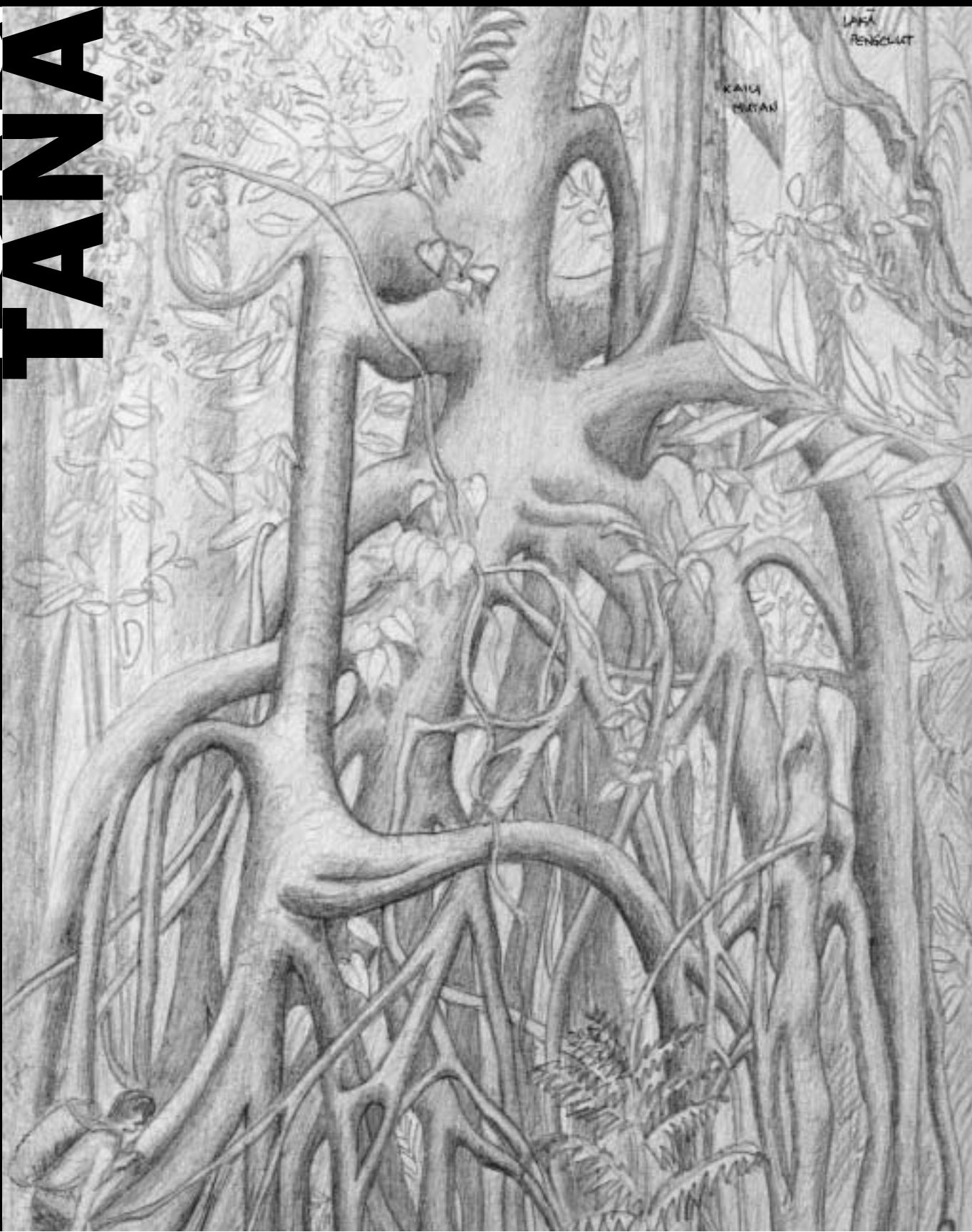


April 2003

Journal on rainforests,
indigenous rights and timber trade

TONG TANA

Bruno-Manser-Fonds



“Globalisation opponents”?!

Aren't we lucky! My family is fortunate enough to live at the heart of the Bremgarten forest in Bern! As a matter of fact, no actual forestry workers live here any more. And that is because the Forestry Commission of the *Burggemeinde* of Bern had to cut its staff numbers. Because the company was slipping into the red. Because deforestation timber from Siberia won the competition against domestic timber in Switzerland! – What better way to begin the debate on so-called globalisation? But what does this word actually mean?

The *first*, closest, meaning is that local products, for example, Coca Cola or Pizza, are spreading world-wide (or, in any case, much further than their region of origin). That happened to rice, the wheel or writing thousands of years ago. The head-dresses of the Amazon Indians have also long since entered into the “globalisation” mill. In many parts of the world today, it is part and parcel of any, well-equipped, child's bedroom. A specific type of competition has also spread throughout the world. The beauty competition? The Winter Olympics? The competition in economic use of resources?? Oh no. The *ousting competition* – The custom that can be witnessed in the world's economy whereby the strong overpower the weak and the cheap replaces the expensive. This competition is to *late capitalism* what a shadow is to a relief. It makes us all get our skates on. Even the forestry companies, as already mentioned.

“Globalisation” therefore also means, *secondly*, that the competitive pressure of all companies spurs us on to local specific reactions. The faster, the better, as the clock is ticking relentlessly. And therefore technological development is accelerating, the battle to survive is becoming more intense. Rivers are poisoned, forests felled, species destroyed, indigenous people driven out. Or also destroyed?

And this brings us to the *third* meaning, a growing series of challenges to face up to: the ecological crisis, the abysmal gulf between the poor and the rich; the consequence of the almost quadrupling of our species in the course of the 20th century alone; and the discovery that there are many ways to destroy ourselves and a large part of life on earth. *Every single one of these problems is new*. And what is new in particular is that we are all in the same boat with regard to them, i.e. all societies, all ethnic groups on this globe must work together in order to get the situation under control. Iraq must immediately make its weapons of mass destruction harmless! That's all well and good. But we are still far from finding a solution to the problem.

Fourthly, traffic, transport and trade operate globally today: their volume has increased eight hundred times over the past 300 years – a hundred times faster than the world's population. Today it is possible to consume goods that have been manufactured in a completely different part of the world – often at the cost of

reckless overexploitation, of which we in our (still) protected corner of the world, know nothing of unless we carry out painstaking research. The *fifth* meaning: thanks to a range of technical revolutions – from telephone to television, from fax to computer and the Internet – our communication possibilities have expanded beyond all expectations. Luckily, thanks to these media it is easier for us to track down overexploitation, wherever it takes place. *Sixth*, over 60,000 companies – the notorious “multinationals” – have extended their share radius internationally, even globally in parts. Sorry but even the Mafia is operating globally in the meantime, the drug trade, arms trade, organ trade, the trade in women and in children. And many human trafficking organisations do what they can to ensure that the wealthy paradises are permanently fed with newcomers. Even terror is spreading itself around the globe. Once the world market is completely deregulated and freed from state rules, how will we then be able to differentiate the business practices of the “Multinationals” from those of the Mafia?

Luckily, there is the so-called “civil society”: Spread throughout the hundred thousand Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and networked throughout all continents, they take action to ensure justice and welfare for all and have thus taken over the actual basic tasks of the state. Whether Amnesty International, Greenpeace or BMF – they dedicate their efforts to causes ranging from *the fight against poverty* to *the certification of timber*. Their “business” deserves two figure growth rates, in contrast to the rampant egoism!

The diversity of the themes conveys the breadth of challenges facing our generation. As for the *seventh meaning*, globalisation stands for the international conference – for the possibility for people from all over the world to meet and exchange views. Scientists, politicians, businessmen – they all organise conferences. Even the NGOs! The largest of this kind of conference – the third World Social Forum in Porto Alegre (23.–28.1.2003) – has just taken place. The “globalisation opponents” allegedly met there. Excuse me? The opponents *of what exactly?*

Thomas Kesselring



Privatisation of the forests

jk – When Abdul Taib Mahmud was elected Chief Minister in 1981, the election campaign was accompanied by a stage-managed mud fight against his predecessor and uncle. Each accused the other of corruption and leaked documents to the media that proved that both candidates had been guilty of unlawful moneymaking. Even back then, the forest proved to be the most lucrative self-service store. The concessions and deforestation licences handed out shamelessly to family and friends formed the basis of the immense wealth of the Sarawak elite, leading to a situation, still prevalent today, whereby political cronies rule and control the entire national economy of Sarawak – from the construction sector to agriculture (palm oil), to the service sector and the media industry. In 2001, Taib Mahmud, elected to his fifth five-year term as Chief Minister, indicated that 10% of Sarawak's jungle was still intact – big business therefore seems to be a thing of the past. But now, the government has found plans dating from the early 90s that set out to privatise the entire Forestry Department. Law enforcement will be ensured by fewer than twelve government officials, while the around 2000 forestry employees have been offered employment with the new company or a transfer to another Government Department. Most of this drastic undertaking has been carried out behind closed doors and is set to enter into force on the 1st of April 2003. The government thus gives up almost all of its responsibility!



Sustainability in Sarawak: „Due to shortage of seedlings ...

Only the Opposition Party DAP (Democratic Action Party) fought against the undertaking: “Sarawak's forests, environment and resources belong to all Sarawakians and can therefore not be privatised but should be prudently managed by the government in the interest of all. It is unwise and imprudent to privatise a Government Department where public interest is involved. These functions ought to be managed by the Government as trustees of the people!”

The history books tell us that only the corrupt elite profit from privatisation – especially as most of the time projects are awarded without public calls for tender. In order to fight against corruption, DAP also calls for greater transparency and accountability during the award of government projects. “Even if there were merits in privatising certain operations (not departments), it is DAP's stance that the State Government should consider other alternatives to improve the forestry economy such as certification for example”.

Source: www.dapsarawak.com, 12.12.2002

... and natives who illegally occupy the land, our reforestation activities face big problems”, said Samling-Boss and Sarawak Timber Association's Chairman Datuk Leo Chai at the annual general meeting of the STA on march 18, 2003.





Hopefully trees keep growing into the skies – also for the Penan! Majestic tree in the upper Limbang-area, June 2002.

Penan take the Government and Samling Co. to court

jk – On the 4th of January 2003, in the case Kelasau Naan against Samling and the Government, a hearing took place between the lawyers of the three parties. They discussed Samling's application for authorisation for two Kenyah long houses lying close to the plaintiffs, the Penan, as defence against the land right demands of the 4 Penan settlements (see Tong Tana December 2002). The court had not made any ruling on this matter at the time of going to press but it is conceivable that Samling's application will be rejected because of various contradictions. In the meantime, some Kenyah have realised that they are more often than not in the same boat as the Penan (also in the literal sense) rather than in that of Samling and that they never had any problems with them. That is why the Kenyah are seriously considering demanding their own land rights from the Government and Samling instead of taking action against their long-standing neighbours!

A forest reserve for Penan-Nomads?

jk – As the BMF found out locally in December 2002, the Forestry Department gave a positive response in July 2002 to a petition drawn up by the nomads of the Bareh and Magoh river. The three groups of nomads, led by Guman Megut, Bujan Lawai and Tebaran Agus, were promised a common forest reserve of 5,000 hectares. This would appear to be grounds for celebration. The fact that this apparently positive development only came to light when the Penan nomads went to the office of Sahabat Alam Malaysia in Marudi at the beginning of December in order to report on the massive incursion of forestry companies (including Samling), and to ask for help, means that all hope for a change for the better can be forgotten once again. While the nomads may have been given a map with the extension of the forest reserve, this is so vague and

hand drawn that it is not possible to speak of an actual end to timbering. Furthermore, the actual legal binding force of this proposal is unclear even though it has been signed by the Forestry Department. A third of the "reserve" has furthermore already been "selectively" deforested over the past few years and a further third of this reserve, which is in any case too small, is currently being exploited. The majority of the Penan territories neighbouring the "reserve", which share their hunting and gathering grounds according to age old traditions, have also been devastated. In the catchment area of the Bareh and the Magoh river, the actual heartland of the Penan and Bruno's friends, another 30 nomadic Penan families with over 150 members are still trying to survive according to the traditional way of life. The Sarawak government, the Forestry Department in particular, has therefore once again made empty promises and is playing the time game, as from the point of view of those who stand to profit from the forest, once the conditions are created i.e. once the forest is ruined, then the Penan problem is also solved. And with the privatisation of the Forestry Department, this "forest reserve" will also end up in the wastepaper basket.

The BMF has financially compensated the 3 fighting nomad groups for their action and is planning, within the framework of the mapping project that is definitively supported by the association "Kunst für den Tropenwald", to complete the documentation on their legitimate land and customary rights this year. The aim is to allow at least two nomadic groups to take their case to court as quickly as possible.

The Mapping Project

jk – In order to gain an overview of the situation and to discuss the timetable for the year 2003, in December I travelled to Sarawak for 10 days and met all of the project partners in 3 hot and sticky cities. Over this time I obtained a very positive impression of the work carried out and of what can be achieved through commitment and cooperation. Steering this kind of large-scale project through the tricky local currents (Know-How/Personnel, Techniques/Infrastructure, Financial resources, etc.) is not an easy undertaking. The result oriented aim is necessary as far as we are concerned, in order to be able to guarantee the on-going financial support, but is also causing some headaches in Sarawak, both because of the aforementioned deficiencies and because of the local way of living and thinking, which is not always accustomed to long term working processes. The traditional subsistence economy (hunting and gathering, planting and harvesting of rice fields), and the weather (rainy season) are also forcing the Penan again and again to reset their priorities. However, this 3-year project is on the right path and the first phase will be completed by the middle of the year as planned.



Reckless action by Robin Wood for the natives of Malaysia in Hamburg, february 13, 2002.

Hamburg wants to recognise Malaysian tropical wood certificate

jk – In 1996 the Hamburg City Senate decided to only use tropical wood bearing the FSC certificate for its public buildings (www.fscoax.org). As a member of the international climate alliance (www.climatealliance.org), the city also undertook to give its support to the protection of the rain-forests and the rights of indigenous people. However, on the 11th of December 2002, the Department of the Economy of the city of Hamburg invited Robin Wood, Greenpeace and WWF, as well as the trade union IG B.A.U., to a round table discussion on the matter. The NGOs were confronted with the already carefully drafted intention, alongside the FSC certificate authorising the State Malaysian Certificate for a probationary period of 2 years, as “Malaysia seems to be determined to steer its forestry practices, which have been out of control over the past few years (close to overfelling), towards sustainable development” (a quotation by Folkhard Spangenberg, Hamburg City Senate). The fact that this completely distorted perception of reality is shared by the umbrella association of the entire German timber trade is not surprising.

Based on reports by the largest environmental and indigenous organisations in Malaysia and Sarawak, which withdrew from the Malaysian certification process in 2001, as all of their objections (such as the land and native customary rights of the indigenous peoples, see www.rengah.c2o.org) were ignored, the environmental and worker federations declared their rejection of the proposal at the first meeting. But the Department of the Economy of the Conservative-controlled Hamburg Senate (CDU/FDP/“Schill-Partei”) kept its head down, ignored the objections, and held on tightly to its original idea and simply invited them to the next round table discussion. By means of an identical procedure, Malaysia has long since claimed that all relevant parties

are actively participating in the process. Despite protests, the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC) however repeatedly misused informal meetings between it and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) as “proof” that the FSC recognised the Malaysian certification process. However, that is not the case, as within the FSC system, the rights of the local indigenous population groups override the interests of the timber industry. And that is exactly what Malaysia is not ready to do. To this must be added the fact that the practical certification system of the industry refuses to be controlled by an independent third party – another prerequisite for the FSC certification! The NGOs therefore did not turn up at the on-going pseudo participative round table talks on the 13th of February, and instead, activists from Robin Wood climbed onto the roof of the Department of the Economy with the banner “Hamburg on the (de)forestation track”.

The environmental organisations were able to prevent a rapid endorsement of the proposal thanks to their protest. Now, the Department of the Economy has another trick up its sleeve and is ready to accept proposals for minimum standards – but it continues to temporarily recognise the MTCC. The die has not yet been cast – as long as subsidiaries of the most active environmental and rain-forest organisations are in Hamburg! But the protest must also be taken up outside Hamburg so that the Senate realises that the environmental organisations here and elsewhere will not accept a tropical wood certificate for public procurement markets that does not unreservedly support the land rights of the forest people.

Request protest postcards from:

tropenwald@robinwood.de

or join the “Save the Rain-forest” online protest on <http://www.regenwald.org/new/aktuelles/hamburg/protmail.htm!>

Massive criticism of FSC

jrd – The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) awards its label to forest industries, timber works and traders “guaranteeing” the labelled wood products as deriving from environmentally appropriate, sustainable and socially beneficial forest management. The British Rainforest Foundation recently published a report* describing 9 cases from all over the world demonstrating serious flaws in the claims of the FSC and the necessity for fundamental reforms if the FSC is to uphold its own standards and the public’s expectations. Negative examples such as that of an Indonesian teak plantation company’s certification being withdrawn (see Tong Tana, Aug. 2001, p. 6/7) harm the FSC’s reputation.

According to the Rainforest Foundation the following points undermine FSC’s performance:

- Of greatest importance to the whole organisation is the accreditation contract which regulates the relationship to FSC certifiers and is only intended for internal use! The actual on-site controllers of the forest industries and sales routes are the certifiers (for ex. SCS, Smart Wood) with FSC authorisation, who award the label according to their own specifications.

Because of their economic significance these certifiers are hardly controlled, let alone punished for violations of the FSC principles and criteria.

- The greater the area these “independent” certifiers can certify, the higher their income, which may lead to a conflict of interests with the strict FSC standards. They do place conditions which must be fulfilled by the to be certified company inside a given time-span but are not interested in rejecting applications for certification. Such admittances based on a sitting back and watching attitude lead in the best case to some future improvement in timber production, while the products are already sold with the FSC logo!
- The certifiers differ in their interpretation and application of the FSC principles and criteria. Additionally, involved experts who control a company on-site have no possibility of enforcing their recommendations (due to the requirements of confidentiality); decisions are made by the management of the certifier.
- Due to competition with other certification systems, usually issued by the industry, the FSC has decided on the strategy of speedily enlarging their own areas which puts people under pressure, leads to the standards being undermined (for ex. the percent clause), and to promises being accepted instead of actual management improvements – generally putting quantity over quality. The FSC standards are the strictest. It is therefore quite complex and expensive to attain the label.

- Therefore it will never be able to compete against less strict labels as far as quantity is concerned.
- Due to trade groups mainly supported by the WWF, who wish to sell only FSC wood products, a demand is being created which can hardly be satisfied with wood from good sources. Therefore the FSC certified forest areas must be enlarged in order to supply enough FSC wood!
- This system of principles and criteria lacks a clear unambiguous definition of “major failures” (on company level as well as due to governmental base conditions) which prohibit certification.

The initial interest in certification was caused by appeals to boycott tropical wood or wood products from overexploitation: suppliers, government authorities and retailers wanted to go on offering a big range of wood products without continuously being confronted by campaigns and complaints. But one of the fundamental problems in the certification of wood and wood products is that the additional profit margin is relatively small. Therefore companies look for cheap labels, or less strict certifiers, or even play one certifier off against another.

The authors reach the conclusion that in the course of the last couple of years the FSC has developed from an organisation which fought for better forest management into a marketing tool for better sales of wood products. They propose massive reforms, for example, that the FSC office itself (together with teams on a national level) award the label and dispense with the certifiers. They hope with these and other measures for greater transparency and more democracy in the decision making.

They also recommend that instead of following the growth maxim they should fulfil the function of a market niche by guaranteeing that only really good examples of their strict principles are awarded the FSC label.

* S. Counsell & K.T. Loraas (2002): Trading in Credibility – The myth and reality of the Forest Stewardship Council. 159 p.

Links:

www.rainforestfoundationuk.org/FSC/RFA4REPORTfull.pdf or
www.rainforestfoundationuk.org/FSC/FSCReport.html
www.fscoax.org
www.regenwald.org/pdf/rdr-report0301.pdf

The FSC answers

jrd – According to a recent analysis** “almost all the issues raised by RF as matters of concern were well known to the responsible FSC staff ... We do not think they are intentional or incorrigible failures of certification”. However, the FSC secretariat acknowledges that further improvements are needed.

FSC has chosen to operate as an accreditation organization for reasons of efficiency. Operating as a certification body would hardly improve the decisions. However, FSC would like to be able to monitor and co-ordinate more closely the work and systems of accredited firms without imposing unacceptable extra costs on certification.

FSC states that their own evaluations were not able to substantiate the claims to deliberate manipulation and/or collusion between forest managers and certification bodies, and it rejects the suggestion that staff is unable or unwilling to monitor or enforce adequate compliance with the stated rules. And “fast growth” is said to be desirable only within the framework of the FSC Principles & Criteria.

Trade networks and their respective demand for products are considered an immense support to FSC and critical for its continued success.

The secretariat prefers to give guidance on how to satisfy the rules, instead of insisting on (internationally defined) “major failures” excluding any certification by FSC. These should be agreed upon on a national level. The analysis of the secretariat is sound, often very detailed, and recognizes many shortcomings within the FSC-System, but disturbing is to read about the many very recent improvements and to see all the clarifications (requiring many consultations with a lot of FSC-bodies) which are just being elaborated.

** H. Liedeker (2003): An FSC Analysis of the Rainforest Foundation report, “Trading in Credibility”. 26 p.



Cut – but not by him! Ulu Limbang, 1999



Penan children still live in the forest; Ulu Limbang, august 2002.

The BMF attitude

The BMF has always had a critical attitude towards certification as a (or the only) tool for the protection of the primeval forests. It is also not a member of the FSC. The problem of this forest certification system is that it does not clearly exclude commercial logging of the primeval forests and that plantations can also be certified. It's true that it is not fundamentally wrong to certify natural reforestations (with indigenous tree species, without monocultures and not on land cleared intentionally for this reason) when the needs of the local population have been taken into consideration, but this demands the creation of a clearly different label.

We acknowledge the FSC as the best of all the wood labels but are of the opinion that it should proceed with greater restriction and consistency. The report we have discussed in this article confirms our caution and we support several of the demands for fundamental reforms to the FSC system. But even a very good label does not make governmental measures unnecessary such as mandatory declaration of wood (species and origin) and direct contributions towards the protection of the last primeval forests and their inhabitants!

Now as before we recommend: Buy Swiss wood or wood from a neighbouring country, not least because of the shorter transportation routes. If such wood products carry the FSC logo: very good, because in central Europe the FSC standards do contribute to certain improvements in forest management over and above the legal requirements (for ex. by demanding that some dead trees are left standing to contribute to the diversity of species, like woodpeckers or decomposing arthropods).

Pulung Tau the next Transboundary Conservation Area (TBCA) with Kalimantan Kayan-Mentarang

I attended the 21st session of the International Timber Trade Council (ITTC) in Yokohama, Japan last November where it was announced that Sarawak's Chief Minister has approached ITTO for support in creating Pulung Tau as the next TBCA. For more than two decades Pulung Tau has been a proposed national park like twenty others. This conservation effort is a welcome respite after more than a decade of intense logging in the Kelabit and Penan traditional territories. TBCA is a programme for protecting biological diversity in an ecosystem that straddles the borders of two countries. Naturally, wildlife and ecosystems do not recognize political borders. In South Africa, it is called peace parks because of its importance in improving relations in border areas.

TBCA is a fairly new concept in the tropics. Sarawak and Kalimantan were the first to adopt it in 1994 for the Lanjak-Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary and Betung Kerihun (Kalimantan) conservation areas. Its purpose was to protect the last sanctuary of the orang utan. For Sarawak, Lanjak-Entimau is the biggest wildlife sanctuary area comprising of 191,568 ha. It is slated to be the next World Heritage site after Mulu.

Conservation projects in Sarawak are still a top-down approach, where the government designates a Totally Protected Area then proceeds to compensate communities who have legal claims. This is a far cry in ensuring a sustained commitment from communities to conservation. The transparency of the process and their engagement is almost zero.

Local communities are more than stakeholders, these areas are their homelands. They have every interest in the future and security of a healthy environment. The fact that biodiversity rich areas still exist within their territories aren't a coincidence. A resource management system developed over many generations is in place for its protection and utilization. Scientists and

conservation practitioners need only to utilize that knowledge.

Unfortunately, communities are seen as threats to protected areas instead of allies. Its only when communities feel estranged from their environment that they actually pose a threat. The purveyors for these feelings of estrangement are logging and large scale developments, since they take away native lands.

The official announcement of Pulung Tau as a TBCA may take place during the next ITTC session in Yokohama. Pulung Tau as a watershed area is critical to three major Sarawak river systems mainly the Baram, Limbang and Lawas. Included in this area is Batu Lawi, with its unique limestone features, cultural significance and many endemic species. Sadly, it will not be included in the TBCA since Samling company has been logging the area. The question of the legal rights of nomadic Penan currently living within the Adang area bordering the TBCA will hopefully be taken into consideration. According to international standards, they should be part of all developmental decisions affecting them.

From February 15–21, I attended the IUCN/ITTO workshop in Thailand, where 80 scientists and conservation practitioners converged to find ways to improve the effectiveness of TBCA. The experts cite political will, commitment, and a strong social policy, as critical elements in ensuring its success. In this case, Pulung Tau has a strong local support, except at this juncture, it is unclear to what extent their involvement will be. As member of a 'stakeholder' group, I have yet to see the proposal or have an input into the process. In fact, these lack of transparency and lack of local involvement are the very issues the international workshop seeks to address in creating an effective TBCA.

Pulung Tau in Kelabit means *our common forest*. One hopes that the communal spirit embodied in this concept will be maintained under the TBCA, unlike the current logging operations that threaten the integrity of this area and benefit only a small sector of society.

Anderson Mutang Urud

The shadow of the Batu Lawi points at Along Segas homeland – and the logging roads of the Samling Co; June 2002.





Huge crowd for a better world in Porto Alegre.

World Social Forum and indigenous peoples

tk – Running parallel to the World Economic Forum in Davos (WEF, 23.–28.1.2003), the third World Social Forum took place in Porto Alegre in Brazil, attracting 30,000 delegates from 5,717 Non Governmental Organisations. They were joined by a crowd of 70,000 supporters. In short, it was the largest “conference” in the history of the world! In the background, a great deal of music and singing and a colourful Latin American craft fair on the Forum’s grounds. Not to mention a short “cult” interlude, when Che Guevara’s daughter started giving out autographs...

Essentially however, the Social Forum was a bubbling *Think Tank*. Alongside some vast events held in the “Small Giant” (a 12,000 seater sports arena), countless workshops took place, scattered around the hangars in the port and the buildings of the Catholic University, sometimes over a hundred at the same time. The overriding theme, in view of the looming war in Iraq was: “A peaceful world is possible!” Several events dealt with themes such as: debt relief, the fight against hunger and disease, strengthening democracy and reconciling economy and ecology. The key word “*economia solidária*”, alone the focus of 49 events, served as a common denominator for all of them.

Tropical forests and *indigenous people* turned out to be marginal themes. The *World Rainforest Movement* organised a meeting on the fringe of the Forum on the second day, but broke it off early however so as not to miss the speech by the Brazilian President “Lula”. On the third day, the Forum’s voluminous programme was then handed out. This marked the beginning of the search for the proverbial needle in the haystack. Among 1,200 workshops, I found four or five about indigenous people. These were organised by the Indian Mission of the Catholic Church of Brazil and the *Instituto Indígena Brasileiro*. A further event (by the Indigenous-NGO COIAB) was announced by underground rumours.

In almost all of these events I met the same forty or so representatives of the indigenous people of Latin America, from Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Panama and Guatemala. Not to mention a Franciscan Monk from Quezon, the Philippines! One of the workshops dealt with the rights of the indigenous people, others with the search for ways of winning over politics to their cause, the recognition of ethnic identities and ancestral territories (land surveying was a recurring topic!), better medical care and access to education. The indigenous groups from civil war torn Colombia would also be thankful for a reduction in the very heavy military presence on their territories.

All of the delegates openly professed their identification with the distinctive tradition of their own people. Colourful costumes (Andean Region), metallic adornments (Chile), and fantastic head-dresses (Amazon) emphasised the cultural diversity. But all of them used one of the “lingua franca”, Spanish or Portuguese. All strictly respected the talking times with almost Swiss punctuality. They all shared the same debating style: serious but humorous, disciplined yet relaxed. And one characterised by a mutual respect as one would wish for in a discussion in the age of “globalisation”! In two of the workshops I won their attention and interest with a short report about the situation of the Penan, on the other side of the globe.

There is no doubt that the Social Forum strengthened the “civil society” movement in the North and South. The indigenous people however remained on the margin of events. Only in few countries are the indigenous people represented in government (in the Parliament, as has long since been the case in Panama, or even in the Executive as was recently the case in Ecuador). In most countries today, including Brazil, their cause is mostly ignored by the political class. That is why the indigenous people took a decision to ensure a greater presence at the next Social Forum and to hold their own symposium in the run-up to the event with the aim of mobilising a broader public.



Not just for the timber dealers, also for the logging-victims the ITTO bears a responsibility...



... Indigenous peoples must be heard – ...



International Tropical Timber Organisation ITTO

jk – Early in 2001 the BMF and the Society for threatened peoples, Switzerland, (GfbV) launched a petition demanding that Switzerland resign from the ITTO. Though the ITTO is merely a trade organisation aiming to enlarge international business in tropical timber, Swiss membership in the ITTO has been equated for many years with Switzerland's official tropical timber politics. That politics is not only about private industry maximizing its profits but also constitutes a civil responsibility for the population, has been ignored by the Federal Council and the parliament. Thus, when the only ITTO aim of social importance – from 2000 onwards to only accept timber out of sustainable forest management in international trade – had not been even marginally achieved, we demanded Switzerland's resignation from this token association. An acceptable alternative would have been to create a fund for indigenous peoples – not only for those of the rain-forests – in which Switzerland would pay an equal yearly amount as it does to the ITTO. Additionally, Switzerland should demand from the ITTO a mandatory declaration of species and origin of woods, prohibition of trade with illegally produced timber and support of certification according to the standards of genuine sustainability. Motions have already been presented to the National Council dealing directly with these issues but they are still pending parliamentary attention. In November 2002 the International Tropical Timber Agreement ITTA, the fundamental agreement of this organisation, was prolonged by three years for the last time. Negotiations dealing with the ratification process have been reopened in the different member countries and the BMF has been invited to a discussion forum on March 18th 2003, to present its point of view of the ITTO and the ITTA. Together with the GfbV we are also going to use this opportunity to demand that the ITTO establish an office of appeal for different groups of people affected by logging activities and for environmental organisations. We do not see why the ITTO – actually an organisation lobbying for the producers, traders and industry – should listen to complaints presented by the timber industry when, for example, it does not agree with Switzerland introducing a mandatory declaration of wood and wood products, but show no willingness to receive complaints dealing with the social and ecological harm caused by the timber industry.

Were the ITTO to include the above mentioned initiatives it could become, at long last, an organisation deserving to be called a meaningful and complementary element of Swiss rain-forest politics!

... like at the World social forum in Porto Alegre!

FSC-tropical timber in pristine forest friendly communities

jk – Few months ago the BMF was approached by a carpenter who wanted to know whether it was correct for a “pristine forest friendly community” to use Jatoba-timber from FSC-certified forest management. Due to lack of knowledge about the FSC-mechanics (BMF is not a member of FSC), we referred to the WWF, the driving force behind FSC. After WWF confirmed the FSC-certificate, nothing spoke against the use of the FSC-Jatoba timber.

Shortly after, an FSC-accredited certification firm accused us to abuse the FSC-label: Even though it could not be excluded that the used timber actually comes from a FSC-certified forest, only a complete certification of the whole chain of custody, i.e. from the forest in Southamerica to the final processor – our carpenter – guarantees the FSC-certificate. Since in our case neither the intermediate traders nor the final processor have been certified, this guarantee can not be given.

Only the complete chain-of-custody certification (CoC) allows an independent control of all the involved companies. If just one timber trader is not certified, nobody can guarantee that he does not mix FSC-timber with tropical timber from plundered forests.

As we realised that we have given green light too fast, the floor had already been put in place... While we can only congratulate the engaging community for the honest effort to comply with its pristine forest friendliness, we have learned something: the larger the demand for FSC-timber, the better we have to pay attention – completely!

Swiss Pristine Forest Friendly Communities and Cantons

jrd – On the 6th January 2003 the community of Sissach in the Oberbaselbiet renounced use of wood from overexploitation and decided to shift paper consumption towards recycled paper as far as possible. Greenpeace Switzerland and the BMF used this occasion to hold a press conference on the development of the “Pristine Forest Friendly Community” campaign in the parish rooms of Sissach on March 18th.

John Künzli quoted the missing Bruno Manser: “What gives us the right to consume goods which do not belong to us geographically? How can we forbid exploitation at home – but still continue to import products out of overexploitation of the rain-forests?”

Mrs Annemarie Spinnler from the Department of Environment and Energy of the canton of Baselland presented the effects of our paper consumption on the protection of the last rain-forests.

Mrs Elisabeth Alter (Chief of Construction and Building Control Office of the community of Aesch/BL) reported on construction with indigenous woods and on the

purchase of the Swissbau-MINERGIE-House “Phoenix”, as the new environment friendly youth centre (look at www.phoen-x.net/).

Kuno Roth (Greenpeace) and John Künzli then presented the documents of acknowledgment, FSC beech wood plaques, to the representatives of the 9 communities of the cantons Baselland and Basel-City with best wishes for the successful implementation of the decided measures.

Petra Schmidt, president of the community of Sissach, thanked them in the name of the pristine forest friendly communities of both Basels.

National councillor Maya Graf, who comes from Sissach, reported on her motions in parliament to achieve “pristine forest friendliness” in the Federal Government (preference of recycled paper) and the renunciation of wood from illegal logging.

Kuno Roth said: “Pristine Forest Friendliness is possible! Because of this the BMF and Greenpeace sent a letter to all the cantons of Switzerland on March 12th inviting them to participate in this campaign.”

Cantonal administrations purchase and consume considerable volume. By making the right choices they could have a very positive influence on sales of environmentally friendly products.

Since December, additionally to Sissach, the following **communities** have decided to become “pristine forest friendly”: Krummenau and Oberhelfenschwil (SG), Igis (GR), Zunzgen (BL), Laupen, Längenbühl and Rüegsau (BE), Bischofszell (TG), Plan-les-Ouates (GE). In the middle of March, together with all the other 327 communities mentioned in the last journal, they also received the document of acknowledgement.

Communities and other corporations interested in our campaign as well as people who wish to make their communities become (more) pristine forest friendly can order the documentation from the BMF (Tel. 061 261 94 74) or download it via the Internet at www.urwaldfreundlich.ch.

Pristine forest-friendly Basel Countrysides and City – Congratulation!





Disappeared without a trace for 3 years: Bruno Manser: Philanthropist and environmental activist.

Just released: Tong Tana II video

The film Tong Tana – The Lost Paradise was shot on Borneo during 1999/2000, ten years after the first “Tong Tana – journey into the heart of Borneo”. Lovely pictures show the rain-forest and the Penan being visited by Bruno Manser, but the film also gives impressions of the destruction wrought by commercial logging.

The film is on video (VHS or NTSC) and has English subtitles. It can be ordered from the BMF for 29,50 Euro/US\$ (+ postage).

BMF exhibition in spring

bmf - On May 30th at 18 o'clock in the Probstei of St. Peterzell in the Toggenburg the exhibition of “Bruno Manser’s Diaries” will be opened. The exhibition will be open for one month. A Penan house will again be part of the exhibition and will be built during the Holy Week. Whoever has not as yet seen the exhibition should definitely use this opportunity!

Impressum

Published by Bruno-Manser-Fonds (BMF)
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Anderson Mutang Urud
Photos: BMF, Robin Wood, Erich & Bruno Manser, Olaf Wüdrich
Title: Bruno Manser: Fig Tree in Sarawak
Translations: Nicole Widmer, Tradoc (English);
Robert Gogel (French)
Edition: 6300 (4200 German, 1500 French, 600 English)
Appears trimesterially
Printed by Gremper AG, Basel
Donations:
Switzerland/Liechtenstein: Post account # 40-5899-8
Bank Coop, 4002 Basel, Acct. 421329.29.00.00-5
France: La Poste, Strasbourg, Acct. CCP 2.604.59T
Germany: Deutsche Bank, Lörrach (BLZ 683 700 24)
Acct. 1678556; IBAN = DE85 6837 0024 0167855600

Please note: Voluntary contributions are very welcome and very needed! Thank you!