
The launch of the anti-plantations campaign

Large-scale tree plantations are having grave social and environmental impacts in many countries of the world. While governments and international organizations promote this forestry model, more and more people rise in opposition against it. Its promoters' real aims (power, profits) are hidden under a "green" guise: the plantation of "forests" in a world facing deforestation and climate change. This environmental discourse, which has little or no influence on the people living in the plantation sites, is aimed at uninformed -mostly urban- audiences, which constitute the main potential support for the plantations industry.

The World Rainforest Movement has for many years been supporting the struggles of local peoples against these industrial-scale tree monocrops and building knowledge and alliances to launch an international campaign against it. In June this year, the WRM organized an international meeting in Montevideo, Uruguay, to focus on this issue. The meeting, attended by concerned people from 14 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, South America, North America and Oceania, resulted in a unanimous decision to launch a campaign against this destructive model. The aims of the campaign will be:

- 1) To support local people struggling against plantations
- 2) To support local livelihoods
- 3) To create awareness on the problems generated by plantations and on the actors which promote them
- 4) To change conditions which make plantations possible

To facilitate the discussion, some people were invited to make presentations on some country situations which hold some of the largest plantations on earth, which are having important negative impacts: Brazil, Chile, Indonesia and South Africa. At the same time, presentations were also made about some important actors which can either promote or destimulate plantations: the influential Finnish forestry consultancy Jaakko Poyry, the World Bank and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

What follows are brief summaries of the different cases and issues presented and discussed at the meeting.