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## Foreword

*This article is part of the publication [15 Years of REDD:](#)*

[A Mechanism Rotten at the Core](#)

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Since it was introduced in 2007, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) has become the dominant forest policy around the world, impacting forest-dependent communities in countries with tropical forests in particular.

The experience of the past 15 years has shown an overwhelming record of REDD's catastrophic failure to address deforestation and forest degradation – and worse: it has also intensified the climate crisis and left the causes of deforestation untouched. REDD, in fact, has become an underlying cause of deforestation and climate change itself.

This should not be a surprise: the logic at the core of this scheme is rotten.

It allows the main drivers of pollution and deforestation to continue and expand their business legally. It is a logic that allows polluting companies, governments and elites to deny that fossil fuel extraction is at the root of the climate crisis, while deceiving many people into believing that the problems are being addressed and nothing really has to change. It is a logic based on colonial, racist and patriarchal oppressions, that blames those who have maintained and protected forests and other life spaces for generations for destroying them, that shames them for keeping their ancestral practices, livelihoods and beliefs, and that denies them access to their territories.

**For 15 years, REDD has helped to conceal crimes of carbon offset projects through ‘creative’ carbon accounting, ‘green’ propaganda and endless climate commitments that companies and governments make based on misleading and false promises.**

Indigenous Peoples and other communities living in and around REDD projects have been consistently denied access to their ancestral forests. They have seen their communities and crops destroyed or have been evicted. They have been forbidden from carrying on with their way of life, and prevented from continuing their agricultural, fishing or hunting activities. Trees have been planted in industrial-scale monocultures on land that communities depended upon for their survival and on land they regard as sacred, burial sites and places of ritual. Many REDD projects deploy guards, military or security forces to protect the carbon commodity that is stored in trees, resulting in more violence and fear, especially for women and girls. Many REDD projects also use tactics of coercion and manipulation to get the land, destroying social fabric and creating conflicts within communities.

Because of REDD, fossil fuel companies and the industrial and financial complex that depends on

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them have been able to continue devastating, deforesting and polluting more and more territories and life spaces. They have been able to do so with impunity. To them, REDD is not a catastrophic failure.

Many forest communities have opposed REDD since its introduction. 15 years on, opposition against this dangerous distraction to addressing the causes of deforestation is needed more than ever; opposition that is louder and stronger. And it cannot be only against REDD, but also against its new names like 'nature-based solutions', 'net zero' or any other term that will be invented based on the same deceptive and deceiving logic.

This publication gathers 11 articles that reflect on fundamental and dangerous dimensions of REDD. We hope that each of them will help to strengthen our arguments and actions against offsetting and to uncover it for what it really is: a racist scheme that can never be improved or fixed because it is designed to 'keep the oil flowing' and, with this, the capitalist system that is driving the current climate, forest and social crises.

**WRM International Secretariat**

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