
[ABN Amro Bank clients protest against Freeport's activities in Indonesia](#)

For years, environmental and Human Rights groups have harshly criticized Freeport -a huge US-based mining company- for its polluting operations for the extraction of copper and gold in Irian Jaya (Indonesia) and in Bougainville and Ok Tedi (Papua New Guinea). The company has been also involved in cases of violence against local Ekari peasants, with the complicity of the authorities (see WRM Bulletins nr. 7 and 8).

Now the Dutch clients of ABN Amro Bank have joined the protest by signing a petition protesting Freeport mining activities in Indonesia, which are being partially financed by this bank. The Dutch environmental organization Milieudefensie presented the petition to the bank's management, demanding ABN, as one of the 40 financers of the operation, to exert its influence on the U.S. company to make its activities "clean and honest."

The bank reacted positively and called on Freeport to reach agreement with environmental organizations and the indigenous peoples of Indonesia's Irian Jaya province, the site of the mines, to conduct an independent study on the impact of Freeport's operations. ABN's director general for international loans, Herman Mulder, said that next year Freeport will conduct an independent study on the social and environmental impacts of its mining operations.

Source: Dow Jones News Service, 17/12/98