

24 January 2020

Indonesia: Environmental journalist Philip Jacobson detained

On 21 January 2020, environmental journalist **Philip Jacobson** was formally arrested after being detained in the city of Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan, on the island of Borneo on 17 December 2019, over an alleged visa issue.

[Philip Jacobson](#) is an award winning editor for the news outlet Mongabay, which is a non-profit environmental science and conservation news platform that produces original reporting in English, Indonesian and Spanish. In his capacity as editor, Philip has worked extensively on environmental issues, including issues of indigenous peoples.

On 21 January 2020, journalist Philip Jacobson was formally arrested and taken into custody by Indonesian immigration officers for allegedly violating the terms of his business visa. The journalist was in Palangkaraya to meet with the local chapter of the Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN), an indigenous rights advocacy group.

On 16 December 2019, Philip Jacobson attended a hearing between the Central Kalimantan parliament and the AMAN. The following day, he was to fly out of Palangkaraya, but was prevented from doing so by immigration authorities, who arrived at his guesthouse, seized his passport, interrogated him for four hours and ordered him to remain in the city pending their investigation. He was asked to go in for questioning the following day, when he learnt that someone had photographed him at the parliament building and reported him to immigration.

Front Line Defenders is concerned about the growing intolerance and violence against those working on environmental rights in Indonesia. It condemns the detention and judicial harassment of Philip Jacobson as it believes that the environmental journalist is being targeted solely as a result of his peaceful and legitimate work.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Indonesia to:

1. Take all necessary measures to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of Philip Jacobson and guarantee his physical and psychological security and integrity;
2. Guarantee in all circumstances that those working on environmental rights in Indonesia are able to carry out their legitimate activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions, including judicial harassment.