

Dear Mr Holmes à Court

Congratulations on saving poor fellow my country with your posse of Climate 200 candidates. Let's believe rather than hope that enough of them win and so change the trajectory of Australia's future.

Meantime our West Papua Womens Office dares to hope that they are aware of and consider the 'Green State' launched by the West Papua Transitional Government during the 2021 UN Climate Summit in Glasgow,¹ and so distinguish themselves from the politicians who ignore our pain and suffering.

Our Green State is a framework for us to codify, as modern state law, our custodial responsibilities for our waters, air, land, plants and animals. It is buttressed by a clause in our [provisional] constitution about Ecocide ('to kill one's home'), a crime being prepared by a panel of international criminal and environmental lawyers for listing alongside Genocide, War Crimes, and Crimes Against Humanity (which are all applicable to Indonesia's sixty-year occupation).

We believe that West Papuans' right to self-determination is a 'domestic' as well as a 'foreign affairs' issue because the border between our nations—Torres' Strait and the Arafura Sea—ensures that conditions in our homeland affect Australia's climate change data and thus its science-based response. (Did you know that in the old days we used to call 'australia' *zei dagam daudai*/south side mainland).

Of course many of our climate-change symptoms are similar: rising seas, saltwater intrusion, coastal erosion, droughts, storm surges, heavy rains, ocean acidification (CLIMATES RESEARCH 2021). But after decades of illegal and criminal governance—our resources stolen, our people killed, our land and waters destroyed—there are also some that are unique to West Papua:

- Our equatorial glaciers, which have existed for 5000 years, are almost gone (DISAPPEARANCE OF THE LAST TROPICAL GLACIERS IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC WARM POOL (PAPUA, INDONESIA) APPEARS IMMINENT, NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, 2019).
- A 2,700-mile road network, Trans-Papua Highway, is destroying our unique rainforests and remote mountain regions—the epicentre of Australasia's tropical biodiversity—to increase access to minerals, fossil fuels, timber, and land for palm oil plantations (WILLIAM LAURANCE, 2019, A HIGHWAY MEGAPROJECT TEARS THE HEART OF NEW GUINEA'S RAINFOREST, YALE ENVIRONMENT 360).
- By 2030 indigenous West Papuans are calculated to be "a rapidly dwindling minority of just 28% of the population ... down from 99% in 1962, and 48.7% in 2010" (JIM ELMSLIE, 2010, SYDNEY UNIVERSITY, WEST PAPUAN DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION AND THE 2010 INDONESIAN CENSUS: "SLOW MOTION GENOCIDE" OR NOT?).

Now that West Papua is supported by 85 UN member-states pressing Indonesia to allow the UN Fact-Finding Mission it agreed to in 2017, we believe Liberal and Labor should support the Greens and Andrew Wilkie who have long recognised our legal rights. (Although it was the Menzies government that abandoned us to Indonesia in 1962, Labor also refuses to reconsider the policy).

Sir, so-called 'green' issues are elemental to our indigenous identity. The plants and animals are our kin, and our land is sacred, not a commodity. Even in the diaspora we try and uphold this way-of-being,

¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_wocZfge3E (start watching at time-code 22:00)

which is why our office in Docklands is in a five-star-energy building; and why we are so keen to develop relations with the fresh and inspiring Climate 200 candidates. (Incidentally, the Victorian candidates would be welcome to use the boardroom in our beautiful building).

One of our most inspiring politicians is Fanny Kogoya, Minister for the Environment in our West Papua Transitional Government. A courageous environmentalist at both village and national levels, hunted for years by Indonesia's Detachment 88 ('anti-terrorist' commandoes funded by Australia), refugee in Port Moresby since the assassination of her colleague Mako Tabuni—although regularly treks back over the border for meetings (short address, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbA_off7AXU)

Mr Holmes à Court, it is obvious that we need the help of intelligent well-intentioned politicians and their supporters to save our people, our environment, and our country. We would like to meet with you to discuss the above issues and how the struggles of the indigenous people of West Papua can also be part of the political process in the lead up to the election.

Yours sincerely,

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