
[Sign on this letter! Denounce the fraudulent campaign of the Finnish multinational UPM](#)

Adhere to this letter to denounce the greenwashing of the Finnish multinational UPM, which is trying to install a new pulp mill and expand the monoculture tree plantations in Uruguay.

Social organizations from Uruguay, Finland and other countries, together with well-known professionals, presented the results of scientific research carried out over the past 15 years on the impacts of monoculture tree plantations on grasslands, refuting the "green washing" of UPM company, which presents itself as a leading global corporation in the fight against climate change, the defense of biodiversity and the sustainable water management.

The main business of the Finnish multinational is the production of cellulose from its eucalyptus plantations, which replace the prairie ecosystem with industrial monocultures of exotic trees. In addition to the displacement of rural populations, these plantations affect local productions (food sovereignty), soil (acidification and loss of organic matter and minerals, among others) and water (scarcity in areas adjacent to plantations and pollution due to the use of pesticides).

Read -and adhere to- the following open letter that is being presented to different authorities of Uruguayan and Finnish governments as well as to United Nations agencies, where the UPM fraudulent campaign is denounced.

[emailpetition id="18"]

To the public national and international opinion

QUESTIONING UPM GREENWASHING CAMPAIGN

The undersigned entities and professionals denounce the fraudulent campaign of the Finnish multinational UPM Kymmene, whose main business is the production of cellulose in Uruguay from monoculture plantations of eucalyptus, in which it presents itself as a leading global corporation in the fight against climate change, the defense of biodiversity and the sustainable water management.

Diverse research - presented below briefly and more in detail in the annex attached to this our letter - show that it is false to claim like the UPM does that monoculture tree plantations that replace natural grasslands would favor and expand biodiversity or help mitigate climate change and prevent deforestation or would together with the cellulose plants contribute to sustainable water management.

Recently, UPM announced its incorporation into the "Business Ambition for 1.5 ° C" initiative launched by the United Nations Global Compact. UPM says it will strive to mitigate climate change and create innovative products, committing to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 65% and to practice sustainable forestry.

At the same time, UPM noted that it is one of the six leading companies worldwide for its actions to

mitigate climate risk, prevent deforestation and improve water management. UPM appeared in 2019 in the Triple A List of CDP, an entity financed by companies and governments that gives companies sustainability scores to guide investors. These scores are based on self-reporting and CDP does not evaluate the actual performance of the companies on sustainability issues.

In this way, UPM is developing a new campaign to convince investors, governments and populations of the Global South of the goodness of its projects.

The change of land use in the grasslands characteristic of South America - the Pampa Biome - is associated with the worldwide expansion of monoculture plantations with fast-growing exotic species for cellulose production with greater profitability for companies, but with very high cost for the communities that suffer them.

Testimonies of the negative social and environmental impacts of tree monocultures have been documented for more than 20 years by the World Rainforest Movement (<https://wrm.org.uy/browse-by-subject/tree-plantations/>).

In addition to the displacement of rural populations, these plantations affect local productions (food sovereignty), soil (acidification and loss of organic matter and minerals, among others) and water (scarcity in areas adjacent to plantations and pollution due to the use of pesticides).

For more than 15 years, scientists from universities in Argentina, Brazil, the United States, the United Kingdom and Uruguay, among other countries, have carried out a series of investigations on the impacts of tree monocultures and cellulose production that demonstrate the falsehood of the UPM propaganda.

We present a list of scientific research confirming the above and attach [a dossier](#) with the summary of its results:

A. Monocultures of eucalyptus for cellulose production are worse carbon sinks than grasslands originating in South America. In addition, most of the carbon captured by these trees is released by harvesting them and transforming them into cellulose. As part of its process, biomass is burned and other gases are released into the atmosphere, with the consequent effects on the climate.

A1. Preliminary study of prairies forested with Eucalyptus sp. at the northwestern Uruguayan soils. Carrasco-Letelier, L., Eguren, G., Castiñeira, C., Parra, O., & Panario, D. (2003). <https://is.gd/FpsLy1>

A2. Soil organic carbon vs. bulk density following temperate grassland afforestation. Céspedes-Payret, C., Bazzoni, B., Gutiérrez, O., & Panario, D. (2017). *Environmental Processes*, 4 (1), 75–92. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40710-016-0197-4>

B. Monoculture plantations of trees irreversibly extract nutrients and minerals from this original ecosystem that took thousands of years to settle. Among its rows of miles of cloned trees, species of exotic fauna proliferate, such as wild boar, which are a plague for local livestock and agriculture.

B1. Patterns and mechanisms of soil acidification in the conversion of grasslands to forests. Jobbágy, E. G., & Jackson, R. B. (2003). *Biogeochemistry*, 64(2), 205-229. <https://is.gd/JOofTHI>

B2. The irruption of new agro-industrial technologies in Uruguay and their environmental impacts on soil, water supply and biodiversity: a review. Céspedes-Payret, C., Piñeiro, G., Achkar, M., Gutiérrez, O., & Panario, D. (2009). *International Journal of Environment and Health*, 3 (2), 175-197. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJENVH.2009.024877>

B3. Land use change in a temperate grassland soil: afforestation effects on chemical properties and their ecological and mineralogical implications. Céspedes-Payret, C., Piñeiro, G., Gutiérrez, O., & Panario, D. (2012). *Science of the Total Environment*, 438, 549-557. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2012.08.075>

B4. The political economy of global tree plantation expansion: a review, Markus Kröger, *The Journal of Peasant Studies* (2014) <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03066150.2014.890596>

B5. Afforestation of savannas: an impending ecological disaster. Fernandes, G. W., Coelho, M. S., Machado, R. B., Ferreira, M. E., Aguiar, L. M. de S., Dirzo, R., Scariot, A., Lopes, C. R. (2016). *Natureza & Conservação*, 14(2), 146-151. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ncon.2016.08.002>

C. Monocultures of eucalyptus and associated cellulose plants seriously reduce and contaminate the main sources of water in the region.

C1. Hydrological consequences of Eucalyptus afforestation in the Argentine Pampas. Engel, V., Jobbágy, E. G., Stieglitz, M., Williams, M., & Jackson, R. B. (2005). *Water Resources Research*, 41(10), W10409. <https://doi.org/10.1029/2004WR003761>

C2. Effects of afforestation on water yield: a global synthesis with implications for policy. Farley, K. A., Jobbágy, E. G., & Jackson, R. B. (2005). *Global Change Biology*, 11(10), 1565-1576. <https://is.gd/RSE6mk>

C3. Trading water for carbon with biological carbon sequestration. Jackson, R. B., Jobbágy, E. G., Avissar, R., Roy, S. B., Barrett, D. J., Cook, C. W., Farley, K.A., le Maitre, D.C., Mc Carl, B.A., Murray, B. C. (2005). *Science*, 310(5756), 1944-1947. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1119282>

C4. Land-use change and water losses: the case of grassland afforestation across a soil textural gradient in central Argentina. Nosetto, M. D., Jobbágy, E. G., & Paruelo, J. M. (2005). *Global Change Biology*, 11(7), 1101-1117. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2486.2005.00975.x>

C5. Las forestaciones rioplatenses y el agua. Jobbágy, E. G., Nosetto, M. D., Paruelo, J. M., & Piñeiro, G. (2006). *Ciencia hoy*, 17(95), 12-21. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265376623_Las_forestaciones_rioplatenses_y_el_agua

C6. Síntesis de los efectos ambientales de las plantas de celulosa y del modelo forestal en Uruguay. Panario, D., Mazzeo, N., Eguren, G., Rodríguez, C., Altesor, A., Cayssials, R., & Achkar, M. (2006). <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.2929.0483>

C7. Stream acidification and base cation losses with grassland afforestation. Farley, K. A., Piñeiro, G., Palmer, S. M., Jobbágy, E. G., & Jackson, R. B. (2008). *Water Resources Research*, 44(7), W00A03. <https://doi.org/10.1029/2007WR006659>

D. The installation of pulp agribusiness in the Southern Cone of America generates conflicting

social and political transformations in the region.

D1. **Ecosystem services and tree plantations in Uruguay: A reply to Vihervaara et al.** Paruelo, J. M. (2012). *Forest Policy and Economics*, 22, 85-88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forpol.2012.04.005>

D2. **In the shadows of social licence to operate: Untold investment grievances in Latin America**, Maria Ehrnström-Fuentes and Markus Kröger, *Journal of Cleaner Production* (2016). (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652616314536>)

D3. **Birthing extractivism: The role of the state in forestry politics and development in Uruguay**, Maria Ehrnström-Fuentes and Markus Kröger, *Journal of Rural Studies* (2017). (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0743016717305272>)

D4. **Confronting extractivism – the role of local struggles in the (un)making of place**, Maria Ehrnström-Fuentes, *Emerald Insight* (2019). (<https://www.emerald.com/insight/search?q=confronting+extractivism&showAll=true>)

[>>> Download the complete dossier here](#)

For all the above, monocultures of exotic trees for the production of cellulose in substitution of natural grasslands are not a model of sustainable development as the agroforestry industry maintains. On the contrary, this system leads to irreversible degradation of soils and waters and initiates desertification processes as they are already being registered in Brazil.

The international sustainability rankings prepared by entities such as CDP are used by UPM to deploy propaganda actions that justify its expansion in the Global South outsourcing pollution and greenhouse emissions to the poorest regions of the world. The promises of UPM are nothing more than a 'greenwashing' to improve the image of the company in the local and worldwide spheres.

We urge international organizations, governments and citizens to vehemently reject the fraudulent UPM campaign.

Signatures follow

Uruguayan organizations

Coordinación Nacional contra UPM

Comisión Nacional de Defensa del Agua y la Vida

Movimiento por un Uruguay Sustentable (MOVUS)

No al tren de UPM

Asamblea por el Agua de Santa Lucía

Asociación Ambientalista de Salto

Movimiento por la Tierra

Grupo Guayubira

Mesa Nacional de Colonos

Colectivo Ecofeminista Dafnias

REDES/Amigos de la Tierra Uruguay

Maldonado por la Tierra y el Agua

Asociación Uruguaya de Guardaparques

Fridays for Future Uruguay

Consejo de la Nación Charrúa (CONACHA)

Comisión Rivera por la vida sustentable y el agua

RAPAL Uruguay

Asociación de Trabajadores Civiles de los Diques del Estado (ATCDE)

Plenario intersindical social María Romana - La Paloma, Rocha

Diario barrial La Bicicleta

Colectivo Ñangapiré, San Gregorio de Polanco

Ecofeminismo Rio Negro

Partidos por el Medio, San Gregorio de Polanco

Movimiento de Protección Ambiental de Sarandí del Yí

Vivero Atrapasueños, San Gregorio de Polanco

Agrupación Motoquera Cicatriz Uruguay

Taller del arte-insano, San Gregorio de Polanco

Periódico La Fragua

Redes Ecologistas

Clan Choñik (Indígenas Charrúas)

Paysandú Nuestro

Finnish organizations

Friends of the Landless, Finland

Friends of the Earth Finland

New Wind Association

Emmaus Aurinkotehdas ry

Katajamäki ry

Endorsements by International organizations

World Rainforest Movement (WRM)

Acción Ecológica, Ecuador

Friends of the Earth Argentina

Guardianes del Iberá, Argentina

FASE/ES, Brasil

Global Justice Ecology Project

GE Free NZ in Food and Environment, New Zeland

RECOMA – Latin American Network against Monoculture Tree Plantations

Organización BIOS, Argentina

Unidad de Vinculación Ecologista - Fundación La Hendija, Paraná, Entre Ríos, Argentina

Asociación Argentina de Abogados Ambientalistas (AAdeAA)

Otros Mundos Chiapas/Friends of the Earth México

OLCA - Observatorio Latinoamericano de Conflictos Ambientales, Chile

Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)

The Campaign to Stop GE Trees, International

NGO Buenos Aires Sostenible, Argentina

CESTA (Centro Salvadoreño de Tecnologías Apropriadadas), El Salvador

CoecoCeiba (Comunidades Ecologistas La Ceiba), Costa Rica

Intipachamama, Nicaragua

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