



INDONESIA

A PRIMER ON DEFORESTATION FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND FAITH COMMUNITIES

Indonesia has over 90 million hectares of tropical forests, the third-largest area in the world after Brazil and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As recently as the 1960s, 82 percent of Indonesia was forested. Rainforest cover has steadily declined, and now just under half (49 percent) of the country's original forest cover remains. Much of this remaining cover consists of logged-over and degraded forest. Oil palm and wood fiber plantations (mainly for the pulp and paper industries), are the two largest contributors to forest loss in Indonesia. Between 2000 and 2015, some 1.6 million hectares of primary forests were converted to oil palm plantations and 1.5 million hectares were converted to wood fiber plantations. Collectively, this is an area larger than Switzerland.





INDONESIA'S FORESTS ARE A SACRED TRUST

Indonesia is blessed with extensive and biologically rich forests. Its tropical forests, the most extensive in Asia and the third largest in the world,⁶ cover roughly half of the country's land area² and include the world's largest area of peat swamp forests,^{7,8} as well as coastal and alpine forests found across lowlands and mountain ranges.^{3,9}

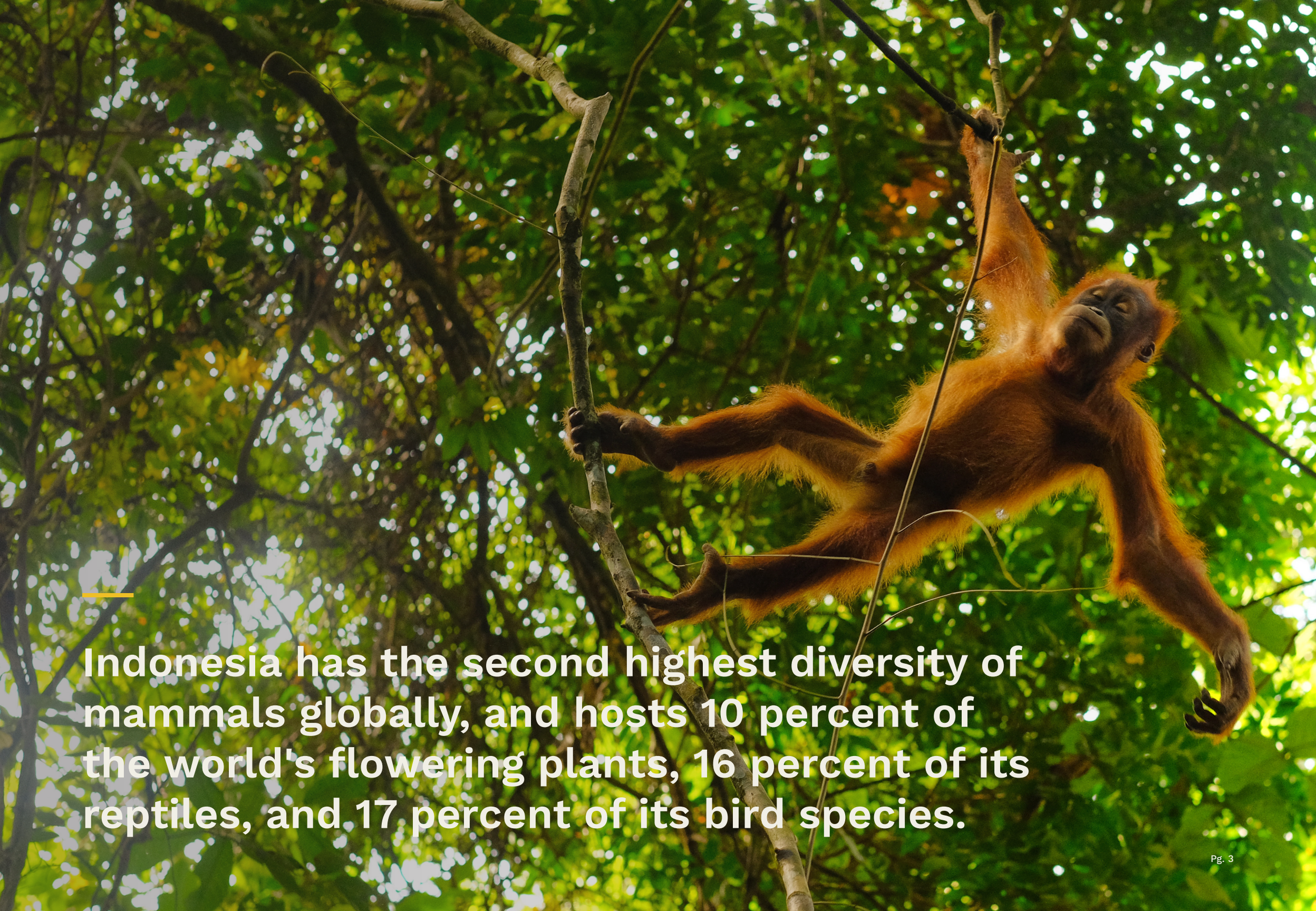
These forests boast a riotous variety of life. Indonesia is one of only 17 countries considered to be megadiverse, a term used to refer to the world's top biodiversity-rich countries, particularly those with many species found nowhere else (endemic species).¹⁰ It is also home to two of the world's 25 global biodiversity hotspots (Sundaland and Wallacea), where endemic species are at high risk from habitat loss.¹¹ It has the second highest diversity of mammals globally, and hosts 10 percent of the world's flowering plants, 16 percent of its reptiles, and 17 percent of its bird species.

Indonesia's forests are bountiful, providing timber and nontimber goods, as well as ecosystem services to the national economy. Timber production contributed more than US\$14 billion to the Indonesian economy in 2012, while

medicinal plants contributed more than US\$1 billion in 2011.¹² The forests also support the livelihoods of more than 50 million Indonesians.^{12,13} For example, almost 80 percent of rural households in Central Kalimantan depend directly on forest ecosystems for their incomes.¹² Forests in Indonesia also provide critical but invisible services, such as erosion control and rainfall regulation, which help maintain healthy agricultural yields.

The role of Indonesia's forests in carbon sequestration and storage has been valued at up to US\$ 97 million and US\$ 19 billion per year, respectively,¹² and the country's carbon-rich peat-swamp forests are particularly important in mitigating climate change.⁷ The long-term protection of the peatlands is essential to meet worldwide targets on emissions reduction and to secure human well-being across Southeast Asia.⁷

In sum, Indonesia's forests are far more than a vast stretch of trees. They contain ecological, economic, cultural, and spiritual assets that make them a national treasure for people and nature alike. Their value to the country is huge, but often unappreciated.

A low-angle photograph of an orangutan hanging from a thin tree branch in a lush green forest. The orangutan is positioned on the right side of the frame, with its body angled towards the left. It has thick, reddish-brown fur and is looking upwards. Its right arm is extended upwards, gripping a branch, while its left arm is extended downwards. Its legs are also spread out, with the right leg gripping a branch and the left leg hanging down. The background is a dense canopy of green leaves, with sunlight filtering through, creating a bokeh effect of bright spots. A small orange horizontal line is located to the left of the text.

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INDONESIA'S FORESTS FACE GRAVE THREATS



Forests covered most of Indonesia in the 1960s, but the 1990s saw an uptick in their conversion for agriculture.¹⁴ During this period, deforestation rates in Indonesia were second only to Brazil's,¹⁴ contributing to a global spike in forest loss that decade.¹⁵ These trends slowed temporarily at the turn of the century due to socio-economic, climatic and political factors, but this was followed by an upsurge in forest loss beginning in 2004 (Figure 1.).¹⁴ By 2017, Indonesia had lost 15 percent of its tree cover compared to 2000, with most of the damage occurring in natural forests.¹⁶ Between 2000 and 2012, a full 43 percent of Indonesia's peat swamp forests were destroyed.¹⁷ The loss was particularly intense in Sumatra, but Kalimantan and Papua were affected as well.¹⁷

Agriculture has continued to be the main driver of forest loss in Indonesia.^{14,18,19} Since 2000, Indonesia has experienced an exceptionally rapid expansion of cultivated land, with oil palm and pulpwood plantations dominating the new agricultural landscape.¹⁹ Oil palm plantation area alone increased six-fold between 1990 and 2010.¹⁹ Lowland forests across Sumatra and Kalimantan bore the brunt of this agricultural expansion, losing about 40 percent of their

area.^{15,20} By 2015, Indonesia was the world's leading producer of palm oil, and together with Malaysia yielded about 80 percent of this widely used, globally traded commodity.^{20,21} Expansion is set to continue: Indonesia's vast oil palm plantations are projected to almost double between 2015 and 2025.^{22,23} In addition, a substantial area of primary forest, nearly 1.5 million hectares, was converted to pulpwood plantations between 2000 and 2015.²⁴

Logging and forest fires also play an important role in the loss and degradation of Indonesia's forests.^{14,18} Often, land is initially cleared for timber extraction and then later converted to oil palm plantations.^{14,18} This process increases access to remote forests through the development of roads and infrastructure, which in turn facilitate further forest incursions.^{14,18} Fires are commonly used to clear land for agriculture, and poorly defined land tenure facilitates their uncontrolled use and spread.¹³ Recurrent mega-fires, particularly within peat swamp forests, damage these ecosystems irreversibly, cause severe health and economic impacts regionally and contribute to climate change.^{7,13} Large-scale fires in Indonesia's peatlands in 2015 released greenhouse gases equal

in quantity to emissions for the entire United States that year.⁷ They also killed at least 19 people outright, and a recent study suggests that smoke from the fires may have contributed to the premature deaths of over 100,000 people in the region.^{25,26} The World Bank estimates that the same 2015 fires cost Indonesia at least USD 16.1 billion (IDR 221 trillion), equivalent to 1.9 percent of the country's 2015 GDP.²⁷

The increasing abuse of the nation's endowment of forested land this century, largely in pursuit of short-term economic gain, is a myopic development track that imperils not only Indonesia's natural environment, but also its people.

Plantation expansion drives Indonesian forest loss. As oil palm plantation area increased six-fold between 1990 and 2010, lowland forests across Sumatra and Kalimantan shrank by 40 percent.

A FATWA AGAINST DEFORESTATION²⁸⁻³²

Vast fires are annual occurrences during Indonesia's dry season as fires are set to clear land for palm oil and pulpwood plantations, and easily burn out of control. 2015's fires were particularly severe, exacerbated by dry conditions caused by the 2015 El Niño. About 2.6 million hectares of land were burned between June and October of that year,³³ blanketing Indonesia and neighbouring countries in toxic smoke for many weeks and causing deaths, respiratory illnesses and widespread school closures and flight disruptions. The fires tripled Indonesia's annual greenhouse gas emissions.³⁴ In an effort to disrupt this annual cycle, the Ulema Council (Indonesia's highest Islamic clerical body) issued a fatwa—a ruling on a point of Islamic law—in September 2016, forbidding Muslims from burning forests and land.

"The act of burning forests and land, which can cause damage, environmental pollution, economic losses, affect health, and other negative impacts is haram [against Islamic law]," said Professor Huzaemah Yanggo, Chairperson of the Ulema Council. "The Koran states that we are not allowed to harm the environment, and forest burning causes damage not only to the environment but also to people's health."



The Ulema Council had previously issued a fatwa against the illegal hunting and trade of endangered species, and this fatwa against forest fires was welcomed by Indonesia's Minister of Environment and Forests, who encouraged Islamic preachers to spread awareness of the fatwa among local communities. Although the fatwa is not legally binding, in a Muslim-majority country such as Indonesia, declaring forest burning as forbidden under Islamic law was expected to dissuade plantation companies from practicing the slash-and-burn methods that led to the record fires of 2015, and to empower the public to stand up to companies pursuing these methods.

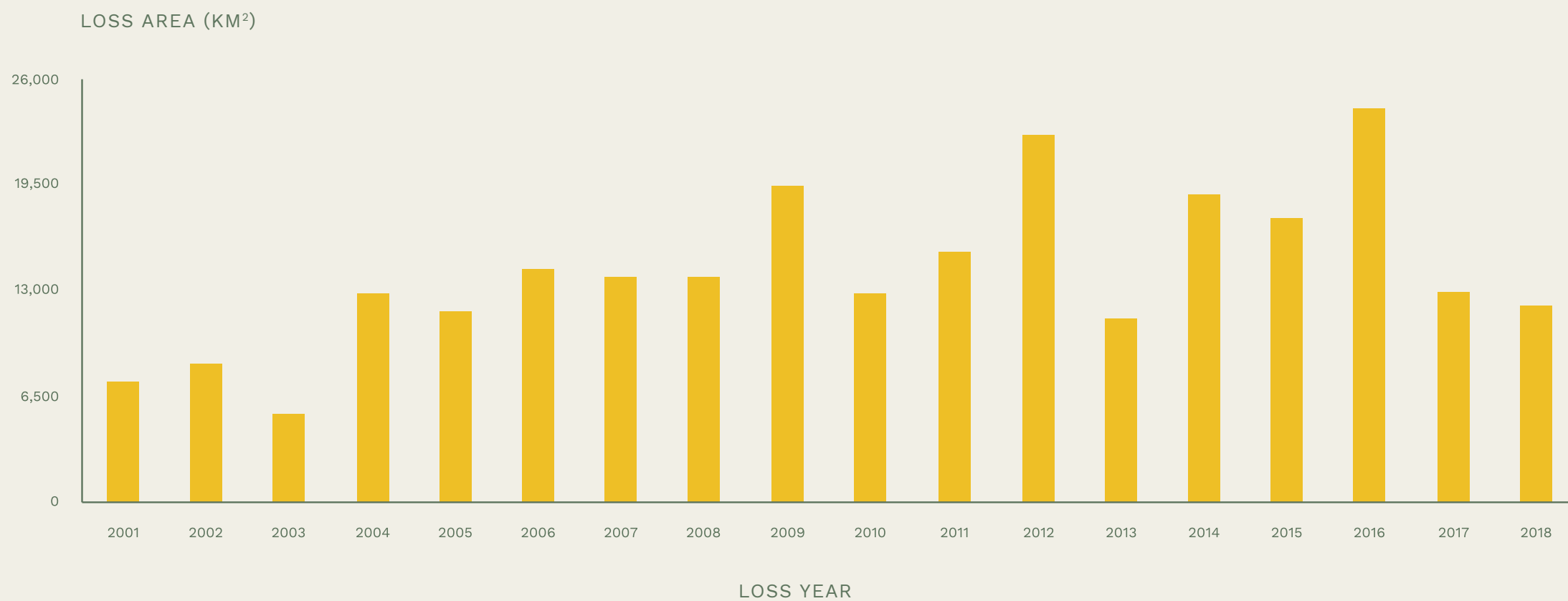


FIGURE 1. INDONESIA TREE LOSS, 2001 TO 2018

Source: Global Forest Watch, Open Data Portal, 2019



PROTECTING INDONESIA'S INDIGENOUS/ADAT COMMUNITIES

Some 50 to 70 million indigenous/adat people live in Indonesia and many, perhaps 30 to 50 million, depend on forest resources for their livelihoods.³⁵ Customary lands—those traditionally managed by indigenous/adat communities—account for almost a quarter of the country's area—a share roughly proportionate to the indigenous/adat share of all Indonesians. Yet only about 0.5 percent of Indonesia's land is legally recognized as indigenous/adat land.³⁶

Indonesia's 1945 constitution recognizes the customary rights of indigenous/adat communities. Such customary rights are traditional entitlements that have evolved over time and become established through community consensus about how the land should be used. Unfortunately, the 1967 and 1999 Basic Forestry Laws effectively negated those rights by incorporating most of the territories claimed by indigenous/adat communities into the areas managed by Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry. However, a 2013 ruling by the Indonesian Constitutional Court opened the door to the legal recognition of up to 40 million hectares of customary lands.³⁷

The Government of Indonesia's Social Forestry Program is also supporting the recognition of customary forests through the ambitious goal of giving forest-dependent communities access to 12.7 million hectares of forests through social forestry permits.

In 2016, customary forest status was granted to nine communities and in 2017, another nine customary forests were recognized, covering a total of 16,400 hectares.³⁸ The expansion of the palm oil industry, however, is a significant threat to land-use rights. Indigenous/adat rights are often ignored when plantations are established, leading to conflict between indigenous/adat communities and palm oil companies.²³ And although the development of palm plantations is often promoted as an economic opportunity for indigenous/adat communities in Indonesia, former landowners and customary land users are the most negatively affected by this land-use change. Depletion of forest resources has promoted deeper incursions into forest areas and threatened indigenous/adat ways of life.³⁹

LAKE TOBA REFORESTATION LED BY THE BATAK CHURCH⁴⁰

The indigenous Huria Kristen Batak Protestant Church is leading a project to restore forests to the hills around Lake Toba and on Samosir Island in Sumatra. The Batak Church, the largest Lutheran Church in Asia with 3 million members in the Batak country alone, is working alongside other church denominations and traditional Batak leaders to inspire local people to protect and restore the forests and the lake through replanting and organic techniques.

Lake Toba is one of the deepest and highest lakes on Earth. Sitting at 905 meters above sea level, and stretching 100 km in length, it is the largest lake in Southeast Asia. The lake and Samosir Island are critical heritage areas for the Batak people of North Sumatra, but the lake and surrounding region are under threat. A growing need for grassland to cultivate food crops and graze buffaloes and goats has prompted extensive burning of vegetation. This has led to soil erosion and water scarcity, hazards that have grown more acute as a decline in tourism has left local people with fewer livelihood options.

Illegal logging, widespread use of chemical fertilisers, and significant pollution, in particular from the paper industry, also threaten the local ecosystem.

The restoration project started with replanting trees on Samosir and in the district of North Tapnuli, at the south of Lake Toba, in a 100-hectare area where erosion, water scarcity, and forest burning were most severe. Church members are now planting trees on the grounds of select Batak churches and schools, as well as on church forestlands, using organic farming techniques. At Sipholon in North Tapnuli, for example, they created a tree nursery to cultivate a range of local tree species including toona sureni, jackfruit, durian, and cinnamon. The Batak Church also advocates against businesses dumping untreated waste into rivers and lakes and works to raise awareness and to educate the local community.

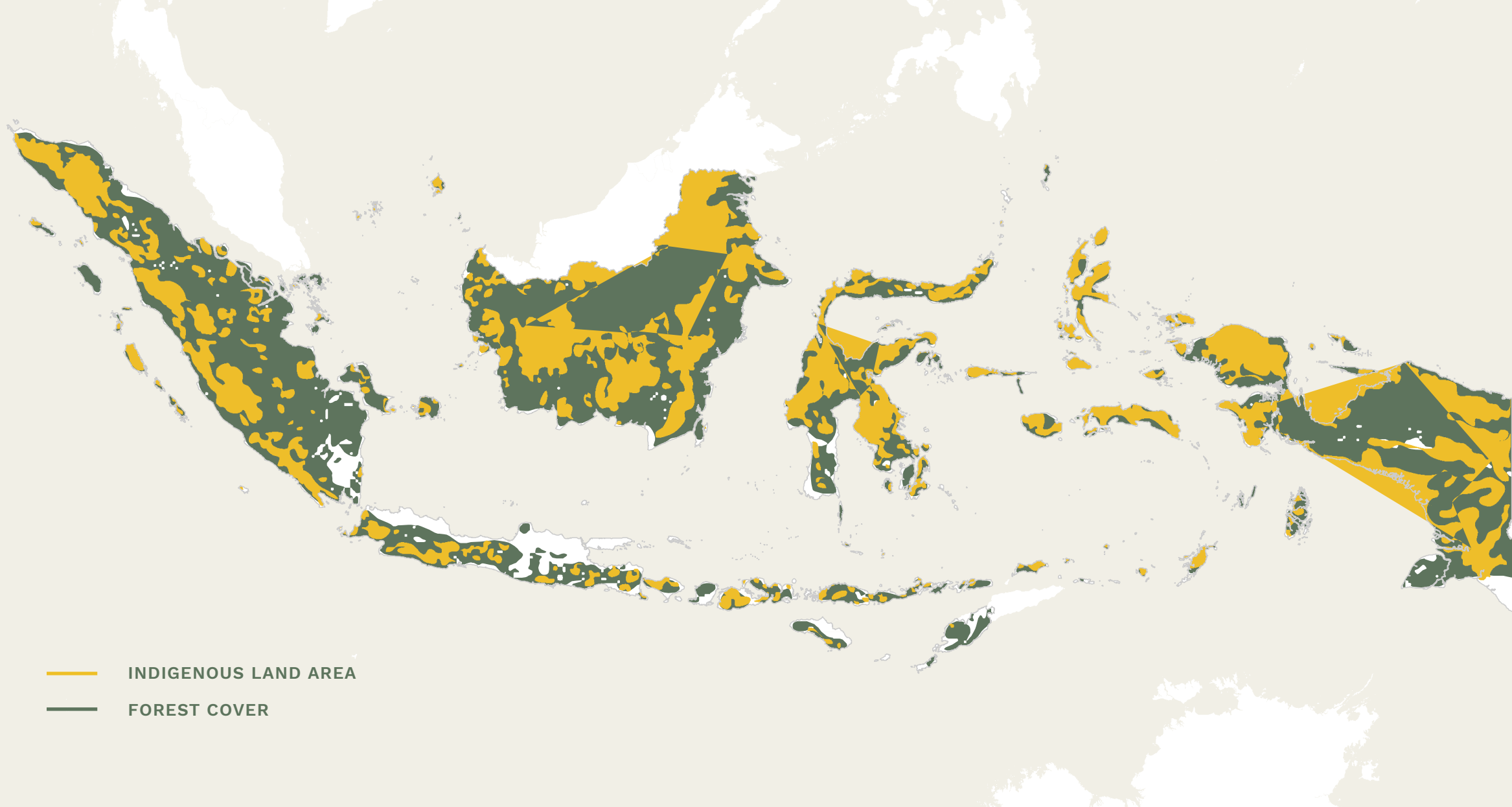


FIGURE 2. FOREST COVER AND INDIGENOUS LAND AREA IN INDONESIA

Source: Garnett, S.T., Burgess, N.D., Fa, J.E., Fernández-Llamazares, Á., Molnár, Z., Robinson, C.J., Watson, J.E.M., Zander, K.K., Austin, B., Brondizio, E.S. et al. 2018. A spatial overview of the global importance of Indigenous lands for conservation. *Nature Sustainability*, 1(7): 369–374. Hansen, M. C., P. V. Potapov, R. Moore, M. Hancher, S. A. Turubanova, A. Tyukavina, D. Thau, S. V. Stehman, S. J. Goetz, T. R. Loveland, A. Kommareddy, A. Egorov, L. Chini, C. O. Justice, and J. R. G. Townshend. 2013. “High-Resolution Global Maps of 21st-Century Forest Cover Change.” *Science* 342 (15 November): 850–53. Data available on-line from: <http://earthenginepartners.appspot.com/science-2013-global-forest>.

The boundaries and names shown and the designation used on maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by UN Environment or contributory organisations.



KEY COMMITMENTS AND INITIATIVES

INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Indonesia's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement includes a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 29 percent below business-as-usual levels by 2030, or by 41 percent with international support.⁴¹ Almost two-thirds of Indonesia's current emissions result from land-use change and peat and forest fires.⁴¹ Consequently, Indonesia plans to meet almost two-thirds of its emission reduction commitments from the forestry sector.⁴¹ Indonesia has also endorsed the New York Declaration on Forests, committing to do its part to at least halve the rate of loss of natural forests globally by 2020 and strive to end natural forest loss by 2030.⁴² These commitments are reinforced by Indonesia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, which also commits the nation to manage its protected forests sustainably by 2020.³

BILATERAL COOPERATION AND REDD+

REDD+ is an international climate mitigation strategy with the goal of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in tropical forest countries, while providing sustainable development benefits to participating communities. It does this, in part, by providing financial incentives for sustainably managing or conserving forests, and halting or reversing forest loss. In 2010, Norway and Indonesia entered into a REDD+ partnership to support Indonesia's efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation of forests and peat lands. Norway committed up to US\$ 1 billion in results-based payments to support Indonesia's efforts to reduce emissions from forests and peatlands.⁴³

Initially, the agreement did not achieve its primary objective of reducing emissions from deforestation; in fact, satellite imagery published in 2013 revealed that Indonesia's deforestation rate had actually increased. An important milestone in the bilateral partnership was reached early in 2019, as Indonesia reported reduced emissions from deforestation and forest

degradation in 2017. Following an independent third-party verification, Norway will guarantee payment for a portion of the reported results. Assuming the verified result matches the reported result, the first payment would be for approximately 4.8 million tons of CO₂.

The bilateral agreement between Norway and Indonesia is credited with heightening national and international visibility of REDD+; increasing transparency around national data on forest cover and peatlands in Indonesia; expanding the political space to advance indigenous/adat rights; increasing attention on forest-related crime; and challenging corruption in the issuing of licenses and the enforcement of forest laws.⁴⁴

Indonesia remains committed to REDD+ and its 2016 NDC identifies REDD+ as an important component of the country's strategy to reduce emissions from the land use sector.⁴¹ In December 2015, Indonesia submitted its Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) for REDD+ to the UNFCCC Secretariat. The reference level, which is one of the elements required to participate in REDD+ activities, will serve as the benchmark for evaluating Indonesia's REDD+ performance through 2020.⁴¹

MORATORIUM ON CLEARING PRIMARY FORESTS AND PEATLAND

In 2011, Indonesia instituted a moratorium on new licenses to exploit land designated as primary forest or peatland. Despite the moratorium, satellite monitoring showed that palm oil and paper plantations continued to expand, and primary forest and peatland continued to disappear.^{45,46} This has been attributed to the moratorium's status as a presidential instruction, which lacks legal consequences for violators.⁴⁶ In addition, the moratorium was riddled with loopholes that green-lighted infrastructure projects, renewals of existing licences, and forest-clearing proposals previously approved 'in-principle'.⁴⁵

In 2016, Indonesia's government imposed a new moratorium on the conversion of peatland, while the Government of Norway pledged US\$ 50 million to support its enforcement. This moratorium goes further than its predecessor by covering all of Indonesia's peatlands. It is also legally binding and instructs companies to restore peatlands in areas where these have been degraded.⁴⁷ Early signs of the new moratorium's effectiveness are encouraging, with primary forest loss in protected peat areas falling by 88 percent between 2016 and 2017 to the lowest level ever recorded.⁴⁸ In addition, in 2018, Indonesian President Joko Widodo announced a separate 3-year moratorium on new licenses for oil palm plantations as another step toward reigning in forest conversion.⁴⁹

THE ONE MAP INITIATIVE

In December 2018, Indonesia launched its long-awaited One Map Policy Geoportal to serve as a common reference for land-use planning by government institutions and the general public.⁵⁰ Land disputes have been all too common in Indonesia, with incomplete or contradictory maps resulting in overlapping land claims that fueled conflict, human rights abuses, and environmental damage. The One Map initiative established a single database for all government maps in order to eliminate disparities across the various maps used by different government agencies. Under the policy, the government reportedly reconciled at least 85 disparate maps, including those governing mining permits, free-trade zones, oil and gas blocks, and forestry areas.⁵¹ In advance of the portal's launch, President Joko Widodo expressed the hope that the One Map initiative would help resolve the longstanding problem of illegal plantations inside forest areas, noting that in Kalimantan alone, there was an overlap of some 4 million hectares between areas designated as plantations and those designated as forests.²⁵



HOW RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES CAN GET INVOLVED

Religious believers and spiritual communities have a unique role to play in protecting Indonesia's rainforests and supporting its indigenous peoples. The ethical case for caring for the planet is deeply rooted in all of the world's religious traditions, and now is the time to reinvigorate and mobilize our respective spiritual resources, our influence, and our moral authority to collectively make the case that rainforests are a sacred trust and that tropical deforestation is a sanctity of life issue: it is wrong and it must stop.

Religious believers in Indonesia can take action at several different levels, including regulating their personal choices and working through their religious institutions to promote education about the value of and dangers to rainforests, advocate for economic choices that safeguard rainforests, and pursue coordinated political initiatives that combat deforestation and support indigenous peoples' rights.

PERSONAL CHOICES

People of faith can honor the planet and forests by making conscious and informed decisions that signal an awareness of where and how their food and consumer items are sourced and who produces them. Diet is one area where personal choice can directly support rainforest health. A shift toward a plant-based diet and eating less meat, particularly beef, is one of the most powerful personal choices any individual can make in solidarity with rainforests, since beef and soy production (much of it used as cattle feed) are important drivers of deforestation. Indeed, animal raising is remarkably land-intensive: supplying meat to a global population requires two-thirds of the world's agricultural land, including pastureland and cropland for feed. This extensive area is often taken from forests. Even reducing meat intake to twice a week can make a measurable impact. Reducing meat consumption also reduces pressure on a range of agricultural resources beyond forest land. Water use, fertilizer production, and greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change—each of these declines substantially for every foregone kilo of meat.

As with meat, religious believers can make informed consumer choices around palm oil, paper, and wood products. Consumers can look for products made by companies committed to zero deforestation and ensure that up and down their supply-chains there is no activity that negatively impacts forests. This means choosing paper, wood, and other products made from 100 percent post-consumer content materials and opting for virgin wood products certified by reputable authorities such as the Forest Stewardship Council.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

Religious believers can also help to address deforestation by working with and through their own religious institutions. More than 85 percent of people in the world have a religious affiliation, making the religious public a formidable force

for positive social and environmental change when they and their institutions pursue a common goal. Religious institutions and places of worship can incorporate forests into existing communal religious activities and practices—such as liturgies, large prayer gatherings, or celebrations around festivals, feasts, or commemorations. For example, communities that emphasize fasting can include a notion of “fasting for the forest.” And communities can set aside particular periods to pray for the forests.

Religious communities, congregations, universities, schools and places of worship can also counter deforestation by protecting trees on religiously owned land. This can involve declaring protected forests, putting in place prohibitions on deforestation or hunting wildlife, or restoring degraded lands. Many of these practices have been adopted by Hindus in India, Christians in Africa, Buddhists in Thailand and Cambodia, and followers of Shinto in Japan. Because places of worship are community gathering spots, they can help to set norms around respecting and protecting forests and biodiversity. In Ethiopia, for example, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, a Christian denomination that traces its lineage to the first century, is credited with saving many of the nation's remaining trees. Its churches have planted more than 1000 “sacred forests,” each averaging a few football fields in size, around its many churches. The forests are seen as the “clothing” of the churches, serving as community centers, meeting places, schools, and burial grounds, in addition to providing shade for people and habitat for many species.

ECONOMIC ACTION

Every economic decision constitutes a moral decision. Businesses and investors that work in forest landscapes and that depend on forests for their products have a responsibility to social and environmental stewardship that can and must be guided by the world's religious communities. Investor movements driven by people of faith can exert shareholder pressure on

businesses by insisting that they adopt sustainable practices, clean up their supply chains, and respect the forests. Corporations run by people with religious convictions need to hear from religious leaders and places of worship that deforestation is a sanctity of life issue and that business practices that destroy forests and biodiversity and that disregard the rights of indigenous peoples and forest communities are in violation of the tenets of their faith.

Divestment can be another potent strategy, given the substantial financial assets and investment portfolios held by some faith groups. There is great potential for a faith-based movement that encourages divestment from industries that engage in deforestation and investment in renewable energy projects, community-based natural resource management and social enterprises that benefit local people and local economies, not multinational corporations and their shareholders. Making the moral decision to refuse to fund activities that destroy forests is a powerful and effective avenue to bring about change. There is ample evidence to suggest that divestment from industries that damage the planet and a transition to ethical investing can change behavior and will ultimately encourage other investors to follow suit. The faith-based movement to divest from fossil fuels—from oil, coal and gas companies—provides an instructive example of what is possible when religious institutions take a stand in this regard.

EDUCATION

Religious leaders are often among the most trusted figures in any society, looked to for ethical and spiritual guidance on economic, social and political life. They are also teachers and conduits of education, awareness and learning. Religious leaders then are key actors in the effort to raise awareness about the deforestation crisis, the risks that deforestation poses to progress on climate change and sustainable development, and the entry points for people of faith to get into action to fight for the protection of forests. As such, one

of the best ways for religious leaders to take action on forest protection is to use their influence and authority to relay information and resources on the deforestation crisis to those in their congregation.

Some of the most powerful lessons to be taken from forests are not on deforestation rates and numbers of displaced indigenous peoples (important as these are), but lessons of the heart that teach appreciation of forests in their spiritual fullness. Attitudes toward forests and trees could be markedly changed for western audiences if forests were viewed primarily as a gift, rather than resources. Indigenous traditions have much to teach in this regard. Gratitude and sufficiency are familiar concepts to people of many faiths; it is not a stretch to imagine applying these attitudes widely in our consumption of palm oil, paper, wood, and other forest products. Such a shift could be transformational.

POLITICAL ACTION

Ending deforestation comes down to mobilizing sufficient political will. Until now, globally and in major rainforest countries, the enforcement of laws and policies around forest protection have been largely insufficient to stop the destruction. Religious believers, leaders and places of worship can help to influence public debate and public policies on forests and the rights of indigenous peoples, making them moral issues that demand a moral response from elected officials. Halting and reversing deforestation will require the cultivation of new public virtues and a seismic shift in values and the way that we as a human family understand and manage forests.

Many religious leaders are uniquely positioned to lobby governments at local, regional, national and global levels and other decision-making bodies that determine the policies and practices that govern forests and the rights of their guardians. Advocacy can take various forms, ranging from quiet

diplomacy and back-channel meetings to more public statements, campaigns, petitions and demonstrations around the moral and spiritual responsibility to protect forests. To be effective, coordination across sectors is critical, to ensure that advocacy by religious believers is bolstering and advancing campaigns and efforts already underway by the broader coalition of indigenous peoples, NGOs, multilateral organizations, and grassroots activists working to end deforestation. Religious leaders also have a role in holding political leaders accountable for past commitments, and encouraging greater ambition to new commitments over time.

MULTI-RELIGIOUS COLLABORATION

The gains from deploying religious resources in the fight against deforestation are multiplied when the world's religions stand together. This kind of cooperation can prove more powerful—symbolically and substantively—than unilateral action by individual religious groups. When religious communities demonstrate the ability to work closely together, they build credibility and trust among the population at large. When they speak with one voice on issues like forest protection, their moral authority is magnified, giving them greater ability to influence policies through their influence on individuals and institutions.

For more information on actions you can take to support rainforests in Indonesia, connect with the Interfaith Rainforest Initiative in Indonesia at indonesia@interfaithrainforest.org.

The ethical case for caring for the planet is deeply rooted in all of the world's religious traditions. Now is the time to mobilize our spiritual resources, our influence, and our moral authority to collectively make the case that rainforests are a sacred trust and that tropical deforestation is a sanctity of life issue: it is wrong and it must stop.

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ABOUT THIS PRIMER

This primer is part of a series of briefs meant to inform and inspire faith communities to action to help safeguard tropical forests and their inhabitants. Through facts, graphics, analysis, and photos, these primers present the moral case for conserving and restoring rainforest ecosystems, supported by the latest science and policy insights. They bring together the research and practical tools that faith communities and religious leaders need to better understand the importance of tropical forests, to advocate for their protection, and to raise awareness about the ethical responsibility that exists across faiths to take action to end tropical deforestation.

PARTNERS

The Interfaith Rainforest Initiative welcomes engagement by all organizations, institutions and individuals of good faith and conscience that are committed to the protection, restoration and sustainable management of rainforests.

INTERFAITH RAINFOREST INITIATIVE

The Interfaith Rainforest Initiative is an international, multi-faith alliance working to bring moral urgency and faith-based leadership to global efforts to end tropical deforestation. It is a platform for religious leaders and faith communities to work hand-in-hand with indigenous peoples, governments, NGOs and businesses on actions that protect rainforest and the rights of those that serve as their guardians. The Initiative believes the time has come for a worldwide movement for the care of tropical forests, one that is grounded in the inherent value of forests, and inspired by the values, ethics, and moral guidance of indigenous peoples and faith communities.

QUESTIONS?

The Interfaith Rainforest Initiative is eager to work with you to protect tropical forests and the rights of indigenous peoples. Contact us at info@interfaithrainforest.org.



Norwegian Ministry
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