
[Hawaii: Actions against eucalyptus expansion](#)

The big landowner Bishop Estate, which owns the sugar lands of Hamakua, has 12,000 acres planted and 4,000 acres more to expand its eucalyptus plantations. The company is also planting 5,000 acres down south in Ka'u. Also Parker Ranch is beginning to lease another 10,000 acres to eucalyptus. Additionally, concern is increasing among ranchers, since ponds are diminishing their yield because of the presence of eucalyptus monocultures, which can be intensifying the effects of drought. Ranchers are extremely upset that eucalyptus is taking over much of the land. Now the state is letting go of some of the cattle lease land to conservation efforts and not replacing available acreage for pasture. To avoid an open conflict with the government -from which they hope to obtain positive signs- many of the cattle breeders will not publicly proclaim the damage of polluted ponds or drier pastures due to the close proximity of eucalyptus plantations.

To face this invasion, the environmental NGO Friends of Hamakua -known by its successful action in 1997 against plantations planned by Prudential Insurance and Oji Paper/Marubeni in the Big Island of Hawaii- organized a successful rally on March 18th in Waimea. The central aim was to gain public opinion against a plywood and veneer plant that is being projected to use raw material coming from plantations. Friends of Hamakua is asking the County Council to carry out an economic and environmental assessment of this industry. The organization is also actively working in seeking information on alternatives to this scheme, for example, through the replanting of diverse native hardwoods. Those willing to cooperate with them can contact Linda Lyerly at: lindal@interpac.net

Article based on information from: Friends of Hamakua, 11/4/2000; 8/5/2000,