



Arbeitskreis nördliche Urwälder (AKU)

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Position statement

On the "Great Bear Rainforest", British Columbia, Canada

We the members of the Arbeitskreis nördliche Urwälder (AKU; "Council for Northern Primaeval Forests", founded 1991), Germany, have over the past 20 years observed with mounting concern the fate of the primaeval temperate rainforest at the West Coast of British Columbia (BC), Canada. Their destruction has long reached an advanced, critical stage. In order to preserve the temperate rainforest as a pristine ecosystem and to maintain their high value for biospherical stability and climate buffering, it is mandatory that all remaining primaeval forest areas be permanently protected.

The land utilization schemes for the BC West Coast and the governmental "Central and North Coast Order" and "South Coast Order" legitimate the further destruction of the primaeval forests within the area of the "Great Bear Rainforest" (GBR). "Ecosystem Based Management" (EBM) is an industrial forestry method and does not guarantee long-term protection of primaeval forests.

German consumers are dismayed by the fact that in Canada primaeval forests continue to be destroyed for the export of wood, wood products, and pulp to Europe. Tourists visiting Canada (including visitors of the 2010 Winter Olympics) expect to find intact wilderness. They should know, however, that the forest ecosystems in BC are not being preserved for future generations but continue to be exploited as a cheap source of raw materials.

We therefore demand the following:

- 1. No commercial* logging or any other commercial* exploitation of the remaining primaeval forests!**
2. No Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification of primaeval forests and their wood products.
3. Complete preservation of the remaining primaeval forest areas (apart from ecologically and socially adapted use by indigenous and local people).
4. Secure and permanent protection and a significant expansion of the existing and the allocated preserves (including the adjacent ocean areas). To maintain biodiversity, a contiguous area of at least two thirds of the whole GBR area must be permanently preserved. All preserves must be clearly delineated.
5. Significantly improved protection of the river and lake ecosystems and their drainage areas; no hydroelectric projects in primaeval forest areas and watersheds.
6. No mining in the "Great Bear Rainforest".

*By "commercial logging" and "commercial use" we mean the industrial exploitation or damage of natural resources which goes beyond the sustainable subsistence use by local communities.