

Greenpeace says Canadian forestry lawsuit aims to silence critics

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Greenpeace on Tuesday urged major publishing houses to not buy paper from a major Canadian forestry company that is suing the activist group.

The multimillion dollar lawsuit that Resolute Forest Products filed against Greenpeace last year is "aimed at muzzling civil society" and

"intimidating critics," the environmental group said.

Greenpeace urged publishers such as Hachette, Penguin Random House, HarperCollins and Simon & Schuster to refrain from buying paper for their books from the [forestry](#) giant in order to show "support for defenders of freedom of expression throughout the world."

Resolute is seeking Can\$300 million (US\$220 million) in damages from Greenpeace for alleged defamation, intimidation of customers, and related harms.

Greenpeace warned that a Resolute victory would "create a dangerous precedent" that could "encourage other companies around the world to use similar tactics against their detractors."

Forestry is one of Canada's largest industries.

In a statement to AFP Tuesday, Resolute said it is holding Greenpeace accountable for what it called a campaign of misinformation.

"Real peoples' lives have been impacted," said spokesman Seth Kursman. "People have lost their jobs and the socio-economic repercussions in communities has been significant."

A history of lawsuits

The lawsuit is hardly the first launched by Resolute in a longstanding row with [environmental activists](#) and indigenous peoples.

In 2014 it sued the Rainforest Alliance after the group issued a negative audit of Resolute's logging practices, and urged that the certificate stating that it adheres to best forestry practices be suspended.

Resolute's troubles intensified the following year with the Forest Stewardship Council, an international non-profit that promotes responsible forestry management.

The FSC denounced Resolute's condemnation of activists that accused the company of being a "forest destroyer" responsible for a "caribou death spiral and extinction."

Following the controversy one of Europe's largest publishers, Germany's Axel Springer, stopped buying paper from Resolute.

The Axel Springer said at the time that it no longer felt comfortable supporting a forestry firm that was battling aboriginals and environmental activists.

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