

On Human Rights Day, groups demand justice in climate convention

Sunday, 10 October 2004

Buenos Aires, Argentina - In a press conference today, human rights and environmental organizations participating in the 10th Conference of the Parties for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change condemned the rapidly emerging market in carbon as a failed experiment in solving the climate change crisis.

"Powerful interests have hijacked the climate debate, and are forcing a corporate, free market approach to the earth's peril," said Tom Goldtooth, director of Indigenous Environmental Network.

In previous climate negotiations, developing countries attempted to create a global fund that would assist them in transitioning to more sustainable energy paths. Instead, the Northern governments forged the new Clean Development Mechanism, which even Kyoto Protocol supporters concede has failed to forge new pathways of development. The CDM allows Northern countries to evade limits on their carbon emissions already committed, by setting up projects in Southern countries, including "cheap" carbon "sinks" such as large-scale tree plantations.

"Monoculture tree plantations are devastating for local communities and for the environment," said Rachel Nunez of the World Rainforest Movement. "If the Kyoto Protocol allows large plantations of genetically modified trees to count as clean development projects, the results will be catastrophic," she added.

Current carbon trading schemes involve governments, export credit agencies, corporations and international financial institutions—all of whom continue to invest in and support fossil fuel exploitation and use—but not the people whose land, air and water, and lives and most directly affected.

At today's press conference, the Institute for Policy Studies released an expose of the biggest carbon trading proponent, the World Bank. *Wrong Turn From Rio: The World Bank's Road to Climate Catastrophe* demonstrates how the World Bank has systematically transformed Kyoto tools including carbon trading schemes into mechanisms for institutional profit and maintaining the status quo.

"The World Bank has done more than any other institution to entrench the global fossil fuel industry," said Nadia Martinez of the Institute for Policy Studies. "It must be removed from any scheme that purports to solve the climate crisis."

Daily updates on the Climate Justice blogs:

<http://climatejusticeblogspot.com> (English) and

<http://justiciaclimatica.blogspot.com> (Spanish).

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