



Rainforest Agribusiness Campaign
Defending Forests, Family Farmers and our Climate

Rainforest Action Network (RAN) launched its Rainforest Agribusiness Campaign in October 2007. The campaign is challenging one of the largest and fastest growing threats to the world's tropical ecosystems: the expansion of industrial agriculture plantations. Fueled partly by the U.S. and Europe's growing demand for biofuels, U.S. agribusiness giants Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), Bunge and Cargill are clearing the rainforests of Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea to establish industrial soy and palm oil plantations.

Industrial Agriculture and Global Warming

ADM, Bunge and Cargill are promoting soy and palm oil biodiesel as a solution to the climate crisis. Unfortunately, cultivation of these crops requires clear-cutting and burning rainforests, draining peat swamps, and long distance transport – all of which emit large amounts of greenhouse gases. In fact, over its lifecycle, a gallon of palm oil can emit 10 times more carbon dioxide than petroleum. Agribusiness expansion and its resultant forest destruction in Indonesia and Brazil have caused the countries to become the world's 3rd and 4th largest greenhouse gas emitters.

Human Rights Violations

Many communities throughout Southeast Asia, Latin America and the Pacific have been displaced by U.S. companies, sometimes violently, without consultation or compensation. Pollution from palm and soy plantations in Papua New Guinea has destroyed rivers used for drinking, bathing and fishing. In Brazil and Paraguay, aerial pesticide use has contaminated protected natural areas and caused illness and even death in nearby communities. Debt peonage and slave labor have been linked to some Brazilian soy plantations.

Loss of Biodiversity

Palm oil and soy plantations are threatening some of the world's most biodiverse forests. In Indonesia, palm oil plantation expansion is destroying an area equal to 300 football fields per hour – the fastest rate of deforestation in the world – and threatening highly endangered species like the orangutan and the clouded leopard. Soy is a primary driver of deforestation in the Amazon and the adjacent *Cerrado*, which is also richly biodiverse. Though half of the world's plant and animal species live in the Amazon, it is being deforested at a rate of two football fields per minute.

What RAN Is Doing About Global Agrisprawl

RAN is partnering with frontline communities and local NGOs to demand that U.S. agribusiness companies stop the expansion of soy and oil palm plantations into tropical rainforests around the world. We are calling on these companies to improve environmental and labor conditions on the plantations where they do business. Through dialogue and consumer pressure, we will show U.S. agribusinesses that destroying pristine rainforests, using harmful chemicals, displacing communities and employing slave labor are unacceptable practices in the 21st century. We are insisting on real solutions to the climate and energy crises rather than the shortsighted practice of clearing rainforests to produce biofuels.

RAINFOREST ACTION NETWORK

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