

Asia-Pacific Environment Monograph 1

**STATE, COMMUNITIES
AND FORESTS IN
CONTEMPORARY BORNEO**

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Editor: Fadzilah Majid Cooke



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Foreword

The name 'Borneo' evokes visions of constantly changing landscapes, but with important island-wide continuities. One of the continuities has been the forests, which have for generations been created and modified by the indigenous population, but over the past three decades have been partially replaced by tree crops, grass or scrub. The loss of forests has been most severe in Sabah, where the plantation model is long established. In Kalimantan, populations have grown and both government-backed and illegal forest clearing have increased exponentially, bringing imminent or more distant threats to traditional livelihoods, but also possibilities to engage with new opportunities. Activities in support of conflict resolution and participatory action research have assumed greater importance and find fertile fields for operation. Before the authoritarian Suharto regime ended in 1998, the role of civil society was quite restricted in Indonesia. Since reformation and democratisation, this has changed, with Indonesia now more liberal than Malaysia. Decentralisation, however, has created its own set of problems. This volume tackles issues of tenure, land use change and resource competition, 'tradition' versus 'modernity', disputes within and between communities, between communities and private firms, communities and government. While there are an equal number of chapters from Kalimantan and East Malaysia, it must be said that there is not equal coverage of the various regions. Three of the four Kalimantan papers are from East Kalimantan, where there is more surviving intact forest than elsewhere.

There are many Borneos: I have my own, as do all researchers on this fascinating island. Crossing the Meratus Mountains in South Kalimantan by motor cycle in 1988, we used old logging roads, the memories of their creeping vines and broken bridges being vividly re-created by Anna Tsing's *Friction* (2005: 29). On the southeast coast I encountered my first oil palm estate with its Sumatran owner, one of the early bridgeheads of that commodity now transforming so much of Borneo. In her introduction to this volume, Majid Cooke has noted that, despite the rapid increase in oil palm planting in Kalimantan, the contributors on the Kalimantan side have not chosen to focus on it. One reason for the lack of discussion is probably that the case studies tend to be located within the hilly borderland of Indonesia and Malaysia, and some are in high mountain areas inherently unsuitable for oil palm, including the sole study set in Sabah. This is the 'Heart of Borneo', especially the large Kayan Mentarang National Park. In Kalimantan, most plantation development lies further south, closer to transport facilities within reasonable distance of the coast. This may be changing, however, with the announcement of a central government-supported 'plantation corridor' along the Indonesia-Malaysia border, in association with road development. A major aim would be to control the illegal logging so graphically described here, but the environmental impacts could be

much more serious. The Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), a main proponent of the 'Heart of Borneo' conservation initiative, leads the critics of that plan.

Whatever outcomes may still lie in the future, this volume, the first in the series of Asia-Pacific Environmental Monographs, provides much interesting, up-to-date and useful material. I commend it to the reader.

Lesley Potter
The Australian National University
November 2005

Tsing, A.L., 2005. *Friction: An Anthology of Global Connection*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Acknowledgments

The chapters in this book were originally written for a conference organised by the Resource Management in Asia-Pacific Program at The Australian National University in 2001, under the title 'Resource Tenure, Forest Management and Conflict Resolution: Perspectives from Borneo and New Guinea'. It was made possible with financial assistance from various sources, most notably the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). The editor would also like to thank the Earth Island Institute's Borneo Project, whose contribution enabled the attendance of a participant from Sarawak.

All papers have been updated, considerable changes being made by some authors, less by others. They can stand on their own, but contain some common themes. As mentioned in the introductory and concluding chapters, the common themes emphasise the importance of focusing on changes at the local level, of situating local complexities in the larger institutional context, and of the possible gain from such an approach in the search for alternative models of development.

The anonymous readers are to be thanked for their thorough review of the papers and their constructive criticisms. As a result, the introductory chapter was completely rewritten to capture more precisely the similarities and differences between the Indonesian and Malaysian parts of Borneo. Part of the introductory chapter was presented in draft form at the Stockholm Seminars organised by the Swedish non-government organisation Albaeco and the (Swedish) International Foundation for Science at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences on 15 June 2005. I benefited enormously from comments made at that seminar.

Special people, however, need mention: Cristina Eghenter, who, apart from being a contributor, took on an additional role as commentator to my introduction and to other chapters in the book; Lesley Potter for her continuing support throughout and for her comments and contribution to the introductory chapter; and last but not least, Colin Filer for his patience in seeing the project through to publication.

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October 2005

Abbreviations

CIFOR	Centre for International Forestry Research
DFID	Department for International Development
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HPH	Hak Pengusahaan Hutan [Logging Concession]
HPHH	Hak Pemungutan Hasil Hutan [Forest Product Harvesting Right]
HTI	Hutan Tanaman Industri [Industrial Timber Plantation]
JVC	Joint Venture Company
KKPKD	Kelompok Kerja Program Kehutanan Daerah [Regional Forestry Program Working Group]
LCDA	Land Consolidation and Development Authority
MFMA	Model Forest Management Area
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
PT	Perseroan Terbatas [Company Limited]
PT KEM	PT Kelian Equatorial Mining
SALCRA	Sarawak Land Consolidation and Rehabilitation Authority
SFI	Sabah Forest Industries
SLDB	Sarawak Land Development Board
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature

Contributors

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Cristina Eghenter is an anthropologist who has worked in the Indonesian part of Borneo (Kalimantan) for the last 14 years. She advises WWF Indonesia on issues of community empowerment, sustainable development, collaborative management and equity in conservation, and has particular responsibility for community-related activities in the Kayan Mentarang National Park.

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