



RAN RELEASES BANNER OFF NIAGARA FALLS

Seventy-foot banner highlights tar sands threat to climate



On the eve of Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's first official visit to the U.S. to meet with President Barack Obama, RAN activists released a vivid 70-foot banner from the bridge overlooking Niagara Falls. Symbolically set amidst the most well-recognized border between Canada and the U.S., the banner was intended to send a clear message that Canadian tar sands oil threatens North America's clean energy future.

Harper has signaled that he intends to protect the tar sands oil industry from climate regulation despite the fact that tar sands oil production produces three times the level of global warming pollution than conventional crude oil.

The Alberta tar sands are the largest single source of U.S. oil imports. Mining oil from tar sands destroys large tracts of boreal forest and pollutes clean water with poisonous chemicals that have caused severe health impacts to Alberta's First Nation communities.

Continued reliance on tar sands oil from Canada will prevent any real progress on climate change. In September, Rajendra Pachauri, head of the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), stated that the tar sands should be shut down.

Opposition to tar sands oil has been rising on both sides of the border. In Canada, RAN has been pressuring the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), which is Canada's largest bank and the largest financier of the tar sands. We are calling on RBC to stop financing the tar sands and to start investing in a 21st century clean energy economy.

VICTORY FOR INDONESIA'S RAINFORESTS! ➡➡➡ page 4

MASSEY BEGINS BLASTING ON COAL RIVER MOUNTAIN ➡➡➡ page 2



IN WEST VIRGINIA THEY ARE BLASTING OUR CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

PHOTO: BRANDEN BARBER / RAN

On October 27 RAN confirmed that Massey Energy began dynamiting Coal River Mountain in West Virginia—the site of a proposed 328-megawatt wind farm—to prepare for a massive mountaintop removal (MTR) coal mining operation.

Coal River Mountain can be a wind farm that provides 85,000 households with electricity, 700 long-term green jobs, gives back \$1.7 million in annual county taxes and stands as a model for clean energy across the region. Or, it can be a 6,000-acre dirty energy wasteland.

At Rainforest Action Network we know that the fate of Coal River Mountain is up to us and up to you. On October 30, RAN held a national day of action to demand the end to MTR in Appalachia. With dozens of planned events and hundreds in attendance we held demonstrations at the Environmental Protection Agency headquarters in DC and across the country as well as at JPMorgan Chase bank branches, the biggest financier of the destructive form of strip mining.

But we aren't stopping until the blasting stops. As this Panther goes to print, RAN along with Appalachian Voices, 350.org, Credo Mobile, Sierra Club, NRDC and others are preparing an online day of action to encourage more than half a million people to contact the Obama Administration to ask them to immediately stop the blasting on Coal River Mountain and preserve our nation's clean energy resources.

It is not too late for you to demand that they stop the blasting today!

To local residents, Coal River Mountain is a last stand. It is one of the most dangerous examples of blasting for dirty coal and one of the most profound examples of hope that exists in our country. It is a crossroads.

Blasting on Coal River Mountain not only destroys the mountain's

clean energy potential but it could also destabilize the largest coal slurry pond in the country, unleashing eight billion gallons of toxic sludge on homes, jobs and schools. Were the slurry dam to fail, and many have, local resident would have minutes to evacuate before being overtaken by a 50-foot high wall of coal sludge.

Coal River Mountain must become our line in the sand. We can no longer allow fossil fuel interests to build more pipelines, belch out more pollution, and destroy more mountains that could become clean energy wind farms. If we can stop the blasting on Coal River Mountain we can stop talking about a clean energy future and start living in a clean energy present.



Take Action! Call the EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and urge her to stop mountaintop removal

Write To:

**Lisa Jackson, Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460**

Or go to <http://savecoalrivermountain.org> to send an email.



**You can help support this campaign!
Make a donation today at RAN.org/give.**

The PANTHER

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FROM THE CANOPY

By Michael Brune, RAN Executive Director

PHOTO: DANIEL BRENNWALD

Dear friends,

For the past ten days, the beaches have been closed a few blocks from where I live in Alameda, California due to an oil spill in San Francisco Bay. I'm a passionate environmentalist but I'm also an optimist, so I've been trying to identify a silver lining – even in an oil spill! And I think I may have found one: we are making progress, in at least some locations, dealing with oil-related catastrophes.

Early in the morning on Friday, October 30th, a mechanical failure during a routine refueling caused up to 800 gallons of bunker fuel to be spilled into the bay. Although the release was much smaller than the Cosco Busan oil spill, in which more than fifty thousand gallons were spilled under the Bay Bridge in 2007, it's still a serious issue. Shipping fuel, like all oil-related contamination, is a threat to life, whether to birds, marine wildlife, or children playing on the beach.

Knowing this, the response from the Coast Guard and other agencies has been swift and effective. All local beaches were closed. More than two dozen ships were quickly deployed in the bay to skim oil from the water's surface. Thirty-six thousand feet of oil-soaking boom was installed to help contain the spill, and more than 300 workers began combing miles of beaches to clean up the oil that washed ashore.

Not all spills are treated like this. Last month, I traveled to the rain forests of Ecuador to examine first-hand the impacts of one of the largest cases of environmental contamination in history. Over a period of twenty-six years in northern Ecuador, Texaco, now owned by Chevron, dumped more than 18 billion gallons of oil and other toxic waste directly into unlined pits and local waterways. Much of this waste is still untreated, even though the company left the country more than seventeen years ago. During my visit, I saw how these pits were designed purposely to leach toxic runoff water directly into streams and rivers used by local communities for drinking, bathing, fishing and recreation. I met with community leaders overrun with families suffering from cancers, sudden miscarriages, childhood leukemia and other ailments. At last count, more than 1400 people have died due to the contamination.

The tragedy in Ecuador has been compared to the Exxon Valdez spill and called the "Amazon's Chernobyl." This might be true in terms of environmental impact, but there's one major difference. Unlike the Exxon Valdez spill, Chernobyl – or even the recent spill in the San Francisco Bay – the oil dumping in Ecuador by Texaco was not an

accident, nor even a case of negligence. It was intentional. Before Texaco began operations in Ecuador, oil companies commonly re-injected toxic "formation" waters into underground wells, to prevent contamination of local water and soils. Texaco never did this in Ecuador, despite doing it the U.S. and other countries, and despite even holding a patent on the technology.

Cleanup efforts in both locations appear to be in inverse proportion to the size of the spill. Hundreds of workers in Hazmat suits were scouring the beaches on Halloween in Alameda to clean up 800 gallons. An investigation of the spill is pending. Meanwhile, the captain of the Cosco Busan was jailed for ten months. In Ecuador, Chevron claims that the 378 contaminated well sites and separation stations were fully remediated. However, in judicial inspections of 94 sites, 100% of them were found to be contaminated with hydrocarbons, some at levels thousands of times greater than standards designed to protect human health.

If this cleanup effort was, at best, inadequate, then accountability is even more difficult to obtain. Chevron has been fighting a lawsuit since 1993 that would mandate a more effective remediation. Rather than showing remorse or taking responsibility for its actions, Chevron has shown an uncommon arrogance, vowing to refuse to pay for a clean-up even if found guilty. A Chevron spokesperson said, "We'll fight this until hell freezes over. And then we'll fight it out on the ice."

The spills in Ecuador and Alameda should be added to the true price we pay for oil. But there's also good news. We can take solace in the fact that, in some locations, important lessons have been learned about how to respond rapidly to oil spills that threaten health and the environment. Now we must take the next step to ensure that oil companies don't have one set of standards in the U.S., and a completely different standard in countries where they hope nobody is watching.

For a better world,

Michael Brune

Michael Brune
Executive Director



RAN is gearing up to launch a campaign against Chevron in order to bring accountability to the people of the Ecuadorian Amazon who have been suffering from the damages left behind by Chevron for 15 years – and we need your help.

We've received a three-year commitment for an \$800,000 challenge grant with a 1-to-4 match in support of our campaign against Chevron – that means, for every \$1 you give RAN, we'll receive another \$4. Contact our Membership office for more information.

FASHION INDUSTRY LEADERS COMMIT TO PROTECTING INDONESIA'S RAINFORESTS

There's a new fashion trend this fall: saving Indonesian rainforests. The Gucci Group, the prestigious conglomerate of fashion and luxury brands that owns Yves Saint Laurent, Alexander McQueen, Stella McCartney, and Balenciaga, has decided to eliminate all paper made from Indonesian rainforests throughout their supply chain.

Gucci Group's policy puts it at the front of a list of major companies—including Tiffany & Co., H&M Group, Hugo Boss and Ferragamo—that have decided they don't want their brands associated with the destruction of rainforests or causing climate change. By December 2010, the Gucci Group has pledged to reduce the amount of paper it uses, eliminate fiber from high-conservation-value forests, and only purchase recycled products or those certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

RAN has been urging the fashion world to closely examine their paper supply chains and sever any connection with paper suppliers like Asia Pulp and Paper who are actively destroying Indonesia's rainforests. On September 15, during New York's prestigious Fashion Week, RAN co-hosted an event with Tiffany & Co., the first brand to take action to protect Indonesia's rainforests and the climate by switching their iconic blue shopping bags (and all the other paper it uses) to environmentally preferable paper certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

Worldwide, the degradation and destruction of tropical rainforests is responsible for 15 percent of all annual greenhouse emissions. In Indonesia, which supplies much of America's paper, a lot of this deforestation is driven by the pulp and paper industry—notably the notorious paper company Asia Pulp and Paper (APP).

This hurts the climate as well as the forests. The carbon emissions resulting from Indonesia's rapid deforestation account for up to eight percent of global emissions—about equal with the combined emissions from all cars, trucks, buses, planes, and trains in United States.

The Gucci Group's new policy commits all its brands to one of the strongest paper standards in the industry, and ensures that even their stationery will be rainforest destruction free. This new policy signals an industry shift that is poised to sweep the rest of the sector off the runway while helping to make a difference for rainforests and for the climate. Over the past couple of weeks, RAN members have generated more than six thousand emails to other leading fashion industry brands that could still be doing business with APP, challenging them to meet or beat the new bar set by Gucci Group. This couldn't have happened without your help.



*Help RAN launch the next phase of this campaign!
Make a donation today at RAN.org/give.*

LEFT: TROPICAL RAINFOREST PEAT LANDS OF BORNEO. PHOTO: GREENPEACE. RIGHT: TIFFANY & CO. CEO MICHAEL KOWALSKI, MODEL OLIVIA ZALESKI, RAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MICHAEL BRUNE. PHOTO: WILL RAGOZZINO / PATRICK MCMULLAN.

WHOLE FOODS AND SEVENTH GENERATION COMMIT TO ENVIRONMENTALLY AND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE PALM OIL

In September, RAN traveled to Boston to attend the Natural Products Expo East, one of the largest gatherings in the country for retailers, pioneers and entrepreneurs in the natural and organic products industry. Rainforest Agribusiness Campaign Director Leila Salazar-Lopez joined industry leaders in a panel discussion titled "Little Seed. Big Problem. Bold Solution" explaining to an audience of palm oil users the problems palm oil poses to the world's tropical rainforests, communities and the climate. Joining Leila on the panel were Jeffrey Hollender, CEO of Seventh Generation; Michael Besancon, Global Vice President of Purchasing, Distribution and Marketing of Whole Foods Market; and Matilda Pilacapio, land owner and human rights advocate from Papua New Guinea.

Seventh Generation recently announced an industry-leading commitment to obtain 100 percent of the palm oil used throughout its product line from certified sustainable sources by 2012. This follows an announcement earlier this year by Whole Foods Market concerning their private label brand products by 2012 and Lush Soaps committing to forego palm oil from their product line entirely.

RAN has been calling on companies to become market leaders by adopting responsible policies and practices on palm oil and helping mount industry pressure on major suppliers such as Cargill. To date, 45 companies have signed RAN's pledge to protect rainforests, communities and the climate and we continue to encourage more companies to join us in order to develop alternatives to palm oil sourced from tropical rainforests.

TELL CARGILL TO STOP DESTROYING TROPICAL RAINFORESTS



Cargill, a Minnesota-based agribusiness company, is the largest privately-held company in the United States and the largest U.S. importer of palm oil. Cargill says that it is committed to "sustainable palm oil," but it continues to source palm oil from suppliers who are clearing and burning rainforests to make way for palm oil plantations. Their current policies are threatening the rights of local communities, destroying some of the world's last rainforests and contributing to climate change.

Palm oil is in roughly half of all supermarket goods, from lipstick to breakfast cereal. It is only grown in tropical countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea. Increasing demand is pushing palm oil cultivation into the rainforests – destroying habitats for unique species, displacing communities, and making Indonesia the third largest greenhouse gas emitter on Earth as carbon from felled forests is released into the atmosphere.

Your help is needed to convince Cargill to adopt and implement a comprehensive global forest policy that will stop them from destroying the rainforest, communities or the climate.



*Take Action! Contact Cargill CEO, Gregory Page and let him know that you care about rainforests, communities and the climate.
1-800-CARGILL (227-4455) or cargill_incorporated@cargill.com.*



*You can help support this campaign!
Make a donation today at RAN.org/give.*



BANGKOK AND BEYOND:

A report back from the United Nations climate treaty negotiations

By Joshua Kahn Russell, RAN Grassroots Actions Manager

In December, world leaders will be gathering in Copenhagen, Denmark for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in an attempt to forge an agreement that will succeed the Kyoto Protocol. People across the planet are joining in this debate to demand justice for climate-impacted communities and a dramatic reduction in worldwide greenhouse gases. Included within the overall framework of these negotiations is an agreement on REDD, or “Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation.” This critical component initially presented the hope of an unparalleled opportunity to focus global efforts in ways that could save millions of acres of the world’s dwindling rainforests. That hope is increasingly at risk and RAN has been engaged in the complex dance of an inside-outside strategy around REDD.

As part of the run up to Copenhagen, the United Nations has been holding preliminary rounds of negotiations all over the world following the adoption of a two-year action plan in Bali in December 2007.

In October, the United Nations gathered in Bangkok, Thailand for its next step. Negotiators from every country on the planet gathered inside the U.N. convention center, while thousands of Indigenous people, peasants, farmers, and fisherfolk gathered outside to speak truth to power. People from across Asia came to share stories of the floods, typhoons, droughts, famines, and hurricanes that are all intensifying because of climate change.



When it was first developed, REDD proposals had the promise of forest protection and safeguarding of Indigenous rights. While in Bangkok, we witnessed a reversal of this promise, leading to lively protests surrounding the negotiations.

RAN was there in full force, helping support and build this outside pressure, while pushing inside to get meaningful safeguards back into the text. My role was lead organizer among a number of coalitions, and spearheading the International Youth Delegation. At Bangkok, this meant that I was a lead organizer of actions both within the U.N. conference center, outside in city streets, and crafting interventions on the plenary floor.

RAN and the Youth Delegation kicked off the first week with youth delegates from more than 20 countries gathering in demonstration

to demand that Indigenous rights and protection of forests must be a core part of any deal. At the protest we engaged negotiators to pledge that they would only support initiatives that contained these core elements. Several countries including Papua New Guinea and Indonesia all signed on the spot.

In a subsequent press conference, the International Youth denounced forest carbon scams that have been documented in countries from Papua New Guinea to Peru, working to intimidate, trick, and repress Indigenous communities. We think that these dodgy business deals constitute a new kind of colonialism. The current REDD text fails to address the drivers of deforestation, and fails to safeguard Indigenous rights. Without a deal that meaningfully protects natural intact forests, it’s our rainforests and our future on the chopping block.

Later that week the official United Nations Indigenous Peoples Caucus organized a demonstration outside and inside the convention center. With matching t-shirts declaring “NO RIGHTS?? NO REDD!!” native leaders from across the planet gathered outside, joined and supported by RAN and other groups.

Throughout the day, advocates wore the same shirts inside the convention in silent protest, making a powerful visual statement to all negotiators.

Every living person on this planet depends on forests for our survival, and the 60 million Indigenous people who live in forests worldwide have been the primary guardians of the forests for time immemorial. In these negotiations we must insist that “forest” is not a code word for “monocrop plantation.” “Indigenous rights” does not mean “right to participate” in these discussions. It means communities with rights over their own land, rights to their forests and livelihoods. It means the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the respect for the principles of free, prior and informed consent must both be in the text.

In our final sprint to Copenhagen, RAN will continue to support the efforts of the International Indigenous Peoples and work inside and outside of negotiations for justice in the climate negotiations.

HOW TO PROTECT RAINFORESTS

IN THE CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS



PHOTO: JACQUES DESCLOITRES, MODIS RAPID RESPONSE TEAM, NASA/GSFC

Global climate change is the most important environmental issue humanity has yet faced, but our window of opportunity for action is rapidly closing. The protection of tropical rainforests is paramount to any efforts to stabilize the world’s climate, which is why the forest part of the treaty, called REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation) is an integral part of the adoption of a global climate treaty in Copenhagen in December.

Globally, tropical forest destruction is now responsible for one-fifth of all greenhouse gas emissions - more than all the world’s cars, trains, trucks and planes combined. Indonesia and Brazil are the third and fourth largest greenhouse gas emitters on Earth – primarily due to deforestation. Protecting these forests while also reducing fossil fuel emissions is critical to stabilizing the climate, preserving global biodiversity, sustaining the economy and protecting the livelihoods of billions of people.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was given a specific mandate to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, a part of the treaty known as REDD. While initially embraced as an unparalleled opportunity to focus global efforts on strengthening protection for forests, the current state of the REDD negotiations represents a reversal of its original mandate. Instead of defending the rights of Indigenous and forest peoples and addressing the underlying causes of deforestation, REDD now appears heavily weighted toward the demands of extractive industries and open market carbon speculators. This situation is putting Indigenous peoples at risk of losing their traditional territories and ultimately subsidizing the destruction of rainforests instead of protecting them.

If we are to get serious about addressing the climate crisis, we cannot let REDD become another false solution. The future of our planet is at stake and the time to act is now.

In order for REDD to succeed, it *must*:

PRIORITIZE FOREST PROTECTION.

PROTECT AND ENFORCE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS TO FREE, PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT.

STRENGTHEN WEAK FOREST GOVERNANCE.

PREVENT THE CREATION OF REDD OFFSETS.

ADDRESS THE REAL DRIVERS OF DEFORESTATION.

REDUCE FOSSIL FUEL EMISSIONS AT HOME.



Take Action! Contact President Barack Obama and U.S. Special Envoy on Climate Change Todd Stern and demand that any REDD agreement include strong provisions to protect Indigenous rights and protect rainforests.

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Penn. Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Todd Stern
Department of State
2201 C St, NW, Attn: Suite 1427
Washington, DC 20520

Or go to http://ga3.org/campaign/obama_REDD to send an email.



Make a donation today at RAN.org/give.



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YEAR-END GIVING

For your family and friends this holiday season, give a gift that has real impact. You can't buy the world's rainforests in a store – but you can help protect them by giving a gift to Rainforest Action Network.

RAN MEMBERSHIP

Give the gift of environmental activism. We'll notify the recipient with a personalized card announcing your gift. Then throughout the year, they will enjoy all the benefits and privileges of our regular membership.

Make your gift online at www.RAN.org/give, or by calling our membership department at (415) 659-0542.

PROTECT-AN-ACRE PROGRAM

Since 1993, RAN's Protect-an-Acre program has distributed nearly \$1 million in small grants to traditionally underfunded organizations and communities in forest regions.

Recipients will be sent a certificate of recognition in their name informing them of your generous donation, along with a description of the projects they are supporting.

To learn more and make your gift online, please visit www.RAN.org/PAA, or call our membership department at (415) 659-0542.

RAN RECOMMENDS:



Three years in the making, this feature from acclaimed filmmaker Joe Berlinger tells the story of one of the most extraordinary legal dramas of our time, described as the “Amazon Chernobyl.” Over the course of three decades of oil drilling in the Ecuadorian Amazon, U.S. oil giant Chevron deliberately dumped more than 18 billion gallons of toxic wastewater into the rainforest, leaving local people suffering a wave of cancers, miscarriages and birth defects.

Crude is a real-life high stakes legal drama that offers a ground-level view into the lives of those directly impacted by this tragedy while revealing a behind-the-scenes look at one of the most extraordinary legal dramas of our time, one that has the potential of forever changing the way international business is conducted.

Check out a Crude at a theater near you or visit www.CrudeTheMovie.com.