

## Free, Prior and Informed Consent and REDD in West Papua:



### Workshop Summary

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## Forest Peoples Programme

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**Hosts:**

The meeting was hosted by the Papuan NGO network, Jasoil, which is based in Manokwari, and the indigenous peoples' organisation based in Jakarta, Pusaka. The meeting was held in Hotel Mansinam on the south shore of the promontory just outside Manokwari City, looking out towards Mt. Arfak. RRI partners, FPP and RECOFTC, attended as resource persons and facilitators.

**Participation:**

About 55-60 people attended the meeting in all, though not all attended the full three days. The three speakers invited to present their knowledge about REDD on the third day came for that day only, while local government officials attended the first day but gradually faded out. Community and local NGO participants on the other hand sustained their involvement for the full three days.

The main participants were representatives from 12 or more local communities from West Papua, most from the Manokwari area but some from further afield including Waropen (Papua) and Bintuni bay. These included traditional leaders who were variously self-identified as heads of clans, tribal chiefs, lineage elders and customary heads. A Melayu village headman from Riau was also invited to share his experiences with conflict resolution. There were also local representatives of several government agencies including the local environment department, the department of forestry, the land agency, and representatives from some village-level authorities. The meeting was also attended by one of the senior Ministry of Forestry policy advisers from Jakarta who has been a co-author of the country's R-Plan. NGO participation included representatives from Fauna and Flora International, Rainforest Action Network, Kemitraan, Forest Peoples Programme, Pusaka, Jasoil, Perdu and the local legal support NGO, LB3H. RECOFTC was the only international organisation involved. Two lecturers from the local University of Papua also attended. The formal educational level of participants was very diverse including several people who were illiterate as well as some village leaders and officials with secondary education. The meeting was held using Bahasa Indonesia throughout. The opening session on the first day was filmed by a local TV station.

**Workshop Materials:**

At registration, participants were provided with a workshop bag and folder with copies of following materials all in Bahasa Indonesia (some of which were added in the course of the meeting):

- A Handbook on Conflict Resolution prepared by RECOFTC
- Copies of the latest Indonesian REDD regulations
- Copies of all the power-points presented during the meeting
- A summary of the legal implications for REDD of the case of *Saramaka versus Suriname* prepared by FPP
- A CD ROM with various films of Indonesian cases of conflict and conflict resolution
- The draft agenda and terms of reference of the meeting with the objectives spelled out
- A summary of the implications of international law for indigenous peoples
- A list of all participants with their names, phone numbers/ email address and institutional or community affiliations.

- A handwritten statement by the Dewan Papua Adat.

They were also each provided with a workshop T-Shirt with the slogan ‘No REDD without RIGHTS’ on it. The logos of the main sponsors of the meeting were also displayed on the T-Shirts, the banner and the workshop handbag.



**Agenda:**

The three day meeting was planned to build awareness and capacity in stages. Day 1 was devoted to introducing the key issues: Human Rights, Climate Change, REDD and FPIC. Day 2 was designed to elucidate local perspectives and included training on thinking through existing land conflicts, how to manage them and how to avoid them by insisting on respect for human rights and adhering to the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent. Day 3 then explained, in more detail, the implications of REDD for communities and explored community perspectives of how they thought REDD plans should be amended or applied to ensure respect for their rights.

The meeting was designed to be highly interactive with several sessions devoted to break outs, group discussions, as well as mind-games and other training exercises. The participants evidently appreciated this approach and a high level of enthusiasm was sustained until late on the third day.

**Findings:**

This short report does not repeat the information provided in the handouts, presentations and training sessions (copies are available in electronic form). Instead, it seeks to capture the key points that emerged from among the participants themselves in the panel discussion, the break out groups and ensuing plenary discussions.<sup>1</sup>

*Introductory observations:*

Both the communities and local authorities represented were almost all strong in their insistence that rights must be respected and that custom was a source of rights. Rights were seen as extending over the whole of a community's territory. Most of the participants referred to their areas as *wilayah adat*, communal territories of the tribes (*suku*) or clans (*marga*), reserving the term *tanah adat* for farmlands held by individuals or lineages (*keret*). The legal term *hak ulayat*, used in the Basic Agrarian Law (Law 5/1960), was generally seen as applying to the entire *wilayah adat* but this was not always clear.

The authority of customary institutions was also strongly affirmed in the meeting although the connection between these and the provincial level 'Dewan Adat Papua' was somewhat blurred.

Although community representatives were strong in affirming their rights, they were numerous statements and comments made during breaks which suggested a quite widespread scepticism about the government's development efforts. The discussions showed that almost all the communities had experienced violations of their land rights by government-permitted natural resource exploitation, including logging, plantations, oil palm estates and smallholder schemes, road building, transmigration or other developments. Thus while insistence on rights and the recognition of customary authorities was strongly asserted, we detected a general tendency for participants to assume from the outset that developments would take-over their lands, whether they want it or not, and the most they could hope for was compensation or benefit sharing. This expectation seemed to endure into the discussion about REDD, which was on the

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<sup>1</sup> This summary derives from notes taken down by hand during the meeting, so not all statements can be reliably considered to be direct quotations.



first day dismissed by some as irrelevant as they wanted first to get their present land conflicts resolved before anything new happened.

Conflicts over natural resources have evidently been widespread and sometimes violent. In discussions of the principle of FPIC, that it implied the right to say 'yes' or 'no' to development, there was a repeated complaint made by the community representatives that they **could not** object to government-endorsed developments on their lands. If they did object, opposed projects or sought to resist incursions, they were branded as separatists and the companies and / or the government would use the security forces, especially *Brimob*, (mobile police brigades), to quell unrest.

It also became clear in small talk around the meeting and, by inference, in some of the plenary discussions that there are considerable tensions surrounding the way community leaders are currently handling negotiations with companies and government officials. While communities feel their rights are being ignored, some tribal, clan and lineage heads are, in fact, dealing with companies to extract compensations monies without the wider community being aware of this. At least in peri-urban areas, it also seems that a market in informally privatised land has de facto emerged in violation of customary norms.

### **Day 1:**

The meeting opened with introductions to the purpose of the meeting, personal introductions of all participants and an explanation of the agenda and logistical arrangements. This was followed by a presentation by the Forest Peoples Programme which summarised relevant human rights laws and jurisprudence, summarised what REDD is all about and how it is likely to be applied to Indonesia and then noted some of the key policy debates about Indonesia's approach to REDD including the critique of the current REDD regulation made by the UN's Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and civil society's concerns about the R-Plan.

During the ensuing discussion the following main points were made:

- Participants welcomed the notion that international laws upheld their rights but commented that these international norms were unlikely to be effective in West Papua, where even the provisions of the Constitution and the law were rarely upheld.
- In West Papua, the State recognises indigenous peoples' rights in theory (ie constitutionally and through the Special Autonomy Law) but not in practice
- Objections to development are difficult to make as those who object are branded as separatists and subject to intimidation or worse
- Peoples' bargaining position is weak.
- Despite the formal recognition of rights industry carries on as if we had no real rights
- A number of cases were cited of development projects that had violated rights to land and to FPIC.

Summing up in response to queries FPP noted that participants clearly had a good understanding of the core issues that the meeting would address. It was clear that

rights were not being effectively recognised by companies which were taking over their forests. This situation would have to be addressed before REDD projects were developed and made the situation worse. Whereas some participants had implied in their questions that their rights derived from the law, it was vital to appreciate that under international law their rights are inherent, do not depend on an act of the State and, as far as lands are concerned at least, derived from custom not from statutory recognition. The importance of a right to redress and of access to justice was stressed.

Further presentations were then made by the Government land agency (BPN) about the status of community lands in Papua, and by the Dewan Adat Papua about the work being done to get adat recognised. After further discussions and a break there were further presentations by Pusaka about FPIC and again by Pusaka about the importance of mapping as a tool. A final presentation was made by the headman of a community in Riau about his experience with land conflicts there.

Discussions were very animated. The following key points were made:

- Participants stressed the vital importance of land to people: livelihood, spiritual and political.
- All land in the province belongs to the Papuans: land is inalienable and held by clans and lineages based on custom.
- International law supports this.
- The relationship of the law and rights to land in West Papua is complicated by the high degree of inconsistency between the various 'levels' of law:
  - International laws
  - National laws
  - Special Autonomy Laws
  - Provincial and local laws.
  - Customary laws.
- These laws often contradict each other.
- Custom is only ambiguously recognised by the constitution and by national laws
- Although BPN has regulations that recognise *adat*, yet it has no resources and lacks detailed regulations that allow it to do this in practice. BPN admitted that 'administratively we are very weak'.
- The local government feels that BPN which is run direct from Jakarta has no local funds to effect land titling
- Not a single area of *hak ulayat* has yet been recognised in West Papua
- There is no map of *hak ulayat* that the government can use for spatial planning
- Moreover, BPN feels it cannot recognise *adat* in State Forest Areas as this is subject to the jurisdiction of another Ministry, the Department of Forestry, but the Department does not effectively recognise community rights in forests either.
- In practice lands and resources are being taken away by numerous interests including transmigration, logging (HPH), plantations (HTI), oil palm estates (HGU), mining, oil and gas. Rights are also ignored in spatial planning.
- Agreements when negotiated seem unfair
- Participants wanted to know what rights do they have in land when company permits expire. They were not given a clear answer.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In other parts of Indonesia, lands under HGU leaseholds revert to the State, not the people, once the HGU expires (although such leases are also quite easily renewed). In West Papua the BPN seemed unsure what transpires. It is possible that the Special Autonomy law which gives stronger recognition

- There are violation of custom by the State and by local people who are negotiating away lands without reference to custom.
- Land reallocations should require authorisation from both State agencies and customary authorities representing the land owners.
- The status of lands that have been allocated to settlers also needs to be addressed. These people are also Indonesians and have rights.
- Summing up the representative of the Dewan Papua Adat noted that: ‘Everything comes from the land and everything goes back to it. We are made from the soil and return to it. How can we become masters of the land in such a way that we do not release it to others? How can we ensure that we deal with the land without violating custom and yet also in line with our national laws? We are late in sorting out these issues. Land is already handed out to others for mines, oil palm and so on. We need to get land titles, at the moment everyone is suing and countersuing and people are selling off the land contrary to custom. We are breaking custom. To arrest this we need to organise, we need our NGO friends to help us clarify our land holdings.’
- Summing up the representative for BPN noted that when it comes to land there is ‘no such thing as too late’ and he agreed firmly that in order to get these issues clarified it is essential that the government establish ulayat.
- A new local regulation is needed to regularise customary rights
- Mapping can be an important tool to help communities clarify the extent of their customary lands.

## **Day 2: Training by RECOFTC on Conflict Management**

The morning of the second day was led by Yurdi Yasmi of RECOFTC who led participants through a highly interactive set of exercises designed to help them to think about their rights. One opening exercise included people being asked to move quickly into groups as ‘yes’ or ‘no’, in answer to a specific question and some were then asked to explain why they had moved into a group. The following were notable:

### ***Q1: Are forests better managed by the State? Yes or No?***

*Great majority say No!*

- Oil palm has invaded our lands
- The Department of Forests has allowed our forests to be wrecked.
- Forests should go back to the community
- Indigenous peoples’ land should be managed by the indigenous peoples

*Some say Yes!*

- The Constitution says land water and resources should be managed by the State in the interests of the people. We should not blame the State but the people, like foreign businesses which come in and wreck the forests. I agree with the Constitution and think it is the people who act badly.
- The State needs to plan how lands and forests are used. The State has right to manage the forests for the benefit of the State.

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of customary rights than do national laws in other provinces may allow the BAL to be applied differently in West Papua.

- Laws and procedures must be respected. We need to choose the right people to manage the forests. We have to work based on the Constitution. The people own the forest but the State should be allowed to manage it.

***Q2: NGOs are the best organisations to voice the aspirations of the communities:  
Yes or No?***

*A few say No!*

- NGOs cannot represent the people. People in the villages should speak for themselves
- NGOs role is to assist them with outsiders.
- Communities should speak for themselves and NGOs should help them.

*Most say Yes!*

- Customary organisations meet and voice their opinions through the NGOs. So we need NGOs as we can't work with the government.
- The people and the government are at odds.
- Only NGOs support us.
- I think it is a fact that NGOs work with us and provide us accurate information not the government.



Break out groups were formed to look into specific conflicts and to present summaries of these experiences to the meeting. These cases were discussed and presented in considerable detail. Some key points which emerged were:

- Many companies get permits to exploit lands and natural resources on indigenous peoples lands without due process and without following adat



- Companies were accused of violating both custom and national laws
- EIAs are often absent, incomplete and / or unhelpful
- There was a great lack of transparency in their dealings with communities and local officials
- Sometimes communities had agreed to projects but then had found that companies did not keep their promises, benefits were less than expected and costs higher
- Some companies left nothing behind and even took away all the documentation making it hard to sort out the conflicts that had been left in their wake.
- People were very concerned about the social and environmental impacts of company operations in terms of loss of resources, undermining of livelihoods and destruction of fish and game
- Local officials present were very reluctant to talk openly about specific cases

Summing up Marcus also noted the following:

- People want development so they are agreeing to things before they fully understand the implications
- The government appears to be playing an invisible role in allocating lands and is not active in resolving conflicts when they occur.
- There is a great lack of transparency in the way decisions are reached
- Tribal chiefs are easily manipulated and may even be acting out of divided interest
- There is a lack of accountability between the government and the people and between the tribal chiefs and the people
- There is a lack of recognition of rights by the government, by the companies and maybe even by the people themselves. The people themselves are not aware of their rights. We have learned however that people do have rights :
  - To their lands and territories
  - To exercise their customary laws
  - To be represented by institutions of their own choosing
  - To information
  - To control their lands and resources
  - To FPIC.
- It is clear that to date people have not enjoyed FPIC. There is coercion and the use of Brimob, so people are not 'free'. Permits are handed out before people are consulted, so it is not 'prior'. There is a lack of 'information' and there is no real 'consent', as either people are not involved at all or their leaders are making decisions without involving their communities.

### **Afternoon Day 2:**

Working in four break out groups the participants considered, reported on and then discussed in plenary 4 questions.

*Does the Government recognise your rights to land and if so how?*

- Rights are there but are not really recognised
- There is no implementation of the law
- In our group there were several cases of natural resources exploitation companies that should have recognised our rights but did not.
- Yes, our rights are respected but we already had custom and had clear boundaries to our lands before the government existed here

- Actually, the government does recognise small areas of farmland around our settlements but not our wider territories
- Yes, we have been here for generations and the government has reached out to use with roads and public services
- Yes, we are also parties to agreements signed between companies and the government

Discussion: The government may recognise our rights in law and in principle but in practice does little to protect our rights when companies abuse them or fail to keep their promises.



*How should you demonstrate your rights to your lands, territories and natural resources?*

- Our rights are demonstrated in our history, our genealogies, in stories about the origins of the ethnic groups, and written and verbal recognition
- Our rights are demonstrated by the lives of the communities
- Everyone knows who lives where, the clans, their sites, everyone knows.
- There is mutual recognition among the tribes and clans
- It is quite clear: there are gravesites and rocks and this all helps land from being taken
- We have our verbal and oral histories
- Older generations convey these rights to younger generations.
- Witnesses of boundaries can come from neighbouring clans and tribes
- The government can find out by interviews with such people.

*What information do you need from investors planning activities on your lands?*

- Permits and licences issued by the government

- The locations of permits
- We need socialisation and extension from the government to understand things
- There must be communications between the government, the company and the communities
- Documents summarising the activities that are planned in line with permits
- When will they start
- How long they will be there
- What company is it
- What obligations they have towards the indigenous peoples
- Transparent plans from the investors
- We need to map out worst case scenarios
- Clarity about what our rights are and what we will get
- What compensation there will be for the use indigenous rights areas
- Full details of things like prices, costs, commodity trades
- We need to know everything: what is the plan, where, who, how and with whom. We need all these things to make a good decision
- We need to share with the government and the investors who are the rights holders in the area they are interested in.

Discussion: Yes, but how can such information really be accessed by anyone and properly discussed? We need EIAs so we know what all the impacts will be like effluents and waste. Communities also need to inform the companies where are their sacred sites. We may need to make a map.

*Who should represent your communities in dealings with government and the companies planning projects on your land?*

- Customary owners
- Leaders chosen by the people
- Local government (kepala desa and Pemda)
- Customary elders and NGOs working with communities
- Village heads
- Clan leaders
- Tribal chiefs
- Collective land owners
- Lineage heads

*Discussion:* We need NGOs because they can document what is happening as often we don't know our rights. Customary organisations are very complex, they need to be incorporated before they represent us.

*General discussion:*

- If all this happened a lot of conflicts would be avoided
- We chose not to have independence and instead chose Special Autonomy (*Otonomi Khusus*). Special Autonomy means that our rights should be given back but so far we lack ordinances to this effect. What we need is demarcation of our lands from the mountains down to the sea using the natural landmarks that we customarily observe. Each clan has an area which is handed down from generation to generation. We need to push the government to get some clear answers on this.
- The local forestry officials don't seem to know how to map our rights

- We should have a meeting of all the clans to clarify our boundaries
- These days oral and verbal agreements are not enough.
- We need to document and map our rights
- We need to stop more of the same problem. We need to stop this oil palm.
- Talking about customary land and asserting it through reference to genealogy, history, gravesites and so on is not enough for the government. In our case we tried to clarify our rights by a clan meeting with the company which was planning tourism and kalamari farms but they did not follow adat.



### **Day 3: REDD and Rights.**

The meeting on the third day started with a summing up of the main issues that had come out on the previous days. There were then three well prepared but very detailed presentations by the Ministry of Forestry, Kemitraan and Fauna and Flora International. There was then a panel discussion in plenary. There were strong reactions from the participants to the presentation by the Ministry of Forestry.

- Deforestation is relentless in Riau from timber plantations and oil palm. If you want to stop emissions don't give out more concessions!
- Map our customary areas, then we can look after them. Tell the Minister to revoke the licences on our lands!
- We want PT Irna Sorindo's licence revoked!
- We want to map and clarify our customary areas and then think about REDD
- In West Papua licences are given out to companies without respect for our rights. The Government has not involved us as rightsholders.
- You must recognise the rights of indigenous peoples in this process
- Avoid repeating the same old mistakes



- How will local government secure indigenous peoples' rights. This needs serious attentions by the government.
- Who will follow up?
- 'No REDD without Rights' is too vague. Even companies have rights. It must be 'No REDD without customary authorities'!
- We need a law here in West Papua like the Perda Khusus in Papua.



Ibu Retno of the Forestry Department agreed to take these concerns back to the Ministry in Jakarta.

- Are there any REDD projects yet in Indonesia that have yet delivered to the people? Does REDD only apply to forests that are under threat? What about forests that are 'safe'? What assistance will be given to Papuans to make sure there is real involvement of the customary authorities?
- We don't want forestry areas on customary lands. We don't want REDD over our customary forests. We need our land titles first.
- REDD needs to be socialised at the village level to ensure people know how to benefit. Rights are not being respected at the moment.
- We want to prevent the same thing happening again. At the moment communities are very disadvantaged by the Ministry of Forestry which hands out permits for forestry activities without respect for rights. Everyone knows where their rights are and the government needs to understand that ulayat is much more extensive than just around the village. There are more than 200 tribes whose lands need to be accommodated. Most of the HPH owners (logging licencees) never compensate the people. No attention is paid to our rights. We don't want the same thing again. Also we need a lot of capacity building of the local officials.

- There are already lots of conflicts between communities and national parks, game reserves and protection forests. So people are not going to be enthusiastic about this (REDD). But we do care about and look after our forests. In fact we look after our forests much better without these laws than the government does with all its regulations. Why can't you just revoke the HPHs and HTIs as they violate our human rights?

*Discussion:* NGOs queried the Ministry representative about extent to which the new REDD regulation, which has just been passed, recognises or can secure indigenous peoples' rights. The Ministry representative noted that it is true that the categories *hutan adat* and *hutan desa* only provide management rights and not ownership rights. As for *hutan hak* the Ministry viewpoint is that *hutan hak* could only be created where forests came under the Forestry Department's jurisdiction in lands that were subject to *hak milik* (individual land ownership title). Since all other land tenures under the BAL are leases on State lands, where such lands are declared forests they become State Forest Lands. In her view this cannot be changed by the Ministry of Forestry without the BAL itself first being revised. It might however be possible to establish *hutan adat* and *hutan desa* through local legislative acts (Perda).

It was acknowledged in the discussion that the REDD regulation still follows the old system and that NGOs would need to push hard to ensure that communities benefitted. Getting legal certainty for communities was, it was admitted, going to be hard to achieve.

*Break outs:* Participants were again asked to divide into break out groups and consider three more questions in the light of the previous days discussions and what they had learned about REDD. However, while the groups were forming a participant demanded the mike and stated:

- We want the officials here from Jakarta to take clear notes about our concerns and convey them to their seniors in Jakarta.

*How would you secure your rights in relation to REDD or other such projects?*

- To ensure that rights are not diminished we first need to get accurate information from the elders about the extent of our rights and then get these documented and mapped. I also need to get a letter from the government recognising my rights.
- To secure our customary lands we need to have a village meeting and build consensus in an open and transparent manner and have present community organisations, customary bodies and other CBOs. We would then need to file the result with the DPR so they can file the result with the local government and get it recognised via a decree. We need some kind of letter securing our customary lands. The thing is that foreigners don't recognise our customs, they need a bit of paper to prove we have rights.
- This question should be in the plural as our lands are held collectively. Community rights should be secured through participatory meetings with clear information sent to the villages. Things must be transparent. Regulations must recognise our rights effectively at the local level, in the local government and in the Department of Forestry. This all needs socialising. We need a local ordinance of indigenous peoples' rights or our lands secured through Perda. We need a good participatory map of our *ulayat* rights.

- Our customary rights must be recognised in accordance with custom. This will require a local ordinance and clear maps of our lands.

*How would you ensure that your leaders are answerable for any decisions that they make?*

- Our leader will be accountable because he will share information with all in the community in a transparent and truthful way. He must be clear of our rights and responsibilities.
- We should form a team to represent the village with the company and this should convey the community's consensus view to the meetings. The team should accompany the leaders to make sure they deal fairly. There should be legal recognition of the outcome to make sure leaders flow through on the agreements and fight for the rights of the communities.
- Transparency. The leaders must be recognised by everyone. They should work with NGOs.
- Leaders must be elected by customary processes.
- People are godfearing here so they will be honest in their dealings.

*How would you ensure that benefits are equitably shared?*

- We need a process based on ownership so it is clear who is entitled to benefits and who is not. But even those without rights should get something like services. This should be looked at in terms of togetherness. This is normal for Papua.
- Benefits must be based on ulayat, must be transparent and based on community consent in line with ownership. The project has to be linked back to rights.
- Compensation should not only be in terms of roads, schools but should be provided in terms of shares. We want the benefits of REDD to be in shares as in a company. We don't just want a one time financial pay off. We want to retain our rights, not sell them, and we want to retain our land. We can't sell them. Then we can use the money for collective benefits. As shareholders people will be able to monitor their investments and funds. We would need a clear and just system for allocating shares.
- All lineages should negotiate in a customary forum.

*Discussion:* It is important to understand that clans and lineages are the rights holders here. If mapping and other efforts to secure rights are done wrong there will be killings. Recording genealogies needs to be done in public meetings.

### **Closing:**

There were two lengthy summing up statements from the organisers, Pusaka and Jasoil, which summarised the main points made in the meeting and emphasised the need to push for provincial level legal reforms, move ahead with the mapping of customary rights areas, work to raise awareness and ensure that leaders deal responsibly on behalf of their communities.

### **Assessment:**

Unfortunately owing to the rescheduling of the agenda to allow local participants to attend church services on the third day, which turned out to be a religious holiday (Assumption), there was not time to include a participant evaluation session, as had been planned. Based on anecdotal comments, the enthusiasm to maintain discussions until late and the warmth of thanks on closure, it seemed that participants were

broadly satisfied with the meeting. By the end of the training and discussions, participants seemed to have a clearer sense of the importance of: getting formal government recognition of their rights; clarifying their customary areas through mapping or by other means; asserting their rights to information; ensuring transparency in dealings with companies and the government and; developing systems for holding their own leaders accountable.

While, I suspect that the details of REDD remained unclear to many (especially with regard to offsets schemes and other market-based approaches which were explained but not then discussed in any detail) there was broad awareness generated that: climate change is a threat to all and deforestation in Indonesia contributes to this problem; the Government is now hoping to obtain funds from outside Indonesia to conserve forests and; projects to this end are likely to be established in West Papua in the coming months or years. As noted, the prevailing view seemed to be that such projects were likely to repeat the problems of the past and a better way of curbing deforestation would be to first revoke existing forestry licences and secure community rights to their forests.

There was a notable (and disappointing) gender imbalance in the participants who were largely self-selected by their communities. With the exception of the local environment agency (BAPPEDALDA), most government authorities, communities and NGOs were represented at the meeting by men. The few women who were present were relatively quiet and reluctant to speak even when encouraged to do so. The exception was the representative of the Ministry of Forestry. This marked gender imbalance in community representation, reflects the strongly patrilineal structure of Papuan societies in this part of New Guinea. Addressing this imbalance in a future training would imply the provision of considerably greater financial resources than were available and a much longer preparation time so that techniques could be designed to train, and elucidate the views from, women.

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