
Two years on the road

The WRM bulletin has completed its second year and we would like to take this opportunity to share some comments with you all. Since the first issue, our efforts have been geared at supporting indigenous peoples and local communities fighting to protect their forests. We have insisted on the fact that the forest is theirs and that they are the ones most interested in forest conservation. Consequently, that if humanity is really committed to protecting the remaining forests of the world, then it should begin by recognizing indigenous and local peoples' rights as a first step in the right direction.

The bulletin has therefore largely focused on supporting local struggles to protect the forests. The first means to achieve such aim has been to make as many struggles as possible known to the widest possible audience. Given the number of existing conflict situations, this has constantly faced us with the dilemma of either excluding some cases or increasing the length of the bulletin. As those of you with slower email systems are certainly aware, our option has been the latter. We have tried very hard to provide you with accurate -though never neutral- information and analysis to act upon.

Local struggles greatly benefit from a wider support to put pressure on governments and other relevant agents of forest and livelihood destruction. In all cases where local organizations have asked for such type of support, we have urged our readers to carry out the requested activities. Solidarity was forthcoming and proof of the "damage" inflicted were the strong letters we received, particularly from targetted TNCs and governments.

Many of the factors which are at the root of deforestation processes arise very far away from the forest (e.g. international trade, overconsumption, macroeconomic policies) and therefore local peoples and their allies need to be aware of and act upon them. We therefore consistently included information and analysis on global processes and actors, in order to facilitate understanding and information sharing about them, as a first step to change the conditions which result in deforestation.

In sum, our aim was to create a tool and we hope that the WRM bulletin has become useful, both for indigenous and local peoples and for other people concerned with the fate of forest peoples and their forests. We wish to stress the importance that the direct participation of many of our readers has had in carrying out this task. Much of the information and analysis featured in the bulletin originated from subscribers from all over the world; in some cases as written contributions and in other cases providing us with the relevant information. We have also received very useful feedback and suggestions which have been taken on board.

We have been on the road for two years, but not alone. An increasing number of friends, fighting for similar ideals are also walking along with us. We hope their number will increase and that our bulletin may assist in generating more and more support to local struggles, for their benefit and for that of humanity as a whole. Thank you all very much.

