
[FERN: Stop climate negotiators from bargaining away forests for their carbon content!](#)

With just five weeks to go before climate negotiators flock to The Hague to hammer out the implementing rules of the Kyoto Protocol, forests are more and more in danger of being reduced to a single commodity --carbon-- to be traded away under the Kyoto Protocol's so called "Flexible Mechanisms".

The resulting "Kyoto forests" are likely to be tree plantations --supposedly a substitute for reducing carbon emissions-- and the implications of these for forests, forest peoples, biodiversity and sustainable development could be grave.

Gaining credits for the natural ability of forests and soils to temporarily fix carbon, instead of addressing greenhouse gas emissions at home will mean that the North can continue to get away with using more than its fair share of the world's natural resources --by claiming (supposedly degraded) lands in the South to make up for it's exorbitant resource use.

So, the North goes on polluting and people in the South pay --these countries are often hit hardest by severe weather events (remember Hurricane Mitch, the recent flooding in Vietnam?). What's more, land already under heavy pressure from conflicting uses is now being committed to Northern energy companies searching cheap land for their "carbon offset" projects. Carbon sinks will thus lead to a new form of colonialism, which passes onto the South responsibility for the past decades of inequitable resource use by the North.

Gaining credits to fix carbon instead of addressing greenhouse gas emissions will also delay the inevitable switch towards renewable energy sources.

The full text can be accessed at: <http://www.wrm.org.uy/english/Luxemburg.htm>
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- "The Hague Mandate"

The following declaration, endorsed by an international group of concerned organizations from the South and the North for COP6, stresses the need for an effective and fair agreement to protect the global climate and among other issues, expresses that:

- cuts in emissions can and should be made by industrialised countries as agreed in Rio in 1992
- cutting emissions will bring about the innovation needed for sustainable development in North and South
- no citizen has a right to pollute more than any other
- past, current and future emissions from industrialised countries have, do and will exceed for an unknown period their fair share by far and that this is unfair.

We therefore call on the Governments of the world to correct this inequity by implementing the UN

Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol so that:

- mechanisms are developed whereby those who emit above their fair share provide adequate resources to developing countries vulnerable to the impacts of climate change for both disaster preparedness and disaster relief and rehabilitation
- the overwhelming majority of emission reductions are made in the high per capita polluting countries (domestic action first)
- other environmental and social problems are prevented by a clear focus of the Protocol's flexible mechanisms on renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.