

## **Rainforest Action Network's Global Finance Campaign**

Dirty coal plants, destructive oil pipelines and unsustainable logging operations are all contingent on one thing: the financial support of major banks. Since 2000, RAN's Global Finance campaign has successfully challenged the world's largest banks – including Citi, Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, Goldman Sachs and Toronto Dominion – to fund a future in which the environment is protected and human rights are respected. In 2004, Citigroup became the first bank to adopt a comprehensive environmental policy to guide its lending practices, a step many other banks have since taken. These policies have resulted in significant environmental protections, but they do not address the most pressing environmental and social problem of our time: global warming.

### **Banking on Climate Change**

By blending inside negotiation with outside agitation, RAN's Global Finance team is pushing banks to stop funding coal development and other carbon-intensive projects that contribute heavily to global climate change, and to elicit meaningful emission reduction targets for their operations and investments.

In late 2006, RAN joined the movement to stop Texas utility company TXU from developing 11 new coal-fired power plants by going directly to the project's financiers. Dressing as "Billionaires for Coal" and protesting outside bank branches across the country, RAN activists helped spark public outrage over TXU's massive proposal. More than twenty global banks refused to finance the proposed plants, and the resulting scale-back by TXU proved that investments in dirty energy are a risky business.

Still, more than 150 new coal-fired power plants remain in development in the U.S. that, if built, will emit an estimated 600 million tons of greenhouse gases every year. The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from just one new medium-sized coal plant (500 MW) would:

- negate, in just ten days of operation, Home Depot's efforts to curb climate change by funding the planting of 300,000 trees across the U.S.
- negate, in just one month, Wal-Marts investment of a half billion dollars to reduce the energy consumption and GHG emissions of their buildings by 20 percent over the next seven years.
- negate, in just eight months, California's recently passed legislation that would cut GHG emissions in new cars by 25 percent and SUVs by 18 percent starting in 2009.

RAN is working to ensure that banks refuse to fund this proposed free-fall into climate chaos. In the coming months, RAN will be pushing two of the world's largest banks, Citi and Bank of America, to stop funding coal and other dirty energy sources and to instead invest in a clean energy future that prioritizes energy efficiency and renewable energy sources like wind and solar.

### **The Global Finance Campaign Goes Global**

In addition to its No New Coal focus, RAN monitors the compliance of banks with existing international base standards such as the Equator Principles through our steering committee role with BankTrack, a close network of international allies tracking private sector investment.

In 2005, RAN challenged the top five Canadian banks to catch up with other leading banks around the world and develop policies that protect endangered forests, prevent climate change, and promote human rights. In 2007, Toronto Dominion became the first Canadian bank to adopt a comprehensive environmental policy to guide its financing and operations, signaling the beginning of a necessary industry shift.