



THE *PAPUA NEW GUINEA* ECO-FORESTRY FORUM

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Media Release

Benefits from Industrial logging not genuine

It is misleading to believe the assertion that the logging industry contributes significantly to the economy of PNG. The PNG Eco-Forestry Forum does not think this is true as much of what the industry provides is unsustainable and not genuine.

The Forum makes this observation in response to the recent claim by Melbourne-based ITS Global that the logging industry is an important contributor to the economy and that its opposition by environmental groups were dishonest and threatening to the economy.

According to the Forum, while logging may generate 5 to 9 percent of GDP and 6 percent of the total taxes, as claimed by ITS Global, its contribution in the employment and rural infrastructural sectors can be described as well below expected standards.

“Almost all the roads, bridges, jetties and schools that were built by mostly foreign logging companies under the pretext of development no longer exist today,” says the Forum. It said there is an overwhelming evidence to prove this all over PNG today in especially those provinces that have once allowed industrial logging into their areas. The Forum said even the findings from numerous government sanctioned and other independent reviews into the industry revealed alarming cases of logging companies operating in defiance of the labour, environmental, and human rights regulations in the country.

The Forum says while it also acknowledges that PNG faces some tough economic challenges, it believes the way to go is to give the people, especially the forest resource owners, the opportunity to retain much benefit from their forest resources exploitation through sustainable and legally acceptable practices.

It said, therefore ITS Global's independent review commissioned by controversial logging giant Rimbunan Hihau (RH) as reported recently is just another cover-up tactic played by RH to deviate attention from the truth about the abnormalities that exist within the logging industry.

For more information, contact the Forum on phone 323 9050 or email teff@global.net.pg

PNG Eco-Forestry Forum

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The *Papua New Guinea Eco-Forestry Forum* supports integrated rural community development and sustainable resource use through a viable and sustainable eco-forestry industry