
[Asian companies invade the Amazon](#)

A report on the activities of Asian logging companies in the Brazilian Amazon, prepared by a special committee of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies will be ready by the end of August. According to Deputy Gilney Viana of Matto Grosso (Workers' Party), two dozen transnational logging companies are working in the Amazon. Those financed by Malaysian and Chinese capitals entered the area in 1995. The Malaysian WTK Group bought 1.400.000 hectares at Carauari Municipality, Amazonia State, in association with the Brazilian company Amaplac that exports plywood. A second Malaysian group -presumed to be connected to Riguma and Jau companies- has created a holding for wood industrialization together with two Brazilian firms. This shows that the main strategy of foreign logging companies is to associate with national firms, with the aim of avoiding internal criticism for their depredatory activities. However, Brazilian companies themselves should also be responsible for conserving the Amazon environment. Viana pointed out that Article 225 of the Brazilian Constitution, that declares the Amazon as being a national heritage, needs to be regulated in order to avoid this kind of abuses. Nowadays foreign economic groups can exploit at will 8 to 10 million hectares of the Amazon without any kind of control from the public authorities.

Source: Gaucha Ecologica (Radio Gaucha) and Ecologia en Destaque (Radio CBN/1120). Brazil. August 1997.