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| Dear friends, http://www.wrm.org.uy/21_09.jpg    Please find below a press release on **September 21st "International Day of Struggle against Monoculture Tree Plantations."**    Please feel free to distribute it as widely as possible among your networks and contacts.    Best regards,  The WRM Team  Press release: September 21st 2012  **International Day Against Monoculture Tree Plantations:**  **Alert on financialization**  An open letter (see below) by organizations and activists from 45 countries dated today -International Day Against Monoculture Tree Plantations- warns about a new phenomenon: the expansion of monoculture tree plantations as a result of finance capitals promoting it.  According to the letter, the incentive is part of a greater process by virtue of which *“speculative financial markets have increasingly gained power over the rest of the economy and life in general.”*The statement also indicates that “The new Green Economy, encouraged by the United Nations and rationalized by the claim that the only way to assure that nature is conserved is to price it.”  The letter goes on to express that:*“Preserving nature becomes a business, restricting the access of local communities to zones and goods that are essential to their survival. REDD and proto-REDD projects are a clear example.”*  And: *“In many cases, it is the same actors who are speculating on the 'business of nature' and getting richer through its destruction. At the same time that financial capital explores 'ecosystem services', it is also continuing to expand its interests in destructive activities. For example, it is increasingly common that pension or investment funds from Northern countries invest and speculate in large-scale monoculture tree plantations in Southern countries.”*  According to WRM’s (World Rainforest Movement) international coordinator Winnie Overbeek:*“Monoculture tree plantations, which have caused serious social and environmental problems for local populations mainly in southern countries, today find a new incentive in these investments by speculative financial capitals whose only interest is to access quick and easy profits. This is making the land concentration issue worse and also jeopardizes the food sovereignty of large populations and regions”.*  On this particular date, this letter will be addressed, in a number of countries, to local government authorities, as the 11th Meeting of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity is organized to take place in India shortly, from October 1st to 19th.    Organizations as well as activists claim for the governments to put a halt on the expansion of tree plantations on peoples territories and request a firm position by authorities attending the CBD meeting against the growing financialization of nature.  *What indigenous peoples use to call ´the sacred´ cannot be priced; it has to be defended!*  Contacts:    WRM International Secretary  [+598 2413 2989](tel:%2B598%202413%202989) – [wrm@wrm.org.uy](mailto:wrm@wrm.org.uy)  -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------  OPEN LETTER to the NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS on 21st September,  International Day Against Monoculture Tree Plantations.  The current environmental, economic and climatic crisis we all face today represents a threat to the survival of mankind. Destroyed ecosystems imply a risk not only for the communities depending directly on them but also for the planet as a whole. The centers of power are not questioning the conditions imposed by the production and consumption that have led to the present situation. On the contrary, they support false solutions that enable the same actors who caused the crisis to become even wealthier continue to accumulate wealth, as the majority of the world’s population watches their life conditions deteriorate.  We are witnessing the convergence of two processes that respectively imply the inclusion of new aspects of life in market economies, and the finacialization of economy in itself, including speculations with new “green” goods.    Capitalist systems have always controlled human and non-human nature. A series of brand new products are being developed aimed at being sold in the market, such as carbon, biodiversity or water. As this takes place, speculative financial markets have increased their power over the rest of the economy and life in general, as a result of the crisis of capitalism started in the 1970s. The new Green Economy is stimulated by the UN, and rationalized upon the argument that the only way to guarantee the preservation of nature is to put a price on it. As the new objects for trade and speculation, the so-called goods of “environmental services” are presented as the lifesaver of an economy that continues focused on plundering and exploitation activities.  To those - such as Banks, investment funds, pension funds, and multinational companies - who get rich through the financialization of nature, Green Economy represents nothing but new and further opportunities for business. As they coordinate their activity with large conservation organizations, they take over the UN’s procedures, such as the Conventions on Climatic Change and Biodiversity, and use them to their own benefit making their actions legitimate.  Preserving nature has become a business that restricts the access by local communities to areas and assets that are fundamental for their subsistence. The REDD and proto-REDD projects are a clear example of it, as evidenced at the recent Rio+20 World Summit.  In many cases, the actors involved are speculating with the “nature business” themselves, as they are benefitting from the destruction of nature. While ‘environmental services’ are exploited, financial capitals continue to expand their interests in destructive activities. For example: it has become common practice for the pension and investment funds of northern countries to invest in large-scale monoculture tree plantations in southern countries, which implies speculative procedures.  The negative impact caused on ecosystems, biodiversity, water sources and means for survival for local communities has been widely demonstrated.  This call appeals to bringing all our battles together in order to demand that government authorities start dismantling the speculation and commercialization of life, so as to help in protecting landscapes and means for survival from the destruction and inequity aggravated by the financialization of life.  Such are the reasons for this open letter - on the International Day Against Monoculture Tree Plantations (21st September), and in preparation for the 11th Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to take place in India on October 1 to 19 - by means of which we demand that our governments put an end to the expansion of tree plantations on our territories, by defending a firm position during the Meeting, against the growing financialization of nature.  *What indigenous peoples often call “sacred” cannot be subject to trade! It should be defended by all means!*  *The full list of signatories can be accessed at:* [*http://www.wrm.org.uy/plantations/21\_set/2012/Signatures\_to\_the\_Open\_letter.html*](http://www.wrm.org.uy/plantations/21_set/2012/Signatures_to_the_Open_letter.html)  -------------------------------------------------  Access further information on the subject at  <http://wrm.org.uy/plantations/21_set/2012/index.html> |