

Indonesian NGOs Put Forest Issues on World Stage with Help from GreenCOM/Indonesia

By Leigh Ann Hurt,
GreenCOM/Indonesia

"Anarchy and lawlessness are taking a toll on the country's forests," Togu Manurung, head of Forest Watch Indonesia, one of a global network of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) devoted to being watchdogs of Indonesia's forest management, told the audience of a talk show-style debate hosted by USAID/Indonesia's GreenCOM project and the Indonesian People's Forum.

The debate was held at the final preparatory meeting of the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) meeting in Bali in June. "Unless the government of Indonesia and the international community work together to halt this blatant theft, the country will bankrupt one of its most valuable natural assets."

Entitled "Who's Responsible for Illegal Logging?," the debate featured speakers ranging from government agency representatives to investigative NGOs. Government speakers included the environment minister, high-level Ministry of Forestry insiders, and the assistant chief of police. It was moderated by Wimar Witoelar, a former presidential spokesperson and well-known media celebrity in Indonesia.

The lively discussion attracted an international audience of more than 100 government delegates, donors, and international and national NGOs and was covered by the national press, the BBC, CNN, and Voice of America and Indonesian station, NHK-TV.

Illegal logging is acknowledged to be rampant in Indonesia.

GreenCOM/Indonesia and its NGO partner organizations, which are developing a campaign to draw attention to Indonesia's forest crisis, took advantage of the WSSD preparatory meeting to issue a plea for action and accountability at all levels of government.

Indonesia's State Minister for the Environment, Nabel Makarim, stressed the need for developed countries also to act by cutting back on the demand for illegal tropical lumber.

"Curbing illegal logging activities needs to be conducted from both ends: the supply and the demand," he said, "It is difficult to enforce the law, when there is a continuing demand."

The fate of Indonesia's forests is of global concern because they comprise 10 percent of the world's remaining tropical forests and contain 20 percent of the world's biodiversity. If the current rate of destruction continues, scientists estimate that all of Indonesia's tropical lowland forest will be destroyed by 2010.

Illegal logging is also a concern for Indonesian government officials because each year the country is losing a potential US\$3 billion in tariff revenue that could help stimulate a much-needed economic recovery.

After a short break, the official "talk show" was followed by a two-hour forum in Bahasa Indonesian with speakers from the Indonesian government, as well as from Japan and the United Kingdom, which have recently signed agreements with Indonesia to help curb illegal logging. This session also highlighted several

national NGOs and journalists who have been investigating illegal logging in this country.

Former journalist Mr. Abi Kusno, who was nearly killed for reporting illegal activities in

Central Kalimantan, stunned the audience with details of his investigation and the resultant violence that befell him last November. Mr. Kusno's story and his appearance made an unforgettable impression on the audience.—He was badly beaten by illegal loggers who left him scarred from head to toe, partially paralyzed in his right arm, and missing most of his left hand. Everyone listened in horror as he explained how the police failed to come to his rescue and have also failed to prosecute those responsible.

Mr. Kusno has offered to serve as a spokesperson for a national communications campaign being sponsored by GreenCOM Indonesia, in close collaboration with concerned NGOs and key government agencies. The Bali talk show and forum helped set the stage for a larger media campaign due for kickoff later this year.



Former journalist Abi Kusno, who was attacked by illegal loggers when he was investigating a story, spoke at a GreenCOM forum on illegal logging.

Popularity Grows for GreenCOM's Annual Community Environmental Awards in Tanzania

*By Pancras Ngalason,
GreenCOM/Tanzania*

Popular support for USAID/Tanzania's GreenCOM annual awards for community environmental action grew again this year. The number of entries reported so far has increased almost 40 percent over last year's events. The 2002 awards competition may involve nearly 75,000 people and many more will attend the 17 festive community ceremonies planned for June through August.

To participate, a community group, school, or individual enters a local project designed to enhance the environment and promote the economic development of the community. The winners are selected by a panel of local judges and awarded tools and equipment to help carry out their projects.

In 1999, its first year, the awards program attracted about 15,000 entries. The number grew to 26,000 in 2000, and 53,000 in 2001.

In 2002, nine new districts joined the competition for a total of 17. Originally developed in coastal districts, the awards program expanded to the inland districts of Monduli, Karatu, Simanjiro, and Babati, which are located around Tarangire and Lake Manyara National Parks. Next year, the



One of the events during the prize giving ceremony in Dar Es Salaam June 5, 2002. In the picture a crowd of people who attended the event are participating in dancing and singing a song that sensitizes people to take positive actions to manage their environment more wisely. At the front is GreenCOM consultant Dr. Irma Allen.

Photograph by Pancras Ngalason

awards program will expand to the districts surrounding Ugalla ecosystem in the western part of the country.

An awards ceremony held in Dar Es Salaam on World Environment Day, June 5, attracted approximately 30,000 people. On the podium dignitaries including representatives from the USAID mission to Tanzania, the National Environment Management Council, the Ilala district commissioner (who represented the regional commissioner, Mr. Yusuf Makamba), representatives of the district commissioners for Temeke and Kinondoni, and the city director of Dar Es Salaam, honored the winners.

Organizers initially feared that busy, urban Dar Es Salaam might not embrace the competitions that had been so successful in coastal villages. However, the Dar Es Salaam region responded enthusiastically and even had the highest school participation—almost 75 schools.

GreenCOM has organized this and similar competitions in other countries as a "social mobilization" strategy to activate public support and generate action to improve both environmental conservation and the local economy. The scheme was initiated in Tanzania by GreenCOM consultant Irma Allen in 1999. The projects entered usually focus on improving the conservation of coastal resources and wildlife through public participation, communication, and awareness.

"Social mobilization programs attempt to build a national consensus by campaigning through all possible channels, gearing up quickly and generating excitement." Ms. Allen said. "Although some critics claim that such programs don't solve long-term problems, social mobilizers think these events are merely peaks in a continuous process of developing more environmentally and economically sustainable communities." The Tanzanian awards were developed to



Photograph by Pancras Ngalason

Muheza District Commissioner presenting prizes to winners at Jitegemee Stadium during the prize giving ceremony June 5, 2002.

build public support for a new coastal policy to manage resources more sustainably. Development of both the new policy and the social mobilization initiative were supported by USAID.

The coastal areas of Tanzania are faced with deforestation, pollution of beaches, coral mining, and unsustainable fishing practices such as dynamiting that have caused a decline in fish stocks in recent years.

Understandably, most of the projects in the coastal districts focused on developing alternative livelihoods based on coastal resources. About 75 percent of them were mariculture activities, ranging from seaweed farming to income-generating activities combining fishing, the planting of vegetable gardens, and beekeeping. Other projects included tree planting, replanting of mangroves, raising awareness in the community about environmental aesthetics, formation of active environmental clubs, beautification and greening of schools, and water protection. Most activities included economic, educational, and social aspects.

Red Sea Rangers Train to Help Stakeholders Understand Environment

By Mark Goldrup, GreenCOM/Egypt

A diving boat hovers over a characteristically dazzling stretch of coral reef in the Red Sea as the divers, mainly tourists from Cairo and overseas, strap on their gear and check their equipment. Just as they are about to enter the crystalline water, an Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) speedboat pulls up and a team of Red Sea Rangers boards the diving boat.

The Rangers are courteous and professional. They concentrate on checking the boat's licenses and monitoring compliance with mooring and waste disposal regulations. Their interactions with the tourists are minimal. Their job done, the Rangers speed off over the turquoise reef.

For the boat operators, the experience is a reminder that they will be held accountable for environmental compliance. For the uncomprehending tourists, it is a brief delay, perhaps a minor inconvenience. But it could have been a memorable learning experience.

The Red Sea Rangers, a corps of approximately 40, have developed a reputation for professionalism and efficiency, but USAID/Egypt's GreenCOM nature interpreters feared they might be missing some important chances to influence visitors' and other stakeholders' environmental consciousness and to encourage good environmental behavior in the ecologically fragile area. In the course of their work, the Rangers come in contact with boat operators, dive masters, Bedouin communities, fishermen, and tourists, among other groups whose behaviors can affect the delicate environmental balance on the reefs.

Dr. Sam Ham, a recognized world leader in interpretation theory at the University of Idaho (USA), and Dr. Betty Whyler of the University of Melbourne (Australia) held a GreenCOM-sponsored workshop at the Red Sea resort town of Sharm El



Red Sea Rangers approaching a diving boat.

Sheikh in June where 19 rangers learned important communication and "customer service" principles that will help them to manage Egypt's national protectorates on the Red Sea. Developing eco-tourism is a core objective of USAID's environmental strategy in Egypt. The Rangers' newly acquired skills will help them encourage environmentally sound behavior and understanding among tourists.

The nine-day practicum included training on identifying and analyzing communication problems, being aware of communication strategies, and being able to capitalize on "teachable moments" that arise daily in the line of duty. The Rangers also received training on giving interpretive talks and tours. More than half of the workshop was spent in practical exercises.

GreenCOM/Egypt Deputy Chief of Party Patrick Papania and consultant Eng. Hany Farid helped organize the workshop, which was enthusiastically received by the Rangers according to the evaluations.

Rangers who completed the workshop will work with GreenCOM/Egypt on several projects to

create more awareness about the Red Sea among the targeted groups mentioned above. Projects include developing self-guided tours on land and underwater, making presentations to groups, developing a Web site and a newsletter as information resources, and producing short-wave radio programs for boat captains. Dr. Ham will return to Egypt in early 2003 to visit Rangers at field sites and follow up on their progress.

The next time they inspect a dive boat, rangers who attended the workshop are not likely to miss the chance to tell the divers a bit about how to respect the fragility of the reef.

"We have learned how to deal with visitors and how to help them achieve the goals of their visit: having fun while preserving the environment," said Mohamed Abbas, director of the Rangers' office in Qusseir. "The program was very useful, showing us how to communicate with others and to easily present ideas to all kinds of audiences, in an appropriate way."

July Human Nature Focuses on Ecoagriculture

By Mary Paden, Human Nature Editor

Conventional Green Revolution-style agriculture has helped feed the world's growing population over the past 50 years, but it is also beginning to wear down its biological support systems (soil fertility, clean water, biological diversity), according to recent scientific reports. Can agriculture be transformed so that it can continue to feed us but also nurture the ecological systems that support it?

The question is addressed in the July issue of GreenCOM's semi-annual newsletter, Human Nature, which is sent to environmental education and communication (EE&C) practitioners around the world. Each issue explores current research and trends around a particular theme and looks at best practices of how EE&C professionals are addressing the trends. The newsletter is published in English, Spanish, and French and mailed to about 6,000 professionals. It is also available online at www.greencom.org.

A special feature of this issue is an online Power Point presentation on global trends in food and agriculture, which is available at GreenCOM's Web

site (address above). The presentation was done in conjunction with the Earth Trends Project of the World Resources Institute, a policy research organization in Washington, DC, that supplied the data. The presentation can be viewed online along with explanatory notes for each slide, or it can be downloaded and used to give presentations to groups. Additional global and country data are available at www.wri.org.

The July issue of Human Nature includes articles on:

Ecoagriculture, a new term coined to describe ways to make large farms more attractive to wildlife and more sustainable in their treatment of natural systems.

Shade Grown Coffee. A number of conservation groups are encouraging coffee farmers to grow their crop under a mixed canopy to mimic the natural forest and enhance wildlife.

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Clagett Farm, which provides a hands-on experience for both local farmers and students to learn conservation techniques.

A case study of how social marketing principles were used by the



Page one of Human Nature Volume 7, Number 1.

Food and Agriculture Association of the United Nations in Malaysia to help rice farmers increase their yields and income while reducing both pests and the use of chemicals.

The rich history of how agriculture and health educators have used behavior change tools such as social marketing to achieve results. Environmental educators and communicators can learn from their research and experiences.

GreenCOM

Strategic Environmental Communication



GreenCOM Update

The GreenCOM Update newsletter is published electronically four times a year and sent to USAID program officers and GreenCOM collaborators. It describes activities undertaken by the Environmental Education and Communication (GreenCOM) Project of USAID, which conducts strategic environmental communication projects for USAID missions.

GreenCOM is funded and managed by the USAID Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau: Environment Sector.

USAID missions interested in information on setting up a GreenCOM project should contact:

Roberta Hilbruner, Environmental Education and Communication Team Leader
USAID EGAT/ENV/ENR 3.8.135
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington D.C. 20523-3800
Tel. 202-712-5688
Fax. 202-216-3174
rhilbruner@usaid.gov

Technical services for GreenCOM (Contract No. LAG-1-00-01-00005-00) are provided by the Academy for Educational Development in partnership with Chemonics International and World Wildlife Fund.

Back issues of update are available on the GreenCOM website www.greencom.org
To be placed on or removed from the Update listserve contact greencom@aed.org.

GreenCOM
Academy for Educational Development
1825 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington D.C. 20009 USA
Phone: 202-884-8000 Fax: 202-884-8997

GreenCOM Update Staff

Editor: Mary Paden
Production: Maureen Daley
Project Director: Brian Day

Contributors and Reviewers:
Shera Bender, Bette Booth, Richard Bossi, Julia Brooks, Maureen Daley, Mark Goldrup, Leigh Ann Hurt, Atziri Ibañez, Susan Lomenzo, José Ignacio Mata, Dr. Lynn Mortensen, Pancras Ngilason, Mary Paden, Doctor Schongwe, and Erin Schuck.