

The reality of Carbon Sinks Projects

Examples from Brazil and Uganda

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Eucalyptus Tree Plantation of
Plantar S.A. in Minas Gerais,
Brazil





Plantations improving 'degraded' land?



Or destroying land used by
peasants and the landless?



Impact on water



Plantar preparing to steal public lands?



Plantar's CDM Project

- Part of the World Bank Prototype Carbon Fund (PCF)
- Carbon credits will finance expansion of already vast eucalyptus plantations by another 23.100ha
- After app. 7 years trees will be cut to make charcoal – produce pig iron – make steel – manufacture cars – allow more CO₂ in the atmosphere

Charcoal



Movements in Brazil say no to new Eucalyptus Plantations



But the World Bank's Prototype Carbon Fund still promotes the project as a clean development project and finances the expansion of the plantations

Tree Farms eucalyptus plantations in Uganda

Tree Farms

- Is a Norwegian company
- Increase capital investment only days after Kyoto Protocol was signed in 1997 and shortly after registered on the stock market
- Rented land very cheaply in Uganda to plant eucalyptus trees
- Trees were planted to soak up carbon dioxide from the atmosphere so in exchange a new coal power plant could be built in Norway (“Offset project”)

- Without the carbon credits from the planting of trees Norway would not have been able to built the new coal plant because it would have used up more fossil fuels than it was allowed under the Kyoto Protocol
- 8000 people were threatened with eviction in Uganda because they had no land title

What Tree Farms said about its projects

- “Everyone living and farming inside our area are illegal intruders. But we don’t want to do the dirty job chasing them out. We have told the forest authorities quite clearly that this is their responsibility.”
- “Some would claim that the annual rent of US\$1.9 per hectare is quite low. But of course, we wish to run profitable business. Preferably, we would like the land rent to be reduced even more.”

What people in the Uganda forest department said

- “We just have to admit that we know nothing about the trade in CO₂, neither how it will function nor how much the foreign investor will profit from it.”

- The Project in Uganda was not used in exchange for the emissions from the new coal plant, partly because of a very critical report from Norwegian NGO Norwatch that exposed the impacts of the project on the people facing eviction and the attitude of the company.
- The trees have been planted and the people only got a small area of land

In another case in Uganda, government departments had not been told that a forest restoration project financed and implemented by foreign investors would also be used to sell carbon credits.

In none of the cases have local communities been consulted

In Brazil, the movement has written several letters to the World Bank and met with companies in Europe who will buy these carbon credits from the eucalyptus to demand that they not buy any of these credits from Plantar