

*Advocacy toolkit case studies*

# PROTECTING NATIONAL FORESTS IN HONDURAS

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**THEMES:**

**Environment**  
**Land and property**

**ADVOCACY APPROACHES:**

**Mobilising people and campaigning**  
**Using the media**  
**Working in alliances and coalitions**

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The government of Honduras presented a proposal for reform of forestry legislation that would have allowed large sections of national forest to be sold to logging companies who could choose whether or not to reforest the land. The importance of Honduras's national forests to poor farmers and indigenous groups living in these areas was ignored.

Seeing the potentially devastating consequences, Tearfund partner Asociación para una Sociedad más Justa (Association for a More Just Society) joined with representatives from various sectors (indigenous groups, cooperatives, an evangelical network, agricultural ecologists and farmers' groups) to form an alliance to push for amendments to the proposed legislation. They hired consultants to analyse the proposal and present reasonable counter-proposals to the government. They also initiated a media campaign to educate the public about the problem and to pressure the government into negotiating.

The government agreed that no reform of the forestry legislation would be brought to the Honduran congress until it had been approved by a committee consisting of representatives from the alliance, as well as the government and logging companies. The alliance was involved in negotiations within this committee and continued to educate the public, the media and committee members. Most of their proposals were accepted, and marginalised groups such as poor farmers, cooperatives and indigenous groups were able to participate for the first time in the making of a law that affected them directly, although indigenous people still felt that their rights needed to be taken into account more explicitly.