

# Masalai i tokaut

*Number Fourteen: 28 November 2002*

## East Awin Landowners withdraw support for logging deal

**As the government scrambles to unlawfully issue new logging permits in Western and West Sepik Provinces, four clans in East Awin have withdrawn their support for any logging deal involving their forest area.**

**The landowner's decision effectively splits in half the proposed East Awin Forest Management Agreement leaving what was already a flawed project now totally unviable.**

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The landowners of the Pari Tribe in the remote northern region of Western province have written to the Forest Authority requesting that the land belong to their four clans be removed from the controversial East Awin FMA (*see below*).

This is a blow to the government of Michael Somare who have been trying to push the National Forest Board to approve a timber permit for the East Awin project as well as accelerating the allocation of several other logging projects.

The Minister for Forests had ordered the National Forest Board to meet in October to allocate the East Awin permit (*see below*). But this has so far been blocked by a court action brought against the National Forest Board by the Western Provincial government.

It appears that the proposed logging project has many defects, including a lack of landowner support, insufficient timber for a sustainable operation and a failure to developed the project according to the framework specified in the Forestry Act.

Bizarrely, the Forest Authority wants to see the logging permit given to a 'two-kina' company, GL Niugini, that has no assets or logging experience. Worse still, the supposed landowner company, Apka Investments, that claims to represent all the East Awin landowners and that backs GL Niugini, (*see below*) has only 3 shareholders.

But it seems that the Pari landowners are not as gullible or naïve as the Forest Authority and they are not going to allow their valuable forest resources to be squandered in another poorly considered and obviously inept logging deal between the government and the foreign logging industry.

The removal of the Pari lands from the logging deal effectively carves in half the available forest resource making any sustainable logging operation unviable (*see below*).

This will come as a blow to Rimbunan Hijau who has been using the Forest Industry Association to lobbying directly with politicians and government officials to secure the smooth allocation of the East Awin timber permit.

But there is another interesting twist to this story. The company that has written to the Forest Authority on behalf of the Pari landowners is Paiseo limited. Remember that this company is the permit holder for the much maligned and illegal Kiunga Aiambak logging project, which is also in Western Province and not far from East Awin.

The logging company that has been contracted by Paiseo to fell and export logs from Kiunga Aiambak is RH rivals, Concord Pacific.

It seems that this new conflict over East Awin is further evidence of the on-going battle between Concord and RH to gain access to the forests of Western Province – *see Masalai 2, June 5<sup>th</sup> 2002*.



# PAISO COMPANY PTY. LTD.

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WESTERN PROVINCE,  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

TELEPHONE: 58 1231  
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The Managing Director  
Papua New Guinea Forest Authority  
P.O Box 5055 Boroko  
National Capital District.

November 04th 2002

Subject : WITHDRAW FROM THE EAST AWIN FMA AREA.

Reference is hereby made to my two (2) previous letters dated on the 9th October 2001 and 21st April 2002 pertaining to the above captioned. I, together with my tribesmen from the Pari tribe have agreed that our clan land now covered under the current East Awin FMA area be excised. The clans who wish to withdraw their land from the FMA area are:

- 1) Kuga Clan
- 2) Homko Kuse Clan
- 3) Yesa Clan
- 4) Ebiko Clan

The four (4) clans have come up with some plans to utilize both the timber and the land as I believe it would be some thirty (30) to forty (40) years before an FMA area terminates and the rights goes back to the traditional land owners. This I believe is far too long for my tribe man to just wait for or to claim our rights over our forest area, and would therefore does not give us much choice to bring any meaningful development into the area.

Whoever developer is awarded the East Awin Project area can proceed with the development of the areas which does not belong to the Pari tribe, that is any other areas other than the Pari land.

The Pari landowner would not rest until when our concern is addressed by the relevant State Agencies (The Forest Authority and the Lands Department). Likewise, the State can ask the resource owners/landowners for co-operation, assistance, understanding until the State itself has taken the lead to show what it really means, that is to address with the view to resolving our concerns over the East Awin FMA area.

If you can put yourself in my position, I believe you would really understand what I am trying to get across to the Authority.

I would therefore like to ask you for your Co-operation, assistance in making any attempts possible to resolve this issue as best you could.

Thank You

David Kaya  
Chairman Paiso Co. Ltd

CC : Joe Badi - Forest H/Q  
CC : Chairman - National Forest Board

Enclosed please find map of the FMA Area showing the areas to be excised.

INDEPENDENT STATE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

FORESTRY ACT 1991

Act. Sec. 15(4)  
Reg. 19

FORM 17

REQUEST BY MINISTER TO \*CHAIRMAN/DEPUTY CHAIRMAN  
OF THE BOARD TO CONVENE A MEETING OF THE BOARD

To: Chairman

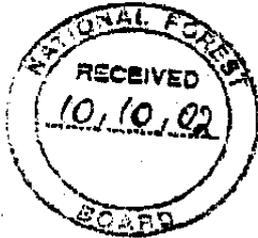
Pursuant to Section 15(4) of the Forestry Act, 1991 I hereby request that you convene a meeting of the Board within 14 days of the date of receipt of this request to consider and advise me on those matters as set out below.

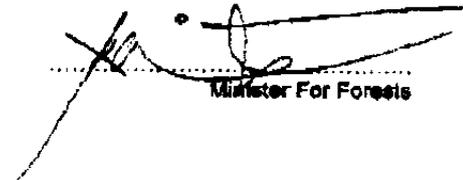
Matters:

To convene a special board meeting of consider allocation of the following timber projects:

- a) East Awin Timber Project - Western Province
- b) Amanab Blocks 1-4 - Sandaun Province
- c) FMA documentation relating to Kamula Doso Project

Dated this 10<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2002.



  
Minister For Forests

# AKPA INVESTMENT LTD

PNG Forestry Services  
P. O. Box 5055  
Boroko  
NCD

P O Box 57  
Kiunga 335  
Western Province

03th May 2002

**ATTN: NATIONAL FORESTRY BOARD CHAIRMAN**

**SUBJECT: ISSUANCE OF EAST AWIN TIMBER PERMIT**

Dear Sir/Madam,

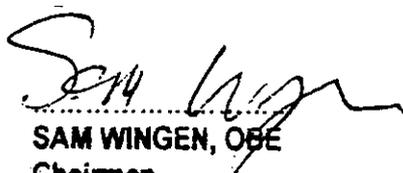
We the Land Owners through our Land Owner Company would like to bring to your attention that the East Awin FMA has followed all the Forestry Department Guidelines and Policies Set Out by the Forestry Department for the Past 6 years since 1994.

To the best of my knowledge we have fulfilled the entire requirement set out by the Forestry Act and it is a confusion to notice that some funny dealings are happening at the high office within your department.

To avoid the confusion and delaying of project for the majority of people, we urge you to act upon the natural course and issue the timber permit for East Awin Forest Project once and for all.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours faithfully,

  
**SAM WINGEN, OBE**  
Chairman

CC : **Sir Mekere Mourata**  
(PNG Prime Minister)

: **MR. Wan Mustapha Ismail**  
(Managing Director – GL Nuigini Ltd)

: **Mr. David S. Nelson**  
(Managing Director – National Forestry Services)

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