The Heart of Borneo: a challenge for social scientists

Nature conservation projects must contend with (illegal) logging, poaching, encroaching farmers, the trans-border trade of wildlife and timber and local communities that question the protected status of areas. Anthropologists' professional code of ethics states that the studied group must never suffer from the research when there are conflicts of interest – the people must come first. Does this imply that anthropologists cannot contribute to nature conservation because their science serves a social purpose?

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The Heart of Borneo Conference
An extensive campaign for the Heart of Borneo to protect one of the largest intact rainforest areas in the world with extremely rich biodiversity. Two conferences were held in early 2005, the first in Brunei, which had largely political and diplomatic goals, and the second in London and The Hague with more scientific aims. The latter was organized by WFF, the institute of Environmental Studies (OMI, Leiden University), and IIA. A selection of conference papers will be published by ‘Trappenbos International.

Towards social stability and democratic governance in Central Eurasia: challenges to regional security

In the current world system Central Eurasia may seem peripheral with its poor socio-economic indicators, particularistic tendencies in politics and intensified ethnic conflicts. However, its geo-strategic location and natural resources – among them the large hydrocarbon reserves of the Caspian Sea – may return its historical centrality to the region. This new ‘centrality’ of Central Eurasia brings new threats. Repressive political regimes and marginalisation of whole groups of population inflame conflicts that spill across national borders. Migration to Europe, both legal and illegal, is the direct outcome of social-economic destabilization in the region.

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The announced publication is the result of the NATO Advanced Research Workshop (ARW) ‘Central Eurasia: challenges to regional security in Central Eurasia – challenges to regional secu-
rity which took place in Leiden, 8-11 September 2004. Scholars of many backgrounds from different theoretical and interdisciplinary perspectives addressed the historical and social legacy of Central Eurasian societies and current risks such as nation-building, secessionism, marginalization, and the ability of regional governments and elites to deal with these threats. The workshop was organized by co-directors Wim Stokhof and Irina Morozova (IIAS) and funded by the NATO Science Programme, NWO, Leiden University, CNWS, EMRAW and IIA.

For further info see: www.cnws.nl/shiva/Id-40979.