Declaration: International Day of Struggle Against Monoculture Tree Plantations - September 21st, 2020

We share the Declaration of the Latin American Network Against Monoculture Tree Plantations : International Day of Struggle Against Monoculture Tree Plantations - September 21st, 2020

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This September 21st is not just another year: The COVID 19 crisis is all over the world. This pandemic forces us to reflect on the dramatic impacts that biodiversity loss and damages to ecosystems have on the planet and the societies that are part of it.

There is full global recognition that the pandemics we experience are a product of the aggression against nature. Not only COVID 19, linked to the trafficking of species and the destruction of natural areas; but other pandemics, such as Dengue, are expanding across our Americas in the heat of climate change.

Yet, the lockdown of half of humanity, the loss of jobs, the dramatic experiences of broken healthcare systems and the cost in lives—even in wealthy cities and countries—are not enough to stop extractivist corporations or change their profit models. World leaders continue to pin their hopes of post-pandemic economic reactivation on the same economic models that have led us to the COVID crisis, the climate crisis and the biodiversity crisis.

In this context, plantation's sector companies are a major part of the problem. Hundreds of thousands of hectares—of wetlands, forests, savannas and grasslands—have been transformed into tree monocultures. The model is the same, whether they are Oil palm, Pine, Eucalyptus, Citrus, Poplar, Avocado or other trees. Monoculture tree plantations destroy habitat diversity and ecological niches that exist in natural ecosystems. They affect ecosystem services and modify hydrological conditions, water availability, pollination supply, and the immeasurable characteristics contained in diverse environments; this includes the people who inhabit them.

The dispossession of local communities, indigenous peoples, peasants, Afro-descendent communities and other traditional communities is a constant that has not slowed with the pandemic. It has gotten even worse. There has been no lockdown for environmental destruction, which places people who live in forests and natural areas at enormous health risk. In almost every country, the situation for environmental defenders has worsened, as the most basic civil liberties—the rights to assemble and to protest—have been lost. Murders have continued during the quarantine in Honduras and Colombia.

Therefore, on this Day of Struggle against Monoculture Tree Plantations, we once again denounce that industrial plantations are part of the problem, and that given the magnitude of the global crisis, we cannot we cannot allow false solutions to continue to be discussed. Monoculture tree plantations

should not be part of discussions on carbon sequestration to curb the climate crisis. They should not be part of discussions on environmental restoration. And they should not be part of discussions on sustainable development. With monoculture tree plantations, we will not have biodiversity or healthy ecosystems; and nobody will be healthy in diseased ecosystems with no biodiversity.

NO MORE INDUSTRIAL TREE MONOCULTURES!
NO MORE FALSE SOLUTIONS!
NO ONE WILL BE HEALTHY IN DISEASED ECOSYSTEMS!

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