

Trees Make Delegates See REDD

What do Towering Tree Puppets, 25 Balinese Dancers and the UNFCCC have in common?

Ideally, an issue as urgent as tropical deforestation would have no problem getting media attention. Tropical deforestation cause 20% of global warming and is the leading cause of biodiversity loss. In Indonesia, deforestation accounts for 85% of its greenhouse gas emissions. So when UN diplomats meet in December of this year on the Indonesian island of Bali to confront climate change, tropical deforestation shouldn't have a problem getting attention. The problem is...diplomats with colorful badges and stacks of papers don't make very good photo opportunities.

Once again, the Tropical Forest Group (TFG) is making plans to give deforestation a photogenic face world leaders can't ignore. At COP11, TFG found that looming tree puppets being chased by chainsaws and protected by colorful local dancers draws reporters and camera crews like a free lunch draws economists. With your help, TFG is going to put tropical forest conservation where it should be – on the front page and leading the evening news, worldwide.

Reminiscent of COP11 in Montreal, TFG is sponsoring performances, speakers and high-impact visual props to attract media coverage to REDD. Here's the line-up:

Tri Hita Karana Means "Harmony Between Man, Trees and God"

TFG has commissioned one of Indonesia's most famous choreographers to develop and perform a brand new Tri Hita Karana dance at the negotiations. Invariably spectacular and occasionally controversial, I Sura Nyoman will make forest conservation an issue that can't be ignored. World renowned I Sura Nyoman will lead Balinese dancers in a world-premier performance on the importance of harmony between humans and nature. TFG is in dialogue with COP13 organizers to have Pak Sura and his dance troupe perform in front of the convention center during the first week of the negotiations.

Colossal Colorful Trees Looming over the Convention Center

TFG has commissioned a towering tree-art installation for COP13. Thirteen* beautiful silk trees will billow over the negotiations for two weeks. The 13 trees will change daily in their appearance, based on whether the talks are going well, or poorly, for tropical forests. (Think of the Vatican – white smoke from the Sistine Chapel signals a new Pope, while black smoke signals negotiations by the Cardinals continue.) The thirteen silk trees (thanks to Boxtales Theatre Company) will be inflated with solar and/or carbon neutral power (thanks to Solforce Solar Systems) and will be visible to every delegate, observer and media crew at the talks. TFG staff and affiliates will be on hand to explain how the

diplomacy inside is reflected in the appearance of the trees outside. Effective, Informed Media Advisories and Updates

During the talks, the TFG delegation will provide ongoing detailed coverage of the UN talks to the outside world. Yale University's School of Forestry is sponsoring 15 graduate students to help TFG merge our visual props with on-going analyses, media advisories, blogs and updates. Together, TFG's local dancers, towering trees, and timely policy analysis and advocacy will hold governments accountable for the decisions they take that impact tropical forests.

* Why 13 Trees?. Bali is the 13th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC. Approximately 13 million hectares (30 million acres) of tropical forests are destroyed each year. And the first day after COP13 talks –when there will or will not be new global support for conserving tropical forests - is the 13th of December.