

DR. CAROLINE LUCAS

Green Party  
*for the South East of England*

Commissioner Ferrero Waldner  
DG External Relations  
The European Commission  
200 Rude de la Loi  
Brussels B1049  
Belgium

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Dear Commissioner,

Survival International, the movement for tribal peoples, estimates that there are only 100,000 bushmen remaining in southern Africa, many of whom live in the central Kalahari game reserve in Botswana. As I am sure you are aware, in 2006 the High Court in Botswana ruled that the eviction of indigenous tribes from the land was illegal and unconstitutional, yet this ruling has been undermined by a government-led campaign of intimidation that has prevented the bushmen from returning to their ancestral lands.

The authorities in Botswana have banned the bushmen from using their water borehole and from taking small herds of goats onto the land. No permits for hunting have been issued, despite the High Court's ruling that refusal to issue permits was unlawful, and over 50 bushmen have been arrested for hunting for food for their families. As a result of these and other policies, hundreds of Gana, Gwi and Tsila tribal people remain in the settlement camps established when the authorities cleared the reserve, too frightened to return to their traditional way of life and ancestral land.

The campaign to remove the bushmen from the reserve began when diamonds were discovered on the land and has been relentlessly pursued in order to allow mining to go ahead unimpeded. Given the unique lifestyle of the bushmen and the fact that Europe is a significant potential market for diamonds from the Kalahari, I would urge the Commission to call on the authorities in Botswana to abide by the terms of the 2006 High Court ruling, granting the tribes their full rights to access the game reserve.

Another tribe, with an equally unique way of life under threat, is the 200 nomadic Penan of Borneo. The tribal peoples of Sarawak have had land taken away since the 1970s for logging and palm oil plantations and the rights of the Penan continue to be overlooked, despite Malaysian support of the UN's Declaration on Indigenous Peoples. Speaking at an international event this summer, a Penan spokesperson explained:

*As our forests disappear, they are being replaced by oil palm and acacia. These forests cannot give us food, water, a home or medicines. Without our forests and lands, we become poor, we lose our homes with no hope of good jobs and our children are robbed of their future and their heritage. We have the right to live in the lands of our ancestors, just as you do.*

The Malaysian Certification Council has deemed that timber from Penan land in the Borneo rainforest is sustainable, despite Penan opposition to the logging and the failure to uphold Malaysian and international law regarding indigenous peoples consent. The growing demand for

palm oil as a biofuel is placing additional strain on the situation and the nomadic Penan face being wiped out by disease, hunger and the loss of their land.

The EU's Forest Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan is already helping to tackle illegal logging in places like Malaysia. Yet legal logging also needs attention, given that unsustainable practices such as threats to the human rights of the Penan, are not being properly considered as part of the timber certification scheme. The EU enjoys a good relationship with Malaysia, as one of its main trading partners, so I would call on the Commission to raise these concerns as a matter of urgency. I would also reiterate my previous call for the EU to scrap its biofuels targets.

Thank you, as ever, for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline Lucas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Caroline Lucas - Green Party MEP for South East England.