

President, Republic of Indonesia  
Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono  
State Secretary Office / Bapak Presiden Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono  
Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, Gedung Utama Setneg  
Jl. Veteran No.17-18,Jakarta 10110,Tel: 62-21-384 5627 Fax: 62-21-384 8592

16 February 2011

Dear Mr President,

As an international network of specialists on the ants of Asia, and a group concerned for the highly threatened biodiversity and ecosystem services of Southeast Asia, we write today to express our strong support for your recent forest protection and climate change mitigation commitments, and to respectfully request the immediate protection of the Bukit Tigapuluh forest landscape in Jambi and Riau provinces in Sumatra.

Your agreement with the Kingdom of Norway to reduce carbon emissions from deforestation and to protect Indonesia's forests has made you a world leader in climate mitigation efforts. We applaud your efforts, and Indonesia should be proud of this strong commitment to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation.

In the spirit of that commitment, we urge you to halt the proposed imminent clearance of natural forest in the Bukit Tigapuluh landscape to produce pulp and paper, and instead to place this forest into protection or restoration zoning. Sumatra's forests have been devastated in recent decades, and many of the island's species are now threatened with extinction. This forest is now critical to the survival of Sumatran orangutans, tigers, elephants and innumerable other species, as well as to the indigenous Orang Rimba and Talak Mamang tribes.

The Bukit Tigapuluh forest landscape is a global priority conservation area. It is the largest of the last remaining dry lowland forest blocks in Sumatra, and contains one of the richest assemblages of Sumatran fauna and flora, including almost 200 bird species and 59 mammal species according to a 1994 report.

The landscape is designated a Global Priority Tiger Conservation Landscape and is one of the six focal areas that the Government of Indonesia committed to protecting for Sumatran tigers at the International Tiger Conservation Forum in St Petersburg, Russia, in November 2010. The Frankfurt Zoological Society, in collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry, has been running the world's only successful reintroduction programme for Sumatran orangutans since 2002 in the landscape. The landscape is also critical habitat for two groups of endangered Sumatran elephants.

Today, of the approximately 320,000 hectares of natural forest in the landscape, only 130,000 hectares are protected in the National Park and majority of the unprotected forests are licensed to be cleared to produce pulp and paper. Even the national park is under threat from illegal encroachment.

**ANeT**

We are extremely concerned that companies associated with Asia Pulp & Paper/Sinar Mas Group plan to clear the largest portion of natural forest remaining outside the National Park, causing huge carbon emissions and negative impacts on the indigenous tribes, and diminishing a host of ecosystem services supplied by natural forests. We also fear the local Sumatran elephant populations will become locally extinct without this forest.

For the sake of Sumatra's biodiversity and indigenous people, we respectfully urge you and the appropriate agencies within the Government of Indonesia to immediately protect all remaining natural forest in this landscape as the expanded Bukit Tigapuluh National Park or as Ecosystem Restoration Concessions.

We stand ready to help Indonesia protect this biodiversity treasure.

Yours sincerely,

Signature

**Dr Himender Bharti**

President

International Network for the Study of Asian Ants,

Department of Zoology, Punjabi University Patiala, Punjab, India, 147002

[www.antdiversityindia.com](http://www.antdiversityindia.com)

[himenderbharti@gmail.com](mailto:himenderbharti@gmail.com)/[himender\\_bharti@yahoo.com](mailto:himender_bharti@yahoo.com)/[himenderbharti@antdiversityindia.com](mailto:himenderbharti@antdiversityindia.com)

Phone: Mobile:91-09356785454,91-09316150810 and 91-08591645454

**Dr. John R. Fellowes**, Leading Biodiversity Consultant and Conservationist, United Kingdom [jrfellowes@yahoo.com](mailto:jrfellowes@yahoo.com)

**Dr. Carsten Brühl**, Community Ecology & Ecotoxicology +49 (0)6341 280-31310 [Bruehl@uni-landau.de](mailto:Bruehl@uni-landau.de)  
[www.uni-landau.de/umwelt/bruehl.html](http://www.uni-landau.de/umwelt/bruehl.html). Institute for Environmental Sciences, University Koblenz-Landau  
Fortstraße 7, D-76829 Landau, Germany

**Dr. Martin Pfeiffer**, DAAD Longterm Professor, Department of Ecology, National University of Mongolia, Baga toiruu 47,  
P.O.Box 377, Ulaanbaatar 210646, MONGOLIA, [martin.pfeiffer@biology.num.edu.mn](mailto:martin.pfeiffer@biology.num.edu.mn), Mobile: ++976-95057993, Fax: ++976-11-322608

**Dr. Seike Yamane**

Professor in Biodiversity Science, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Faculty of Science, Kagoshima University, Korimoto-1, Kagoshima, 890-0065 Japan, FAX: +81-(0)99-259-4720

**Dr. Erwin Suprastowo Widodo**, Deputy Director, WWF, Sumatra, INDONESIA [erwinwidodo@hotmail.com](mailto:erwinwidodo@hotmail.com)

**Dr. Suparoek Watanasit**, Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Prince of Songkhla University, THAILAND  
[suparoek.w@psu.ac.th](mailto:suparoek.w@psu.ac.th)

**Dr. Bakhtiar Effendi Yahaya**, Deputy Director (Research and Academics), Institute for Tropical Biology and Conservation  
Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Jalan UMS, 88400, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, MALAYSIA, Tel: +60 88 320104, Fax: +60 88 320291  
Email: [Bakhtiareffendi@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Bakhtiareffendi@yahoo.co.uk), URL: [www.ums.edu.my](http://www.ums.edu.my) and <http://homepage.mac.com/dorylus/index.html>

And other AneT Committee Members- **Dr. Rudy R. Kohout** (Australia), **Dr. Kazuo Ogata** (Japan), **Dr. Yoshiaki Hashimoto** (Japan),  
**Dr. Maryati Mohamed** (Malaysia), **Dr. K. Eguchi** (Japan), **Dr. Suputa M.P.** (Indonesia), **Dr. Omid Paknia** (Iran), **Dr. Dias R.K. Sriyani**  
(Sri Lanka), **Dr. Decha Wiwatwitaya** (Thailand), **Dr. Veit Bui Tuan** (Vietnam)

Copy of Letter:

---

**The Ministry of Home Affairs**  
Jalan Taman Pejambon 6, Jakarta Pusat  
Indonesia  
Tel: 021-3441508 , Fax: 021-380551  
Email: [infomed@deplu.go.id](mailto:infomed@deplu.go.id)

**The Ministry of Forestry**  
Gedung Manggala Wanabakti  
Jalan Jend. Gatot Subroto, Senayan - Jakarta  
Tel: 021-5731820, Fax: 021-5700226  
Email: [pusdata@dephut.cbn.net.id](mailto:pusdata@dephut.cbn.net.id)

**International Media**

**Various International NGOs**