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No to Nature-Based ~~Solutions~~ Disposessions!

Big climate polluters like Shell and Nestlé are peddling a dangerous scam. They say they can bring their greenhouse gas emissions down to zero *and* keep burning fossil fuels, mine more of the planet, and increase industrial meat and dairy production. They call this reducing emissions to "*net-zero*". Planting trees, protecting forests and tweaking industrial farming practices, they claim, will store enough extra carbon in plants and the soil to cancel out the greenhouse gas emissions they pump into the atmosphere.

What corporations and big conservation groups call "nature-based solutions" is a dangerous distraction. Their marketing concept is dressed up with unproven and flawed data and the claim that the idea can provide 37 percent of reductions in CO₂ by 2030. More and more corporations, from Total to Microsoft to Unilever, are making "*nature-based solutions*" the core of their climate action plans while the conservation industry taps into corporate "nature-based solutions" funding to expand their control over forests.

From the conservation industry's perspective, the idea is simple: corporations pay them to enclose forests or plant trees on land they claim is "degraded" and which could absorb more carbon if restored. In return, the corporations claim that the climate damage from their ongoing greenhouse gas emissions is being cancelled out. Often, a document referred to as a carbon credit is used to market this offsetting claim.

When corporations and big conservation groups talk about "*nature*", they mean enclosed spaces devoid of people. They mean protected areas guarded by armed rangers, tree plantations and large monoculture farms. Their "*nature*" is incompatible with nature understood as territory, as a life space inseparable from the cultures, food systems and livelihoods of the communities who care for it and who see themselves as intrinsic parts of it. What's more, behind a marketing front of genuine agroecology and natural regeneration initiatives, backers of "nature-based solutions" are preparing to advance yet more harmful practices such as monoculture tree plantations and industrial agriculture.

"Nature-based solutions" are thus not a solution, they are a scam. The purported solutions will result in "*nature-based disposessions*" because they will enclose the remaining living spaces of Indigenous Peoples, peasants and other forest-dependent communities and reduce "*nature*" to a service provider for offsetting corporations' pollution and to protect the profits of those corporations most responsible for climate chaos. Indigenous Peoples, peasants and other forest-dependent communities whose territories are being enclosed will face more violence, more restrictions on their use of their lands and more outside control over their territories.

"*Nature-based solutions*" are a repeat of the failed REDD+ tree planting and forest conservation schemes that the same conservation groups have been promoting for the past 15 years. REDD+ has done nothing to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions or reign in the big food and agribusiness companies driving deforestation. Its enduring legacy, however, is the loss of lands and forests for peasant and forest-based communities and heavy restrictions on how they can use their land. REDD+ has also birthed an industry of "sustainability and safeguards" consultants and project proponents who profit from declaring REDD+ projects 'sustainable', despite the violations of rights that such projects cause. The proponents of "nature-based solutions" are now utilising the same tactics of certification schemes and safeguards to deflect criticism and to obscure their corporate take-over of community lands and forests.

The companies with "*nature-based solutions*" in their climate action plans intend to increase their production of highly polluting products. In the flawed logic of corporate "*nature-based solutions*", more pollution means that corporations will need to claim more land as their carbon storage facility; it will mean more dispossessions and more restrictions on peasant farming and community use of their territories. It will also mean even more corporate control over lands and forests.

The Italian energy company Eni says by 2050 it will still be using fossil fuels to generate 90% of its energy. To offset these emissions, it will have to claim the entire potential of all the forests in Italy to absorb carbon - 8 million hectares for Eni's "*net-zero*" claim! According to the NGO Oxfam, the *net zero* targets of just four of the big oil and gas corporations (Shell, BP, Total and Eni) alone could require an area of land twice the size of the UK. That is just a couple of the big energy companies. The "*net-zero*" plan of world's largest food company, Nestlé, could require 4.4 million hectares of land per year for offsets. And the plans of Big Tech companies like Microsoft and Amazon are also based on enclosure of similarly large areas of land.

Corporations and the large conservation NGOs are peddling this latest false corporate solution not just in the climate talks; they are also pushing the idea into governmental meetings of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). In connection with the Food Systems Summit in September 2021, "Nature positive production" is being used as a similar concept to NBS to further industrialise agriculture and expand corporate control. If these attempts are successful, the result will be more climate chaos and an even quicker loss of biodiversity, while corporations continue to profit from destruction and the burning of fossil carbon.

Governments need to know that there is a growing movement of frontline communities, organisations and activists for climate justice. The signatories of this statement will stand together to resist attempts to grab peoples' territories for *nature-based dispossessions* and carbon offsetting.

We call on climate, environmental and social justice movements to unequivocally reject “*nature-based solutions*” and all offset schemes. Such schemes are not designed to address the climate crisis. Their primary function is to buy another decade or two of unrestrained corporate profiteering from fossil carbon extraction and industrial agriculture while increasing outside control over community territories. Climate neutrality amounts to little more than paper reductions, achieved through creative book-keeping and unverifiable claims to have prevented hypothetical emissions. Time has run out for such distractions. Only a rapid, time-bound plan to leaving the remaining coal, oil and gas reserves in the ground and industrial agriculture overhauled will avert catastrophic climate chaos.

Frontline communities opposed to fossil fuel extraction, pipelines, mines, plantations and other extractive industry projects are showing the way. Opposition to “*nature-based solutions*” and community resistance against the destruction of underground carbon deposits, corporate mining and agroindustry must be understood as part of the same larger struggle to stop the corporate take-over of community territories.

Grassroots communities are also at the forefront of struggles for food sovereignty and agroecology which are necessary to resolving the manifold crisis afflicting the planet. We recognize and support the struggles led by grassroots communities for control over the territories on which they depend, today and in the future.

It is time to stand together! Join us!

Reject *nature-based solutions* as a new form of corporate land grabbing and greenwashing!

Say ***NO to nature-based dispossessions!***

[Add your organisation](#)

Initial signatories

[Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa](#) (AFSA)

[Alianza Biodiversidad](#)

[Asian Pacific Movement on Debt and Development](#)

[ETC group](#)

[Focus on the Global South](#)

[Global Grassroots Justice Alliance](#) (GGJ)

[GRAIN](#)

[Friends of the Earth International](#) (FoEI)

[Indigenous Climate Action](#) (ICA)

[Indigenous Environmental Network](#) (IEN)

[World March of Women](#) (WMW)

[World Rainforest Movement](#) (WRM)