

## The Real Greenwash: How to Buy a CBD

*By Simone Lovera, Global Forest Coalition*

Admittedly, there is one big advantage to the increased corporate sponsorship of the Convention on Biodiversity; all those Ministers looked absolutely gorgeous yesterday after all the “promocao” from O Boticario – the cosmetic firm where Tuesday’s Ministerial was held. Brand new lipstick emblazoned their mouths as they exchanged smiles, policy standards and corporate funding during the high-level panel debates and breakfast meetings at O Boticario’s. Meeting at a cosmetics firm specializing in natural soaps and bathfoams was the perfect way to gloss up and sanitize the conference. These people literally specialize in greenwash !!!!

In this light, the statement in the CRP on private sector engagement questioning the limited private sector involvement in the CBD is simply hilarious. Guys and girls, without industry you would not be here! (and you certainly would not look so good.) Have you heard the rumor about the number of Monsanto representatives on the Brazilian delegation to the Biosafety Meeting of the Parties? 15. Fifteen! Aside from that we have pharmaceutical companies, seed companies, oil companies, banks and numerous privately funded research institutions, both on and off delegations. Just look around you, wherever you are in the conference building, and see if you can find the nearest advertisement. This conference centre is so plastered with commercial exhibitions and advertisements it makes Times Square look square!

And mind you, it is not the number of people companies bring to these meetings that really counts; it’s their money. Funding for glamorous receptions, high-level meetings, and breakfast meetings financed by a cosmetics company which, however good intentioned, would not be entirely neutral on access and benefit sharing, for example. Funding for glossy publications by the Secretariat on issues like protected areas, paid for by companies like Shell are sheer goodwill, of course. Except for that funny little recommendation at the end stating that oil exploration in protected areas should be possible.

Of course, we do not call this ‘corporate sponsorship’. No, we call these contributions “partnerships”. Partnerships as in: “I give you money and you do something for me.” Is it really accidental that the report of the Sao Paulo meeting of the Business and Biodiversity Initiative was censored so as to make sure the recommendation by many participants that binding regulations are the best way to ensure good corporate behavior was kept out of the official documentation? Is it really accidental that the expert meeting on liability concluded, 13 years after the Convention called for consideration of the issue, that an international liability regime was “premature”? Is it really accidental that we still have this pathetic document on the need for increased private sector engagement when the entire COP has already turned into a shopping mall? (I’ve heard about people who accidentally walked into next door Carrefour supermarket, and discovered an hour later they were in the wrong building!!!) Do we really need even more private sector engagement in the ABS-mess? On GURTS? On deep sea trawling?

And are we really sure we want to promote biodiversity offsets, to mention just one funny recommendation in the controversial private

sector paper, when we know offsets will drop many governments and conservation organizations down the slippery slope of having to trade off their principles against budgetary considerations? Talking about perverse incentives, it is a simple fact that it becomes very attractive for a conservation agency not to protest too much against destructive development in a nearby area when you are able to pay park manager salaries with the offset. And then there is money to be made out of impact studies, risk assessments, and dramatic movies about species being at risk leading to more public donations. Biodiversity offsets can undeniably create win-win situations - for protected area managers and destructive corporations.

And we all know who will loose out in these dirty deals. Ordinary people, without money, without the capacity to pay for expensive breakfast meetings, and fancy lipstick. Women and men who are organizing actions and demonstrating on the street against dirty deals, against dirty technologies like GURTS and GM trees, against monocultures like the massive eucalypt plantations of Aracruz that are promoted by governments as “reforestation” projects.

Yes, we need a certain amount of funding to implement the Convention. As clearly stated in the Convention itself, it is governments, especially donor countries, who should cough up this money. They committed to doing so in 1992, and it is time they fulfilled their promise, without bowing to the private sector, without dirty deals, without trade-offs.



### In This Issue:

1. Greenwash
2. Subsidies + 8j
3. MONOCultures
4. C O P Notes

*ECO thanks SwedBio for their on-going support!*

# Attention Delegates!

## Production/Consumption and biodiversity loss are closely linked.

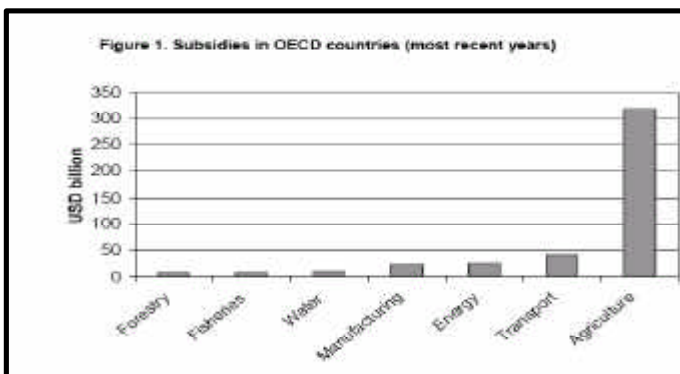
Rosario Ortiz, researcher, Université de Sherbrooke

To come even remotely close to the 2010 target, Parties (and one particularly consumptive non-Party) must address unsustainable production and consumption. Thus a critical question posed in the proposed National Reporting Guidelines is:

### Has your country taken measures to reduce unsustainable consumption of biological resources? (Target 4.2 – promoting sustainable use and consumption).

An interlinked issue, of course, is that of incentives, which has been discussed here, and will again be on the agenda at COP 9. Every year, OECD countries give about USD 400 billion in subsidies to different economic sectors (see below figure). In the agricultural sector these subsidies can lead to the overuse of pesticides and fertilizers. In many countries, particularly the less industrialized ones, governments directly subsidize the purchase of pesticides and chemical fertilizers to favor industrialized agriculture centered on export crops. During the 1980's, for example, the Chinese government spent 285 million, the Egyptian government 207 million, and the Columbian government 69 million on such subsidies. In Pakistan, the government dedicated around 75% of its agricultural budget to finance chemical fertilizers. Specific policies limiting these perverse subsidies are required if the 2010 target is to be met.

With this in mind, the following list provides more specific



questions that Parties could answer (and hopefully address) in relation to Target 4.2:

1. What percentage of your country's arable land is dedicated to industrial agricultural export crops?
2. What kinds of support measures does your country use in the agricultural sector (tax breaks to particular groups, market price support, preferential interest rates, subsidize input prices, budgetary payments)?
3. What percentage of your country's agricultural budget (in the 1980s, 1990s, and the period from 2000 - 2005) has been dedicated to:
  - Financing the purchase of chemical fertilizers?
  - Financing the purchase of pesticides?
  - Supporting organic small-scale farmers?
  - Supporting large-scale industrial farmers?
  - Support of local or regional food consumption based on biological diversity agro-ecosystems?
  - Supporting farmers to limit the use of pesticides and fertilizers?
  - Supporting farmers for ecosystems restoration?
4. What kinds of policy measures are being applied in your country for the removal of perverse incentives that promote unsustainable agricultural, forest and fisheries practices?
5. Has your country issued incentives to promote community-based management of non-timber forest products or community-based fishery management?

Despite the fact the third national CBD report poses a question related to incentives -- *Has your country established programmes to identify and adopt economically and socially sound measures that act as incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of components of biological diversity* -- we currently lack precise information accounting for unsustainable land use practices and incentive measures targeting biodiversity conservation, never mind unsustainable consumption. This information is a prerequisite to minimizing all types of biodiversity loss. The author can be reached at [rosa.ortiz@sympatico.ca](mailto:rosa.ortiz@sympatico.ca)

## Indigenous Rights-holder from New Zealand tells a story about 8j

Te Aroha Henare, Pacific Indigenous Peoples Environmental Coalition

### In Her Country

Article 8J is homeless in NZ!! Native flora and fauna, and traditional indigenous knowledge do not have adequate protection. Indeed the last mention of native remedies was in the Tohunga (native healer) Suppression Act passed by the NZ legislature in 1908, which, as one can deduce from its title, sought to *suppress* the cultural practitioners – something it did quite effectively.

Article 8J certainly expresses the universal desire to recognize traditional indigenous knowledge, innovations, and best practices. Yet it is an uphill battle, as it must work against 100 years of colonial legislation in New Zealand. For instance, there is no protocol between the NZ govt and Indigenous delegates for CBD dialogue.

Traditional Maori (Indigenous) peoples look to the CBD for allies among seasoned, respected, and connected Indigenous Peoples, NGOs and Global Forestry groups.

### From Benign Acceptance ...

Recently, certain NZ and Australian pharmaceutical and chain store interests sought to ban non-factory herbal remedies. Their intent was to outlaw products that till then did not enjoy pharmaceutical vetting, bar-labelling, etc (including native traditional healing products and remedies my people pluck from the forest for their daily needs).

Ironically Captain Cook (in the late 1700s) and the British and French armies in World War One, appropriated these remedies, e.g. koromiko, to treat dysentery, and diarrhoea amongst the soldiers. They were benignly regarded – then.

...Continued pg 4

# Illegal Logging or Industrial Timber Plantations – Which Causes Greater Biodiversity Loss?

Wally Menne, Global Forest Coalition

The focus of environmentally aware consumer countries has traditionally been on avoiding the importation of illegally procured timber from tropical forests. However there has been another source of industrial timber that has been making its way into the market place without causing too much of a stir amongst mainstream environmentalists. An obscure process possibly driven by perverse demand created by desires to slow deforestation in tropical regions, has simultaneously driven up demand for timber from another source - large-scale industrial timber plantations.

Together with incremental market growth, driven by wasteful consumption and greedy paper product manufacturers more than anything else, this relatively new source of industrial wood needs the same environmental scrutiny as any threatened forest. According to the 2005 United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) forest area assessment report, industrial timber plantations are spreading faster than forests are being logged or otherwise destroyed, but this expansion could represent an even greater loss of biodiversity than forest degradation caused by unsustainable logging.

The Global Forest Coalition defines forests as *“complex tree dominated ecosystems with particular structural biotic and abiotic components, assembled within temporal and spatial limits and with a self-sustained successional dynamic determined by its biodiversity”*. In countries where such forests comprise a minority of vegetation cover, as in South Africa, this usually means that environmentally and socially destructive timber plantations take over land suitable for more productive and sustainable agricultural activities such as community livestock grazing or food farming. In substantially forested regions like Brasil, where plantations often replace existing forests or are planted on land where forests previously grew, there is a slightly different scenario in terms of land-use succession. But even in forested regions, large-scale industrial timber plantation still results in a substantial loss of both agricultural and natural biodiversity, with all the associated impacts on human communities and rural economies.

Industrial timber plantations characteristically destroy all the natural vegetation and wildlife where they are established, and also have devastating impacts on water resources. Reductions in water supply, siltation, and invasion by alien invasive weeds spread by plantation activities, also negatively impact farms, communities situated downstream, and threaten the viability of ecosystems on adjacent land. Heavily logged forests are likely to recover naturally over time, but without major and costly restoration efforts, timber plantations permanently degrade the land.

The monoculture timber plantation model is not a sound way to produce the valuable environmental goods and services normally derived from healthy forests, apart from industrial fibre and timber for utility. However, the plantation industry relies on misleading definitions promoted by FAO, and goes out of its way to mis-represent and exaggerate the benefits of industrial timber plantations. Industry-inflated claims of plantation benefits are further legitimised by the inclusion of industrial timber plantations in the ‘forest’ certification schemes of organisations such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Third party certification of timber has proven unreliable in providing adequate assurances that products derived from industrial plantations do not contribute to environmental degradation and poverty.

In the context of recent debates on the genetic engineering of plants, and especially the use of so-called ‘terminator’ technology to interfere with the capacity of trees to grow and breed naturally, the potential of timber plantations to damage ecosystems and communities could increase substantially. If this untested technology is approved and genetically engineered trees are introduced into cultivation, even greater destruction of biodiversity could occur. There would be no

advantage for the environment at all, contrary to mischievous claims forwarded by plantation proponents.

A simple decision needs to be made by the governments of affected countries - stop the expansion of industrial timber plantations before they further damage our planet’s biodiversity and sustainability. At the civil society level, this means the forest protection lobby in overdeveloped countries needs to encourage consumers to boycott all timber extracted from unsustainable sources - both threatened forests and threatening plantations!

## Declaration by the Latin American Network against Monoculture Tree Plantations

The member organizations of the Latin American Network against Monoculture Tree Plantations find it necessary to communicate to COP 8, their concern over the continuous substitution of ecosystems rich in biodiversity by monoculture plantations of eucalyptus, pine and other exotic species, particularly in the countries of the South.

To make matters worse, the biotechnology industry has already entered into the business of transgenic trees to increase their growth rates, to make them more resistant to herbicides, to lessen the lignin content in the wood and thus increase profitability of the pulp industry. In spite of the fact that the spread of transgenic trees implies a clear threat to forest biodiversity, and in spite of the fact that their use will worsen the impacts of monoculture tree plantations, this Convention continues without making a clear pronouncement against them.

Consequently, the Latin American Network against Monoculture Tree Plantations appeals to this Convention to:

- 1) Clearly define forests, excluding from such definition large-scale monoculture tree plantations.
- 2) Include the substitution of natural ecosystems by monoculture tree plantations as one of the main causes of the loss of biodiversity.
- 3) Ban transgenic trees.

## Declaração da Rede Latino-americana contra as Monoculturas de Árvores Curitiba, 2006

As organizações integrantes da Rede Latino-americana contra as Monoculturas de Árvores consideram necessário transmitir à Conferência das Partes da Convenção sobre Diversidade Biológica reunida em Curitiba, Brasil, sua preocupação pela contínua substituição de ecossistemas ricos em biodiversidade, por monoculturas de eucaliptos, pinus e outras espécies exóticas, particularmente nos países do Sul.

Para piorar a situação, a indústria da biotecnologia já ingressou no negócio das árvores transgênicas para fazer com que as árvores cresçam mais rápido, para que sejam mais resistentes aos herbicidas, para diminuir o conteúdo de lignina na madeira e para aumentar desse jeito a rentabilidade da indústria da celulose. Apesar de que a liberação das árvores transgênicas significa uma clara ameaça para a biodiversidade das florestas e apesar de que seu uso pioraria os impactos das monoculturas de árvores, essa Convenção continua sem pronunciar-se claramente contra.

Por conseguinte, a Rede Latino-americana contra as Monoculturas de Árvores faz um chamamento a essa Convenção para que:

- 1) Defina claramente as florestas, excluindo dessa definição as monoculturas de árvores em grande escala
- 2) Inclua a substituição de ecossistemas naturais por monoculturas de árvores como uma das principais causas de perda de biodiversidade
- 3) Proíba a liberação das árvores transgênicas.

# Notes from the C O P

## GRULAC on Indigenous Peoples Participation

*Sandy Gauntlett, GFC*

The discussions on Indigenous participation in ABS have become more muddled by this week's events that lead to the introduction of the GRULAC text on IP participation. In order to understand the possible implications of this text, we must first examine the events leading up to it.

On Monday evening, the informal consultation group on Indigenous participation met and clearly indicated that it was a meeting *closed* to Indigenous participation. That alone should have set alarm bells ringing.

On Tuesday, the GRULAC text appeared and seemed set to supersede the weakened EU/Canada text. At first glance the GRULAC text appears to be a major step forward (given the present alternatives). A deeper analysis of it, however, and the unseemly rush of some groups to endorse it, reveals some serious shortcomings with GRULAC's proposal.

Paragraph one might appear to be geared towards increasing participation, but a careful reading reveals that in fact this paragraph calls on the 8J working group to provide WG outcomes to the Secretariat so these can become available to the WG on ABS. It also seeks to restrict this to the issue of benefit sharing and to protect traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources. There are two problems with these moves: 1) There is a difference between Indigenous Peoples and the WG on 8J and; 2) Protection of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources does not necessarily protect the genetic resources.

Paragraph 2 is a shortened version of paragraph one but this time refers to Indigenous Peoples. Again it subtly seeks to limit participation to the issue of traditional knowledge.

Paragraph 3 has a huge potential problem in that it seeks government access to indigenous concerns, case studies, and evidence. For some indigenous peoples this could be dangerous, particularly in countries where the human rights record is less than perfect.

Paragraph 4 is vaguely related to some of the original indigenous text, but is problematic in that it seeks only to consult IP reps in order to relate their views to the WG on ABS. This is not the same as participation.

5 and 6 are simple re-statements of current practice. 7 is a good idea in theory but in practice could lead to some problems for Indigenous communities that do not have adequate consultation opportunities before meetings and may lead to an increase in the capacity gap. 8 and 9 I personally support and do not see as problematic, while 10 appears to support internal Indigenous processes.

Finally, what is GRULAC's motivation in raising this text? Is this a genuine attempt to support Indigenous participation? Or is this instead about sidestepping the 'participation problem' so that interested parties can begin negotiating the regime on Access and Benefit Sharing? .

## Bola Murcha (Flat Ball) of the day nomination goes to the Puppet Team

*Greenpeace*



Today's *Bola Murcha (Flat Ball)* nomination for the most destructive government delegation at CBD COP8 goes to the Puppet team (Canada, Australia, New Zealand.... and their mastermind the non-Party USA) for mobilizing their army of lawyers to provide a raffle of amendments meant to obstruct and delay the adoption of a negotiating mandate for a legally binding agreement on ABS. They also obstruct the recognition of CBD's role in identifying marine reserves in areas beyond national jurisdiction along with any reference to how trade can drive biodiversity exploitation.

The Bola Murcha (Flat Ball) of the day will be placed at the Greenpeace booth in the exhibition hall of COP8.



## In good faith.

*Joyce Hambling, Seeds*

We would all like to think that whatever our differences, we come together around the CBD in good faith - however the experience of the past week has fallen short of my most meager expectations.

Last week, the Executive Secretary kindly came and met with a group of NGOs. At this meeting he offered (offered - we did not ask) a prominent speaking position - after Wangari Mathai and Rejoice Mabudafhasi - to women as the only major stakeholder group to be included in the running order of the ministerial plenary.

We were surprised...and impressed....and I, at least, was prepared to believe that the male half of the human population had finally entered the 21st century by realising the crucial contributions women make.

So it was a bit of a shock, when we were told by somebody from the secretariat that women would be the very last to speak, after all the ministers, the WTO, WIPO, the IGOs...the very very last.

Indeed, when the South African minister Rejoice Mabudafhasi came to spend time with the women's group, she expressed surprise since she was expecting to hear us after her speech, and not the Austrian minister.

This is a great shame on several levels - firstly, I doubt many people were left in the plenary hall at the day's end to hear what was a really good

statement. Secondly, it casts doubt on the sincerity and credibility of assertions that the CBD wants to emphasize women as a major stakeholder, and rights holder in issues of biodiversity. In his speech on International Women's Day this year, Mr. Djoghla noted that '...the 2010 biodiversity target will not be achieved without the active involvement of women.' He also said an awful lot of other good things. We invite him, and others, to reread it, and take it seriously.

In the meantime, yet another group of diverse and amazing women have come together at the CBD in a partnership based on trust and respect.

## ...NZ + 8j from pg. 2

### To Sector Marginalization

After a century of Western trust in traditional healing products, remedies and expertise, these have now become vilified in NZ. The upshot of these actions has seen traditional Maori healers become totally reliant on voluntary resources, and thus not able to do the networking they would like. In industry vernacular this is called 'sector-marginalisation'.

### Does This Forum Know Or Care?

Traditional knowledge holders say that virtually all other issues emanating from the CBD cannot be considered in isolation from each other because traditional knowledge is holistic. So issues that have no Indigenous veto are extremely likely to compromise Indigenous practices and the repositories of that essential knowledge, as in fact, they have in many instances.

### Who Are We?

Today, many traditional Maori healers such as *Nga Ringa Whakahaere O Te Iwi Maori* Rotorua (with networks throughout Aotearoa, NZ), work to restore, protect and perpetuate centuries-old traditional knowledge of the healing properties and powers of native indigenous flora and fauna. Our beliefs affirm synergies and understandings between man, nature, and supernatural sources. Our healing, as most Indigenous Peoples know, is culturally prescribed by right conduct, motive, approach, condition, attitude, and leadership. Traditional healing requires the recognition of biological diversity at its most fundamental level.

### What Can You Do, CBD?

To be effective in supporting traditional knowledge in the protection of biological diversity, Traditional Indigenous healers should be formally recognized more than we currently are. The NZ government should consult with Indigenous traditional knowledge holders at home first, before they presume to talk about our interests before the audience of the world.

**...Subject to our full and effective participation, and free prior and informed consent.** For further inquiries, contact Pacific Indigenous Peoples Environmental Coalition Contact Email: [tatmhenare@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:tatmhenare@yahoo.co.nz)