

Open letter to the members of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

May 2008

Dear Sirs/Madams,

We, the undersigned wish to express our deep concern over the impacts of large-scale monoculture tree plantations on the planet's biodiversity, as well as the more recent threat posed by the research on transgenic trees currently being conducted in a number of countries. At the same time, we wish to make a call for concrete measures to be adopted on these issues during the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in Bonn.

We would like to emphasize, first of all, that although large-scale monoculture tree plantations result in serious social and environmental impacts – and particularly on the biological diversity of forest areas– they officially continue to be defined as “forests” and included as a synonym for “forest cover”. We believe it is crucial for the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, as a body specializing in the preservation of biodiversity, to establish a clear distinction between forests and monoculture tree plantations, and to adopt a definition of forests that excludes these plantations.

At the same time, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD should make efforts to clearly distinguish the social and environmental benefits derived from forests and the harmful impacts that monoculture tree plantations entail for local communities and biodiversity.

The Conference of the Parties should also recognize the serious impacts on biodiversity of large-scale monocultures intended for the production of agrofuels and place limits on their expansion. It should also call for an immediate moratorium on all political and financial support for such agrofuel production. This category includes monocultures for the production of biodiesel (oil palm, soybeans, sunflowers, jatropha, etc.) , ethanol (poplars, willows, eucalyptus trees, sugar cane, corn, etc.), and other biomass-based fuels. It should also recognize the increase of the use of agrochemicals and its impact on people's health and environment.

Additionally, the Conference of the Parties should prohibit the release of genetically modified trees – including field testing – which would not only contribute to the consolidation of a model of monoculture tree plantations that has proven to be destructive to biodiversity, but would also increase these impacts and pose new threats to biodiversity. The use of transgenic trees would even further aggravate the impacts already observed on biodiversity, water, land, forests and the communities that depend on them, and could trigger an ecological disaster for forest-based food chains.

The use of unreliable and dangerous “terminator” technologies, proposed as a solution for the possible genetic contamination of forests, would only worsen the problem by potentially resulting in the extinction of numerous species associated with the flowering and fruit-bearing of trees.

To summarize, we call on the members of the CBD to adopt measures to ensure that:

- monoculture tree plantations are excluded from the definition of forests
- all financial, political and technical support for monocultures for agrofuels is withdrawn in the light of their direct and indirect impacts on biodiversity and food sovereignty
- the release of transgenic trees and use of “terminator” technology is prohibited.

signatures up to May 19:

Organization

21st Paradigm

49th Parallel Biotechnology Consortium

A SEED Europe

Acción Ecológica

Acción por la Biodiversidad

AEFJN Africa-Faith & Justice Network

African Centre for Biosafety

African Conservation Foundation

AG Wald der Foun Umwelt und Entwicklung

AGB/ES - Associação dos Geógrafos Brasileiros-Seção Espírito Santo

Agenda 21 Anil&Azul - Rio de Janeiro

Agenda Regional de La Araucanía

Agenda Regional de La Araucanía, AGRA

Agrupación ambientalista Koyam Newen

Agrupación Mapuche Kona Pewman, Gulumapu

Aharan Traditional Crop producer Company

Alianza por una Mejor Calidad de Vida (RAP-Chile)

Alicia Borges

Alternativas y Solidaridad

Amigos de la Tierra España – Friends of the Earth Spain

Amigos en Defensa de la Gran Sabana - AMIGRANSA

André Guiachetto Carneiro Leão

Anna Jussilainen

AOPA - Associação para o Desenvolvimento da Agroecologia

Appolinaire

Arbofilia

Argonautas Ambientalistas da Amazônia

Articulação Pacari

Articulação Rondonense de Agroecologia

Arto Saynajakangas

Aruna Rodrigues, Sunray Harvesters

Asoc. Amigos de la Naturaleza de Aozaina

Asociación Civil La Cotorra

AS-PTA Assessoria e Serviços a Projetos em Agricultura Alternativa

ASSESSOAR

Associação Brasileira dos Estudantes de Engenharia Florestal - CN

ABEEF

Associação de Mulheres Unidas da Serra - ES (AMUS)

Associação de Programas em Tecnologias Alternativas do Espírito Santo

Associação de Programas em Tecnologias Alternativas-APTA

ASSOCIAÇÃO GAÚCHA DE PROTEÇÃO AO AMBIENTE NATURAL -

AGAPAN

ATLA - Associação Terra Laranjeiras

B.C. Food Systems Network

Bergwaldprojekt e.V.

Biofuelwatch

Biowatch

Braam Van Wyk

BUKO Agro Coordination

BUND (Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz in Deutschland) / Friends of the Earth Germany

CAA NM - Centro de Agricultura Alternativa do Norte de Minas Gerais

Californians for GE-Free Agriculture

Cámara Argentina de Emprendedores, CADE

Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN)

Country

USA

Australia, Canada, Columbia,
South Africa, UK, USA

The Netherlands

Ecuador

Argentina

Belgium

South Africa

UK, Kenya, Tanzania and

Cameroon

Germany

Brazil

Brazil

Chile

Chile

Chile

Chile

Chile

India

Chile

Uruguay

Uruguay

Spain

Venezuela

Brazil

Finland

Brazil

France

Costa Rica

Brazil

Brazil

Brazil

Finland

Spain

Uruguay

Brazil

Brazil

Brazil

Brazil

Brazil

Brazil

Brazil

Canada

Germany

UK

South Africa

South Africa

Germany

Germany

Brazil

USA

Argetnina

Canada

Caney Fork Headwaters Association	USA
Carbon Trade Watch	UK
Carlinhos Dayrell	Brazil
Carmelo Ruiz, director del Proyecto de Bioseguridad	Puerto Rico
CAXTIERRA (Comisión de Apoyo X Tierra)	Uruguay
C-CONDEM	Ecuador
CENSAT - Amigos de la Tierra Colombia	Colombia
Center for Food Safety and the International Center for Technology Assessment	USA
Centre for Global Change (CGC)	Bangladesh
Centre Pour L'Environment et le Development	Cameroon
Centro de Análisis Social, Información y Formación Popular CASIFOP	Mexico
Centro de Defesa dos Direitos Humanos – Teixeira de Freitas – Bahia	Brazil
Centro de Desenvolvimento Agroecológico Sabia	Brazil
Centro de Estudios para el Cambio en el Campo Mexicano CECCAM	Mexico
Centro de Estudos Ambientais (CEA)	Brazil
Centro de Políticas Publicas para el Socialismo CEPPAS	Argentina
Centro de Tecnologia Alternativa - CTA Amazônia	Brazil
CENTRO ECOLOGICO BORDE RIO	Chile
Centro Federal de Educação Tecnológica de Rio Pomba (CEFET-Rio Pomba)	Brazil
Centro Latino Americano de Ecología Social - CLAES	Uruguay
Centro Pluricultural para la Democracia CPO	Guatemala
Centro Salvadoreño de Tecnología Apropriada - CESTA	El Salvador
CEPEDES - Centro de Estudos e Pesquisas para o Desenvolvimento do Extremo Sul	Brazil
CEUTA - Centro de Estudios Uruguayos de Tecnologías Apropriadas	Uruguay
Chacha Benedict Wambura	Finland
Chacha Benedict Wambura	Finland
CIEDUR - Centro Interdisciplinario de Estudios sobre el Desarrollo- Uruguay	Uruguay
CLOC (Coordinadora LatinoAmericana de las Organizaciones del Campo)	Republica Dominicana
Coalition for Safe Food, Powell River, British Columbia	Canada
COATI - Centro de Orientação Ambiental Terra Integrada - Jundiá	Brazil
CODDEFFAGOLF	Honduras
CODEFF / Amigos de la Tierra, Chile	Chile
Colectivo Madreselva	Guatemala
Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz – Colombia	Colombia
Comissão Pastoral da Terra - Diocese Itabuna/Bahia	Brazil
Comunidad Civil de Vida y Paz – CIVIPAZ – Colombia	Colombia
Comunidad de Autodeterminación Vida y Dignidad - CAVIDA – Colombia	Colombia
Comunidad Vida y Trabajo la Balsita – Colombia	Colombia
Comunidades Ecológicas la Ceiba - COECOCEIBA	Costa Rica
Consejo Comunitario Afrodescendiente del Río Naya –Colombia	Colombia
Consejo comunitario del Curvaradó – Colombia	Colombia
Consejo comunitario del Jiguamiandó - Colombia	Colombia
CONTAG	Brazil
Coordination for Environment Protection and the Development of the Senegal River Basin (CODESEN)	Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal
Coordination Nationale des Organisations Paysannes du Mali (CNOP Mali)	Mali
Cooperación Union Araucana "Xapeleai Taiñ Kimvn"	Chile
Corporación Campesina para el desarrollo Sustentable. CORPOCAM.	Colombia
Corporación Surcos Comunitarios.	Colombia
Corporate Europe	International
Crescente Fértil	Brazil
Cumberland Countians for Peace & Justice	USA
Daniela MACCARI	Italia

Development Fund	Norway
Dogwood alliance	USA
Dorothy Brandão Carneiro Leão	Brazil
Down to Earth - the International Campaign for Ecological Justice in Indonesia	United Kingdom
E. Mielonen	Finland
Earth Savers Movement	Philippines
Earthlife Namibia	Namibia
Earthlink, Munich	Germany
Ecodevelop - Publikation und Dienstleistung für ökosoziale Entwicklung	Germany
Ecological Society of the Philippines	Philippines
Ecologistas en Acción	Spain
Ecoportal.Net	Argentina
ECOTERRA Africa	Kenya
ECOTERRA Asia	India; Philippines
ECOTERRA Australia	Australia
ECOTERRA Europe	Germany
ECOTERRA Intl.	France; United Kingdom & Northern Ireland; Austria
ECOTERRA North America	Canada
ECOTERRA South America	Brazil
ECOTERRA TRUST Intl.	Tanzania
Eetu Haverinen	Finland
Eija Sivonen	Finland
Elina Toivonen	Finland
Emma Karimaa	Finland
ESPLAR - CENTRO DE PESQUISA E ASSESSORIA	Brazil
ETC Group	Canada
Fair-Fish	Switzerland
FASE - Federação de Órgãos para Assistência Social e Educacional	Brazil
Federação dos Estudantes de Agronomia do Brasil - FEAB	Brazil
Federación Argentina Amigos de la Tierra	Argentina
Federation of Alberta Naturalists	Canada
FERN	UK
FETRAF Brasil	Brazil
Fiji Women's Rights Movement	Fiji
FoE Australia	Australia
FoE Czech Republic	Czech Republic
Food First	USA
Forest Caucus Steering Committee of the Canadian Environmental Network	Canada
Forest Friends Ireland	Ireland
Forest Peoples Programme	United Kingdom
Foro Boliviano sobre Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo - FOBOMADE	Bolivia
Fórum Carajás	Brazil
Fórum de Mulheres do Espírito Santo	Brazil
Fórum em Defesa da Zona Costeira do Ceará	Brazil
Forum Ökologie & Papier	Germany
Frente por la Vida y Contra el Desierto Verde	Colombia
Friends of the Earth (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)	United Kingdom
Friends of the Earth Australia	Australia
Friends of the Earth Czech Republic	Czech Republic
Friends of the Earth Europe	Europe
Fundação Vitória Amazônica	Brazil
Fundación Sociedades Sustentables	Chile
Gaia Foundation	International
GE Free Nz	Aotearoa / New Zealand
GeaSphere	South Africa

GEEMA - Grupo de Estudos em Educação e Meio Ambiente, Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
Genanet - Focal Point Gender, Environment, Sustainability	Germany
GenderCC - Women for Climate Justice	International
Gene ethical Network	Germany
Gesellschaft für Ökologische	Germany
Global Forest Coalition	International
Global Justice Ecology Project	USA
GM-Free Dorset Campaign	United Kingdom
GRAIN	International
Green Press Initiative	USA
Greenpeace	International
Grupo Ambientalista da Bahia - Gambá	Brasil
Grupo de Assessoria em Agroecologia da Amazonia	Brazil
Grupo de Pesquisa e Extensão em Sistema Agroflorestal do Acre	Brazil
Grupo Eco-Tacuarembó	Uruguay
Grupo Guayubira	Uruguay
Grupo Hijas e Hijos del Maíz	Nicaragua
Grupo Interdisciplinario de Reflexión Ambiental - GIRA - Universidad Nacional de Colombia	Colombia
Grupo Mamangava	Brazil
Grupo Motim de Teatro - Cariacica	Brazil
Grupo Semillas	Colombia
GT Ambiente / AGB Associação dos Geógrafos Brasileiros - RJ	Brazil
Guy Fisher	Finland
Hatof Foundation	Ghana
Heidi Hopp	Finland
Heikki Korhonen	Finland
Henna Hurme	Finland
Ida Kankila	Finland
IDESA (Instituto de Desenvolvimento Social e Ambiental)	Brazil
Indiana Forest Alliance	USA
Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN)	USA/Canada
InfoNature.Org	Finland
Iniciativa Nacional por la Suspensión de la Forestación	Uruguay
Inkeri Aula	Finland
Institute for Responsible Technology	USA
Institute for Social Ecology	USA
Instituto Ambiental Viramundo - Ceará	Brazil
Instituto BIOFILIA – Instinto de Conservação	Brazil
Instituto Brasileiro de Direitos Coletivos	Brazil
Instituto de Estudios Ecologistas del Tercer Mundo	Ecuador
Instituto Giramundo	Brazil
Instituto para o Desenvolvimento Ambiental - IDA	Brazil
Instituto Socioambiental	Brazil
International Tribal Association	USA
IPESA - Instituto de Projetos e Pesquisas Socioambientais	Brazil
Isabel Schimmerling	Uruguay
Janne Hokkanen	Finland
Jari Saaranen	Finland
Jeannette Barria Montaña	Chile
Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement-International	Togo
Jo Titchard-Lyons	Finland
Joonas Dachinger	Finland
Juhani Mastokangas	Finland
Julieta Zerpa	Argentina
Kaisa Seppanen	Finland
Kentucky Heartwood	USA

Kolectivo de Acción por los Derechos Ambientales	Chile
Kommetjie Residents' and Ratepayers Association (KRRA)	South Africa
Lara Román Bermejo	Argentina
Latin American Network Against Monoculture Tree Plantations	International
Leonardo Bezerra de Melo Tinôco	Brazil
Les Amis de la Terre (Friends of the Earth France)	France
Leslie Liddell	Finland
Liane Greeff	South Africa
MADGE, Mothers Against Genetic Engineering	Australia
Madre Tierra	Honduras
MADUR (Movimiento de agricultores del Uruguay)	Uruguay
Mapuexpress informativo digital mapuche	Chile
Marcelo Firpo Porto	Brazil
Marcha Mundial de Mulheres	Brazil
Márcia Brandão Carneiro Leão	Brazil
Marilda Teles Maracci	Brazil
Mario Martinez	Uruguay
Markku Tulander	Finland
Martin Doyle	Finland
Max Turunen	Finland
Michal Singer	South Africa
Michella Prado	Brazil
MIRA-SERRA	Brazil
Misión Industrial de Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico
Mo.Vi.T.De.S. (Movimiento por la Vida el Trabajo y Desarrollo Sustentable)	Uruguay
Mohammed Aminu Aliyu	United Kingdom
Movimento de Mulheres Camponesas	Brazil
Movimento dos Pequenos Agricultores	Brazil
Movimiento de chacreros del Ejido de Mercedes	Uruguay
Movimiento de los Trabajadores Rurales sin Tierra de Brasil - MST	Brazil
Movimiento Madre Tierra	Honduras
Muslim Aid	United Kingdom
Nandor Tanczos, Member of Parliament, Green Party	Aotearoa / New Zealand
Narendra	Finland
NEAD1st - Núcleo de Educação Ambiental Continuada e à Distância, Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
Network for a free GE Latin America	International
Network for Environmental & Economic Responsibility, United Church of Christ	USA
Nguallen Pelu Mapu / Protectores de la Tierra	Chile
Noora Kaunisto	Finland
Northern Heritage Association	Finland
Northwest Resistance Against Genetic Engineering	USA
Northwoods Wilderness Recovery	USA
Núcleo de Agricultura Sustentável do Cerrado	Brazil
Oakvillegreen Conservation Association	Canada
Observatorio de conflictos ambientales de la universidad de Caldas	Colombia
Observatorio Latinoamericano de Conflictos Ambientales - OLCA	Chile
Olga Estela Sánchez Caro	Brazil
OroVerde - Tropical Forest Foundation	Germany
Ossi Kakko	Finland
Pacific Indigenous Peoples Environment Coalition (PIPEC)	Aotearoa / New Zealand
Pacific Institute of Advanced Studies in Development and Governance	Fiji
Peter Kuria	Finland
Plataforma Transgenicos Fora (Portuguese GM-Free Coalition)	Portugal
Prairie Red Fife Organic Growers Cooperative Ltd.	Canada
Prefeitura Municipal de Mata de São João	Brazil

Primer Centro de la Ecología	Uruguay
Prodema - UFC	Brazil
Productores y Vecinos de Libertad	Uruguay
Prof. Dr. Alfredo Guillermo Martin	Brazil
Prof. LuizCarlos Pinheiro Machado	Brazil
Protect the Earth	Finland
Proyecto COMPAS	Colombia
Racimos de Ungurahui	Peru
RAE - Rede de Educação Ambiental Escolar, Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
Raimo Kivioja	Finland
Rainforest Relief	USA
RAPAL Uruguay	Uruguay
RAPALMIRA - RAPAL	Colombia
RECOMA - Red Latinoamericana Contra los Monocultivos de Arboles	Internacional
Red Alerta contra el Desierto Verde	Brazil
Red de Acción por los Derechos Ambientales de Temuko	Chile
Red de Alternativas a la Impunidad y a la Globalización el Mercado.	Colombia
Red de coordinacion en Biodiversidad	Costa Rica
Red de Ecología Social - REDES – Amigos de la Tierra	Uruguay
Red de Fitomejoramiento Participativo Mesoamericano FPMA	International
Red Nacional de ONGs Ambientalistas	Uruguay
Red por una América Latina Libre de Transgénicos - RALLT	Internacional
Rede Ambiental do PiauÃ - REAPI	Brazil
Rede de Educadores Ambientais da Baixada de Jacarepaguá, Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
Rede de Integração Verde	Brazil
Rede Fitovida	Brazil
Regenwald-Institut e.V.	Germany
Rel-UITA (Unión Internacional de Trabajadores de la Alimentación y la Agricultura)	Uruguay
Rettet den Regenwald	Germany
Revista Ambiente y Sociedad	Argentina
Rising Tide North America	US, Canada, and Mexico
Roberto J. Langon	Uruguay
Robin Wood	Germany
Safe Alternatives for our Forest Environment (SAFE)	USA
SAFeAGE	South Africa
Salvemos Cobquecura	Chile
Sari Leinonen	Finland
SASOP - Serviço de Assessoria a Organizações Populares Rurais	Brazil
SHALIN Finland	Finland
Shanti Limnell	Finland
Sierra Club	USA
Sindicato dos Trabalhadores de Rio Pardo de Minas - MG	Brazil
Sisli PiisilÃ	Finland
Sobrevivencia	Paraguay
Sociedad de Amigos en Defensa de la Gran Sabana. AMIGRANSA	Venezuela
Sociedade Angrense de Proteção Ecológica	Brazil
Society for a Genetically Engineered British Columbia	Canada
Soil Association	USA
SouthEast Asia Regional Initiative for Community Empowerment - SEARICE	International
Stop GE Trees Campaign	International
Sue Edwards	Finland
Sue Edwards	Finland
SWCC	South Africa
Tania Anderson	South Africa
Tapio Solala	Finland

Tarja Ervasti	Finland
Taru Salmenkari	Finland
Temístocles Marcelos Neto	Brazil
Terra de Direitos	Brazil
The Corner House	United Kingdom
The Woodland League	Ireland
Thomas k mutunga	Finland
Tierra Viva	Bolivia
Tiina Kukkamaa	Finland
TILCEPA & TGER	Nepal
Timberwatch	South Africa
Tomi Toivio	Finland
Toni Tanskanen	Finland
Toni Tanskanen	Finland
Transnational Institute	UK
Uniao Alema dos Grupos de Solidariedade ao Brasil - Kooperation Brasilien	Brazil
Union of Ecoforestry in Finland	Finland
Union paysanne	Canada
UNORCA - Unión nacional de organizaciones regionales campesinas autónomas de México	Mexico
Verónica Etchebarne	Uruguay
Via Campesina	Austria
Via Campesina Brazil	Brazil
Vía Campesina Caribe	Republica Dominicana
Via Campesina Internacional/América del sur	International
Ville-Veikko Hirvelä	Finland
Virpi Virolainen	Finland
Washington Biotechnology Action Council	USA
WESSA (The Wildlife and Environment Society of SA), Western Cape Branch	South Africa
Wild Virginia	USA
Women's Environmental Network	United Kingdom
Women's Leadership and Training Programme, KwaZulu Natal	South Africa
World Development Movement	United Kingdom
World Rainforest Movement	International
Worldforests	Scotland
Worldview	USA
Xarxa de l'Observatori del Deute en la Globalització	Cataluña, Estado español
Zululand Environmental Alliance (ZEAL)	South Africa