

a world wonder

Canada's Great Bear Rainforest



Mass outrage would surely occur if Egypt's Pyramids or England's Stonehenge were torn down. However, a natural wonder like the Great Bear Rainforest continues to be logged and depleted to produce hot tubs and two by fours, toilet paper and disposable diapers. The heavy logging by local and international forest companies has left large, bald patches in the ancient forest that resemble battle scenes, with haul roads slashed across watersheds and through valleys.

The coastal logging companies, including Weyerhaeuser, International Forests Products (Interfor) and Western Forest Products, together log 50 per cent of all the trees cut on the coast of British Columbia each year and export most of the wood to the United States, Europe and Japan.

If logging continues at the same rate, the Great Bear Rainforest and much of the biodiversity it supports will be gone within ten years. To ensure this never happens, Greenpeace took the lead in mounting an international public campaign targeting customers of lumber companies. These customers, including IKEA, Mitsubishi and Home Depot, have committed to phasing out the selling of products that come from endangered forests and have sent a clear message to industry and government —

unless destructive industrial logging stops in the Great Bear Rainforest, they will take their business elsewhere.

The provincial government responded to this ongoing pressure by announcing a commitment in 2001 to protect 1.5 million acres of the Great Bear Rainforest. It remains to be seen whether the government will implement the agreement and protect the ancient forest, even though the Queen Charlotte goshawk, tailed frog and coastal grizzly bears face extinction because their habitat continues to be destroyed.

Already, logging and development have destroyed over 60 per cent of the world's temperate rainforests, and in North America, over half of the coastal rainforest has disappeared. The Great Bear Rainforest is what we have left. It must be protected. With the right direction and enough imagination this magnificent coastal forest can evolve into a truly sustainable region that embraces an ecosystem-based approach to economic and land-use planning. With enough commitment and international pressure, the Great Bear Rainforest could become a model for forest conservation for the rest of the world.

10,000 years...

forgotten coast



GREENPEACE

ancient cedars: bear dens or toilet paper?

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Photos: front page: grizzly (O'Neill/Greenpeace), back page: cut-block (Clarke/Greenpeace). Inside left: locator map (Sierra Club of BC), forest (Al Harvey/Slidefarm), eagle (Adrian Dorst), coho (McAllister/Raincoast), inside right: wolf (J.D. Taylor), Kermode (O'Neill/Greenpeace), map (McAllister/Raincoast), coast (McAllister/Raincoast), rainbow forest (McAllister/Raincoast), child (Ben Fox). Design by Brad Hornick Communications.

The Great Bear Rainforest

It is the world's largest remaining intact temperate rainforest and a world wonder. Situated south of Alaska, along the coast of British Columbia, the Great Bear Rainforest is more biodiverse than any European forest and many times larger than the California redwood forest.

It is home to the rare Kermode Bear — the world's only white-coated variation of the black bear — grizzly bears, black bears, mountain goats, eagles, grey wolves, one thousand-year-old red cedars and trees as high as 30-stories.

This ancient forest is a world unlike any other. But, much like the Amazon, the future of Canada's only coastal rainforest is far from certain.

10,000 years
in the making