



**Friends of
the Earth
International**

FRIENDS OF THE FORESTS

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Bulletin of the Forest Program of Friends of the Earth International

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1. introduction

Welcome to the third Bulletin of Friends of the Earth International Forest Program. Herein, we present briefings on some joint initiatives that are helping us to consolidate as a work team. We present a summary of the FoEI Forest Program strategy meeting held in Penang, Malaysia, some of our work in the forest certification policy review, and urgent actions and reports of FoE groups. Regretfully, the forests and the communities that depend on the forests continue under the aggression of the globalized markets and the interests of big corporations. This situation frequently leads to violent actions against our campaigners, as the case of the threats suffered by WALHI/FoE Indonesia campaigners. Industrial and destructive logging, camouflaged as "Sustainable Forest Management" or "Selective Logging", continues to be one of the most harmful activities to the communities and the forests. Recently, an article in Science magazine conclusively illustrated the impacts that these operations generate on the Brazilian Amazonian rainforest. We also present testimonies of indigenous peoples, as the case of the Penan on the Borneo Island. The expansion of monocultures is yet another activity that generates our deepest concern, whether for the production of pulp, animal feed, biofuels, or "Carbon Credits". The monocultures are displacing forests, agri-ecological systems, and their communities in areas where dramatic conflicts over land and severe environmental impacts already exist. The manner in which trade negotiations are impacting on forests is another issue we are introducing hereinbelow.

Our bulletin possesses the twofold function of keeping us informed on the progress of our work as a program and serving as a denouncing tool. However, we are not completely satisfied as we do not show an improved balance with propositive information, wherein experiences of communitarian control of resources, sustainable, local and communitarian

management of forests would have a more significant space. We owe you this task. Also, the great work of the FoE African groups in forest related issues is another misbalance of this edition that we promise to compensate in our next bulletin.

Finally, we would like to remind you that this bulletin is complemented by documents, reports, and discussions posted on our *insite* -<https://members.foei.org/>. Please, do use this tool to achieve a better coordination within the forest work group and develop a common conceptual base. To access the *insite* contact Sisi Nutt <sisi@foei.org>

For “constructive” criticism, contact Javier Baltodano <licania@racsa.co.cr> or Isaac Rojas <gavitza@racsa.co.cr>. For funny matters and contributions, contact Marta Zogbi <marta@foei.org>

2. forest strategy meeting in penang

From September 30th to October 3rd, the FoEI Forest Program held its first Strategy Meeting. In a previous meeting, held in London in March 2004, the very existence of the Forest Program was held in doubt. Thereafter, with a small meeting during the BGM in Croatia and the work guidelines agreed thereupon, we commenced discussions via e-mail.

The meeting in Penang allowed us to reach many objectives. Firstly, we initiate discussions about the priorities in our work guidelines following the meetings in London and Croatia. We can now say that we count on a common conceptual base to go even deeper into the discussions. Secondly, we defined basic agreements, implying common positions that we can represent and defend within and without the Federation. And lastly, we got to know each other and mutually work towards reaching agreements, building our workspace with a lot of respect, and seeking to understand the driving realities to realize common tasks. Through the presentations of the national situations, we were able to learn about the work, in forest related issues, carried out by the participating organizations. The discussions addressed issues, such as, community based forest management, collective rights, logging, certification schemes, and plantations. The International Coordination presented an Activities Report and wielded the opportunity to address internal aspects, such as, the search for funding for the international tasks. Moreover, we designed a work structure composed by the international and regional co-ordinations. The report of the Strategy Meeting will be circulated in English and Spanish, as of the first week of December and, of course, posted on the *insite*.

In Penang, the possibility of a joint proposal of the forest working groups to apply for a European subsidy was also discussed. We thank WALHI/FoE Indonesia and Milieudefensie/FoE Netherlands for performing the coordination of such a task, given the short time frame for the preparation thereof.

After the meeting, Javier and Isaac remade two of the documents discussed in Penang, namely, the document on the certification and the one on collective rights, both of which are already posted on our *insite*, in English and Spanish, to prompt your comments so that we can continue the discussions. The discussion on collective rights should be concluded by February 2006. Thusly, please log on our *insite* and do not be ashamed to comment them as much as you can!



Meeting with leaders of the campaign against the company Toba Pulp Lestar in Porsea, North Sumatra

Longgena Ginting, ex-director of WALHI/FoE Indonesia and co-coordinator of FoEI's IFI Program, invited us to a trip to the North of Sumatra, while taking the opportunity of our visit to the region. As coordinators of the FoEI Forest Program, we feel very fortunate to have had this opportunity to see the forest work of WALHI/FoE Indonesia closely and learnt more from the situation in Indonesia and the rest of South East

Asia. The experiences we shared very accurately illustrate the principal issues discussed throughout the Strategy Meeting in Penang. The ensuing report has also been posted on our *insite* in English and Spanish and will be in circulation through our forest e-mail list.

3. certification

Certification, as a market tool, is a controversial issue within our Federation. Basically, and following the discussions on the vision and mission of FoEI during the EGM in Penang, certifications formed part of a set of tools that have been used to justify the expansion of the Market and negotiate, with corporations, some mitigation measures, i.e., environmentally and socially healthier ways to realize the exploitation and, in most of the cases, the destruction of valuable resources. On the other hand, some organizations of FoEI are directly working with these market mechanisms and believe that responsible certifications -FSC is probably the most acknowledged certification scheme within the environmental sector- are an essential part of the work performed in some specific regions.

In our recent Strategy Meeting within the Forest Program, we attained a kind of consensus. In that, certification is not an issue to prioritize within our joined work, except in the cases that certification interferes with local efforts and demands. We consider that, because of the context of the FSC, the policy review process was urgently needed, given the numerous denounces and documented cases that depict the interference with campaigns and local demands of certifications of large-scale plantations in the countries of the South. We also consider that this is an excellent opportunity to think carefully of some of the deep structural problems of large monoculture plantations and the market mechanism of the forest certification. Within such a context, we discussed a proposal for a position document, i.e., "Policy Revision Process for the Certification of Large-Scale Tree Monoculture Plantations: FSC Responsibilities." This document is available on our *insite* in English and Spanish. We invite you to post your comments therein so as to enable us to finish its construction.

The International Coordination has been realizing a follow up of the meetings of the Work Group of the Policy Review Process for the Certification of Plantations –a very slow process that has conferred little progress from the 3 meetings that were held throughout 2005. However, at a recent meeting of the Working Group, some of the items that we have been campaigning arose. Please notice that the official report of the third meeting will be circulating shortly, namely:

- The difference between forests and plantations is strengthening. Albeit many regions, specially in the North, do not easily contemplate a difference between forests and plantations, in the most of the cases in the South, this difference is more notorious and should be clearly established.
- There is a need to define the ways to further pursue certifications, i.e., via usage of one set of principles for forests and another for plantations, or usage of like principles for both. Stemming from a socio-environmental perspective, the aforementioned is relevant as, a) by using two sets of principles, there is a risk that the principles to certify plantations will be softer and more permissive than the principles to certify forests, b) by using only one set of principles for both forests and plantations, throughout the forest management practices, the reduction of biodiversity and the homogenization of the level of plantations might befall as the ensuing risks.
- That certifications should COMPLY with a set of principles is clearly understood. Any and all operations that do not comply with said principles should be decertified. In any case, the definition of these principles cannot be held as an easy task: a second and more technical phase will certainly be required.
- Some have prompted the necessity for including a system of social planning that would integrally and specifically encompass social issues as part of the principles for certification. Discussions thereto are also addressing very sensitive issues, such as,

freedom of labor association, subcontracting, communitarian access to forest resources, labor health, tenure and land conflicts, and the like.

- Ways for consultation and participation in the certification processes have been discussed, which have defined 3 basic elements: a) common agreement for the negotiation, b) adequate resources –economic and technical resources, and c) legitimacy: transparency of the process.

Contact Javier Baltodano <licania@racsa.co.cr> Forest Program International Coordinator

4. urgent action! colombian congress is about to pass a new forestry law.

Sixty-three million of the world's 3.5 billion hectares of forests are located in Colombia. These forests host one of the highest levels of biodiversity in the world and provide a natural habitat to a wide range of cultures. They also function as a natural water and climate-regulator, and are the habitat of complex and irreplaceable forms of life. These precious forests are under threat from a series of forestry exploitation projects set forth by the USAID through its Colombian Forestry Program.

Instead of working to protect its heritage, the Colombian Government wants to convert it into a commodity for the benefit of large international investors, in particular the USA and its so-called Free Trade Agreements -FTAs. The construction of roads and ports, the mining and bioprospection -the hunt for biological riches in areas of high biological diversity, and the expansion of large-scale palm oil plantations are encroaching on these areas. The Forestry Law, currently being debated in the Colombian Congress, will make matters worse. This is the last chance to put a halt to it given that the Senate has already passed the bill.

CENSAT Agua Viva/FoE Colombia and many civil society groups in Colombia are fighting this law and need your help. Hence, send a letter to the Colombian authorities, wherein you express your concerns. FoEI has opened a space for a cyberaction that you can easily use for this purpose. For more information or to send a message, log on

<http://www.foei.org/cyberaction/colombia.php>

Contact: Paula Alvarez Roa <agua@censat.org> FoE Colombia

5. walhi's campaigners receive death threats

Our campaigners in Walhi/FoE Indonesia who investigate illegal logging in Aceh, Kutacane and the Leuser National Park are receiving death threats and intimidations in pursuit of preventing them from monitoring logging sites in the area. The first threats were made after the Walhi's campaigners had realized a documentary movie on illegal logging in Kutacane last month. Deforestation in that province contributed to the recent flooding that claimed 10 lives and left hundreds of others homeless. Minister of Forestry, Malam Sambat Kaban, has also blamed rampant illegal logging and widespread falling of local trees known as kemiri for the fatal floods. Posted in The Jakarta Post

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/detailnational.asp?fileid=20051116.C05&irec=4>

6. wrm plantations meeting

Nucleo Amigos da Terra Brasil/FoE Brazil, WALHI and the FoEI Forest Coordination participated in the meeting organized by WRM in Victoria, Espiritu Santu (Brasil) from the 21st to the 25th of November. Thereat, many case studies that showed the reality of plantations in different parts of the world were presented. Among others, the destruction of rainforests, violations to local communities and indigenous peoples collective rights, human rights violations, and the relation of plantations and neoliberal market mechanisms that

present themselves as an alternative for environmental protection were shown. The role of international actors, the certification schemes of large-scale plantations and the impacts of GMO trees were analyzed too. The meeting also helped us to continue with our work on building alliances in the context of the Mumbay-Porto Alegre Initiative (see the insite). A more detailed report on this meeting will be circulating and posted next December. Contact Isaac Rojas <gavitza@racsa.co.cr> Forest Program International Co-ordinator

7. logging forests

selective logging of ancient forest is not sustainable

Finally someone from the scientific community directly addressed an issue that we have been denouncing and that was specifically discussed during the last FoEI Forest Meeting: "There is NO science" behind the myth of "sustainable forest management". The matter is much simpler, namely, the tractors and the big concessions should leave the forest, open a space for more artisan, environmentally softer community-based forest uses, and their relationship with local markets. The idea that selective logging of ancient forests can be performed in an environmentally sensitive fashion is a dangerous myth that threatens large ancient forest expanses wherever they occur, but particularly in Canada, Brazil and the Democratic Republic of Congo – please bear in mind that 60% of the world's natural forests are currently found in only seven countries, i.e., Russia, the US, Brazil, China, Canada, Indonesia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In October, the leading scientific journal "Science" published a report that shows the results of a new satellite survey of the Amazon Basin in Brazil. The results indicate that selective logging is destroying the Amazon rainforest twice as fast as formerly regarded. This annual logging of pristine rainforest represents an area equal to that of the state of Connecticut. First-time selective logging of ancient forests –be it illegal or "certified"– is not sustainable in any meaningful ecological sense because sunlight dries out the forest floor, which along with roads, causes more forest fires, whilst heavy equipment damages the soil. Selectively logged ancient forests are diminished forever. These forests, which contain different species in various abundances, changed size classes, differed in forest structures, lost genetic diversity and are hindered in important soil microbes."

The report also pinpoints climate change as one of the greatest concerns when primary forests are selectively logged because forest debris left behind decomposes and releases roughly 100 million tons of carbon into the atmosphere in the Amazon alone per annum. This carbon release just by selective primary forest logging is enough to alter climate change forecasts on a global scale. ("Selective logging causes widespread destruction of Brazil's Amazon rainforest, study finds" http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2005-10/su-slc101705.php)

Forests.org calls upon those pushing ancient forest "sustainable logging" to get off the gravy train, heed the science, and start working fully to protect ancient forests which are the foundation of the global ecosystem. Forests.org has been instrumental over the past decades in highlighting the incompatibility of industrial logging –legal or illegal, selective or certified– and maintaining large natural ancient forest landscapes required for global ecological sustainability. Unfortunately, most major environmental groups, including Greenpeace and WWF, still cling to the notion that environmental benefits can come from first time industrial harvest of old-growth forests. And increasingly, major environmental financiers, such as, the Pew Trusts and the Tides Foundation, are funding organizations that support ancient forest logging rather than efforts to end such practices, appropriately promote scaled community eco-forestry, and establish large community supported protected areas. For more information on Forests.org's "End Ancient Forest Logging" campaign, please see <http://forests.org/campaigns/> >. To protest plans for increased selective logging in British

Columbia, Canada's ancient temperate rainforests see:
<http://forests.org/action/alert.asp?id=greatbear> .

Foe Melbourne supports selective logging only in regrowth forests, see <http://www.forest-network.org/Docs/AlternativeVision.htm>

penan's plight requires a stop to logging and plantations

FoEI sounded the alarm bells for the Penan people as our Extraordinary General Meeting came to a close in Penang in early October. Continuous logging in the Sarawak area is destroying the forest resources vital for the survival of the Penan, who already live in extreme poverty with scarce access to proper housing, food, clean water, education and healthcare. The long awaited efforts to alleviate problems promised by the Malaysian government have not yet taken place. FoEI urges the Malaysian government to act on the Penan's demands, including the recognition of ancestral and native customary rights on their lands, rights for the Penan to continue to obtain their food and produce from their forests, and the cessation of logging in their areas. FoEI has opened a space for a cyberaction that you can easily use for this purpose. For more information and to send a message, visit:

<http://www.foei.org/cyberaction/penan.php>

Contact: Meena Raman meenaco@pd.jaring.my FoE Malaysia

rainforest for furniture and building products

As a result of Greenpeace UK actions and crime file report released on the use of illegal PNG logs for plywood made in China and exported to UK, Wolseley Build Centers –a major purchaser of Chinese plywood identified in the report as a Partner in Crime in forest destruction in Papua New Guinea– is moving *all* Chinese plywood from their 200 stores in the UK, and have suspended *all* further purchases of Chinese ply!! This means that none of the top three builder's merchants will be retailing Chinese plywood with logs sourced from PNG, Russia, or Africa. Link: <http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/PNGForestCrimeFile>

Maan Vstävät Ry/FoE Finland has also conducted a survey on the use of tropical wood in furniture and building products on sale among retailers. Southeast Asian tree species, coming through China form a major part of garden furniture markets. Merbau from West Papua is commonly used by Finnish export-oriented floor makers. They plan to publish the data and start dialogue with one of the biggest retailers, Kesko, in view of the upcoming garden furniture season. Contact Otto Miettinen <oto@iki.fi> FoE Finland

8. targeting palm oil and soy monocultures impacts on forests

oil for ape scandal

Last September, FoE EWNI launched the 'Oil for Ape Scandal' report with the conclusion that, without urgent intervention, the palm oil trade could cause the extinction of Asia's only great ape within 12 years. Palm oil is found in many products on supermarket shelves, from bread to margarine, and from lipstick to soap. The report finds that almost 90 percent of orangutan habitat in Indonesia and Malaysia has now been destroyed. Some experts think that an estimated 5,000 orangutans perish as a result every year. The researchers found that palm oil plantations have now become the primary cause of the orangutans' decline, wiping out its rainforest home in Borneo and Sumatra. The forest fires that ravaged the island of Sumatra in August were mostly set by palm oil companies clearing land to set up their plantations. It is estimated that one third of the orangutan population in Borneo was killed by the forest fires of 1998. New evidence shows that orangutan rescue centers in Indonesia are overflowing with orphaned baby orangutans rescued from forests that are being cleared to make way for palm oil plantations. The Indonesian Government is now planning to convert a large part of Tanjung Puting National Park –the world's most famous protected area for orangutans– into a palm oil plantation. Note that the Indonesian Government signed the

Kinshasa Declaration, an action plan backed by the UK Government to save the world's great apes from extinction.

Despite being warned for years by environmental groups that palm oil plantations are associated with rainforest destruction and human right abuses, most UK companies do not even know where their palm oil comes from. The story of corporate failure on palm oil is repeated across Europe. The European Union is the world's biggest buyer of palm oil.

Pictures of orangutans can be downloaded from:

http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/images/orangutan_report/ Full report:

www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/oil_for_ape_full.pdf Contact Rully Syumanda

<roelly@walhi.or.id> FoE Indonesia

dutch industrial meat production causes deforestation of amazon

A research commissioned by Milieudefensie/FoE Netherlands and Cordaid shows that the Netherlands are importing large quantities of soy from the Brazilian Amazon via companies that are involved in slavery, illegal land acquisition, and cutting of tropical forests. On November 4th, the organizations protested before the 'Nordmoritz', which was unloading a huge shipment of soy from the Amazon region for soy importer Cargill. The organizations placed a boat bearing an enormous banner that read 'Stop forest destruction for meat production!' in front of the bulk carrier Nordmoritz in the port of Amsterdam. The soybeans on the Nordmoritz come directly from companies involved in the social and ecological problems that are taking place in Brazil, as stated in the report.

The explosive growth of soy cultivation is the most important driver of deforestation in the Amazon region. Approximately 80% of Dutch soy imports are used to produce animal food, mainly for pigs and poultry. After China, the Netherlands is the largest soy importer in the world. Contact Danielle van Oijen <danielle.van.oijen@milieudefensie.nl> FoE Netherlands

cargill and temasek growing interests in palm oil

CARGILL, a giant food purveying corporation and Temasek Holdings, an Asian investment company headquartered in Singapore, have acquired CDC Group palm oil plantation interests in Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. CDC Group is the UK Government's pipeline for investing in the private sector in developing economies and CELCOR/FoE Papua New Guinea has been working for the CDC campaign.

The palm oil plantation interests include a plantation in Kalimantan, Indonesia and a majority shareholding in four other plantations in the region (in Higturu, Oro province, Milne Bay, and Poliamba, West New Britain). The new venture is registered in Singapore as CTP Holdings Pte Ltd (CTP). Cargill is the majority shareholder of CTP and will assume managerial and operational responsibilities. Palm oil demand is increasing globally and the acquisition thereof represents a significant development in the plantation business for Cargill. Demand for palm oil has almost doubled in the past decade. Global consumption now stands at about 30 million tons, making palm oil the world's largest vegetable crop after soy. Contact Damien Ase <dase@celcor.org.pg> FoE PNG

saving the climate by destroying the rainforest?

To meet Kyoto Protocol Commitments, various European and other governments are encouraging the use of biomass as fuel –biofuel– for transportation and electrical power. Biofuels are made of plant oils, crop wastes or wood. They may be used to run vehicles and power plants. They are mostly carbon neutral as their burning returns the carbon that the plants extracted during growth to the atmosphere. Switching from fossil fuels to biodiesel is promoted as a solution to climate change. Nevertheless, serious concerns as to the impact of biofuels upon tropical rainforests, land, and the poor exist.

An unregulated rush towards biofuels will lead to more natural forest loss and fragmentation, increased pressure upon endangered primary forests, and more monoculture, herbicide laden and genetically modified tree plantations. Using limited lands to feed people is likely to shift to using said lands to feed automobiles. Two material tropical crops that are suitable as biofuels are palm oil, grown mostly in Southeast Asia, and soy, grown mostly in South America. Both are already grown for the food industry, enjoy favorable prices, have existing markets, and are economically attractive. Both are already amongst the world's major causes of tropical forest destruction. Moreover, further stimulation of the palm oil and soy markets for biofuel will surely result in massive new waves of irreversible destruction of tropical rainforests and savannas. The use of vegetable waste and regionally produced biomass is more appropriate. The world would be better off in pursuing energy. In October, a protest email to support the campaign against soy and palm oil plantations for biofuels and the destruction of the rainforest was launched.

For more information go to <http://forests.org/action/alert.asp?id=biofuel>

Malaysia, the world's top palm oil producer, will make a palm oil-based fuel a mandatory additive at petrol pumps by 2008. Said palm oil-based fuel is composed of 95 percent diesel and 5 percent processed palm oil. Biofuels are taking on new importance worldwide as the cost of petroleum products rise and countries seek to cut emissions so as to meet the UN Kyoto Protocol. Burning of the biofuel is considered to be carbon dioxide neutral and does not require emissions rights. Malaysia produces less than 14 million tons of palm oil a year. More than 12 million tons are exported. *Story Date:* 7/10/2005 All Contents © Reuters News Service 2005. Contact Catherine Pearce Co-ordinator International Climate Change Program, and Theivanai Amarthalingam <theiva@streamyx.com> FoE Malaysia

FoE Finland will start a campaign on biofuels. The Government owned Energy Company Neste is going to initiate a large-scale production of biofuels based on palm oil imports from Indonesia and/or Malaysia. Contact Otto Miettinen, , <oto@iki.fi> FoE Finland

9. efforts to transform the european paper industry

The world's forests supply each European with 4 times as much paper as that supplied to the average person in the world. Europeans have a responsibility to the world through their paper consumption and paper production. For the first time, a cross European NGO coalition –including TRN, Greenpeace, WWF, several German NGOs, and other national FoE groups– on paper presents a Common Vision on transforming the European paper industry. FoE Finland has been part of the formulation of this European paper vision and is calling upon groups from inside and outside Europe to sign the document. The document addresses the negative effects of the paper industry and the forms of production that are unacceptable, such as, old-growth logging, ECF bleaching, exploitation in areas of social conflict, and the establishment of plantations that disregard social considerations. The document also contains a work plan thereto.

This initiative has been presented to other NGOs at the FME Meeting in Brussels and will be launched at the Paper World Conference in Frankfurt during the third week of January. The idea thereof is to organize an International Paper Action Day on January 25 and later launch the initiative per se on January 27. Ideally, every NGO that signed the Common Vision will organize a local action or submit a press release so as to target pulp and paper industry. FoE Finland will wield its launch to highlight the responsibility of the Finnish paper industry and address the Indonesian situation. The Common Vision paper and more information related to this action are posted on the *insite*. Contact Otto Miettinen, <oto@iki.fi> FoE Finland

10. pulp mill plants: source of environmental catastrophes, social and political conflicts in the south

no pulp mills in kalimantan

Global 2000/FoE Austria is collaborating with Walhi/FoE Indonesia to prevent the construction of a pulp mill in Kalimantan, Indonesia. The Austrian United Fiber System (UFS) is pursuing the destruction of 113,000 hectares of natural rainforest for the construction of the plant. This will also intensify lumbering in nearby areas by locals as they will be hindered from their current source of wood. There is a call for signing a letter to protest against the two Austrian companies involved, i.e., machinery supplier “Andritz A.G.” and cash supplier “Raiffeisen Zentralbank (RZB)”. A similar letter that was sent to the World Bank-agency MIGA (Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency) in 2003, which had been signed by 65 NGOs in 19 countries, successfully prevented MIGA from bestowing its financial support toward said project. The letter is posted on the *insite*. For more information, contact Daniel Hausknaust FoE Austria, daniel.hausknaust@global2000.at

aracruz cellulose occupied by tupinikim and guarani indians

In October, roughly 300 Tupinikim and Guarani occupied the 3 pulp mills of Aracruz Celulose in Aracruz, state of Espírito Santo, Brazil, to request the attention of the public about their land struggle and the lands they took back in May. This multinational corporation has been invading the indigenous people’s lands for over 35 years. The pulp mills were built in the village of Tupinikim in Macacos. Aracruz Celulose is responsible for the grave problems that the indigenous peoples are suffering. The Corporation is systematically damaging the rivers, forests, culture, and traditional way of life. Amongst the demands purported by the Tupinikim and Guarani are the definition of a timetable towards the withdrawal of the Corporation and the deadlines of their definitive demarcation and validation.



ence and botnia source of conflicts between the governments of argentina and uruguay

FoE local groups in Argentina and Uruguay are opposing the installation of two pulp mills in in the Capital of Rio Negro, Fray Bentos, and on the shores of the Uruguay River, bordering Argentina. The pulp mills belong to the Spanish company Ence and the Finnish Botnia respectively. The installation of the pulp mills has caused several conflicts between the Uruguayan and Argentinean governments and between the sectors promoting this industry and the ones who are against it because of the negative impacts that it will bestow on the environment and the lives of the people living in the area.

The companies are offering a total investment of 1.5 billion dollars, a sum that is equivalent to that of Uruguay’s gross annual internal investment. Said argument seems to be difficult to be ignored by the Uruguayan government. One of the conflicts rised from the actions taken by the Argentinean ambassador to the US before the World Bank to make sure that the funding requested by the Corporations will not be approved until an Environmental Impact Study is conducted by the institution, ignoring the studies carried out by the Uruguayan

environmental authorities. There is a new confrontation between Argentinean businessmen, represented by the Argentinean Forest Association (AFOA), and the authorities of the province of Entre Rios because Entre Rios declared itself to be "Cellulose-Plant free". The businessmen consider this a negative sign for foreign investors who may be interested in producing pulp there. After the public debate triggered by Argentinean and Uruguayan ecologist organizations, a large number of people from Entre Rios expressed its concern about the environmental effects that are caused by cellulose plants located on the banks of the Uruguayan river.

Last April 30th, an important demonstration called upon by organizations on both sides of the river blocked the General San Martín Bridge, in a so-called "hug on the Bridge." This "hug" over the river symbolized the fact that citizens of both countries stand united and that political frontiers may separate nations, but not the ideals of their peoples. It was a clear NO not only to this project but also to all investors –foreign and domestic– in Latin America that disregard negative environmental effects and governments that fail to have a long-term sustainable development strategy and that are eliminating any kind of regulation and rules to benefit private investors. The demonstration –the largest for an environmental protest in the history of Argentina– gathered 15,000 people, including environmental and social organizations, political parties, student confederations, and other groups of concerned citizens from both countries. The organizations have created a binational coordination, the so-called Socio-Environmental Network. Contact Jorge Daneri, <jorgedaneri@arnet.com.ar> FoE Argentina

chile against environmental destruction and social injustice

Neither the demonstrations of Thousands of Chileans in Santiago, the Capital of Chile, and in 20 other cities last June, nor the various reports and inspections were able to prevent the environmental catastrophe caused by a new pulp mill in Chile. The pulp mill plant has destroyed one of South America's most biologically outstanding wetlands, killing its famous population of black-necked swans, along with most other bird life. CODEFF/FoE Chile was actively participating in the Action for Swans campaign to protect the Carlos Anwandter Nature Sanctuary, which comprises more than 12,000 acres of wetlands along the Cruces River in the southernmost Chilean province of Valdivia. An officially designated "wetland of international importance" under the Ramsar convention, it was inhabited by two endangered species of birds –the Coscoroba swan and the white-faced ibis.

In the past months, Chilean civil society has protested against the environmental damages that the country is undergoing as a result of the industry projects developed therein, under the slogan "Chile against Environmental Destruction and Social Injustice". Within the destructive projects are the pulp mill plants of the Arauco group, a binational mining project in the border between Chile and Argentina affecting the glaciers of Pascua Lama, and a plant of sewage water treatment called La Farfana, that operates in Santiago, and which belongs to Aguas Andinas corporation. Lagos and almost 90% of the politicians' campaigns are financed by businessmen such as: sus Lucksic, Angelini and Matte, owners or representatives of the corporations that contaminate the environment. All environmental conflicts in Chile have a common pattern: they all answer to the relation between the government and the economic power. See related news in Real World Radio at <http://radiomundoreal.fm/?newlang=eng>. Contact Hernán Verscheure <bosque1@codeff.cl> FoE Chile

11. foe argentina at cop9 ramsar to protect pantanal-paraguay- paraná system

From November 8th to November 15th, 2005 in Kampala, Uganda the 9th Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was held. The motto was "Wetlands and water: supporting life, sustaining livelihoods". The initiative Pantanal –Paraguay- Paraná system was presented with remarkable impact during the side events of the COP 9 Ramsar. Fundación Proteger, a member of FoE Argentina, attended this side event promoting an

initiative on the 3,500 km wetland system that stretches from the Matogrossense Pantanal and the Paraguay River wetlands to the Lower Paraná and the Río de la Plata. A summary on the advances made for Latin America and mainly for Pantanal-Paraguay-Paraná Wetlands corridor can be found. Read more at

<http://www.proteger.org.ar/documento.php?id=420>

Final statement from the international NGO community:

<http://www.proteger.org.ar/archivos/DocumentoCOP9RamsarIngles.swf>

Contact Jorge Cappato <amigosdelatierra@arnet.com.ar> FoE Argentina

12. fighting pesticides/insecticides/herbicides?

Read "Catastrophic macroinvertebrate drift and sublethal effects on brown trout, *Salmo trutta*, caused by cypermethrin spraying on a Tasmanian stream." P.E. Davies and L.S.J. Cook, Inland Fisheries Commission, Hobart, Tasmania 1991. Anthony Amis <anthonyamis@hotmail.com> from FoE Melburn, recommends the reading of this report for those one fighting the alpha-cypermethrin. Go to http://www.tfic.com.au/scammell_report_07.04.htm

See also "Pesticides Action Network" The PAN Pesticides Database is your one-stop location for current toxicity and regulatory information for pesticides.

<http://www.pesticideinfo.org/Index.html>

United Kingdom Review of the FSC's Pesticides Policy"

<http://www.certifiedforests.org.au/documents/pan.html>

13. foe brazil monitoring "development" projects

In October 28th, Nucleo Amigos da Terra/FoE Brazil held a Seminar to discuss the impacts of the expansion of tree plantations in the South of Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina, presented by politicians as a "new development project". More than 300 people including students, politicians, people from social movements and NGO's were there to discuss other possibilities for a better local development, but also the real impacts of monocultures in the livelihoods of rural communities, the changes in the natural landscapes as the native and rich ecosystems as the grasslands of the south of Brazil.



The men in black are the politicians trying to explain their tree monoculture development project.

The Landless Movement, Alert Against the Green Desert Network and WRM did also participate in the seminar and help us to show the real face of these so-called development projects. This action is the beginning of a new campaign of FoE Brazil against the expansion of tree monoculture plantations. Contact Clarissa Trois Abreu <florestaurbana@terra.com.br > FoE Brazil

14. carbon credits for big business

In October the first "carbon credits" were issued. Two projects in Honduras and one in India, financed by donors in Finland, the Netherlands and Italy, received the world's first "certified emissions reductions". Such projects benefit companies involved, as they can be offset against requirements on companies to reduce their greenhouse gas output in developed countries. In other words, by buying these carbon credits, companies can continue with their polluting operations. Many companies have begun to enter the fast growing carbon market, including Repsol, Eon UK, Norsk Hydro and Endesa.

The issuance of credits brings into practical effect one of the key provisions of the protocol, the "clean development mechanism". This is designed to encourage the transfer of "low carbon" technology to developing countries that could not otherwise afford it. The projects are funded by rich nations, which are obliged by the treaty to cut their greenhouse gas emissions. When a project has been shown to work, the greenhouse gas emissions thus avoided will be credited to the developed country's account in the reckoning of whether countries have hit their targets in 2012. From World Bank Press Review. Contact FoEI Climate Change Campaign Coordinators: Catherine Pearce <catp@foe.co.uk> or Roque Pedache <pedacher@infovia.com.ar>

first cdm project in panama

In the *insite* we have posted an article from Wally Menne, Timberwatch Coalition, criticizing propaganda from the Prime Forestry Group (PFG) to its teak plantations in Panama (<http://www.primeforestry.com/en/default.asp>, "We are investing in forests so that you can harvest the benefits")

The Prime Forestry Group is a Swiss company that manages teak plantations in Panama under FSC certification and are now the first Clean Development Mechanism of Panama. The PFG claims that these plantations are developed on land that has been devastated by erosion and on pastures that have suffered excess usage. The PFG wants us to believe that these plantations they actually reforest, restore and revive the land. Furthermore, PFG affirms that "each additional teak tree planted binds a certain amount of CO₂. With around one million newly planted trees each year (2004), Prime Forestry is thus making a substantial contribution towards a reduction of CO₂ in the atmosphere."

But, the "true nature of industrial monoculture timber plantations is such that any short-term benefit from the temporary carbon sequestration they may seem to offer, will likely be heavily outweighed by the overall negative impacts that usually result from the full process of initial establishment, infield management and eventual clear cut, extraction, transportation and processing of the plantation trees. A full and honest assessment of the life-cycle NET carbon sequestration of these plantations will be sure to shock existing and potential investors.", replies Wally.

"In addition, there are many issues relating to the social and ecological impacts of industrial timber plantations that need to be addressed. In theory, FSC certification is supposed to take care of any concerns in respect of these issues, but experiences in many countries have shown there are unresolved problems with the way FSC FOREST certification standards have been applied to industrial timber plantations that are anything but forests in the true sense of the word."

"Such restoration projects could have substantial local benefits in terms of watershed protection and long term employment for local people, ultimately providing them with social security through access to a sustainable source of natural materials for food, medicine and shelter. Globally, priceless benefits in terms of greater climate stability, cleaner air and water, opportunities for recreation and research, would be generated by such projects. But will northern polluters/investors, with empires built on the backs of southern people and their resources, feel any great obligation to support projects that may not generate the same huge profits promised by the use of quick and dirty plantations in the 'carbon economy'?"
Please, read the complete article in the *insite* (contact sisi@foei.org)

15. wto negotiating forests

Liberalisation of the forest sector has reappeared near the top of the World Trade Organisation's negotiating agenda, as part of the non-agricultural market access (NAMA) negotiations. Canada, Hong Kong, China, New Zealand, Thailand and the United States are

collectively pushing for complete liberalisation of the sector. And complete means complete - zero tariffs, and if they have their way precious few 'non-tariff measures' either (which could include removing a wide range of standards and regulations). Laughably, these countries claim that "tariff liberalization would increase forests' intrinsic value and foster long-term planning focused on sustainability, providing substantial commercial, social and environmental benefits". But what would such changes really mean for Indigenous and local communities? Read the complete article at Forest Cover Issue N° 17: November 2005 at <http://www.wrm.org.uy/GFC/cover/issue17.html#6> Contact Sandy Gauntlett <sandygauntlett@hotmail.com> FoE New Zealand

In November, FoE EWNI launched a report, "Can't See the Forest for The Trees – How the WTO is gambling with our future", highlights how WTO attempts to relax trade rules in natural resources are likely to result in an increase in logging and the commercial exploitation of forest products, damaging poor communities, the natural environment and exacerbating climate change. The talks, under the Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) strand of the negotiations, aim to liberalise trade in natural resources, including forest products, by reducing import taxes and removing non-tariff barriers. "NAMA could benefit Europe by 20 billion euros a year" said Tony Blair, although, as usual, developing countries will pay the price.

The report highlights the WTO and the EU's failure to fully assess the impacts of an increase in trade. The world's native forests provide valuable habitat for wildlife, but are also a source of sustenance for many people in the developing world. According to UN figures, 90 % of the world's poorest, 1.2 billion people, depend on forests in some way for their livelihood. According to the UN Millennium Taskforce "The world's poor depend disproportionately on ecosystem services to provide for their systems of small-scale agriculture, grazing, harvesting hunting and fishing. Without access to infrastructure providing safe drinking water, electricity, fuel and transportation, poor people rely on natural sources of clean air and water, fertile soil, renewable energy and biodiversity to meet their needs," (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005). Ecosystems and human well-being: synthesis).

New projections from the World Bank suggest that increased trade liberalization would bring far fewer benefits to developing countries than originally believed - with the effects of implementing the Doha Round bringing benefits of no more than a penny a day per capita in developing countries. The result is likely to be a fall of less than one per cent in the number of people living in poverty. Contact Eve Mitchell <evem@foe.co.uk> FoE EWNI

16. calendar

december

28/11-02/12 11th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biodiversity in Montreal, Canada. For more information, visit: <http://www.biodiv.org/meetings>

28/11-09/12 1st Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and 11th Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Montreal, Canada. See Forest Cover articles (Ex Silvis by Miguel Lovera, and the articles by Assitou Ndinga and Rully Syumanda). For more information, visit: <http://unfccc.int>

5-7/12 Via Campesina's meeting on forests and Biodiversity in Costa Rica. Of course, Javier and Isaac will be there to present experiences of community

based forest management, to talk about collective rights and the Mumbai-Porto Alegre Declaration, among others.

- 5/12 Day set aside by the FSC Intl Secretariat to inform people attending the FSC GA about the plantations review process and ask input from the wider FSC membership before FSC gral Assembly in Brazil.
- 7-9/12 FSC General Assembly in Manaus, Brazil
- 13-18/12 6th Ministerial Conference of the WTO in Hong Kong. For more information, contact Ronnie Hall <ronnieh@foe.co.uk> or Alberto Villareal <comerc@redes.org.uy>

january

- 21-22/01 FoEI GMO Program Coordinators/focal point meeting in Amsterdam.
- 23-26/01 FoEI Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) Meeting in Amsterdam.
- 24-25/01 Foro Social Américas in Venezuela
- 25 and 27/01 International paper action day. ore information related to this action are posted in the *insite*. Contact Otto Miettinen, FoE Finland, <oto@iki.fi>
- 27-29/01 Foei ExCom meeting in Amsterdam.
- 23-27/01 4th meeting of the working group on Article 8j on traditional knowledge of the Convention on Biodiversity will take place from 23 to 27 January 2006 in Granada, Spain. It will be succeeded by the fourth meeting of the working group on Access and Benefit Sharing of the Convention on Biodiversity, which will take place from 30 January to 3 February. The meetings will include negotiations on an international regime on biopiracy. For more information, please visit: <http://www.biodiv.org>
- 16-20/01 4th session of the UN Conference for the Negotiation of a Successor Agreement to the International Tropical Timber Agreement in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information please visit: <http://www.unctad.org>

february

- 13-24/02 6th meeting of the UN Forum on Forests in New York, USA. The meeting will try to find solutions for the many unresolved questions regarding the future of the UN Forum on Forests. For more information, visit: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests>
- 27-28/02 2-day FSC Environmental Chamber meeting to discuss any outstanding issues and provide input into the final meeting (s) of the FSC Plantations Review WG.

march

- 1st week Mesoamerican Forum on Biodiversity in Guatemala
- 20-31/03 8th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Curitiba, Brazil. The meeting will discuss a broad agenda, including the

friends of the forests

international regime on biopiracy, a report of the working group to review the implementation of the forest work program of the Convention, and the Business and Biodiversity initiative. For more information, visit: <http://www.biodiv.org>