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"Histories of Protected Areas: Internationalisation of Conservationist Values and their Adoption in the Netherlands Indies (Indonesia)"

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Jepson, Paul, and Robert J. Whittaker. "Histories of Protected Areas: Internationalisation of Conservationist Values and their Adoption in the Netherlands Indies (Indonesia)." *Environment and History* 8, no. 2 (May, 2002): 129–172. doi:10.3197/096734002129342620 . National parks and wildlife sanctuaries are under threat both physically and as a social ideal in Indonesia following the collapse of the Suharto New Order regime (1967–1998). Opinion-makers perceive parks as representing elite special interest, constraining economic development and/or indigenous rights. The authors asked what was the original intention and who were the players behind the Netherlands Indies colonial government policy of establishing nature 'monuments' and wildlife sanctuaries. Based on a review of international conservation literature, three inter-related themes are explored: a) the emergence in the 1860–1910 period of new worldviews on the human-nature relationship in western culture; b) the emergence of new conservation values and the translation of these into public policy goals, namely designation of protected areas and enforcement of wildlife legislation, by international lobbying networks of prominent men; and 3) the adoption of these policies by the Netherlands Indies government. This paper provides evidence that the root motivations of protected area policy are noble, namely: 1) a desire to preserve sites with special meaning for intellectual and aesthetic contemplation of nature; and 2) acceptance that the human conquest of nature carries with it a moral responsibility to ensure the survival of threatened life forms. Although these perspectives derive from elite society of the American East Coast and Western Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, they are international values to which civilised nations and societies aspire. It would be a tragedy if Indonesia rejects these social values and protected areas because subsequent management polices have associated protected areas with aspects of the colonial and New Order regime that contemporary society seeks to reform. All rights reserved. © 2002 The White Horse Press

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