Greenpeace protects Indonesian forests against Asia Pulp and Paper, 2009-2013

25 November
2009
to: 5 February
2013

Country: Indonesia
Location City/State/Province: Sumatra, Indonesia
Location Description: Though the campaign targeted Asia Pulp and Paper’s main mills and extraction sites in Indonesia, online consumer campaigns reached a global audience and local campaigns were known in the United States, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland, Brazil, Germany, and the Netherlands

Goals:
"APP needs to leave the deforestation-dependent economic growth model. It could - and should - lead low-carbon growth by setting the bar for industry best practice. We are calling on APP to follow the lead of its Sinar Mas sister company, GAR, and end its dependence on clearance of forest and peatland areas for pulpwood." -Greenpeace About the Campaign 2011

Methods

Methods in 1st segment:

- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 005. Declarations of indictment and intention
- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction › 13 activists lock themselves to APP cranes

Methods in 2nd segment:

- 010. Newspapers and journals › Consolidation of campaign news and resources under the "Asia Pulp & Paper under Investigation" heading on Greenpeace website

Methods in 3rd segment:

- 011. Records, radio, and television › viral online video
- 021. Delivering symbolic objects › golden chainsaw

Methods in 4th segment:

- 006. Group or mass petitions
- 016. Picketing
- 031. "Haunting" officials
- 077. International consumers’ boycott

Methods in 5th segment:
• 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
• 006. Group or mass petitions
• 035. Humorous skits and pranks
• 047. Assemblies of protest or support
• 077. International consumers’ boycott

Methods in 6th segment:

• 004. Signed public statements
• 006. Group or mass petitions

Notes on Methods:
Because most petition signatures and messages were gathered online, timing is somewhat difficult to specifically place.

Classifications

Classification:
Defense
Cluster:
Environment
Group characterization:

• Greenpeace activists
• concerned environmentalists
• consumers worldwide

Leaders, partners, allies, elites

Leaders:
Bustar Maitar, Greenpeace Indonesia
Partners:
All Greenpeace offices, Greenpeace Forests
External allies:
World Wildlife Fund
Involvement of social elites:
Not known

Joining/exiting order of social groups

Groups in 1st Segment:

• Greenpeace
• concerned local activists and NGOs

Groups in 2nd Segment:
• concerned consumers worldwide

Groups in 3rd Segment:

Groups in 4th Segment:

• Green Party of New Zealand
• Green Party of New Zealand (Exit)
• World Wildlife Fund

Groups in 5th Segment:

Groups in 6th Segment:

Additional notes on joining/exiting order:
Local NGOs in 1st segment not consistently named in media

Segment Length: 6 and 2/3 months

Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

Opponents:
Asia Pulp & Paper

Nonviolent responses of opponent:
None known

Campaigner violence:
None known

Repressive Violence:
None known

Success Outcome

Success in achieving specific demands/goals:
5 points out of 6 points

Survival:
1 point out of 1 points

Growth:
2 points out of 3 points

Notes on outcomes:
Success in achieving specific demands must still be monitored and measured, though APP did publicly commit to ending their severe deforestation and illegal logging practices on February 5, 2013. Survival is due to Greenpeace's stability as an established organization. Growth of this specific campaign is difficult to articulate when one considers the already immense size of Greenpeace’s global mobilization network.

Immediately before the 2009 UN Copenhagen Climate Summit, Greenpeace International took major direct action against Asia Pulp and Paper in the heart of the Indonesian forest, launching their “Asia Pulp & Paper under Investigation” campaign. Thirteen Greenpeace activists locked down cranes at Asia Pulp and Paper’s main port, attaching themselves to dangling crane cables. All thirteen activists were ultimately arrested, and the last four activists occupied one of the cranes for twenty-seven hours. Though Greenpeace activists had been mapping deforestation and mobilizing against destruction of Indonesian forests with existing local groups for some years prior to this act, the 25 November 2009 action seems to mark the first clearly targeted and advertised
action against Asia Pulp and Paper.

Greenpeace messaging of the 25 November 2009 action stated: “Deforestation is one of the roots of the climate crisis. We are shutting down this plant at the frontline of forest destruction to tell Heads of State that they can - and must - pull us back from the brink of catastrophic climate change. The paper mill is owned by Asia Pulp & Paper (APP). The parent company, Sinar Mas, is a leading driver of global climate change due to its widespread role in forest destruction. This plant is fed by wood from one of the world's largest peatland forests, on the Kampar Peninsula in Sumatra, which stores up to 2 giga tonnes of carbon." This statement revealed that though Greenpeace was planning a targeted campaign against APP, it saw the importance of the campaign within the broader context of the practices of the Sinar Mas parent company, as well as the heads of state tasked with legislating against climate change and deforestation.

Following the initial November 2009 nonviolent direct action, Greenpeace’s Forest Campaign in Indonesia, led by activist Bustar Maitar, published a report showing how major brands like Tesco, Walmat, Auchan, Hewlett Packard, and Kentucky Fried Chicken, through their use of APP paper products, contributed to the deforestation of the Bukit Tigapulu Forest Landscape, one of the last habitat spaces for endangered Sumatran tigers and orangutans. In addition, the report detailed how APP deforestation along the Kerumutan peatland, illegal under Indonesian law, was further compounding global warming. Greenpeace consolidated all campaign news and resources under the “Asia Pulp & Paper under Investigation” heading on their international website.

Though immediate action was not taken against these complicit companies, this Greenpeace report withstood scientific review and spread widely online and via traditional print media. Throughout most of 2010 it Greenpeace seemed to focus on online initiatives to educate consumers about the deforestation practices of APP. Though unclear, it is very likely that Greenpeace continued grassroots outreach, via petitioning and flyering at this time, as Greenpeace traditionally uses grassroots outreach tactics in the early stages of their anti-corporate campaigns. Regardless, mobilization and outreach throughout 2010 set the stage for a series of actions through 2011.

Greenpeace kicked off 2011 by crashing Paperworld, an international paper fair in Frankfurt, Germany, on 20 January 2011. Greenpeace activists ambushed APP representatives and publicly “awarded” APP with a golden chainsaw and banner calling out APP’s destructive deforestation policies. The action coincided with the UN announcement of 2011 as the “International Year of Forests.” Increased visibility and publication of the event partially contributed to an investigation of deforestation by the government of Indonesia in June 2011. The investigation concluded that the pulp and palm oil sectors were by far the largest drivers of deforestation.

Through the rest of 2011 Greenpeace waged incredibly visible consumer education and action campaigns targeting companies using APP paper products. Greenpeace advertised these campaigns broadly online and in national and international media.

In June, 2011, Greenpeace released online videos targeting Mattel’s use of APP products, humorously lamenting “Barbie’s deforestation habit.” The videos went viral, and Greenpeace used the videos to launch a mobilization named “Toying with Extinction.” In only 6 months over 200,000 consumers signed petitions asking Mattel to cease their use of APP products.

In August 2011 Greenpeace partnered with the World Wildlife Fund and the Green Party of New Zealand to publish “The Rainforest Friendly Toilet Roll Guide.” Several New Zealand tissue companies refused to let their products be tested, so Greenpeace requested fiber testing from an outside global firm. The results revealed the APP products included endangered hardwoods from Indonesia, and created a public relations storm that culminated in Greenpeace bird-dogging of Steve Nicholson, the corporate affairs director for APP Australia and New Zealand.

Greenpeace launched another consumer action and petition campaign against KFC’s use of APP products in late 2011. This campaign went global. Some of the most publicized consumer actions (timing unclear) included the delivery of over 30,000 consumer messages demanding the U.S. KFC board of directors cease the use of APP paper products in the U.S. (this letter-writing push was punctuated by a Greenpeace live-streamed video “dunk” of a life-sized Colonel Sanders mascot in dipping
sauce when the 30,000 goal was met) and the local picketing and partial boycott of six KFC stores in the Netherlands. Humor and online videos proved incredibly useful in attracting international attention.

During this consumer escalation time from 2011-2012 APP employed a smear campaign against Greenpeace: challenging the legal status of the Indonesian office, publicly questioning Greenpeace’s sources of funding, and even leveraging pressure on the Indonesian government to refuse the head of Greenpeace UK entrance to Jakarta when he attempted to attend a 2011 forestry conference.

APP’s oppressive reactions to Greenpeace, combined with increasing consumer pressure via online petitions and local letter writing campaigns, forced several companies to cease their usage of APP paper products, and by the end of November 2011 Hasbro, Mont Blanc, Tchibo (the world’s fifth largest coffee roaster), Cartamundi (the world’s leading maker of playing cards), and several smaller companies announced their refusal to do business with APP. The banking group ING also ceased providing financial services for one of APP’s companies at this time. Media and consumer pressure threatened the public license of APP to continue business as usual.

Greenpeace activists further escalated tactics, and in April 2012 hundreds of volunteers dressed as “homeless” Sumatran Tigers stopped rush hour in downtown Jakarta.

By 4 May 2012 a widely circulated and respected Greenpeace investigative report on APP’s illegal logging inspired Canadian investment giant Mackenzie Investments to announce its intent to cease investing in APP operations. In May 2012 APP attempted to soothe investors by releasing a new forest protection policy. Greenpeace attacked the policy, and messaged their entire presence at the Summer 2012 Rio +20 Earth Summit around the lies of company green washing.

By the end of 2012 increased efforts against KFC’s use of APP products motivated KFC Indonesia, United Kingdom, and Ireland to announce their refusal to use APP products. They joined over 100 companies in taking action against APP, including Adidas, Kraft, Mattel, Hasbro, Nestle, Carrefour, Staples, and Unilever.

Finally, on 5 February 2013 APP announced publicly that they would commit to end deforestation and more sustainably source their paper products. A hesitantly optimistic Bustar Maitar announced that Greenpeace would cease their campaign against APP but continue to track the company’s progress and commitment to more sustainable paper sourcing. Maitar also lamented the thousands of hectares of Indonesian forest already destroyed.

Research Notes

Influences:

Greenpeace modeled this campaign in part after their successful 2004-2009 campaign against Kimberly-Clark’s deforestation of Canadian boreal forests (1).

Lessons from this campaign likely influence Greenpeace’s current campaign against APRIL, another large paper company criticized for unsustainable timber sourcing (2).

Sources:


Additional Notes:
Specific allies of this campaign are somewhat difficult to discern due to Greenpeace's international/regional office relationships.

Pictures of clearcutting, endangered animals from Greenpeace "Tiger Eye Tour":
http://greenpeaceblogs.org/2013/02/05/breakthrough-one-of-the-largest-paper-companies-commits-to-end-deforestation/tiger-tour-in-kalimantan/

Video of Greenpeacers scaling Mattel building headquarters and preceeding arrests:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3MT71Vy8_s

Ramin Paper Trail Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIV8e4DTADo


Name of researcher, and date dd/mm/yyyy:
Pauline Blount and Rachel Dunsmore, 04/22/2013

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