
[International Day against Monoculture Tree Plantations 2007 - Statement by the WRM](#)

In 2004, September 21st was declared as International Day against Monoculture Tree Plantations by a number of organizations throughout the world. On this day, people in every continent carry out actions to generate awareness on the impacts of large scale tree monocultures on local communities and their environments.

Be they eucalyptus, pines, acacias, gmelinas, oil palm or other types of monoculture tree plantations, they are all mostly aimed at feeding northern consumers with growing volumes of raw materials extracted in southern countries at a huge social and environmental cost.

Wasteful consumption patterns in the north are displacing food production in countries where malnutrition and hunger are already a major problem for millions of people. Market-based export policies are leading to decreased food sovereignty in food producing countries.

Local communities are displaced to give way to endless rows of identical trees that displace most life forms in the area. Water resources are depleted and polluted by the plantations while soils become degraded. Human rights violations are strife, ranging from the loss of livelihoods and displacement to repression and even cases of torture and death. While communities suffer as a whole, plantations result in differentiated gender impacts, where women are the most impacted.

New threats are emerging that could increase even further the area occupied by these “green deserts”, as well as their social and environmental impacts. The looming disaster of climate change has resulted in the promotion of “solutions” that not only do not solve the problem but that create yet more suffering for local communities. So-called “carbon sink plantations” (carbon dumps), so-called “green fuels” (agrofuels) and so-called “improved trees” (genetically engineered) are examples of such “solutions”.

The millions of hectares of land already occupied by pulpwood, timber and oil palm plantations could be dwarfed by yet more millions of hectares that are now being targeted for fast wood plantations to absorb the carbon emitted by the use of fossil fuels, for oil palm plantations to produce biodiesel for feeding cars, for frankentrees to absorb more carbon than natural trees or for producing ethanol for energy consumption.

None of this is science fiction: it is already happening. We must stop it. But the only way for achieving this aim is to increase our support to communities that are in the frontline in the struggle against plantations and to force governments to change course. On this day we call on the peoples of the world, and particularly on northern citizens to join in and help to make things change.

