# Accusations at logging giant Boise Cascade during its annual meeting

The US-based Boise Cascade has been practising unsustainable logging both in Southern and Northern countries, including the US itself. One of the most outstanding conflicts in which the company was involved is that of the community forests ("ejidos") of the Sierra of Petatlán in the state of Guerrero, Mexico, that resulted in the detention and prosecution of Rodolfo Montiel and Teodoro Cabrera, two peasants who organized resistance against Boise Cascade (see WRM Bulletins 26, 35 and 38).

Boise Cascade has also been criticized in Chile, where it has been the seventh largest importer of old growth wood from that country, thus affecting unique temperate forests. As a result of strong resistance from local communities and environmentalists, the company recently announced it would abandon the country. Boise Cascade is actively logging old growth forests in the USA, and in central Canada, serving also as a prime distributor of wood from British Columbia's Great Bear Rainforest, where a logging ban has recently been declared.

The company's annual meeting that took place last March in Idaho was the scenario for criticism towards its environmental performance. The meeting was totally unusual, because it focused on the questions posed by members and supporters of the Rainforest Action Network (RAN) on the negative environmental performance of the corporation. Enrique Rodriguez, a member of the Association of Peasant Environmentalists of the Sierra of Petatlán, blamed Boise Cascade for destroying forest land in Mexico and for the arrest of activists Rodolfo Montiel Flores and Teodoro Cabrera, who are still in prison. As a means of trying to avoid the issues raised by the environmentalists, a company spokesperson accused RAN of not being "a serious-minded environmental organization", defining the organization as "a group of reckless, lawless radical activists who lash out at modern society."

Outside the meeting room, RAN supporters marched from a rally at the Idaho Capitol to Boise Cascade's headquarters, chanting and waving signs. A huge banner was displayed denouncing the company's "dinosaur" logging methods. Patricia Vera, international coordinator of Defenders of the Chilean Forests, present at the protest, asked that the company put in writing its plans to terminate a proposed logging venture in the temperate rainforests of her country.

One thing is certain: this year, Boise Cascade's shareholders, employees and journalists were not bored at the annual meeting and perhaps, maybe, they will have gone home with some questions in their minds.

Article based on information from: "Protesters criticize Boise Cascade's actions.
Activists draw caustic response from spokesman" by Beth Bow