



# THE NEW TIMBER BARONS

THE COMPANIES LOGGING THE  
RAINFORESTS OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA





## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This is a publication of Act Now! and Jubilee Australia Research Centre.

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Cover image: Logging pond in West Pomio © Paul Hilton, Greenpeace

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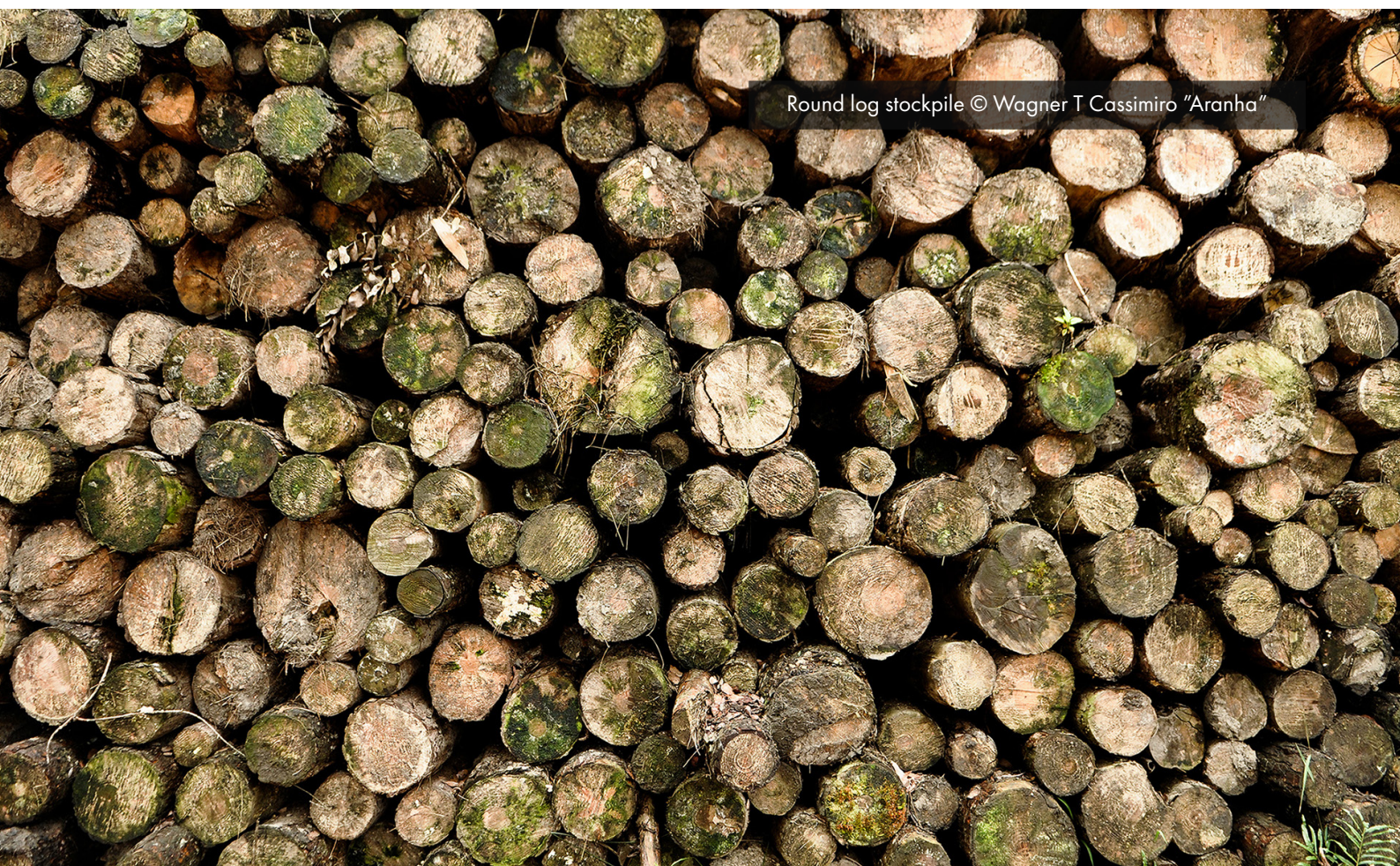
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Round log stockpile © Wagner T Cassimiro "Aranha"

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## SUMMARY

Papua New Guinea's (PNG) forests are globally important. New Guinea Island is home to the world's third-largest contiguous rainforest and is the world's most botanically diverse island.<sup>1</sup> The forests of PNG are an important carbon sink and an essential part of global plans to reduce global warming.<sup>2</sup> They also sustain the lives and livelihoods of millions of rural people.

Despite their importance, PNG's rainforests remain under threat from large scale logging. PNG's logging concessions cover a vast area of the country – as at 2014 there were 298 current or proposed logging concessions covering 14.9 million hectares of rainforest.<sup>3</sup> Since 2015, PNG has been the world's largest exporter of tropical round logs with total export volumes reaching a peak of over 4 million cubic metres in 2018. While the government of PNG has announced its intention to ban round log exports on several occasions, the supporting regulatory framework has failed to materialise.<sup>4</sup> Instead, new logging concessions continue to be approved, with 20 new export licences issued since 2020.<sup>5</sup>

Research by Act Now! and Jubilee Australia reveals that although logs were exported from more than one hundred and ten separate concessions between 2019 and 2021, **just ten groups of companies were responsible for nearly 70% of round log exports.** Together, these ten groups shipped off a staggering 6.5 million m<sup>3</sup> of round logs over that time – enough logs to fill over 85,000 large shipping containers.<sup>6</sup>

Each of these groups appears to be strongly linked to Malaysia, either through direct links to Sarawak-based logging and palm oil conglomerates or other Malaysian individuals and business interests.

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<sup>1</sup> Kate Cranney, CSIRO, "New Guinea: Most Botanically Diverse Island in the World", CSIROScope Blog, 7 August 2020, <https://blog.csiro.au/new-guinea-most-botanically-diverse-island-in-the-world/> (Accessed 11 July 2022)

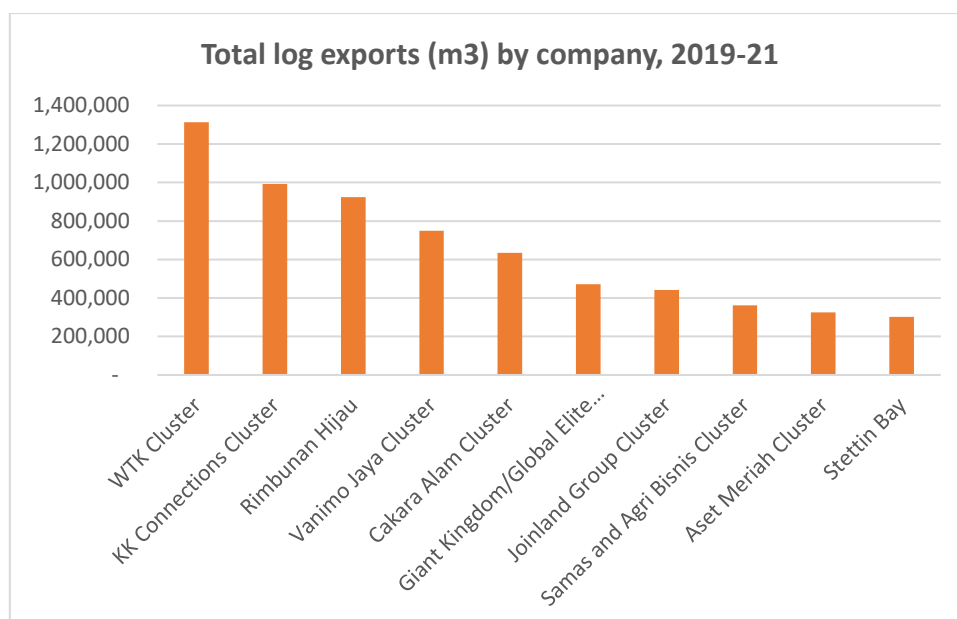
<sup>2</sup> See G S Maribu, "PNG's Prime Minister Wants to Save His Country's Rainforest. He Can't Do It Alone", *The Diplomat*, 1 October 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2021/10/pngs-prime-minister-wants-to-save-his-countrys-rainforest-he-cant-do-it-alone/> (accessed 11 July 2022)

<sup>3</sup> Jane Bryan and Phil Shearman (2015) *The State of Forests of Papua New Guinea 2014*, Port Moresby: University of Papua New Guinea, available at: <https://png-data.sprep.org/dataset/state-forests-papua-new-guinea-2014>, at p .24.

<sup>4</sup> International Tropical Timber Association (ITTO) (2020) *Biennial Review and Assessment of the World Timber Situation, 2019-2020* Yokohama: ITTO. Available at: [https://www.itto.int/annual\\_review/](https://www.itto.int/annual_review/) at p. 19; Kingtau Mambon, "PNG Round Log Export Ban: Plagued by Poor Political Will", Act Now! Blog, 22 July 2021, <https://actnowpng.org/blog/blog-entry-png-round-log-export-ban-plagued-poor-political-will> (accessed 11 July 2022).

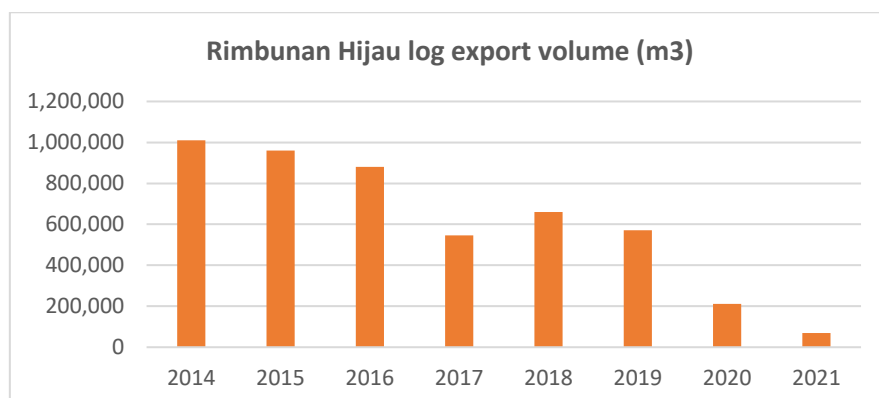
<sup>5</sup> Cathy Tukne, "Will the next government finally ban round log exports?", Act Now! Blog, 2 June 2022, <https://actnowpng.org/blog/blog-entry-will-next-government-finally-ban-round-log-exports/> (11 July 2022)

<sup>6</sup> Log export data throughout this report is sourced from Société Générale de Surveillance SA (SGS) Monthly Log Export Monitoring Reports from December 2019, December 2020 and December 2021 (henceforth "SGS Reports"). SGS Reports are available online at: <https://pngforests.com/sgs/>



Source: SGS Log Export Reports (December), 2019-21, Report 11.

The last three years has seen a shakeup in the composition of the logging sector in PNG. In particular, over this period there has been a significant decline in log exports by the Rimbunan Hijau group, previously by far the largest log exporter in PNG. In 2014, Rimbunan Hijau exported over a million m<sup>3</sup> of logs from concessions across the country; by 2021, this figure was down to 69,175m<sup>3</sup> with logs sourced from only four concessions.<sup>7</sup>



Source: SGS Log Export Report, December 2021, Report 11.

While overall log exports have fallen, the logging industry shows no signs of stopping. Total log exports have fallen from a peak of 4 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2018 to 2.8 million in 2021.<sup>8</sup> It is difficult to know whether this is evidence of the beginning of a decline in the sector or a temporary result of COVID-19 and associated global shipping challenges. However, as Rimbunan Hijau's exports have declined, other groups of companies – particularly those linked to WTK and KK Connections – have increased their log exports and new concessions

<sup>7</sup> SGS Reports, December 2014, December 2015, December 2016, December 2017, December 2018, December 2019, December 2021.

<sup>8</sup> SGS Reports, 2018-21.

have been awarded. This suggests that large scale logging will remain a threat to PNG's forests for some time.

**Murky corporate structures make it difficult to identify who is really behind the export of PNG's logs.** Over the period 2019-21, 80 separate companies exported logs from PNG, but our research suggests over half of these companies belong to one of ten corporate groupings, based on their shareholding and directorships. We have referred to these as “clusters” throughout the report. In PNG's logging sector, companies that initially appear to be separate entities often share the same directors or shareholders.

This briefing paper attempts to map the relationships between superficially unconnected log export companies based on analysis of their ownership and governance.

#### METHODOLOGY NOTE

This briefing paper uses data from the PNG Investment Promotion Authority (IPA) cross referenced against log export data downloaded from the open access tool PNGiForests. PNGiForests uses data from the Monthly Log Export Monitoring Reports prepared for the PNG government by Swiss certification company SGS. Data for exports 1993-95 is from research by academic Colin Filer. The open access analytical tool PNGiPortal (which uses IPA data) was used to identify the corporate directorships and shareholdings of individuals.

For this briefing paper, we have considered that two companies may have a corporate relationship where they share common directors and/or shareholders. Corporate 'clusters' represent groups of companies where there is overlap in the directors or shareholders. The diagrams in this paper map out these relationships. The diagrams do not show all the directors and shareholders of each of the companies and have been simplified for clarity. The full dataset is available on request from [info@actnowpng.org](mailto:info@actnowpng.org).

Data from SGS reports is also sometimes ambiguous. For example, different logging companies will be listed as exporting from a single concession in different years. It is not clear whether this means that the Timber Permits for those concessions are changing hands over the years, whether one company is subleasing to another, or whether this is an inaccuracy (possibly caused by companies incorrectly declaring which concession their logs came from). The estimate of the number of concessions held by each company is therefore only an approximation and may include errors.

The SGS data also lists parent-subsidary relationships. This has at times not reflected ownership data in the IPA. We have disregarded this information for the purposes of this briefing paper.

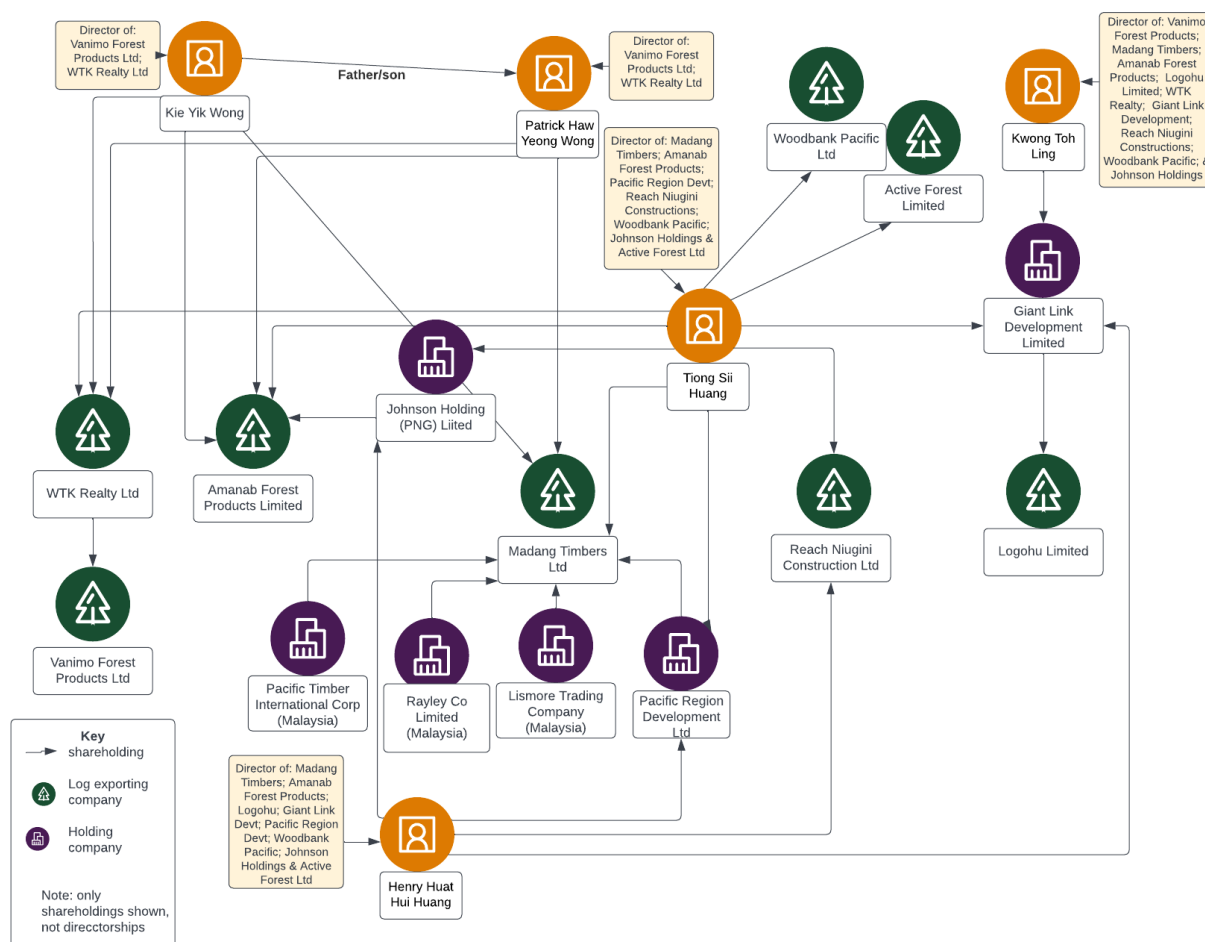
We have referred to a company as a logging company if it has been recorded in an SGS report as exporting logs from a concession in PNG.

## WTK CLUSTER

Number of concessions (1993 -2021): 19<sup>9</sup>

Total log exports (2019-21): 1.3 million m<sup>3</sup>

Market share of all log exports (2019-21): 14%



WTK Cluster<sup>10</sup>

More than 30 companies registered in PNG appear to be linked to each other and to have links, through common directors and shareholders, to the Sarawak conglomerate WTK Group.<sup>11</sup> This

<sup>9</sup> Throughout this report, information on concessions is sourced from: PNGiForests, <https://pngiforests.org/> (last accessed 14 September 2022). All concessions are included, including those that were granted as early as 1993 and are no longer exporting logs; total log export data is based on SGS Reports 2019-2021.

<sup>10</sup> All company data throughout this report is sourced from PNG Investment Promotion Authority, using PNGiPortal (<https://pngiportal.org>) as an analytical tool to identify company-to-company connections. See Methodology Note for more detail.

<sup>11</sup> Vanimo Forest Products Limited; Vanimo Timber Company Limited; Madang Timbers Limited; Amanab Forest Products Limited; Logohu Limited; Giant Link Development Limited; Pacific Region Development Limited; Pacific Timber International Corp; Reach Niugini Construction Limited; Woodbank Pacific Limited; Green Hill Timbers Company Limited; Global Synergy PNG Limited; Grand Millennium Management Services Limited; Harbour View Corporation Limited; Jaya & Berjaya Limited; Jaya & Berjaya Construction (PNG) Limited; Jaya & Berjaya Trading (PNG) Limited; Muti-Agro Industrial Limited; Prosperous Builders and Contractors Ltd; Prime Link Shipping Limited; Vanimo Forest Plantations Ltd; Vanimo Oil Palm Industries Limited; Vanimo Supermarket Limited; WTK Realty Ltd; Vanimo Veneer and Plywood Limited; Active Hypermart (PNG) Limited; HTS Holdings Limited; Johnson Holdings (PNG) Limited; Active Forest Limited; Golden Venture Limited; Lismore Trading Company; and Rayley Co Limited.

cluster includes at least nine logging companies, seven of which exported tropical round logs during 2019-21.<sup>12</sup>

According to the group website, WTK Group's global operations span logging, oil palm, real estate, property development, manufacturing, hotels and shipping.<sup>13</sup> The main company in the group appears to be WTK Holdings Berhad, in which Dato Sri' Patrick Haw Yeong Wong is Managing Director, and his father, Datuk Kie Yik Wong is a substantial shareholder.<sup>14</sup> A large shareholding in WTK Holdings Berhad is held by WTK Realty Sdn Bhd, which appears to be a family-held company. Datuk Kie Yik Wong and Dato Sri' Patrick Haw Yeong Wong are both directors of WTK Realty Sdn Bhd.<sup>15</sup> Datuk Kie Yik Wong, is also the Chairman of the Sarawak Timber Association.<sup>16</sup> Another key figure in this cluster is Tiong Sii Huang, who is a member of Sarawak's State Legislative Assembly.<sup>17</sup>

Between 2019-21, companies that are part of this cluster exported 1.3 million m<sup>3</sup> of round logs from 12 concessions in Madang, West Sepik (Sandaun), New Ireland, East New Britain, Milne Bay and Central province.<sup>18</sup> Of this, nearly 350,000 m<sup>3</sup> were exported from a single concession – Amanab Blocks 1-4 in Sandaun Province. The WTK cluster's large footprint in PNG also includes seven other concessions that did not operate in the last three years.

Non-logging companies linked to this cluster appear to be focused on construction, shipping, oil palm and supermarkets.

In May 2021, a Malaysian newspaper reported that WTK Holdings Berhad stated it had no logging operations in PNG.<sup>19</sup> Act Now! and Jubilee Australia wrote to WTK Holdings Berhad to seek clarification of this prior to publication of this briefing paper, but did not receive a response by the time of publication.

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<sup>12</sup> Logging companies are: Vanimo Forest Products Limited; Madang Timbers Limited; Amanab Forest Products Limited; Logohu Limited; Pacific Region Development Limited; Reach Niugini Construction Ltd; Woodbank Pacific Limited; WTK Realty Limited and Active Forest Limited. Note, other companies in the corporate group have names that suggest they may be involved in logging or the timber industry (eg: Green Hill Timbers Company Limited), but have not been listed as a log exporting company in the SGS reports.

<sup>13</sup> WTK Group website, <http://www.wtk.com.my/> (accessed 6 July 2022).

<sup>14</sup> WTK Holdings Berhad, "Board of Directors", <https://wtkhholdings.com/board-of-directors/> (accessed 5 October 2022);

<sup>15</sup> Corporate Extract, WTK Realty Sdn Bhd, Companies Commission of Malaysia, 20 September 2022.

<sup>16</sup> WTK Group website, <http://www.wtk.com.my/> (accessed 6 July 2022); Kathryn Ma Wai Fong v Wong Kie Yik and 2 others (British Virgin Islands) [2022] UKPC 14 at [7] – [8]; Sarawak Timber Association, "About Us" [https://sta.org.my/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=23&catid=2](https://sta.org.my/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23&catid=2) (accessed 6 July 2022).

<sup>17</sup> Sarawak Report (2020) *Sarawak's Logging Tycoons in Papua New Guinea*, p. 12, available at: [https://sarawakreportdocs.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/Sarawak's+Logging+Tycoons+In+Papua+New+Guinea+by+Sarawak+Report\\_FINAL\(1\).pdf](https://sarawakreportdocs.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/Sarawak's+Logging+Tycoons+In+Papua+New+Guinea+by+Sarawak+Report_FINAL(1).pdf); Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak (Sarawak State Assembly), "Dato' Sri Huang Tiong Sii", [https://duns.sarawak.gov.my/upload/file\\_folder/ADUN%20PROFILE%202022/Slide%2045.jpg](https://duns.sarawak.gov.my/upload/file_folder/ADUN%20PROFILE%202022/Slide%2045.jpg) (accessed 4 October 2022); UKAS Portal, "PRN-12 Sarawak : Dato' Sri Huang Tiong Sii, Menang Dengan Majoriti 7308 Undi" <https://ukas.sarawak.gov.my/2021/12/18/prn-12-sarawak-dato-sri-huang-tiong-sii-menang-dengan-majoriti-7308-undi/> (accessed 5 October 2022).

<sup>18</sup> SGS Log Export Monitoring Reports, 2019-21.

<sup>19</sup> Syafiqah Salim, "WTK says it has no logging operations in PNG following tax evasion probe allegation", *The Edge Markets*, 11 May 2021, <https://www.theedgemarkets.com/article/wtk-says-it-has-no-logging-operations-png-following-tax-evasion-probe-allegation>

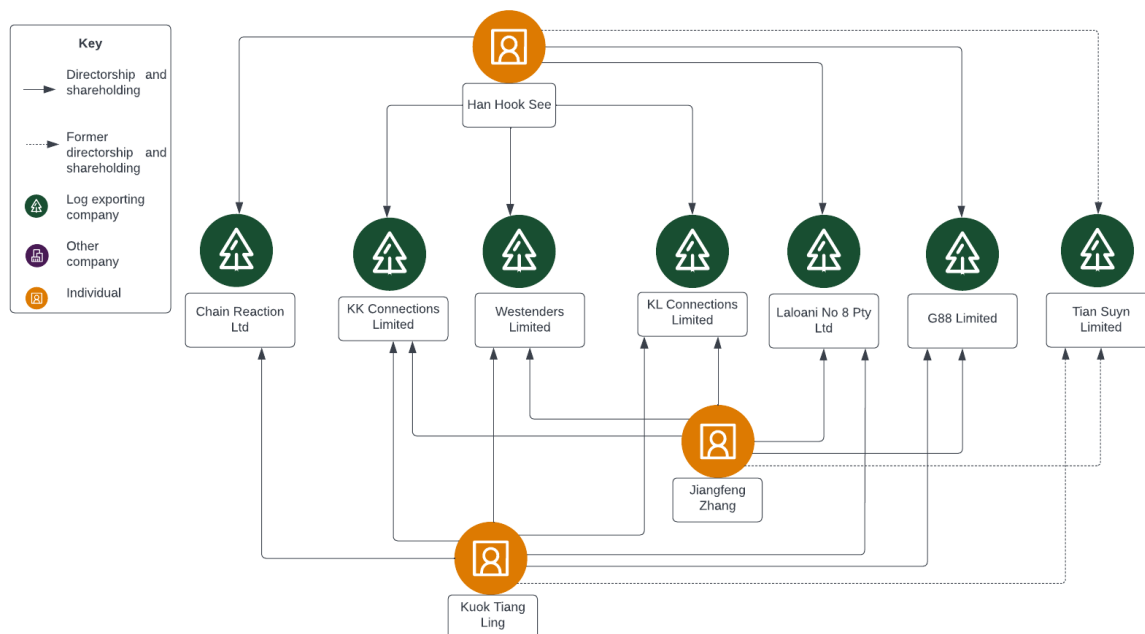


## KK CONNECTIONS CLUSTER

Number of concessions (1993-2021): 15

Total log exports (2019-21): 991,615 m<sup>3</sup>

Market share of log exports (2019-21): 10%



Seven companies that hold licenses over logging concessions in PNG are linked to each other through common directors and shareholders – in particular, Malaysian national Han Hook See, Kuok Tiang Ling (also a Malaysian national) and Jiangfeng Zhang (a Chinese national). Collectively, these companies have exported logs from 15 concessions, almost entirely in East New Britain province, and exported close to 1 million m<sup>3</sup> of round logs between 2019 and 2021. The largest company in the corporate group (by export volume) is KK Connections Limited. Malaysian nationals See and Ling together own 80% of KK Connections.

A further six companies appear to be part of the same corporate cluster, including KKC Sawmill Limited, KKC Veneer Limited and KKC Veneer No 2 Limited – all of which appear to be wood processing companies – and a company called Eastwest Oil Palm Industries Ltd.

KK Connections has historical links to two Chinese import companies – Ningbo ND Import and Export Co, and Ningbo Yongli Timber Pte Ltd.<sup>20</sup> Ningbo Yongli Timber was a shareholder in KK Connections from 2009-2015. Ningbo ND Import and Export Co is the ultimate owner of another logging company – Tian Suyn Limited – which had individuals associated with the KK Connections Group on its board or as shareholders until 2021.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Ningbo Yongli is alternately spelled “Ninbo Yong Lee Timber” in documents filed with the IPA.

<sup>21</sup> Ningbo ND Import and Export Co is the sole shareholder of PNG-based holding company PNG ND Resources Investment Co, which in turn owns 100% of the shares in Tian Suyn Limited. Han Hook See and Kuok Tiang Ling were directors and shareholders of Tian Suyn from 2014-2017 and another figure associated with members of the KK Connections group, Ka Tai Lee, was a director from 2008-2021. See and Ling were directors of the company alongside PNG ND Resources Investment Co. Between 2010-17 Tian Suyn Limited exported logs from the Suikol Makolkol Forest Clearance Authority (FCA) in East New Britain, and from the Rai Coast Timber Rights Purchase agreement area (TRP) in Madang.

## RIMBUNAN HIJAU GROUP

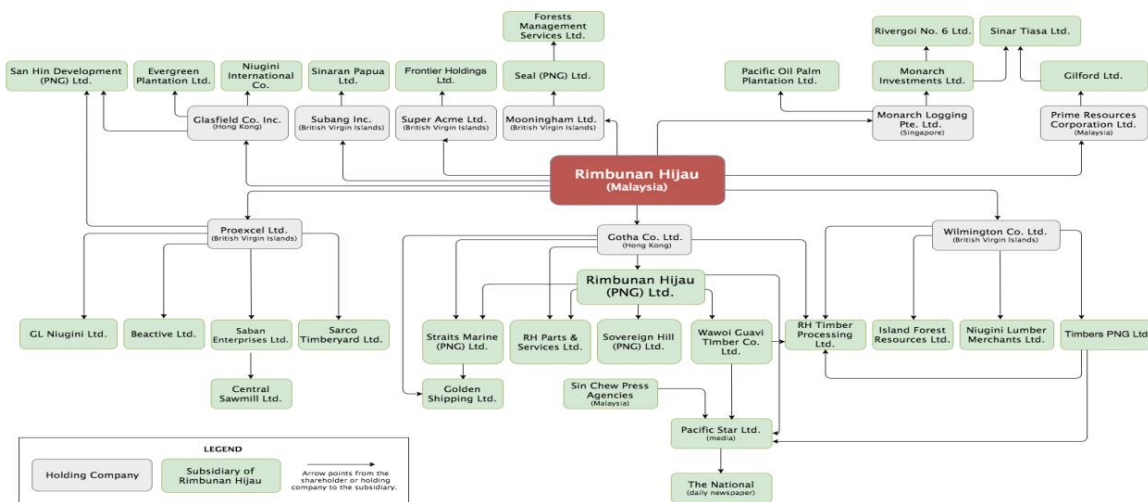
Number of concessions: over 40 since 1993

Number of concessions operating 2019-21: 14

Total log exports (2019-21): 924,631

Market share of all log exports (2019-21): 10%

The Rimbunan Hijau group is a multi-industry Malaysian company operated by the Sarawak-based Tiong family. It is one of the largest timber groups in Southeast Asia and was established in 1976.<sup>22</sup> It is headed by Tiong Hiew King, one of Malaysia's richest men.<sup>23</sup> Rimbunan Hijau has a variety of interests in PNG including mining, oil palm, retail, property, Tropic Air airline and *The National* newspaper. Its operations span 15 different countries including Australia and New Zealand.<sup>24</sup> There are 60 or more companies in PNG identified as being owned and controlled by the Tiong family or Rimbunan Hijau Group, of which 30 are connected to logging businesses.<sup>25</sup>



Companies in the Rimbunan Hijau group that are directly or indirectly involved in logging. © Oakland Institute, 2016.

While Rimbunan Hijau has historically dominated PNG's log export market, its exports have significantly declined in the past five years. In the period 2019-21, Rimbunan Hijau companies still exported nearly one million m<sup>3</sup> of round logs from 14 concessions, but the vast majority of these exports were in 2019 – by 2021, the company was only exporting from four concessions (Andru Johana and Avio Amgen in West New Britain Province and Wawoi Guavi Blocks 1-3 and East Awin in the Western Province). The reasons for this shift are unclear, although factors may include bad publicity surrounding its logging activities, increased investment of the proceeds in other less controversial sectors of the economy, the COVID-19 pandemic, recent resistance to expansion into new forest areas and increased audit oversight.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Jennifer Gabriel and Michael Wood (2015) "The Rimbunan Hijau Group in the Forests of Papua New Guinea". *The Journal of Pacific History* 50(3) 322, 322.

<sup>23</sup> Forbes, "Tiong Hiew King & Family", <https://www.forbes.com/profile/tiong-hiew-king/?sh=cdf07781fb0f> (accessed 14 September 2022).

<sup>24</sup> RH Group website. <http://www.rhg.com.my> (accessed 14 September 2022).

<sup>25</sup> Frédéric Mousseau and Peiley Lau, The Oakland Institute (2016) *The Great Timber Heist; The Logging Industry in Papua New Guinea*, Oakland: the Oakland Institute, pg. 16.

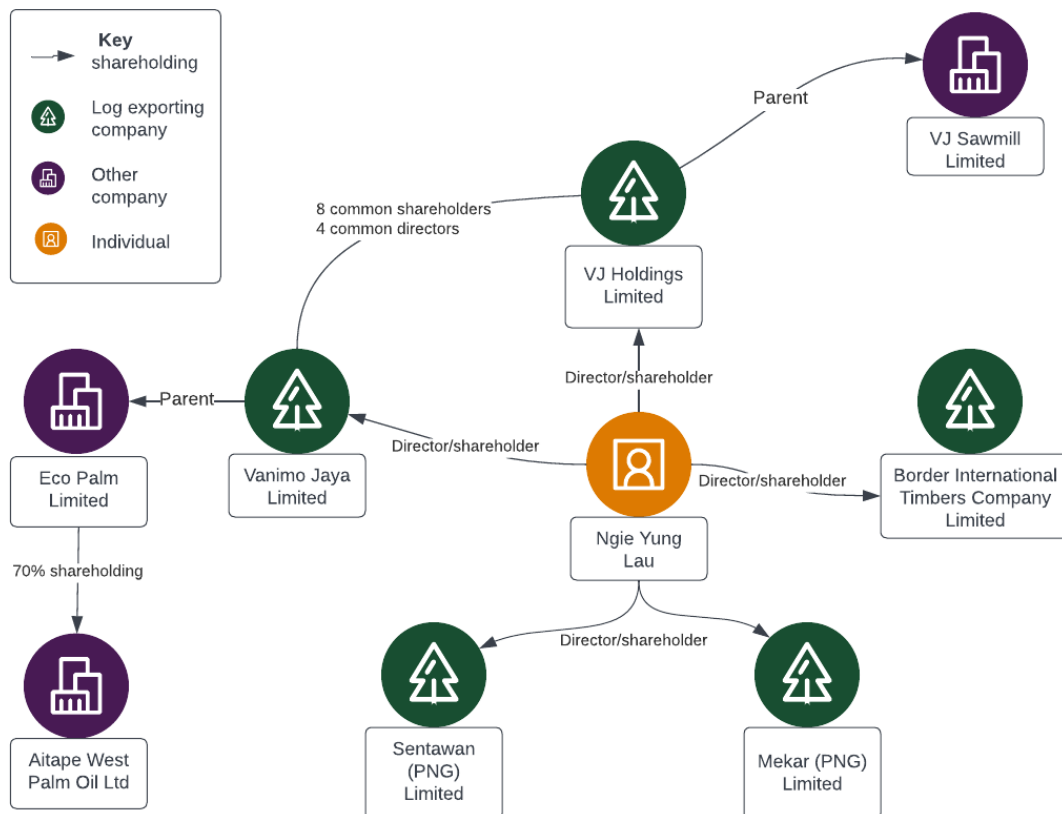
<sup>26</sup> PNGiCentral, 'Is Rimbunan Hijau Ending its Plunder of PNG Forests?' *PNGi - Investigate, Analyse and Expose*, available at: <https://pngicentral.org/reports/is-rimbunan-hijau-ending-its-plunder-of-png-forests>

## VANIMO JAYA CLUSTER

Number of concessions (1993-2021): 17

Total log exports (2019-21): 748, 551

Market share of all log exports (2019-21): 8%



The fourth largest exporter of logs, the Vanimo Jaya cluster, is made up of five logging companies operating in PNG: Vanimo Jaya Limited, VJ Holdings Limited, Border International Limited, Sentawan (PNG) Limited and Mekar PNG Limited. All five companies exported logs between 2019-2021. The five companies exported nearly 750,000 m<sup>3</sup> of logs over this period, with just over 300,000 of these coming from a single concession – Makapa in the Western Province.

Other than the Makapa concession, companies linked to this cluster have exported logs from concessions in West Sepik, East New Britain, West New Britain, New Ireland and Central Provinces.

The group's other operations in PNG appear to include palm oil (Aitape West Palm Oil and Eco Palm Limited), timber processing and shipping.

Ngie Yung Lau is the largest shareholder in almost all the companies in the Vanimo Jaya group, and like all his fellow shareholders, his registered address is in Sarawak, Malaysia.

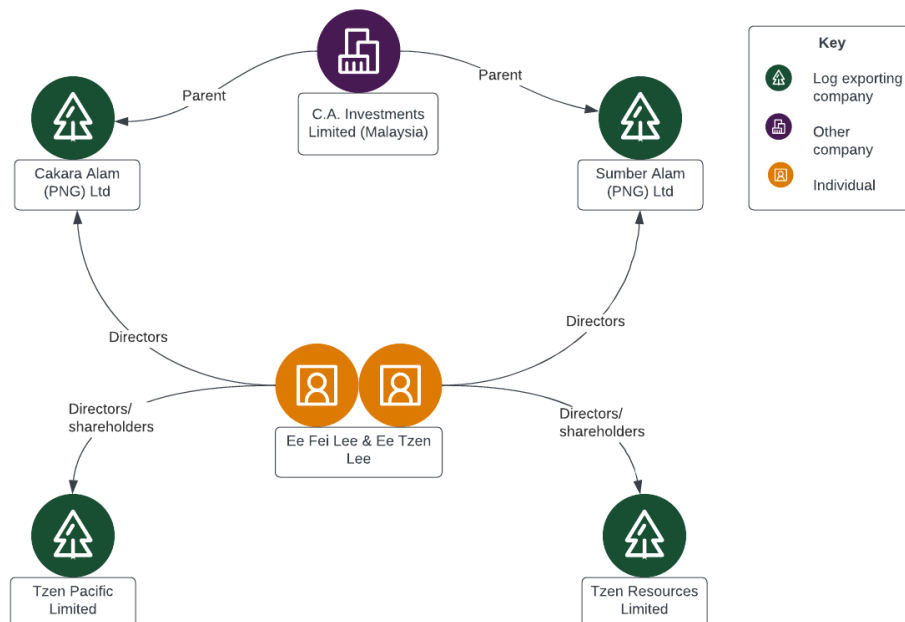


## CAKARA ALAM CLUSTER

Number of concessions (1993-2021): 9

Total log exports (2019-21): 634,954

Market share of all log exports (2019-21): 7%



Four linked companies – Cakara Alam (PNG) Ltd, Sumber Alam (PNG) Limited, Tzen Pacific Limited and Tzen Resources Limited – were together responsible for exporting 634,954 m<sup>3</sup> of logs during 2019-21 from eight concessions in West New Britain Province and the Hawain concession in East Sepik Province. Cakara Alam (PNG) Ltd and Sumber Alam (PNG) Limited are owned by Malaysian company C.A. Investments Limited, which is registered in Labuan, a tax haven.

Like several other logging groups in PNG, Cakara Alam appears to be a family business. All four companies share two common directors – Ee Fei Lee and Ee Tzen Lee, both Malaysian nationals and the sons of the late Chan Char Lee (also known as Francis Lee) and his wife Yap Po Lean.<sup>27</sup> There are 16 companies registered in PNG with one of these four family members as either a director or a shareholder.

According to corporate records, logging and palm oil company Tzen Niugini Limited, which operates logging concessions in East New Britain, was formerly part of the Cakara Alam corporate cluster. Between 2009 and 2019 shareholding shifted to a British Virgin Islands holding company (Kenlox Global) and directors from East New Britain Resources Group joined the company.<sup>28</sup> Tzen Niugini now appears to be wholly controlled by the East New Britain

<sup>27</sup> See: Memories.net entry for Chan Char Dato Lee, <https://memories.net/timeline/chanchar-datolee-34025> (accessed 7 July 2022). Information on this page appears to include a funeral notice for Chan Char Lee from Cakara Alam (PNG) Limited, listing Yap Po Lean as his wife and Ee Fei Lee and Ee Tzen Lee as his sons.

<sup>28</sup> Notice of Change of Shareholder (Share Transfer), Tzen Niugini Limited, 15 October 2009, available at [www.ipa.gov.pg](http://www.ipa.gov.pg) (accessed 14 November 2021). See also Carolyn Hambloch (2018) "Land Formalisation turned land rush: the case of the palm oil industry in Papua New Guinea" Conference Paper, Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty.

Resources Group.<sup>29</sup> In March 2022 the shares were transferred from Kenlox Global to Eng Kwee Tan, Chief Executive of East New Britain Resources Group.<sup>30</sup>

There are two companies that are co-owned by a Cakara Alam family member and Koh Woo Ling (Landex Sawmill Madang Limited and Karanas Investment (PNG) Limited). Ling is a former director of Cakara Alam (PNG) Limited and several other Cakara Alam companies. He is currently 60% owner of logging company Evergreen Limited, which previously exported logs from the Hawain Concession in East Sepik.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> See Annual Return 2012, Tzen Niugini Limited, Registered 30 Jan 2015, available at [www.ipa.gov.pg](http://www.ipa.gov.pg)

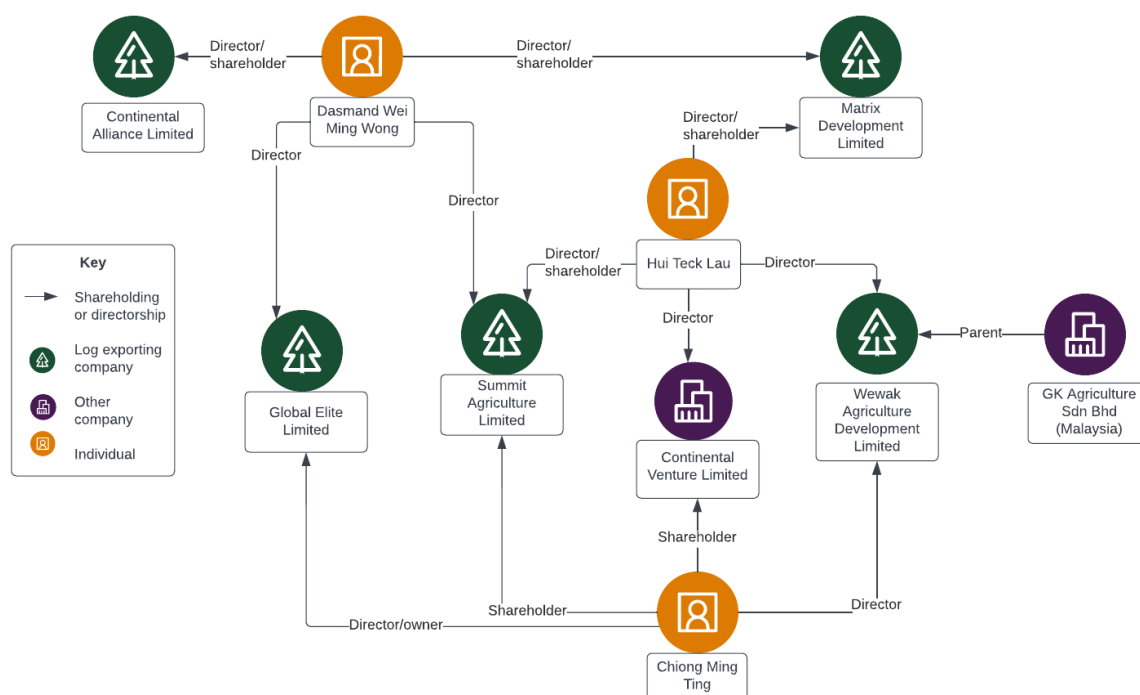
<sup>30</sup> Notice of Change of Shareholder (Share Transfer), Tzen Niugini Limited, 2 March 2022, available at [www.ipa.gov.pg](http://www.ipa.gov.pg) (accessed 14 September 2022); Global Witness, 2021, *The True Price of Palm Oil*, available at: <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/forests/true-price-palm-oil/>

## GIANT KINGDOM AND GLOBAL ELITE CLUSTER

Number of concessions (1993-2021): 22

Total log exports (2019-21): 471,105 m<sup>3</sup>

Market share of all log exports (2019-21): 5%



Five log exporting companies with operations in East and West Sepik are connected to each other through shared Malaysian directors and shareholders – including Hui Teck Lau and Chiong Ming Ting – both based in Sarawak – and Dasmand Wei Ming Wong. The companies include Summit Agriculture Limited, which exported nearly 150,000 m<sup>3</sup> of logs from East Sepik’s Wewak Turubu concession in 2019-21. They also include Continental Alliance Limited and Global Elite Limited, both of which have exported logs from the Meander May Valley concession, which covers over 116,000 hectares of forest in East Sepik.<sup>32</sup>

The companies are linked by a common director and common shareholder to Continental Venture Limited, which was a development partner in an agriculture lease in the Middle Ramu area of Madang.<sup>33</sup> Continental Venture was formerly owned by BVI-registered Giant Kingdom International, while other companies in the group have links to Malaysia-based GK Agriculture Sdn Bhd (in which Wong and Ting are directors) and GK Shipping Sdn Bhd.<sup>34</sup> GK Agriculture Sdn Bhd is a subsidiary of Malaysian Giant Kingdom Holdings.<sup>35</sup> The Giant Kingdom Group is a Malaysian agribusiness conglomerate that identifies on its website that it is involved in

<sup>32</sup> Data from PNGi Forests, accessed 12 July 2022.

<sup>33</sup> Act Now!, “SABL Case Study No.9: Continental Venture and the Middle Ramu”, 11 December 2013, available at: <https://actnowpng.org/content/sabl-case-study-no9-continental-venture-and-middle-ramu> (accessed 12 July 2022).

<sup>34</sup> See company records for Wewak Agriculture Development Ltd, Greenlands Development Limited, Pacific Agro Capital Limited, Sepik Palm Oil Limited and Elite Marine Limited, available at [www.ipa.gov.pg](http://www.ipa.gov.pg) (accessed 12 July 2022).

<sup>35</sup> Companies Commission of Malaysia, Corporate Information Search, GK Agriculture Sdn Bhd (obtained 27 August 2022).



agriculture, shipping, tourism and property development – including oil palm and shipping in PNG.<sup>36</sup>

The PNG corporate cluster appears to include a total of 27 companies linked by one of more common directors and/or shareholders, with company names suggesting a focus on agribusiness, oil palm, construction, shipping and timber.<sup>37</sup> This includes Sepik Oil Palm Plantation Limited, in which Lau is a director and Ting a shareholder and Wewak Agriculture Development Limited a former shareholder. This company was the leaseholder for the Wewak Turubu palm oil project.<sup>38</sup> The corporate cluster also involves several other companies whose names suggest an involvement in agribusiness – including Grand Agriculture Limited, Pacific Agro Capital Limited and Kukusang Plywood Limited.

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.giantkingdom.com/> (accessed 27 August 2022).

<sup>37</sup> Companies linked by one or more common directors or shareholders are: Summit Agriculture Limited, Summit Resources Limited, Continental Alliance Limited, Grand Venture Limited, Grand Agriculture Limited, Continental Venture Limited, Ackland Alliance Limited, Global Splendid Investment Limited, Global Star Corporation Limited, Wewak Agriculture Development Limited, Sepik Oil Palm Plantation Limited, Greenlands Development Limited, Mapac Industrial Limited, Matrix Development Limited, Pacific Agro Capital Limited, Sepik Palm Oil Limited, Dat Construction Ltd, Great Venture Limited, Global Elite Limited, Elite Marine Limited, Foyston Development Limited, GE Development Limited, GE Mart Limited, Green Horizon Limited, Kukusang Plywood Limited, Pacific Elite investment Limited, CJG Infrastructure Limited.

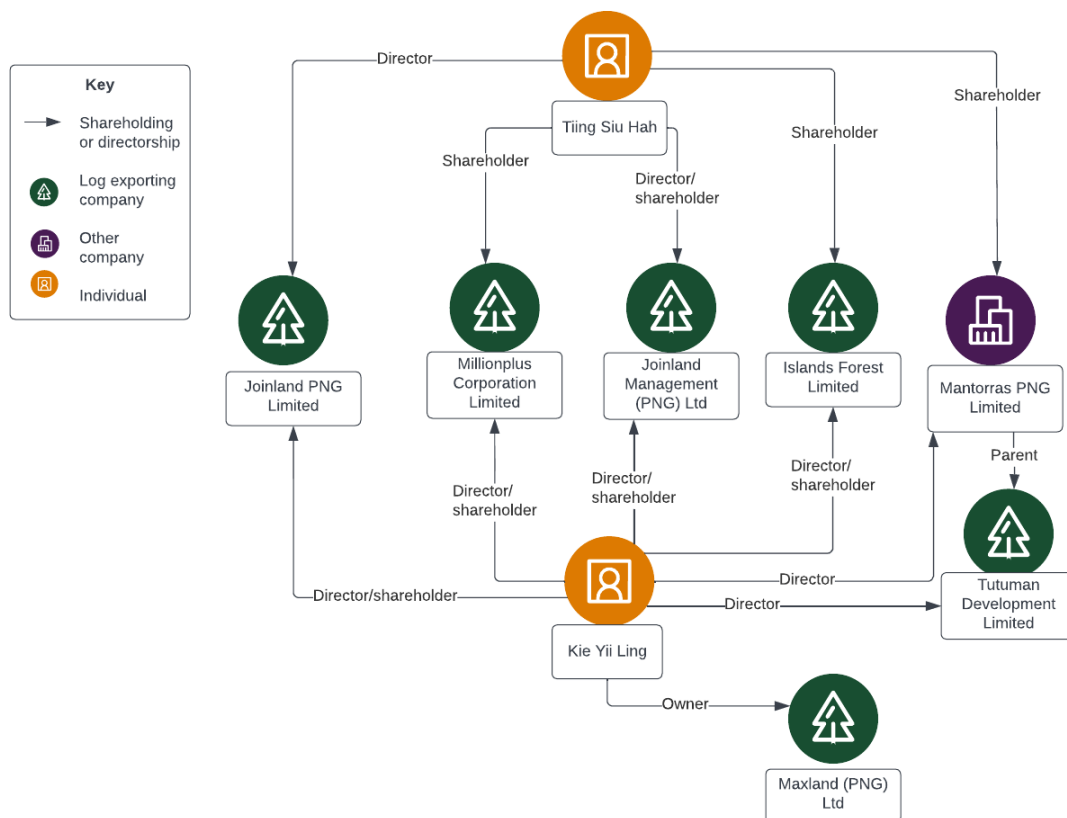
<sup>38</sup> Commissioner Nicholas Mirou (2013) *Commission of Inquiry into Special Agricultural and Business Lease, Final Report*, p. 822-865.

## JOINLAND CLUSTER

Number of concessions (1993-2021): 19

Total log exports (2019-21): 441,208

Market share of all log exports (2019-21): 5%



Another cluster of companies includes six log export companies linked by common directors and shareholders: Joinland PNG Limited, Maxland (PNG) Limited, Joinland Management (PNG) Limited, Tutuman Development Ltd, Islands Forest Limited and Millionplus Corporation Limited. Together these six companies exported 441,208m<sup>3</sup> of logs from 2019-21. The six companies have exported logs from 18 concessions in New Ireland Province and one concession in Manus. Nearly 80% of the logs exported over 2019-21 came from the Konoagil concession in New Ireland.

In addition to the six log exporting companies, Kie Yii Ling and Tiing Siu Hah are joint owners of three other companies (Joinland Properties (PNG) Limited, Multiplus Corporation Limited and Sukalito Limited).

Dato Sri' Thomas Hah Tiing Sui (Tiing Siu Hah) is the founder of the Malaysian Joinland Group.<sup>39</sup> A Global Witness investigation into Joinland's operations identified that the company

<sup>39</sup> Joinland Group, "About the Founder", <https://joinlandgroup.com.my/index.php/our-founder/> (accessed 5 October 2022)

has been involved in industries from logging, to agriculture management, to firearms, and that Mr Hah also held roles in finance companies based in Singapore and Hong Kong.<sup>40</sup>

Kie Yii Ling and Tiing Siu Hah each hold a 10% shareholding in Amanab 56 Timber Investments Ltd, which operates the Amanab Blocks 5-6 concession in West Sepik (Sandaun) Province. Alongside them, holding a 34% share in the company is Malaysian national Hung Kai Hii. According to NGO Sarawak Report, Hii (also known as Peter Hii) has been linked to numerous Rimbunan Hijau companies operating in Africa.<sup>41</sup> He was also a shareholder in Bewani Palm Oil Development Limited from 2009-10. Sarawak resident Patrick Sui Chai Chiong, who holds a 30% shareholding in Amanab 56 Timber Investments Limited, is also a director and shareholder of Evergreen Shipping Limited, as well as a Sabah based company Timberwell Berhad.<sup>42</sup> A 6% shareholding in Amanab 56 Timber Investments Ltd is held by Ah Teck Cheng, an executive of Ta Ann Group, one of Sarawak's "big six" logging companies.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Global Witness (2020) *Bending the Truth*, <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/forests/bending-the-truth/>

<sup>41</sup> Sarawak Report, *Sarawak's Logging Tycoons in Papua New Guinea*, at p. 14-15.

<sup>42</sup> Sarawak Report, *Sarawak's Logging Tycoons in Papua New Guinea*, at p. 14-15.

<sup>43</sup> Sarawak Report, *Sarawak's Logging Tycoons in Papua New Guinea*, at p. 14-15.



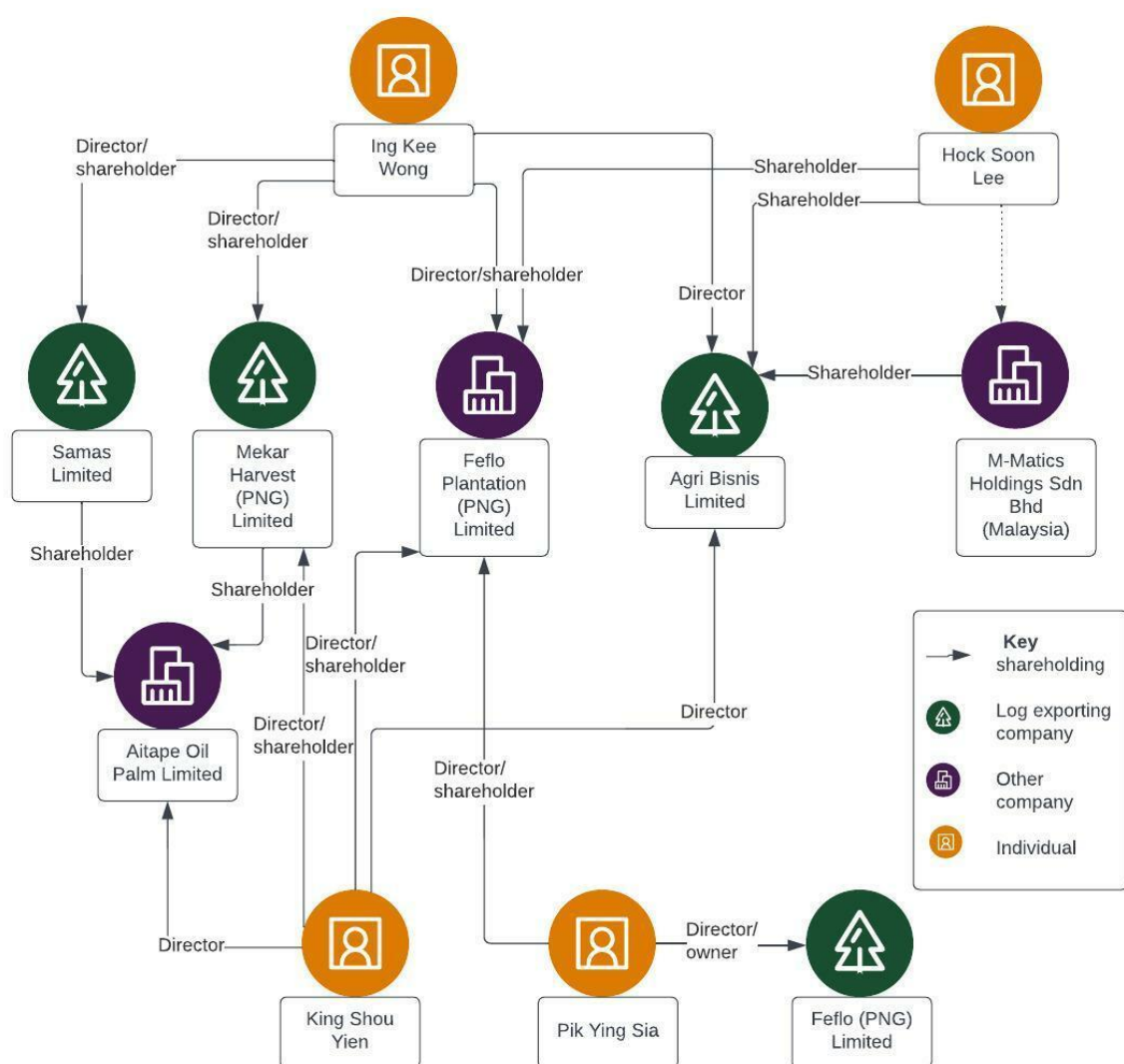
## SAMAS AND AGRI BISNIS CLUSTER

Number of concessions (1993-2021): 7

Total log exports (2019-21): 361,339

Market share of all log exports (2019-21): 4%

Another group of companies has emerged centering on Malaysian nationals Ing Kee Wong, Hock Soon Lee and King Shou Yien. This corporate cluster includes four logging enterprises (Samas Limited, Mekar Harvest (PNG) Limited, Agri Bisnis Limited, Feflo (PNG) Limited) and three companies whose names suggest an involvement with timber or palm oil (Ava Timber (PNG) Limited, Evergreen Wood (PNG) Limited and Aitape Oil Palm Limited).



As of 2018, Ing Kee Wong was the owner of Amamas Boutique Hotel in Kuching, Sarawak and head of the Sibru Golf Club, and referred to in one regional news article as a “prominent

businessman”.<sup>44</sup> Another, Hock Soon Lee, is linked to property development interests in Malaysia.<sup>45</sup> His wife (Paw Poe Choo) is a director of M-Matics Holdings, which is the majority shareholder in Agri Bisnis Limited.<sup>46</sup>

Samas Limited has two directors: Ing Kee Wong and Ing Chuang Ngui. Ngui is a co-director of Rimex (PNG) Limited and Rimex Investments Limited, alongside Chiong Ho Ling, who is the head of the Shin Yang Group. Shin Yang is one of the ‘big six’ large timber conglomerates in Sarawak.<sup>47</sup>

The four logging companies have exported logs from seven concessions in West Sepik, West New Britain and New Ireland. During 2019-21 the vast majority of logs exported were from the Aitape-Lumi Consolidated Forest Management Agreement area in West Sepik.

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<sup>44</sup> Dayak Daily, “CM: Kuching City undergoing a ‘makeover’ to attract more tourists”, *Dayak Daily*, 19 October 2018, <https://dayakdaily.com/cm-kuching-city-undergoing-a-makeover-to-attract-more-tourists/> (accessed 7 July 2022); Borneo Post “SM Sains Edge SK Paku in Cricket Final”, *Borneo Post*, 1 February 2013, <https://www.pressreader.com/malaysia/the-borneo-post/20130201/282170763529766> (accessed 7 July 2022)

<sup>45</sup> See Bloomberg, “Lee Hock Soon”, <https://www.bloomberg.com/profile/person/3024928> (accessed 28 August 2022).

<sup>46</sup> Paw Poe Choo is a director of M-Matics Holdings Sdn Bhd. See Companies Commission of Malaysia, Corporate Information Search, M-Matics Holdings Sdn Bhd (accessed 28 August 2022). Ms Choo is the wife of Edward Hock Soon Lee according to *Datin Paw Poe Choo v Tan Ah Hin & Anor* [2009] High Court of Malaysia, Suit No. D22 NCC-790-2009, available at:

[http://www.edlinghazaly.com.my/reportedcases/datinpawpoechoov.tanahhin&anor\(2010\)11ns1793.pdf](http://www.edlinghazaly.com.my/reportedcases/datinpawpoechoov.tanahhin&anor(2010)11ns1793.pdf)

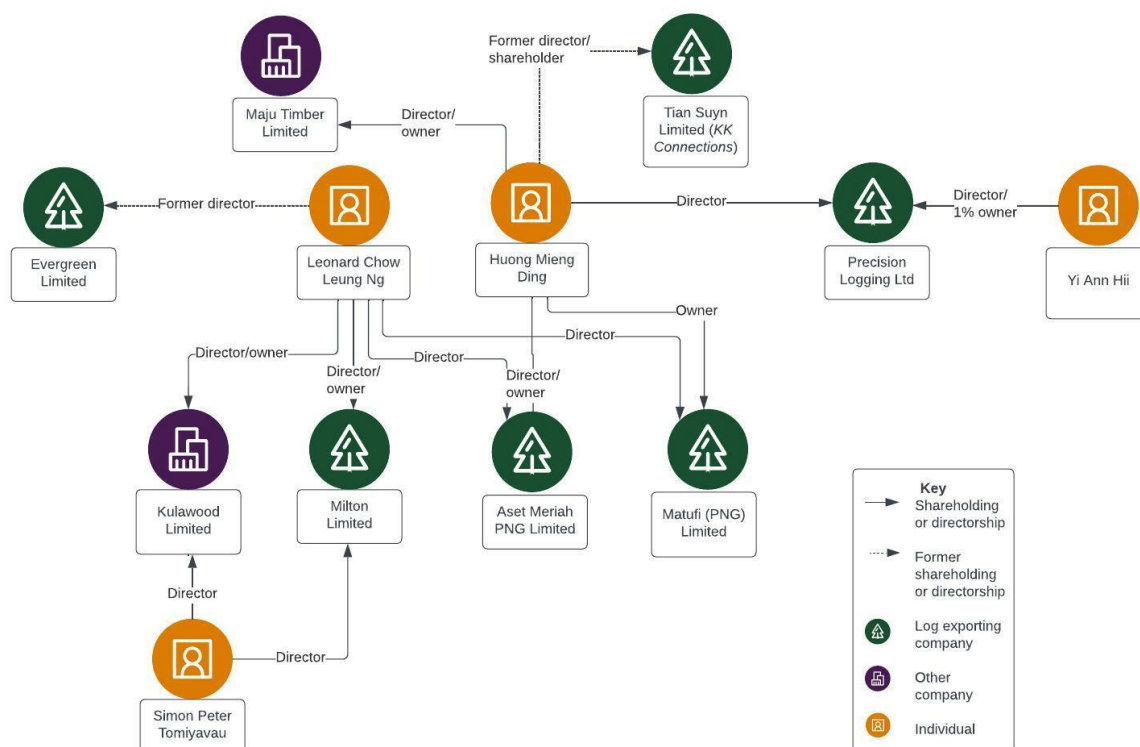
<sup>47</sup> Daniel Faeh (2011) *Development of Global Timber Tycoons in Sarawak, East Malaysia*, Switzerland: Bruno Manser Fonds, at p 51.

## ASET MERIAH, MILTON, MATUFI AND KULAWOOD CLUSTER

Number of concessions (1993-2021): 8

Total log exports (2019-21): 325,908

Market share of all log exports (2019-21): 3%



Another group of companies centres around Malaysian businessmen Leonard Chow Leung Ng and Huong Mieng Ding. Together, Ng and Ding are involved with two companies that have exported logs from PNG: Aset Meriah PNG Limited and Matufi (PNG) Limited. Between 2019 and 2021 Aset Meriah exported 197,088 m3 of logs from concessions in Morobe and West New Britain.

Ng is also a director and sole shareholder of Milton Limited and Kulawood Limited. From 2019-21 Milton exported 128,820 m3 of logs from three concessions in West New Britain province. Kulawood applied in 2018 for a permit to clear 30,000ha of forest on Woodlark Island in the Milne Bay province.<sup>48</sup> As at 2019, an investigation by US-based media outlet Mongabay was unable to determine whether this FCA had yet been granted.<sup>49</sup>

Ding is a director of Precision Logging Limited, which has in the past exported logs from Umboi (Island) Blocks 1-3 concession in Morobe. Precision Logging is part-owned by Yii Ann

<sup>48</sup> PNGi Central, "Woodlark Island Logging Scam Part 1: Ebony Woods", 19 June 2018, <https://pngicentral.org/reports/woodlark-island-logging-scam-part-1-ebony-woods> (accessed 7 July 2022); Gianluca Cerullo, "Logging, mining companies lock eyes on a biodiverse island like no other", *Mongabay*, 31 July 2019, <https://news.mongabay.com/2019/07/logging-mining-companies-lock-eyes-on-a-biodiverse-island-like-no-other/> (accessed 7 July 2022).

<sup>49</sup> Gianluca Cerullo, "Logging, mining companies lock eyes on a biodiverse island like no other".



Hii, who has been connected to several logging companies (including Low Impact Logging Limited), holds a British knighthood and was prosecuted for tax evasion in Australia.<sup>50</sup> Ding is also a former director of Tian Suyn Limited, a company linked to KK Connections.

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<sup>50</sup> See: Vanda Carson, "PNG's logging millionaire knight, Yii Ann Hii, cries poor", *The Courier Mail*, extracted in PNG Attitude, 10 April 2016, available at: <https://www.pngattitude.com/2016/04/pngs-logging-millionaire-knight-yii-ann-hii-cries-poor.html>; The Tax Objection, "Deep pockets couldn't overturn tax resident and evasion decision", *The Tax Objection*, 30 March 2020, <https://thetaxobjection.com/deep-pockets-couldnt-overturn-tax-resident-and-evasion-decision/>

## STETTIN BAY LUMBER CO. LIMITED

Number of concessions: 7

Total log exports (2019-21): 302,622

Market share of all log exports (2019-21): 3%

PNG's tenth largest exporter of tropical logs is a single company – Stettin Bay Lumber Co Limited. The vast bulk of its exports are from a single concession – the Ania Kapiura Consolidated concession in West New Britain Province, which exported 278,354 m<sup>3</sup> of logs in 2019-21. The company has also exported logs from six other concessions, all in West New Britain.

Stettin Bay Lumber Co is wholly owned by CS Bos International Limited. According to company filings, CS Bos is headquartered in Selangor, Malaysia.<sup>51</sup> The company appears to have no online presence and little is known about it despite being part of the West New Britain logging industry for 20 years. A British Virgin Islands registered company of the same name appears on the Pandora Papers database, with the beneficial owner listed as Hock Kee Hoan (Kee Hock Hoan).<sup>52</sup> A Hock Kee Hoan was listed as a director of Stettin Bay Lumber Co Limited until 2017.<sup>53</sup> The company's current director is a Malaysian national, Sing Chai Yiu. Yiu is a director or shareholder in four other PNG companies, including holding a minority shareholding in Excel Holding Limited, which was incorporated in March 2022. The majority of shares in that company are held by individuals associated with Rimbunan Hijau.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> PNG IPA, Stettin Bay Lumber Co Limited, accessed at [ipa.gov.pg](http://ipa.gov.pg) (accessed 12 July 2022).

<sup>52</sup> <https://offshoreleaks.icij.org/nodes/240241914> (accessed 12 July 2022).

<sup>53</sup> PNG IPA, Stettin Bay Lumber Co Limited, accessed at [ipa.gov.pg](http://ipa.gov.pg) (accessed 12 July 2022).

<sup>54</sup> The three largest shareholders are James Sze Yuan Lau; (Ivan) Su Chiu Lu and Ik King Tiong.

## APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF CORPORATE CLUSTERS

Corporate Cluster	Companies exporting 2019-21	Total log exports (m³) 2019-21
WTK Cluster	Active Forest Limited	1,313,709
	Amanab Forest Products Ltd	
	Madang Timbers Ltd	
	Pacific Region Development	
	Reach Niugini Construction	
	Woodbank Pacific Ltd	
KK Connections Cluster	KK Connections Ltd	991,615
	KL Connections Ltd	
	Laloani No.8 Ltd	
	Westenders Ltd	
	Chain Reaction Ltd	
Rimbunan Hijau Cluster	Island Forest Resources Ltd	924,631
	Niugini International Corporation Ltd	
	Niugini Lumber Merchants Ltd	
	Saban Enterprises Ltd	
	Sinaran Papua Ltd	
	Timbers (PNG) Ltd	
	Wawoi Guavi Timber Co Ltd	
Vanimoy Jaya Cluster	Sentawan (PNG) Ltd	748,551
	Vanimoy Jaya Ltd	
	VJ Holdings Ltd	
	Border International Timber Co. Ltd	
	Mekar (PNG) Limited	
Cakara Alam Cluster	Cakara Alam (PNG) Ltd	634,954
	Tzen Resources Ltd	
	Tzen Pacific Ltd	
Giant Kingdom - Global Elite Cluster	Summit Agriculture Limited	471,105
	Continental Alliance Limited	
	Global Elite Limited	
Joinland Cluster	Maxland (PNG) Ltd	441,208
	Millionplus Corporation Ltd	
	Joinland Management (PNG) Ltd	
	Islands Forest Limited	
Samas & Agri Bisnis	Samas Ltd	361,339
	Agri Bisnis Limited	
Aset Meriah Cluster	Aset Meriah PNG Limited	325,908
	Milton Limited	
	Matufi PNG Limited	
Stettin Bay Lumber Co Ltd	Stettin Bay Lumber Co Ltd	302,622
TOTAL		6,515,642

