

Paper Excellence, Resolute Forest Products or the Sinar Mas Empire: who is really logging the forests in Canada?

Last year, a report [released](#) by Greenpeace Canada and other organizations exposed the complex corporate ownership of **Paper Excellence, the largest logging company in Canada, now that its acquisition of Resolute Forest Products Limited is completed.** The investigation, in particular, exposed Paper Excellence's deep ties to **Indonesia-based private corporation Sinar Mas Group**, itself the parent company of global pulp and paper producer Asia Pulp & Paper (APP).

A critical moment for forests in Canada

Paper Excellence's takeover of the Canadian logging industry comes at a critical time for forests across the country, which are already in dire shape due to unsustainable logging. Loss of biodiversity, soaring logging emissions, and failure to protect old-growth forests have prompted [some of the largest](#) civil society protests in Canadian history.

While endangered species laws remain weakly enforced or ineffective, forest degradation is causing the decline of iconic wildlife like caribou in [many parts of the country](#). Logging is also tipping forests in Canada from being carbon sinks to [carbon emitters](#). This vast forest destruction prompted [over 90 scientists](#) to issue an open letter to the federal government in 2022 calling for stronger protections. One signatory even accused Canada of having "some of the worst forestry in the world."

However, at the end of last year, the adoption of the new international biodiversity agreement - [the Kunming-Montreal agreement](#) - has built momentum for creating a system that could foster biodiversity and forest protection across Canada against corporate giants already taking a heavy toll on nature worldwide. As Paper Excellence emerges as a major corporate actor in the logging industry, numerous Canadian stakeholders, including the general public, deserve to know who really owns, controls, and benefits from the company.

Who are Paper Excellence, Sinar Mas and Asia Pulp & Paper?

The Sinar Mas Group is notorious for its links to [extensive deforestation](#) and [social conflict](#). Through its subsidiary Asia Pulp & Paper (APP), it has cleared [two million hectares](#) of rainforest in Indonesia to make pulp and paper, destroying critical habitats for orangutans, tigers, and elephants, [according to civil society analyses](#). Furthermore, many of APP's wood suppliers [have unresolved conflicts](#) with local and Indigenous communities over land used for industrial tree plantations. APP's plantation operations in Indonesia, which involve draining hundreds of thousands of hectares of carbon-rich peatlands, have been linked to [catastrophic fires](#) and globally significant levels of [greenhouse gas emissions](#).

Despite a multi-layered corporate structure with holding companies in numerous jurisdictions, [the report](#) clearly demonstrates a series of factors such as **family ties, overlapping management, and lobbyist filings, providing strong evidence that the Sinar Mas Group, in fact, controls Paper Excellence.** As such, Paper Excellence and APP can be considered “sister companies” under the common control of the Sinar Mas Group. The analysis is based on a review of hundreds of pages of publicly available corporate registry documents and other official filings in Canada, Indonesia, France, Brazil, the United States, Malaysia, British Virgin Islands, and many other jurisdictions.

Resolute Forest Products’ trail of destruction

Resolute Forests Products has been, until recently, one of the [largest and most destructive logging companies in Canada](#). For many years, environmental organizations have been calling out Resolute for its [impact on dwindling woodland caribou herds](#) in the boreal forest.

Resolute’s response has been to lash out with lawsuits against a number of organizations and individuals over the years, including their [own independent auditor](#), the Rainforest Alliance. One of these lawsuits, against Greenpeace Canada, is one of the longest-running “SLAPP” suits in Canadian history. A SLAPP suit refers to Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation. These kinds of lawsuits are intended to silence critics by tying them up in the courts for years and forcing them to pay extensive legal fees to defend themselves. They also send a chilling message to broader society - don’t criticize us, or else.

These kinds of bullying tactics are even more alarming now that Resolute will be so closely affiliated with the Sinar Mas Group, with its own track record of social conflicts. Whatever they call themselves, whether it’s Paper Excellence or Resolute of the Sinar Mas Group, the new owners are going to have a major impact on the state of Canada’s forests, as well as the ability of people to speak out to protect them.

Important facts:

- Paper Excellence, with a global revenue of [\\$7.1 billion](#) USD, now owns mills in the forest covering half of Canada’s provinces: British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec, and Saskatchewan.
- In December, [a new international deal](#) to protect nature was reached in Montreal. As a first step, Minister of Environment Steven Guilbeault, [committed](#) to passing new legislation to better protect ecosystems across the country from ongoing loss of biodiversity.
- A new trade deal bilateral agreement between Canada and Indonesia - the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) - is [currently being negotiated](#). If concluded, the deal risks consolidating or even enhancing the power exercised by corporations like Paper Excellence, Resolute and Sinar Mas over natural resources.

