UK P&I CLUB

Ship Type: All **Trade Area: Indonesia**

Bulletin 238 - 03/02 - Transportation of Illegally Sourced Timber - Ship Arrests - Indonesia

It has been brought to our attention that the Indonesian Navy off southern Kalimantan have intercepted and arrested three ships. Each of the ships was carrying illegally sourced timber. All three vessels are "Chinese" and are reported to be carrying 25,300m^3 of illegal timber between them.

The ships remain under detention as evidence in a case presently being put together by the Indonesian Police. There is also the possibility of legal action against the master and crews. The owners face considerable financial loss and the crews continue to suffer on-going detention. The owner of the timber company responsible for felling the trees stands accused of contributing to the illegal destruction of the world-renowned Tanjung Puting National Park.

In October 2001, the Indonesian Government implemented a log export ban. As a result, all vessels transporting logs out of Indonesian waters face the threat of detention.

According to Indonesia's Foreign Minister, a lack of co-ordination among the relevant agencies was believed to be the cause of rampant tree felling and timber smuggling. He claims that 10 million m^3 of timber is smuggled out of the country each year.

In a circular to the International Chamber of Shipping, the EIA (Environmental Investigation Agency) - an international non-governmental agency, which has been working for 5 years in Indonesia to combat illegal logging - states that Indonesia's tropical forests are being rapidly destroyed and around 2 million hectares (20,000 km^2) are lost every year. One of the primary causes of this deforestation is illegal logging, which, it is estimated, accounts for around 70% of all timber cut in Indonesia.

We would like to advise Members to be particularly aware of the dangers of transporting illegal timber from Indonesia.

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