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Saving forests

"Now when I see my bush I cry. In the past we had sago, pigs, cassowary, big trees everywhere. We used traditional paint from the bush. Now Aiambak is very different. Life is very difficult. I cry for my village."

Jerry lawe, Aiambak villager, Papua New Guinea

Ancient forests provide the world with clean, fresh water, support as much as 90 per cent of the earth's land-based species and play a critical role in shaping the world's climate. Yet, every two seconds, a forest zone the size of a soccer pitch is logged or burned.

The awesome Paradise Forests stretch from South East Asia, across the islands of Indonesia, on to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands in the Pacific. This wonderfully diverse region supports hundreds of indigenous cultures and creatures found nowhere else on earth. Some of the world's most endangered animals shelter in the Paradise Forests, like the last orang-utans left in the wild.

Paradise lost

Global greed for timber products brings the illegal logging companies to the Paradise Forests. Indonesia's forests are being destroyed faster than any other on earth. Papua New Guinea has lost 65 per cent of its large intact ancient forest areas. In 2001, the World Bank warned that some of the richest areas of the Paradise Forests could disappear by 2015.

Logging destroys a uniquely rich biodiversity, with some species at risk of extinction. Local communities suffer human rights abuses, great poverty and disease.

In PNG, all industrial logging is likely to be illegal. Up to 80 per cent of Indonesia's forest is illegally logged. Nations, like Australia, that import illegal and destructively logged timber turn a blind eye to the environmental, social and legal problems caused by the Asia Pacific logging industry.

Greenpeace is one of the few

campaigning organisations with the capacity to reach isolated parts of the world. This is why we work in the Paradise Forests, rather than Australian forests. Greenpeace works to protect ancient forests by opposing their destruction and supporting community solutions.

Why save ancient forests?

Ancient forests are fundamental to life on earth. They provide a home and vital sustenance to millions of people. They provide a habitat for innumerable species of plants and animals. And they perform vital ecological functions.

Indigenous people of the ancient forests have unique and diverse cultures. Yet they are some of the poorest and most disadvantaged people in the world. Their forest homes are harvested with little consideration for their plight or livelihoods.

Logging contributes to climate change because carbon, a greenhouse gas, is released when trees are cut down. Present rates of forest destruction account for more than a quarter of global carbon emissions.

Paths of destruction

Less than 10 per cent of the earth's land area remains as large intact forest. Incredibly, these precious habitats are cut down to make cheap paper and wood products, such as chopsticks, phone books, milk cartons and disposable plywood concrete moulds. Yet this destruction is unnecessary.

If we use wood and paper efficiently, consumer demand could be met by well-managed secondary forests, plantation, recycling and non-wood sources like hemp.



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The Paradise Forests of Papua New Guinea are essential to the livelihood of their people. Their deep connection to the forest for their cultural, spiritual and physical wellbeing has been unbroken for thousands of years.

Campaign objectives

- › To protect the earth's last remaining tracts of ancient forest from destruction, through a moratorium on industrial developments in ancient forests so that appropriately large areas of ancient forest reserves can be established.
- › To ensure governments increase their efforts to stop illegal logging. Also that they stop funding or approving projects that expand logging into ancient forests or that convert or degrade ancient forests.
- › Greenpeace supports forest use by forest communities that sustains the natural dynamics and biodiversity of ancient forest ecosystems.

To find out more about our forest solutions, visit www.greenpeace.org.au/forests

The Paradise Forests

Papua New Guinea

The logging industry in Papua New Guinea has already acquired 70 per cent of available forest resources. The notorious logging company, Rimbunan Hijau, wants to gain access to the rest.

Industrial logging brings intense suffering to those who depend on the forest – damage to their food, plants and traditional medicine supplies, dangerous working conditions, human rights abuses and underpaid log royalties.

Now ecologically responsible industry and legal processes give communities alternatives to illegal and destructive logging.

Greenpeace works in Lake Murray, Papua New Guinea, at the invitation of local landowners. We help clans mark their land boundaries and develop ecoforestry industries, with profits shared among communities. The money made from just one tree can send a child to school for a year. To find out more, visit www.greenpeace.org.au/forests/solutions.



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Hunting in the forest, Weliyo Village, Middle Fly District, Western Province, Papua New Guinea.

Indonesia

In Indonesia, an area of forest at least the size of Wales (around two million hectares) disappears every year. More species face extinction here than in any other country, including the orang-utan, Sumatran rhinoceros, sun bear, proboscis monkey and Sumatran tiger.

By 2054, experts predict a total world population of just 234 wild Sumatran orang-utans. If logging and hunting were stopped today, that population would increase to 6570 orang-utans by 2054¹.

Solomon Islands

Since the 1980s, Asian-based companies have logged Solomon Islands, leaving flattened forests and silted reefs.

Greenpeace and local non-government organisations have built alliances with more than 60 communities, like those from Makira who are working to protect more than 60,000 hectares of rainforest using ecologically sustainable ecoforestry.

¹ IUCN, Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, Orangutan Population and Habitat Viability Assessment, 2004.

Campaign history

1994 Greenpeace starts a campaign to protect the world's ancient forests.

1995 Community leader, Martin Apa, is murdered while fighting logging of his ancestral forests by a Malaysian company in Solomon Islands. His murder has yet to be investigated.

1999 In Papua New Guinea, two logging companies are forced to make the biggest payout ever by loggers, to Warongoi landholders, who took them to court in 1997 with Greenpeace help.

The Papua New Guinea government announces a moratorium on all new logging concessions and extensions.

2000 The first shipment of Solomon Islands ecotimber arrives in Australia.

2002 Greenpeace stops the loading of illegally harvested logs from the Kiunga Aiambak project in Western Province, PNG. The prime minister, Sir Mekere Morauta, concedes logging there "should never have happened".

2003 Greenpeace and its partners help landowners expel Malaysian logging company, Concord Pacific, from land around

Lake Murray, PNG. Concord Pacific is charged with trespassing.

Bunnings, one of the largest hardware chains in Australia and New Zealand, announces a policy to stop buying imported timber from illegal and destructive sources. In Tasmania, Greenpeace and the Wilderness Society build a Global Rescue Station in one of the world's highest hardwood trees, highlighting the destruction of these forests.

2004 A Greenpeace report documents how Malaysian logging giant Rimbunan Hijau sells illegally logged rainforest timber to Australia and New Zealand.

2005 Greenpeace funds workshops for PNG landowners to manage ecoforestry projects in their communities.

2006 Greenpeace sets up a Global Forest Rescue Station at Lake Murray, PNG, to help clans mark their land boundaries and establish ecoforestry businesses.

Greenpeace launches the online Good Wood Guide to buying timber products in Australia. McDonald's agrees to a moratorium on sourcing chickens fed soya beans from deforested Amazon rainforests.

What you can do

Recycle, reuse and reduce your paper use.

- › Buy the most environmentally friendly recycled paper. Inspire others by starting an office paper program. Find out how at www.greenpeace.org.au/take-action/live-greener/shopping/recycled-paper-guide.
- › Consult the Greenpeace Good Wood Guide to companies selling ecologically sustainable timber products in Australia, at www.greenpeace.org.au/goodwoodguide

When building, renovating or buying wood products, avoid:

- › uncertified Australian hardwoods, especially if they are from Tasmania or Western Australia;
- › South-East Asian rainforest timbers, such as meranti and merbau.
- › Tell retailers why you are boycotting their products.

When you buy any timber product, such as furniture:

- › ask for a guarantee that the timber is from a legal source;
- › buy FSC-certified or ecotimber products. For more information: www.greenpeace.org.au/goodwoodguide/certification;
- › If FSC or ecotimber products are not available, choose plantation wood, like Australian eucalypt and cypress, mahogany from Fiji or rubberwood from Asia.
- › ask for a written guarantee that ancient forest products were not used in the item's construction.

Support GREENPEACE

If you want to help save ancient forests, make your voice heard and become a Greenpeace supporter today.

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Australia

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