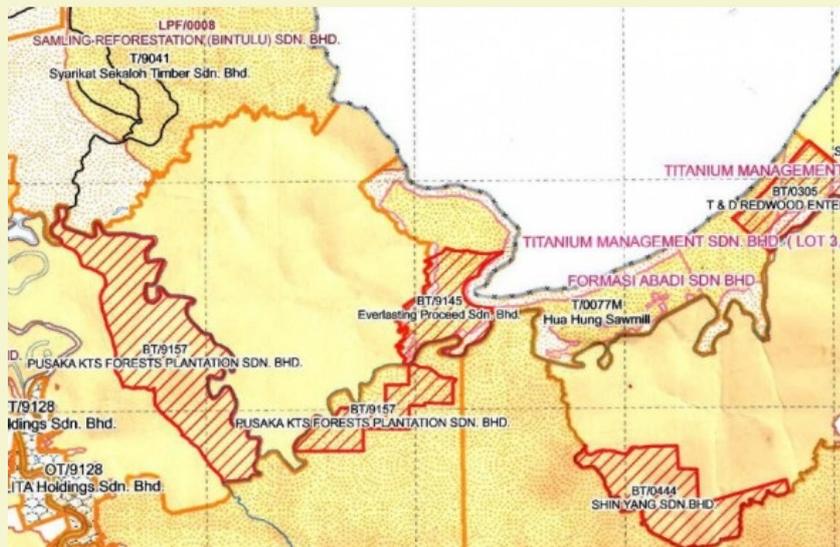


Stop Timber Corruption

Freeze Taib assets now!

Leaked Sarawak concession map shows Taib's stranglehold over the Borneo rainforest



(MIRI, SARAWAK/MALAYSIA) Swiss NGO, the Bruno Manser Fund, has today released one of Sarawak's best-guarded secrets, a map of all the timber and plantation concessions in the northern part of Sarawak, a state on the island of Borneo that accounts for 25% of the world's exports of tropical logs. The map was prepared in May 2010 by Sarawak's Forest Department and was never intended to be made public.

For over three decades, kickbacks for timber and plantation concessions have been one of the most important sources of political funding and personal enrichment for Sarawak's long-term head of government, Chief Minister Taib Mahmud ("Taib"). As a consequence, the Sarawak government has done everything in its power to keep secret the precise figures and dates on the timber and plantation concessions granted to Sarawak companies. Not surprisingly, the leaked Sarawak forestry map provides strong evidence that large tracts of the state's forests have been handed over to family members and cronies of the Sarawak Chief Minister.

Most concessions in Northern Sarawak have gone to the Samling group, which exploits 1.37 million hectares of timber and plantation concessions in the area, equivalent to 36% of the total land mass of Northern Sarawak (3.79 million hectares) as is shown on the map. Samling is owned by the Yaw family, a Sarawak Chinese family with close ties to Chief Minister Taib Mahmud. 5.4 % of Samling shares are held by Ahmad Bin Su'ut, the Chief Minister's spiritual medium ("bomoh"). Another 5% are held by Abdul Hamed Sepawi, Taib's first cousin. Both are thought to be nominees for Taib himself.

Another 18 % of the land mass (700,000 hectares) have been concessioned to four state agencies, Yayasan Sarawak, Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation, Sarawak Economic Development Corporation, and the Land Custody Development Authority, which are ultimately controlled by Sarawak Chief Minister Taib Mahmud.

Other private companies with very significant concession areas are logging giants Shin Yang (384,000 hectares), Rimbunan Hijau (295,000 hectares) and KTS (156,000 hectares). Other operators related to the Taib family are Titanium Management, a company owned by Taib's son, Abu Bekir Mahmud, (55,000 hectares of plantation concessions) and Ta Ann (33,000 hectares), which is controlled by Taib's cousin, Abdul Hamed Sepawi.

The Bruno Manser Fund is calling on the Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission (MACC) to investigate the granting of timber and plantation concessions in Sarawak as part of its ongoing corruption investigation against Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud.

Access the leaked Sarawak concession map under:

www.stop-timber-corruption.org/resources

www.stop-timber-corruption.org/resources/Concessions_SarForstDep_NE_Sarawak_comp.jpg

(06 November 2012)

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Bruno Manser Fund demands a Royal Commission of Enquiry to investigate the takeover of Sarawak's largest state enterprise by former Chief Minister's family

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