

Forest protection is climate protection

Stefan Krug, Greenpeace

In his opening speech at CBD COP9 yesterday, CBD President Gabriel said it clearly: The advancing destruction of the world's forests, particularly the last intact ancient forests, is dramatic. A unique diversity of plants and animals is disappearing along with the basic elements of life for millions of people.

It was a clear statement - but not the first in the long series of CBD speeches complaining about continuing global forest decline, especially the last remaining tropical forests. Two thirds of all land based species live in forests. But when it comes to concrete action, Parties to the CBD continuously fail to implement their decisions and promises of forest protection. Lack of financial resources continues to be a major obstacle: the establishment of protected areas is dramatically under-funded. Industrialized countries are not willing to fulfill their obligation of Art. 20 of the CBD to mobilize "new and additional resources" for developing countries to an extent that conservation and sustainable use of forests gets more profitable for these countries than cutting their forests down.

On the other hand, developing and newly industrialising countries like Brazil are refusing to accept any international regulations on the protection of their forests, on agriculture, agrofuels or illegal logging -- the major drivers of forest destruction. They insist on their national sovereignty and demand for more money from rich countries.

Is there a way out of this dead end? Climate change poses major threats to forests and other ecosystems. But paradoxically climate change could offer a solution to the problem. "Curbing deforestation is a highly cost-

effective way of reducing greenhouse gas emissions", wrote Nicholas Stern in his groundbreaking Report in 2006. Roughly 20% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions result from logging and clearing forests by fire for obtaining wood, plant plantations and raising cattle. This is more than the global transport sector emits.

To tackle climate change, a brake must be put on deforestation. "Avoided deforestation" is being discussed under the UN Climate convention with the aim to integrate emissions from deforestation in emission trading. But years will pass until a functioning system is found, if ever, as the second phase of the Kyoto protocol will only enter into force in 2013. This means that unless action is taken there will be no mechanism for clearly reducing global forest destruction with the appropriate financial incentives for the next five years. To close this gap, a "five-year emergency initiative" by developed countries is needed to combine forest and climate protection. Germany, holding the CBD presidency,

ought to play a leading role in launching this initiative.

We estimate the global costs of permanently halting deforestation to be between 30 to 40 billion dollars per year (20 - 27 billion euro) based on Nicolas Stern's latest estimate of 15 billion dollars needed annually to half emissions from deforestation.

- *At COP 9 and the G8-summit in Japan, Germany must initiate a heads of state initiative to make available from 2008 to 2013 approximately two billion euro a year to provide at least half of the money needed globally for protected areas and for stopping deforestation. The G8 countries are responsible for roughly half of all carbon emissions, so they should raise half the needed money.*
- *In parallel, the CBD must develop a global mechanism to stop illegal logging and related trade as one of the major threats to forest biodiversity by 2012.*
- *CBD COP9 must decide time bound targets to stop deforestation by 2015.*

The G8 countries ought to make their financial contribution in all events until the end of 2012. The CBD's global network of reserves ought to be established by then. As of 2013 there may be additional billion dollar sums resulting from climate protection measures. Greenpeace suggests that a fixed proportion of the proceeds from auctioning emission certificates enter a fund that can compensate developing countries financially if they commit themselves to stopping deforestation and can credibly prove this.

Deforestation and climate change are causing an emergency situation that needs emergency measures.

There is no time to lose.



Civil Society Opening Statement – 19 May 2008

... The global food and hunger emergency has risen to critical proportions -- an emergency propelled by the agrofuels boom, commodity speculation, corporate hegemony and the ever-present climate crisis. This is already triggering crisis in all ecosystems and is profoundly affecting crops, livestock, fisheries and forests and the billions of people whose livelihoods depend on them. As a result, we are losing the very resources that we need to confront climate chaos and the food emergency. Now at COP 9 we have a vital role in addressing these issues.

Women and men farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, forest dwellers and Indigenous Peoples who nurture local biodiversity hold the key to sustaining life and livelihoods on Earth. COP 9 must avoid at least three false solutions.

1. Agrofuels: Industrial agrofuels are a serious and ever-increasing threat to biodiversity stimulating large monocultures and infrastructure to serve them. They are a false solution to Climate Change put forward by industry, funded through perverse incentives, consolidating their control over agriculture. No generation of industrial agrofuels can ever be sustainable and their expansion will inevitably lead to the loss of biodiversity. We therefore call for an immediate ban on all industrial agrofuel production and related targets.

2. Genetically Engineered Trees: The development of GE trees reinforces a destructive industrial forestry model and irreversibly results in the contamination of forests and other native ecosystems, which will present a serious threat to biodiversity and peoples. The CBD must accept the responsibility given it to protect biological diversity, and abiding by the precautionary principle ban genetically engineered trees.

3. Climate technofixes: Technology fixes that will geo-engineer the planet at the cost of biodiversity must not be permitted. We call for a prohibition on the granting of carbon credits for attempts to capture carbon - such as growing plantations for biomass sequestration - and a prohibition on ocean fertilization.

There are six areas where COP 9 could achieve genuine solutions.

1. The Ecosystem Approach: The rights enshrined in the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of indigenous Peoples should form the basis for the implementation of the Ecosystem

approach with effective participation of Indigenous peoples and local communities.

2. Agricultural Biodiversity: Local communities and indigenous peoples' agroecological production systems, in which they develop diverse seeds and livestock breeds on farm, could reverse the serious losses in agricultural biodiversity. COP 9 must implement and strengthen Farmers Rights and the EU must stop undermining the Terminator moratorium through the transcontainer project.

3. Access and Benefit-Sharing: COP 9 must finally take real steps to end biopiracy. The ABS Working Group must leave Bonn with the necessary resources and the unambiguous mandate to work alongside indigenous peoples and local communities to secure their rights, by drafting a legally-binding ABS regime for adoption at COP 10.

4. Forests: The forests that the CBD protects on paper are being destroyed in nature. Perverse economic incentives that destroy forests must be ended through enforced commitments. Monoculture tree plantations must be recognized as a threat not a solution. The knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities must guide the process of establishing a systemic ecosystem approach to forest biological diversity.

5. Protected Areas: The most effective means to reduce biodiversity loss in the Programme of Work on Protected Areas are the ones so far least implemented. This includes in particular Governance, Participation, Equity and Benefit Sharing and the recognition of Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas. Financing mechanisms must not violate the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities.

6. Marine Biodiversity: The process of preparing the criteria for the protection of marine areas in open ocean waters and deep-sea habitats remarkably failed to include the knowledge and participation of indigenous and other artisanal fishers. While Parties must adopt the criteria tabled, they must urgently work to complement them through the full and effective participation of these communities.



ECO is published by the civil society community at many International Environmental Convention negotiations. It is currently being published at the ninth Conference of the Parties (COP-9) to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Bonn, Germany coordinated by the CBD Alliance. The opinions, commentaries, and articles printed in ECO are the sole opinion of the individual authors or organisations, unless otherwise expressed.

SUBMISSIONS: Welcome from all civil society groups. Email to jkrowe@ucsc.edu and jdempsey@interchange.ubc.ca ECO thanks Project "COP 9 preparation" supported by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation with funds of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Swedbio, and Hivos-Oxfam Novib Biodiversity Fund.

Fictitious Forests and False Solutions

(article excerpted from *World Rainforest Movement briefing paper* available at www.wrm.org.uy)

The FAO's definition of industrial monoculture tree plantations as "forests" – taken up by the Convention on Biological Diversity – completely ignores the ecosystem approach. Local populations suffering from the negative impacts of plantations, however, have a clear perception of the differences between real and fictitious forests.

In Thailand, for example, where agriculture is of vital importance to the peasant population, they define eucalyptus trees as the "selfish tree" because they not only prevent crops from developing under them, but also appropriate the water needed for rice crops.

In Chile the vast pine plantations were installed in Mapuche territory during the Pinochet dictatorship. It is not surprising that they should be defined as "planted military" because they are green, stand in line and advance!

In the Cauca Valley in Colombia, the local people call pine plantations "forests of silence." This is because the plantations are lacking any form of life beyond the trees. The silence is deafening.



Graphic by Erik Drooker – drooker.com

In Brazil and South Africa, people call eucalyptus plantations "Green deserts." However in the latter country this definition has been challenged with the argument that in a few square metres of desert there is more life than in an entire eucalyptus plantation!

In the State of Sarawak in Malaysia, the local people claim that eucalyptus and oil palm plantations are much worse than industrial logging. The reason is that the logging companies enter the forest, cut down the best trees and leave, taking the timber with them. But the plantation

companies cut down the best trees, burn the rest and stay!

In Ecuador there are communities that, not by chance, call eucalyptus trees "eucas." The reason is very simple "eucalptos" contains the charming diminutive "ito" (little), which these trees don't deserve because of the hugely devastating effects.

A final illustrative example comes from the state of Espirito Santo in Brazil, where the eucalyptus plantations are defined by local people as "dead forests that kill everything."

All these definitions reflect the fact that rural communities understand the true meaning of the biodiversity that has sustained their ways of life: ranging from agricultural biodiversity, treasured and transmitted through the centuries, to the forests that have enabled food sovereignty for those who inhabit them.

The forthcoming COP 9 must resolve various pending issues, among them agrofuels, transgenic trees and forest diversity. There has been no consensus over these issues and therefore the proposed text will be full of brackets. Biodiversity itself is increasingly stuck between brackets!

Continued on p. 4

From Brazil to Germany – Agrofuel Aggravation

Camila Moreno

Angela Merkel was in Brazil last week, and on the 14th of May she signed a controversial Energy Cooperation agreement with Lula. Although the terms of the whole agreement were not disclosed to civil society, worries about its content mobilized strong reactions from both sides of the Atlantic: letters and statements ranging from German church aid agencies concerned about the major social and human rights impacts of ethanol production, German and Brazilian environmental coalitions and social movements strongly opposed to ethanol and biodiesel exports and critical of Brazil's 'China-Like' Accelerated Growth Program and its (mega) projects.

One of the components of this Brazil-Germany deal is the formation of an immediate working group to establish "criteria of sustainability" for ethanol production and export. This ensures there

will be ongoing exports of this fuel, and this is before the EU makes its final decision (actually under revision) on mandatory targets.

It is very important to note – despite Brazil's 'Crusade' to sell ethanol at any cost – that in more than 30 years of ethanol production for their internal market they have never developed such a scheme. Even without mass export Brazil is unable to cope with the severe ecosystemic effects of energy monoculture, and the harshest of labor conditions (including frequent occurrences of slave labor).

Greenpeace Brazil reflects our concerns well: "At the same time a deal to promote renewables and energy efficiency is signed, Lula renews the nuclear treaty with Germany. This demonstrates, once again, how schizophrenic this government is: on the one hand, it searches for green

technologies to generate electricity and on the other undermines sustainability by promoting nuclear power -- a dirty, expensive and dangerous energy source. Germany itself has a governmental commitment to phase out nuclear power within two decades!"

From Curitiba to Bonn

The country currently chairing the CBD, and the other assuming the presidency until 2010, are demonstrating that business not genuine concern for climate change and ecological degradation is their true priority.

The Brazil-Germany deal was finalized one day after Marina Silva, Brazil's Environmental Ministry and world renowned rainforest activist had resigned, alleging "no more political support" for environmental policy in the country.

Notes from the COP

Delegates – are you an “ethanol person”?

"As you know, I'm a ethanol person," President George Bush said, explaining his belief that it can help reduce U.S. dependence on oil. "It makes sense for America to be growing energy." (President Bush, 3 May, 2008)

WRM – forests continued from pg 3

Regarding transgenic trees, the CBD will have to decide between a moratorium, the precautionary principle or no restrictions. The proposal of a moratorium was submitted by some delegates to CBD in 2006, promoted by various social organizations. On that occasion, it was decided that CBD should prepare a report on “the possible negative environmental, cultural and socio-economic impacts of genetically modified trees.” This was presented in February at the thirteenth meeting of SBSTTA. It pointed out that many

scientists place “emphasis on the application of the precautionary principle on considering the use of genetically modified trees.” But some countries are attempting to weaken this safeguard, promoting another text that leaves it between brackets.

In general terms, it is alarming that the CBD opens its doors to the companies responsible for so much biodiversity loss. In order to protect biodiversity, the CBD should instead give its decided support to community forest management systems and to traditional farming systems that have successfully harvested and conserved biodiversity for centuries.

In sum arresting the devastating effects of large-scale monoculture plantations requires that:

- Monoculture tree plantations are excluded from the definition of forests;
- All political, technical and financial support should be withdrawn from monoculture plantations for agrofuels due to their direct negative impact on biodiversity and food sovereignty;

-The release of transgenic trees should be banned together with the use of “terminator” technology.

Only then will a biodiversity for and with people be possible.

Don't forget about

www.undercovercop.org

Quote of the Day

“A moratorium on field trials of genetically engineered trees is against progress in science for renewable energy. A moratorium on GE trees puts nature and future generations at risk” PRRI scientists at a side event yesterday

**Civil Society/NGO meetings
08.30 hours – GSI, Rm 30/32**

Opening Statement from NAELMMMD

Mr Chai[person], Excelent[is]nose, distinguished degenerates and the great unwashed... Far be it from me to blow my own trumpet [or be dazzled by my own genius], but it is, as always, an enormous privilege [honour/interruption] for all of you to have me here with you this [morning][afternoon][hangover]. I thought I would briefly condescend to address [berate/hector/lobby/and hopefully annoy] this august [chaotic] body [shambles] on behalf of the Not-Always-Entirely-Like-Minded Mega Mega Diverse Group. NAELMMMD is a little known [obscure/shady/legally ambiguous] yet vast and deliberately inconvenient [if not slightly crazed] confabulation [international conspiracy] of not-always-entirely-like-minded individuals [party animals][attractive/lovely people/continents] of diverse and [suspiciously] [deliberately] [refreshingly] unverifiable provenance [origin/source/certification] who specialize [luxuriate] in sun, sand, and shopping.

It has been two long years since my last [legally binding][confession] COP. Look where that got me, arrested [unlawfully detained][and outrageously misused] at Sao Paolo airport with armfuls of medicinal plants [, jars full of insects,] [buckets full of microorganisms,][disk drives full of DNA sequences,] [hotel towels/bath robes/delegates laptops/pen drives/mobile phones and flip flops]. Fifteen years hard labour in Curitiba jail for borrowing things! I ask you, what about the human rights of the perennially light-fingered [to] [beg,] [borrow,] [steal,] [and inappropriately appropriate]? Arrrr...[Jim lad/my dearest hearties/bearded sandal wearing greenies of the world/distinguished fashionistas] the life of a serial misappropriationist [biopirate/botanist/biologist/biochemist] is never an easy one [[and don't get me started on the [pension fund][retirement of decisions]]. But my lovely [indistinguishable] [landlubbing] bignoses [friends] the story of Dr. N.D Bracket's miraculous [biofuelled][parrot][assisted] escape from Curitiba jail will have to wait for a future intervention [lunatic be].

As the late Mahatma Bracket was fond of telling all and sundry: "Organise the party that you wish to go to". In that same spirit I say this Mr. Chair person: Yo ho ho and a bottle of Cachaça, me hearties, hoist the colours high, heave ho, all together, raise [and drain] your cocktail glass. I declare this biopiracy conference well and truly open!

Dr. N.D. Bracket [junior][executive][typist][secretary][bracketologist]
NAELMMMD Secretariat [The Broom Cupboard] - Hotel Maritim, Bonn
Scurrilous unattributable rumours/outrageous fabrications to: ndbracket@mac.com

