



Forest
Peoples
Programme

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Forest Peoples Programme

1c Fosseyway Business Centre, Stratford Road
Moreton-in-Marsh
GL56 9NQ
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)1608 652893
info@forestpeoples.org
www.forestpeoples.org

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Local villagers in Dayak have been carrying out mapping work with data loggers (page 4)

How are Indigenous Communities Benefiting from GPS Data Loggers?

How do GPS data loggers work?

A GPS data logger is an electronic device that records data over time or in relation to location. Generally they are small, battery powered, portable, and equipped with a microprocessor, internal memory for data storage and sensors.

One of the primary benefits of using data loggers is their ability to automatically collect data on a 24-hour basis. Upon activation, data loggers can measure and record geo-information for the duration of the monitoring period. These devices are capable of storing a large number of log entries. The advantage of data loggers is that they can operate independently of a computer, unlike many other types of data acquisition devices.

Why is FPP using them?

FPP's introduction of GPS data loggers has had a positive impact on indigenous communities by enabling them to map their own lands. Unlike consumer grade, off-the-shelf GPS units, the data loggers are extremely simple, light-weight devices comprising a single button operation and no screens to navigate.



This dramatically reduces the amount of training required and ensures that, after a short period of practical experience, the user will become quickly “qualified” to train others in field data collection, thus widening the pool of potential data collectors within the community. The new methodology was first rolled out in February with the Dayak community of Kenabak Hulu in West Kalimantan on the island of Borneo, Indonesia.

After 30 minutes' practical training and a demonstration, the village headman handed out six data loggers and assigned mapping tasks to the villagers.

Two community members with motorbikes embarked on the task of mapping village boundaries via the road, two other individuals mapped village rubber and crop plantations, while a group made up of women and children embraced the challenge of mapping the school and its grounds.

All mapping teams returned within two hours and were intrigued to see their data quickly downloaded from their dataloggers and displayed against satellite imagery in GoogleEarth.

“Everyone seemed keen,” said FPP’s Mapping & GIS Coordinator, Chris Phillips. “The tech we offered was gratifyingly simple and after the practical demonstration, they grasped the concept straight away. This was gratifying for me because that was my reasoning behind introducing the data loggers.”

Chris explained that the training was quick and effective, requiring minimum effort. He added that people seemed to enjoy it and liked seeing the fruits of their labours displayed on a map.

Positive long-term effects

LinkAR Borneo has helped the communities in the Seberuang, Sejiram and Sintang areas to make a wide range of maps of community lands and they are mobilising communities to demand a stop to the palm oil land grabs (some have sent letters to the local government). There has also been mapping progress using data loggers in Kenabak Hulu (with WALHI/Niko) and there are plans for FPP to revisit the communities there to keep up the momentum.

“Mapping provides something tangible any member of the community can really get stuck into, erecting virtual fence lines, if you will, and reinforcing their sense of place,” says Chris. “I’ve seen it before in other situations. There’s nothing like being able to point at a map and saying “This is us! We live here!”



Palmed Off - No Accountability, No Rights.



The palm oil industry's bad reputation has survived the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), which commits member companies to social and environmental sustainability. The RSPO logo certification is visible on many everyday groceries containing palm oil. However whilst RSPO boasts many of the biggest palm oil producers and buyers among its members, displacement of indigenous peoples from their lands, farms and forests is rife.

The RSPO standard is good on paper. RSPO rules prevent the acquisition of land from communities without their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), and require concessions to avoid areas important to communities and to biodiversity. Unfortunately industry non-compliance with the RSPO standard is ubiquitous, bringing its credibility to the brink. The RSPO seems to be reluctant to ensure good rules are matched by good implementation as its Complaints Panel frequently appears unable or unwilling to make decisions that stand up to major companies.

Forest Peoples Programme's new [report](#) documents the numerous human rights failures in the palm oil concession of Golden Veroleum Liberia. The report is based on research conducted since 2012, including work by researchers based full-time in Liberia. Golden Agri-Resources (GAR) – the world's second largest producer of palm oil – is a lead investor in Golden Veroleum. Both companies are RSPO members and both companies have been involved in piloting GAR's Forest Conservation Policy. However, as FPP's report shows, their Liberia project is failing to meet the requirements of both RSPO and Forest Conservation Policy, [while the pilot in Borneo also remains mired in controversy](#).

Communities still lack the information and technical and legal advice they badly need. Golden Veroleum's standard operating procedures give it a licence to short-cut the need for a communities' free, prior and informed consent. According to a so called 'provisional' agreement procedure,

the company is acquiring community land (potentially permanently) in return for a handful of often casual jobs, and other vague and unenforceable benefits. The practical outcome is the loss of valuable productive land in return for what on occasions amounts to little more than a few school benches and some zinc roofing.

Community complaints to the RSPO's Complaints Panel in 2012 provoked an initially encouraging reaction from the RSPO. It decided there was a case to answer and requested a freeze in operations. Since then the Panel has shown itself increasingly unable or unwilling to stay the course. A June 2014 fact-finding mission to Liberia exposed critical weaknesses in the RSPO's enforcement capacity. Astonishingly, Golden Veroleum itself was given a central role in determining how its performance was to be investigated, and hosted and provided logistics for the RSPO staff conducting the mission.

So what is the solution?

First, a recognition by all parties that communities have a right to own the lands they have customarily used and possessed and to determine their own development visions and trajectory, in line with international human rights law. This needs embedding in domestic laws, policies and practices.

Secondly, increasing evidence shows that when community ownership over their traditional forests and lands is legally recognised and respected, forest communities have the capacity to be the best custodians of those forests.¹ This enables communities to think long-term, which means that their choices are most likely to be sustainable ones. RSPO and other parties involved in extracting strong commitments from companies can and must play a key role in ensuring community rights are respected.



At a basic level, they must ensure that the rights of communities take centre-stage in the commitments companies make. Crucially however, they must urgently begin building effective and credible accountability and enforcement mechanisms, to enable strong commitments to be matched by strong implementation.

Everyone is keen to see good news in the palm oil industry, but it would be an unconscionable green-wash for companies to be allowed to get away with simply pledging compliance to high standards without adhering to them.

Duped by false promises, communities could face permanent dispossession of their lands, and the destruction of their forests, wetlands and cultures.

¹See for example research by: Chhatre, A. and Agrawal, A. (2009), *Trade-offs and synergies between carbon storage and livelihood benefits from forest commons*, PNAS vol. 106 no. 42, pp.17667-17670; Nelson A, Chomitz KM (2011) *Effectiveness of Strict vs. Multiple Use Protected Areas in Reducing Tropical Forest Fires: A Global Analysis Using Matching Methods* PLoS ONE 6(8): e22722. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0022722; Porter-Bolland et al (2011) *Community managed forests and forest protected areas: An assessment of their conservation effectiveness across the tropics*, *Forest Ecology and Management, Forest Ecol. Manage.*, doi:10.1016/j.foreco.2011.05.034; and the collection of evidence in the following annotated bibliography: Seymour F, La Vina T, & Hite K. (2014) *Evidence linking community-level tenure and forest condition: An annotated bibliography* (Climate and Land Use Alliance-CLUA).

Expansion by Indonesia's largest palm oil company halted following FPP complaint



In early May 2015, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Complaints Panel upheld the Forest Peoples Programme in its complaint against Golden Agri Resources (GAR), which was seeking to expand 18 of its operations in Kalimantan.

After concluding that it has 'reasonable grounds' to conclude that the company is in violation of several RSPO norms, the latest '[determination](#)' by the Panel notes:

"The Panel hereby prohibits GAR from acquiring or developing any new areas until this complaint has been dealt with to the satisfaction of the Complaints Panel."

Repeated field surveys by Forest Peoples Programme with local partner, LinkAR-Borneo, show that the company has sluggishly responded, after the NGOs had repeatedly raised concerns first with the company and then the RSPO.

The NGOs found that the company had filed to expand its operations after it had taken land without proper consent, had not completed required High Conservation Value assessments and was of questionable legality. The Complaints Panel rules that:

"GAR must also take remedial steps to correct any shortcomings in its land acquisition process with the affected communities..." and insists that "GAR must honor its commitment to allocate 20% of the land for the smallholders as it has promised to do..."

Agus Sutomo Executive Director of Pontianak-based LinkAR Borneo says:

"We need the Government to take note of this decision. Chaotic law enforcement and handing out permits for oil palm plantations on indigenous peoples' lands without even informing them in advance is bad for people, bad for forests and bad for Indonesia."

In past years NGOs have expressed growing dismay that the RSPO was failing to enforce its standards and turning a blind eye to multiple violations.

"We hope this decision will now persuade GAR/SMART that it has to renegotiate with communities where it has taken over their lands without their informed consent", says Marcus Colchester, Senior Policy Advisor of the Forest Peoples Programme. **"We are greatly encouraged that the RSPO is upholding its standard. We need to eliminate all land-grabbing from the RSPO-endorsed supply chain."**

Indigenous Experts Share Experiences and Recommendations on Traditional Occupations

FPP recently developed a new publication that examines traditional occupations in indigenous peoples' communities. The publication is based on a survey that was filled in by 17 indigenous experts, providing information from 13 countries.

The publication provides an overview of the most important traditional occupations in the participating communities, also addressing their degree of practice and gender aspects. A key section is on the decline or increase in the practice of traditional occupations in the communities over the past 10 years. Another central topic is the issue of government support for traditional occupations.

The experts shared their experiences on their government's attitude towards them, and on any regulations that discourage traditional occupations or prohibit them. Also relevant is the information on whether or not questions about traditional occupations are included in national surveys/statistics – which can be important for recognising such occupations.

The experts also reflected on whether formal education paid attention to traditional occupations, and shared examples of community-led initiatives for the transmission of knowledge and skills related to traditional occupations. Lastly, the report pays attention to the main threats to traditional occupations (e.g. reasons people abandon traditional occupations and/or seek other jobs or leave the community) and the main opportunities for improving their status.

Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) agreed that the review of status and trends in traditional occupations will help chart their progress regarding their target on traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use (Aichi Target 18, for which this is a main indicator).

FPP's survey used the definition of 'Traditional Occupations', as agreed in the International Technical Workshop on Indicators Relevant for Indigenous Peoples, held in Baguio City, Philippines, in November 2008. Here it was agreed that the indicators on traditional occupations should focus on "occupations where knowledge of traditional culture and practices may influence the way the work is performed".

Information based on the recommendations, experiences and views of indigenous communities was used from the survey to develop a submission to inform Parties and others on the status and trends evident in traditional occupations.

The research provided very interesting preliminary insights into the practice of traditional occupations. The publication provides a systematic analysis of the responses to the survey along with some quantitative analysis that was drawn from the results, illustrated by specific examples/quotes from the contributions. Graphics are included to visualise main situations and trends. We hope that this small set of data will be a starting point for a broader investigation into the status and trends of traditional occupations.

The report is available to download free in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) from our website.



An International Festival to Promote Indigenous Peoples' Rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The indigenous Pygmy peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are custodians of a rich culture. Their knowledge and traditional practices have contributed enormously to the preservation and sustainable management of the country's forest ecosystems. They play a central role in improving forest governance.

Unfortunately, they also face strong discrimination and marginalisation from other

communities: Bantu, Nilotic and Sudanese, who make up the country population. Customary rights of indigenous Pygmies on their traditional lands are not secure - and most indigenous communities are dispossessed of their land because of conservation activities, forestry or other natural resource initiatives. Taking into account their lifestyle is characterised by a strong attachment to their traditional lands and forests, indigenous Pygmy communities are the most vulnerable and poorest in the country.



Indigenous Peoples from Central and East Africa, Amazon, Scandinavian Europe and Southeast Asia came together at FIPA 2015. Photo: DGPA.

Forest Peoples Programme (FPP) works in DRC with local civil society organisations, such as la Dynamique des Groupes des Peuples Autochtones (DGPA), to promote the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. In July 2014, a proposed law on fundamental principles concerning the rights of indigenous Pygmy peoples in DRC was submitted to the National Assembly for adoption. The bill is a “tool for promoting

the rights of these peoples, including their social, cultural, anthropological and ethnological values, while highlighting their traditional knowledge of nature conservation and sustainable use of forest ecosystems.

Once adopted, this law will significantly improve the legal status of the indigenous Pygmy peoples and their social situation in the country.

It is in this context that the second International Festival of Indigenous Peoples (FIPA) 2015 was organised by DGPA with the support of RFN, FPP, and other actors. The gathering aimed to create a framework for sharing dialogue and experiences and to advocate for the establishment of a legal framework capable of promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous Pygmy peoples in DRC.

FIPA 2015 was held in Kinshasa from 27 - 29 March 2015, and paid particular attention to the issues of recognition and protection of indigenous rights, land reform and the impacts of development initiatives.

At its heart was an exhibition of precious artistic and cultural knowledge of indigenous peoples. The various debates highlighted the political, social, cultural and economic dilemmas of indigenous peoples in DRC and throughout the world. They also highlighted the progress made on the ground towards the guarantee of their inalienable rights to their territories, and the solemn reaffirmation of their dignity and human value.

Representatives of indigenous communities from Central and East Africa, Scandinavian Europe, the Amazon and Southeast Asia participated in the festival, as well as the DRC government.

Ms Jannie LASIMBANG from the Malaizia commission on human rights delivering a speech during FIPA 2015. Photo: DGPA.



The DRC government, including the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) and the Minister of Land Affairs, officially recognised the need for specific legislation for indigenous Pygmies to be adopted to secure their customary rights. They recognised the importance of their effective involvement in the ongoing land reform process for a better management of indigenous issues in the new land law. It now remains to be seen if the political will of the Congolese government, as expressed on the ground, will lead to securing the rights and improving the living conditions of indigenous Pygmy peoples in DRC.



Where They Stand: The Wapichan's Story



Photo: Fred Pearce

“They are bound to that land, and they are its true custodians.”

Written by author and journalist Fred Pearce, *Where They Stand* reveals the reality of life for the Wapichan people. With detailed observations, Pearce documents their determined efforts to secure effective recognition of their customary land rights covering extensive rainforests in the Upper Essequibo basin and savannah grasslands, dry tropical forests and montane forest in the South Rupununi District of Guyana.

The connection between the people and their land runs deep through generations. “I feel the land belongs to me and my people,” says 25-year-old Tessa Felix, from Shulinab. “I want to continue my grandfather’s work so we can govern the land which belongs to us.” However, building the case to reclaim the 85% of their traditional land, which the government has so far refused them, is a long struggle. The Guyanese government so far seems more

interested in portioning off their land to gold miners.

Tessa is part of a planning team that convenes with 17 Wapichan communities to discuss their vision and a way forward for protecting and regaining their territory. She investigates claims of their land being invaded by gold miners, loggers and cattle rustlers. To carry out this work, many of the Wapichan, like Tessa, combine traditional methods and modern IT forms of technology such as using GPS on their smartphones.

Where They Stand offers a poignant insight into the way in which the communities see the mapping process as far more than just an evidence-gathering exercise. “Mapping awakened our struggle for land among our people,” says Angelbert Johnny, a former acting Toshao of Shawaraworo village. “It brought people together.” Underpinning their land claims, the Wapichan have documented the values of their collective ownership, lives, culture and traditions.

Another villager, Claudine La Rose has focused on documenting and translating the traditional knowledge of the elders from all 17 Wapichan communities. “The elders told us how we came to be in the mountains, about the sacred sites and the spirit grandfathers that preside over natural resources.”

Positive benefits to the mapping process are already emerging. Ron James, a skilful Wapichan mapper and IT expert, co-ordinates data collection for the Wapichan’s mappers. Since completing the main maps, he comments on how surveyors have been able to deter intruders from their land. “In one six-day patrol along the river that forms the border with Brazil, we found 30 crossings, six of them active... The rustlers fear what they call the ‘monitors with smart phones’. They turn back if they hear we are around.”

Despite their efficacy, the maps used by the villagers are often ignored by the government whose own models are out-of-date or inadequate. “It is very frustrating,” says Angelbert. “We know the land much better than they do. Our maps are better than theirs. But they seem to regard them as worthless.” He added, “They asked us to justify our demand for the land extension. We have done that. But now they ignore us.”

The Wapichan people in Guyana are also facing a clash of cultures as traditional values collide with modern forces of change generated by external global influences. As well as outlining the many challenges the Wapichan face, this powerful publication highlights how their world is undoubtedly changing. However it is hoped that modern technology and the opportunities it presents for digital mapping and global advocacy will help pave the way to the Wapichan securing their land rights for future generations.

The Wapichan want their own proposal for a large Wapichan Conserved Forest to be fully recognised by Guyana and supported by the international community as a key strategy for curbing climate change, protecting forest biological diversity and sustaining local livelihoods.

Hundreds of copies of *Where They Stand* will be distributed among the South Rupununi indigenous villages. It will be shared by Wapichan leaders in global policy as part of raising the profile of their long struggle for legal recognition of their lands and forests.



Photo: Tom Griffiths

Inga Dam in the DRC to Result in the Resettlement of up to 20,000 People



The dam will create a large lake lying parallel to the Congo River

In March 2014, the World Bank Board of directors gave final approval for a grant of USD\$73 million towards the construction of the Inga 3 Dam on the Congo River in the Bas Congo Province of the DRC. Inga 3 represents the first phase of a vast programme to create the largest and most powerful hydroelectric network in the world, even surpassing the China's Three Gorges Dam. Comprising one dam wall and six hydroelectric power stations, it will lead to the flooding of the Bundi Valley, turning it into a gigantic lake lying parallel to the Congo River.

The foundation stone for this project is due to be laid in October 2015, with construction planned to start in 2016.

On its own Inga 3 is expected to cost between 23 and 30 billion US dollars, and central to the government's financing strategy are plans to sell much of the 4800 MV of electricity thus produced to South Africa, to the mining industry in DRC's Katanga Province, and in the longer term, to Nigeria. While there are plans to lay two new power lines to carry the electricity to South Africa and DRC's capital

Kinshasa, there are no plans to distribute this Congolese-produced electricity to the majority of the Congolese, 90% of whom are currently off the grid.

A worrying aspect of this vast project is the threat it poses to between 12,000 and 20,000 people living in and around the Bundi Valley within SNEL's (government electricity company) concession area, many of whom will have to resettle. This local population includes both Basangela people, who are indigenous to the valley, along with many other groups whose forebears arrived during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s to work on the construction of the Inga dams 1 and 2. With the permission of traditional clan leaders, these migrants established their own fields and plantations, and have been there ever since.

Since March 2015, no official or written notices have been provided to these local people about their fate, according to FPP research. Community representatives we spoke to expressed serious fears and concerns about what was going to happen to them. Speaking of their history, local people recounted to us

tales of the various logging companies who exploited/removed their forests during the pre- and post-colonial period, and how they were then forced to give up ancestral lands when Inga 1 and 2 were first constructed. At least one of the major clans lost almost all of its lands, and other communities ended up moving to other parts of their traditional territory to establish new village sites where they thought they would remain safe from further pressures against them and their rights. None of all the affected communities received any compensation for the loss of their traditional lands, and for the negative impacts on their communities.



This cycle appears set to repeat itself with Inga 3, but this time with more devastating, permanent consequences. One villager from Lubuaku village said: “Inga 1 and 2 took our lands and we received nothing, and now we are being told that we will have to leave our ancestral lands completely, and forever. What will happen to us? Where will we go?” Another villager chimed in, saying: “If we have to move, we must be able to stay within the same area, on the lands of our ancestors, to keep our livelihoods, and our cultural identity.”

Another woman, who was born in Camp Kinshasa, to parents who worked at Inga 1 and 2 sites when they were being built, was very clear: “We raised our families here, and educated our children but they were never employed by SNEL. They used to talk about jobs in Inga 3, now they say we must leave - but I am not going anywhere.”



Although many communities who are going to be forced to leave the SNEL concession area will not be flooded themselves, many will lose fields and plantations to the lake. But instead of being offered employment in a project that will require thousands of Congolese workers, or the development of a new vibrant economy linked to the new lake, they are to be pushed out. It is said Camp Kinshasa has an estimated population of 9000 who will be pushed out to make space for an estimated 7000 workers who will be moved in.

A notable finding from FPP’s preliminary visit to Inga was the consistent explanation of local land tenure rules. These land tenure rules stipulate that control of all lands belong to the six original clans, and immigrants to the area must pay annual tribute to them in order to maintain their land holdings - which they cannot sell or otherwise transfer to third parties. These widely recognised rights would disappear if people were moved out and, as one clan leader noted to us: “If we are moved out and onto other peoples’ lands we will have to pay tribute to their leaders forever - and we do not want that.”

World Bank funding towards this massive project means that World Bank safeguard policies protecting community rights should be recognised. When we explained some of these rules to community delegations in the Bundi Valley, eyebrows were raised, and one community leader asked us: “These rules protecting our rights - do you really think that the World Bank will apply them here?”

Extraordinary Failures Exposed by Report into World Bank Financing of Resettlement

An investigative [report](#) reveals an extraordinary failure by the Bank to track and monitor the longer-term impacts of resettlement caused by Bank financing. The report, the work of a team of more than 50 reporters working in 21 countries, reveals a stunning total of 3.4 million people have been displaced by projects financed between 2004 and 2013.

One of the cases investigated is the Kenya Natural Resource Management Project, a capacity-building project for the Kenya Forest Service (KFS). During the time of the project, the KFS regularly evicted the Sengwer from their lands and burned their ancestral homes to the ground in the Cherangany Hills. This case led to a complaint filed with the World Bank Inspection Panel, which [found](#) the Bank had failed to adequately assess and understand the risk of evictions posed by funding a government agency historically complicit in such evictions. The Sengwer are now waiting to see how far the Bank will be willing to support efforts to remedy some of the harms suffered under the project, and the historic land injustices that underpin these harms.

The wider report highlights that these failures are not limited to a few specific cases, but rather reflect a system-wide failure to adequately assess the potential human rights risks of projects. Indigenous peoples' organisations and civil society from around the world have repeatedly [asked](#) for the Bank to adequately assess such risks, at both a project level and at a national planning level. However the draft proposed bank safeguards [currently fail](#) to ensure that human rights risks are explicitly addressed. It is hoped that a second draft, due to be released shortly, corrects this shortfall.

Of equal concern, the Strategic Country Diagnostic (the up-stream risk assessment tool now being trialled by the Bank -SCD) does not contain specific requirements for Bank staff to take into account historical patterns of human rights abuses or risks in borrower countries. This is despite specific [recommendations](#) made by civil society. The Bank is currently piloting its SCD process in 15 countries, and civil society in these pilot countries are strongly encouraged to bring historic patterns of human rights abuses to the attention of the Bank country offices to ensure that such considerations are not able to be ignored in future country planning. The report echoes some of the findings of the Bank's own Involuntary Resettlement Portfolio Review, phase one completed in May 2012 and phase two in June 2014, (finally [published](#) in March 5 2015). This internal review highlighted monitoring weaknesses, pointing to "sizeable gaps in information point to significant potential failures in the Bank's system for dealing with resettlement", among other serious failings.

Failures pinpointed by the internal review went far further than simply a scarcity of information – as serious as that failing is. It also highlighted a failure to provide the grievance mechanisms, required under Bank policy, to enable projects to respond to community concerns and to avoid harms in the first place. The Bank has responded to this internal review with a brief [Action Plan](#) and a pledge to 'do better', but the Action Plan does not adequately address the scale of the problems identified.



UNDP Adopts New Social and Environmental Standards A Welcomed Cut Above the Rest

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has adopted and made effective (as of 1 January 2015), new Social and Environmental Standards (SES or Standards). They are accompanied by a revised Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) and two new compliance and accountability mechanisms: the Stakeholder Review Mechanism and the Social and Environmental Compliance Mechanisms (and “Unit” known as SECU).



The SES are anchored by three principles and seven standards. The three principles comprise: *Human Rights, Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment, and Environmental Sustainability*. They apply to all programmes and projects and the seven standards include: (1) Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management; (2) Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation; (3) Community Health, Safety and Working

Conditions; (4) Cultural Heritage; (5) Displacement and Resettlement; (6) Indigenous Peoples; and (7) Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency.

In many ways, UNDP deserves applause. Its new documents strived to ensure not only that its standards did not fall below any other safeguards adopted already by international financial institutions, but also to properly expand the concepts of applicable social and environmental safeguards where advances in international law and practice have so warranted.

As an agency of the United Nations, the UNDP has centred the SES in respect of the very human rights and environmental standards adopted within the UN system and embraced by its member states. The SES aim to adhere to the (UNDG) Statement of Common Understanding of the Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation and Programming. It is the first safeguard of its kind that expressly affirms that the hosting institution -- here the UNDP -- will refrain from providing support for activities that may contribute to violations of a state’s human rights obligations and the core international human rights treaties.

The SES specifically state that “UNDP will not support activities that do not comply with national law and obligations under international law, whichever is the higher standard.” The latter is particularly important to indigenous peoples given that all too often the national legal framework does not support indigenous rights, certainly not in a manner consistent with the rights and duties of states under international law. Moreover, Standard 6 related to Indigenous Peoples (the “IP Standard”), expands this required compliance to include all state duties and obligations under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Also, while a key objective of the SES is to ensure UNDP's projects do not adversely affect indigenous peoples, the SES go beyond the traditional and all too familiar "do no harm" approach. Together with the SESP, the SES also aim to support governments in efforts to fulfil their obligations under international law. The objective therefore is not just to avoid human rights violations, but to enhance the respect for, and the enjoyment of human rights.

While each of the seven standards are relevant to indigenous peoples, it should be noted that the IP Standard recognises indigenous peoples' rights to lands, resources and territories (including respect and support for demarcation and titling). It also ensures against involuntary resettlement, and recognises the requirement that culturally appropriate consultation must be carried out with the objective of achieving agreement and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC).

The IP Standard specifically prohibits the undertaking of any project activities that may adversely affect the existence, value, use or enjoyment of indigenous lands, resources or territories unless agreement has been achieved

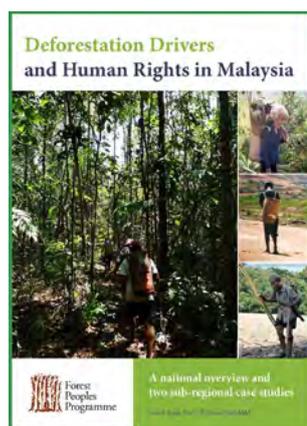
through FPIC. The IP Standard further requires the development of an Indigenous Peoples Plan and demands respect and support for state recognition of the legal personality of indigenous peoples consistent with their own norms, values and traditions. The Standard respects and supports indigenous peoples' cultural heritage, intellectual, religious and spiritual property, and recognises the requirement of participatory monitoring and transparency.

As with all safeguards, their true test will be in the implementation. While it is believed that those responsible for drafting and advancing the SES at the UNDP headquarters level have the proper intentions to see the SES and SESP implemented in full, much will depend on the capacity and political will of both UNDP staff at the country level and the main project implementing partners: the states themselves.

This means that indigenous peoples must familiarise themselves with the content of the Standards and SESP, ensure their application, and insist as required on the full and effective participation of affected indigenous peoples.



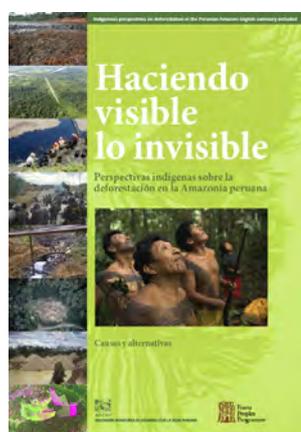
Palangka Raya Publications



Deforestation Drivers and Human Rights in Malaysia

4 December, 2014

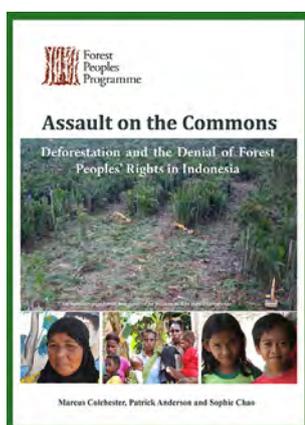
As community forests are plundered and forests are cleared, local sustainable customary land use systems are confined to reduced areas of forest land threatening their sustainability. This [report](#) is one of several commissioned case studies from the FPP's Rights, Forests and Climate Project. It examines the combinations of direct and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation in Malaysia.



Revealing the Hidden: Indigenous Perspectives on Deforestation in the Peruvian Amazon (Spanish with English Summary)

4 December, 2014

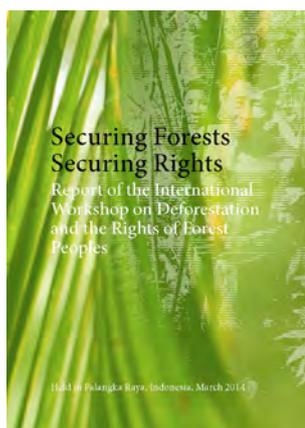
This [report](#) was compiled by Peru's national indigenous peoples' organisation (AIDSEP) and international human rights organisation, Forest Peoples Programme (FPP). It is based on the analysis and perspectives of Peru's indigenous leaders and organisations whose lives, lands and livelihoods are threatened by deforestation on a daily basis.



Assault on the Commons

2 December, 2014

This [report](#) from Forest Peoples Programme exposes the underlying cause of forest loss in Indonesia: the denial of the rights of the tens of thousands of customary law communities ('indigenous peoples') who inhabit the forests. Tracing this denial of rights back to the pre-colonial era, the study documents how the country's legal and policy framework has systematically weakened forest peoples' rights over time.



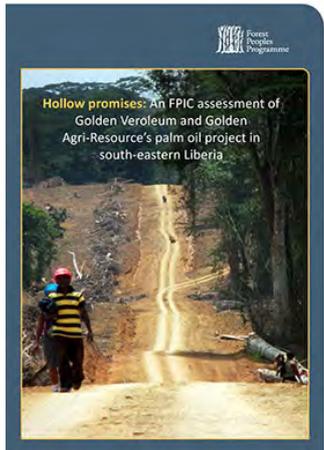
Securing Forests, Securing rights: Report of the International Workshop on Deforestation and the Rights of Forest Peoples

(French and Bahasa versions – out now!)

11 December, 2014

This [report](#) covers the extent of the global forest crisis, the alarming consequences for forest communities, workshop delegates' critiques of top-down international anti-deforestation initiatives, and forest peoples' advocacy of approaches and solutions based on securing their customary land rights and other human rights and placing forest communities centre-stage in efforts to curb deforestation. Published by PUSAKA, Pokker SHK and the Forest Peoples Programme. Also available in Spanish, French and English.

Recent Publications



Hollow Promises: An FPIC assessment of Golden Veroleum and Golden Agri-Resource's palm oil project in Liberia

15 April, 2015

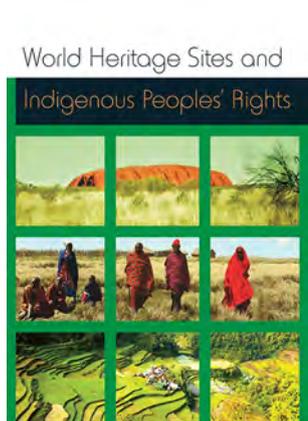
The [report](#) 'Hollow Promises: An [FPIC](#) assessment of Golden Veroleum and Golden Agri-Resource's palm oil project in Liberia' reveals how these companies have caused community division and conflict, having profoundly misled communities who have little or no access to independent legal advice. and have benefited from local government coercion and intimidation of communities, with a variety of poor socio-economic and cultural outcomes evident. Click [here](#) to download the full report. For the Executive Summary click [here](#)



Where They Stand

2 June, 2015

Written by acclaimed journalist and author Fred Pearce, Where They Stand documents the Wapichan peoples' determined efforts to secure effective recognition of their customary land rights covering extensive rainforests in the Upper Essequibo basin and savannah grasslands, dry tropical forests and montane forest in the South Rupununi District of Guyana. The publication is beautifully illustrated with stunning photography - it is currently only available in English. A limited number of printed copies are available.



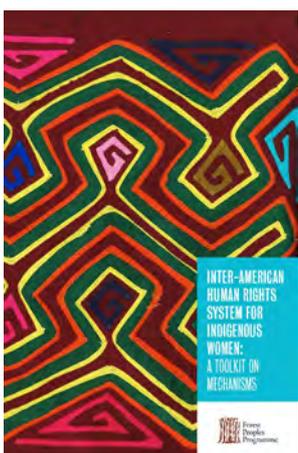
World Heritage Sites and Indigenous Peoples' Rights

14 November, 2014

This book published by Forest Peoples Programme, Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA).

£38 plus shipping

For further information, [click here](#).



Indigenous women and the Inter-American human rights system: a toolkit on mechanisms

February, 2015

This [toolkit](#) explains the legal mechanisms that are relevant to indigenous women's rights in the Inter-American human rights system. It aims to support indigenous women's organisations in making efficient use of the various mechanisms and in influencing standard setting. [Click here](#).