
Certification schemes on “sustainability”: 30 years of deceit and violence

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The shelves in supermarkets and stores are full of certified products. The packaging displays different labels indicating products were made with “sustainable” paper or wood, food or cosmetic products made with “sustainable” palm oil, “responsible” soybeans and so on and so forth. Even when it comes to buying an airplane ticket, consumers can pay a little more to *ensure* that their carbon emissions are (supposedly) “neutralized”, so as to guarantee that much touted “sustainability”.

But why is there this need for so many labels and forms of certification? What is actually being certified? And who is benefitting from this? After 30 years of certification schemes with environmental and social bias, what is clear is that the only “sustainability” that they guarantee is that of corporations’ lucrative business and that of certification industry itself.

This compilation of articles from the WRM Bulletin aims to underscore the damaging role played by companies and organizations involved in certification schemes. WRM considers it important to highlight that after three decades with ever more environmental certification labels on the market, it is urgent to put an end to this greenwashing. Ultimately, instead of combating environmental devastation and the social ills linked to corporations’ and other players’ operations, these labels cover up and sustain their destructive logic.