
[Carbon projects are projects of death](#)

From 9 to 11 July, 2024, members of Indigenous, peasant, traditional and Afro-descendent peoples from the Amazon region and Central America came together in the Alto-Turiaçu indigenous territory, in the state of Maranhão, Brazil. This meeting was hosted and organized by the Ka'apor People through their ancestral organizational system, called *Tuxa Ta Pame*.

Their objective was to share experiences and discuss forest carbon projects, often referred to as REDD projects (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). The number of these kinds of projects has dramatically increased in recent years, not just in Latin America and the Amazon, but also in Africa and Asia.

This meeting in Ka'apor territory differed from other meetings that have taken place on the same issue. It was a space by and for community activists and groups where they shared experiences, priorities, concerns and resistance struggles, without having carbon project promoters present.

The participants at the meeting also decided to make a collective declaration. In their [declaration](#), they first clarify that when they talk about REDD, they are also including projects “created following the same logic as REDD (for example, forest carbon projects, nature-based solutions projects, jurisdictional REDD programs implemented by state or national governments, and others)”.

They go on to analyse how promoters of forest carbon projects and programmes are no different from other companies and actors who promote extractivism. REDD is actually part of the same model that has been appropriating their territories and destroying their livelihoods, with State support, for a long time. REDD promoters use the same tactics as promoters of other kinds of extractivism, and they have the same objective: to profit. In this case, their 'commodity' is 'carbon credits'.

'Carbon credits', in turn, fuel the perpetuation of the extractivist model, so it is more accurate to call them 'pollution credits'. According to the declaration, REDD projects – which include jurisdictional REDD' or 'governmental REDD' programmes funded by Northern governments like Norway, Germany, the UK and the USA – “seek greater economic benefit for their [REDD] business and incentivize deforestation, because more deforestation means more business for companies that sell carbon credits.” The declaration goes on to say that REDD “is a greenwash. Like other false solutions to the climate catastrophe, such as 'unconventional oil exploration', 'biofuels', 'responsible mining or green gold', or the 'energy transition', REDD allows companies to continue with their business whilst polluting.”

Due to this situation, participants at the gathering called forest carbon projects and programmes a “project of death,” in contrast to the “project of life that we the peoples and communities are promoting through the respect and care for our territories.”

The articles in this bulletin highlight several regions where the expansion of carbon projects has become an integral part of the extractivist model. Since this model has been destroying people's livelihoods and territories for a long time, we share articles on both old and new forms of extractivism

in communities' territories.

For example, in the department of Vichada, Colombia, the impacts of mining, monocultures and other forms of extraction are being compounded by the introduction of carbon projects, including carbon plantations.

In Corrientes, Argentina, the community is fighting against the impacts of the sawmills that surround their homes, the result of thousands of hectares of eucalyptus and pine monoculture in the region. A survey carried out by the community on the impacts of these sawmills on their health shows that they should not continue near to their homes. Besides, the survey itself once more denounces the very model of tree monoculture, imposed on the region by the companies with the full support of the state.

Another article reports on the important victory of the communities in Edéa, Cameroon, that mobilised to prevent the SOCAPALM company, which promotes monoculture oil palm plantations in the region, from replanting the areas surrounding the communities. In a statement, a women's association from Edéa said: “we will not accept spending the next 50 years in this misery. We are determined to fight to free our lands and obtain living spaces for our children, who are the current and future generations.”

The land of Papua is currently a major global frontier for industrial oil palm expansion and deforestation. But it is also the territory of hundreds of different Indigenous Peoples. An article in this bulletin describes the resistance of one of these groups. It also describes how the Indonesian government is not only allowing the expansion of large-scale oil palm, but also letting companies use part of their concession area for the sale of carbon credits.

Another article reports on a peasant struggle in Pará, Brazil, where the 2025 annual UN climate conference will take place. The state government of Pará is using this stage to promote the idea of a 'bioeconomy' or 'economy of life' as the solution to the climate and deforestation crises. However, this 'bioeconomy' – which is based on industrial oil palm plantations to produce biodiesel and other products – is actually destroying peasant communities' territories and livelihoods. And this is occurring in collusion with the Pará government.

This last example epitomizes the final words of the aforementioned Declaration, which we highlight here: “They have been killing us since colonization. Currently, it is oil, mining, and agribusiness companies; dams and other infrastructure projects; carbon offset projects like REDD; and State policies which continue with the ethnocide of our peoples – killing our cultures, languages, identities, knowledge and wisdom. Enough is enough! We say No to REDD!”