

## Joint Statement of Uruguayan, Finnish, and International Environmental and Social Groups 5/8/19

UPM announced on July 23rd that it will install in Uruguay a second pulp mill which will be one of the largest in the world with a production capacity of about 2.33 million tons/year. This megaproject will produce significant environmental, social, and cultural damage. In the context of a global socio-environmental crisis, this project represents a step in the wrong direction.

**UPM's new megaproject will contribute to environmental degradation.** This megaproject will promote the expansion of monoculture tree plantations. UPM estimates that 180,000 - 220,000 hectares of plantations are already established and that an additional 60,000 – 90,000 will be required for a sustainable supply of wood for the mill. Most of these plantations were and will be established in Uruguay's natural grasslands<sup>1</sup>. Eucalyptus plantations are less efficient as carbon sequestration than natural pastures and native forests which they displace<sup>2</sup>. These tree plantations also have a negative impact on biodiversity, in particular reducing native grasslands, birds, and fish varieties in the natural prairie ecosystem and facilitating the reproduction of alien invasive species like wild boars. The worst environmental impact will be to an already compromised water system, since this type of plantation, which depends on synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides like glyphosate, erodes soils and contaminates rivers<sup>3</sup>. These impacts on water and soil characteristics compromise Uruguay's future capacity to cultivate food. UPM2 will also impact water availability. Water source reduction due to industrial eucalyptus plantations has been documented in Uruguay since 1999<sup>4</sup>. The new pulp mill's water intake and flow demands are equivalent, to give a simple image, to the daily water consumption of more than 53 million people, more than 15 times the population of Uruguay. The pulp mill will also affect water quality through its effluents adding to already high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus.

**UPM's new megaproject will further economic inequality.** The company will invest 2.4 billion dollars, while Uruguay will spend an estimated 4 billion dollars in upgrading infrastructure to satisfy the company's requirements. UPM will be exempt from paying several taxes, will be located in a free zone, and will sell its excess energy to Uruguay, which is obliged to buy it *even* if it is not needed. The company will use an estimated 137 million liters of water per day without paying for its use, while returning 107 million contaminated liters per day to the river that will require special monitoring from the Uruguayan state. The transnational company makes big profits by extracting natural goods, labor, and causing environmental damages at low costs, while the local community is left with the effects of a contaminated and eutrophic river and the impacts of the influx of a few thousand temporary workers. The jobs created during the construction process reproduce the sexual division of labor as well and do not provide a long-term unemployment solution to the communities where the plant is located. Construction jobs for men who tend to come from other parts of the country increase sexual labor and trafficking for local women. The jobs generated by the plant outside the two years of construction do not compensate for the jobs lost as a result of mechanized industrial tree plantations that displace small shopkeepers, rural producers and artisanal fishing and tourism workers in the territory.

**UPM's new megaproject weakens community participation.** This project does not have social license. The agreement between UPM and Uruguay was not approved by parliament, and citizens access to information and participation in the decision-making process were not respected. Several social organizations, local citizens' groups, and stakeholders have expressed their concerns about the ways in which the megaproject will affect their lives and their concerns have not been properly addressed by the public consultation process. The project will disrupt people's lives, with a diesel cargo train transporting highly toxic substances, dividing cities and towns in the countryside, and fragmenting working-class neighborhoods in the country's capital. Furthermore, the contract includes requirements for reduction of labor rights and influences in educational policy. The latest version of the contract allows UPM to withdraw by only giving only a one-year notice and without providing justification and without material consequences.

There is no planet B, we cannot afford to continue promoting economic projects and practices that consider environmental impacts, social justice, and human rights as secondary issues. We support collaborations among countries that result in good quality equitable jobs that serve to regenerate and protect our environment.

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.dinama.gub.uy/oan/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/VAL\\_Planta-de-celulosa-Paso-de-los-Toros-.pdf](https://www.dinama.gub.uy/oan/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/VAL_Planta-de-celulosa-Paso-de-los-Toros-.pdf), p34

<sup>2</sup> See Carrasco-Letelier et al., 2004; Rodríguez-Loinaz, et al., 2013, <http://www.guayubira.org.uy/plantaciones/prairies.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Products used include: NPK (nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium), glyphosate and fipronil among others. See: Informe Ambiental de UPM in DINAMA [https://www.mvotma.gub.uy/participacion-ciudadana-ambiente/manifiestos-de-ambiente/item/download/11492\\_a797e6cb46b96f0ef653bd129de74875](https://www.mvotma.gub.uy/participacion-ciudadana-ambiente/manifiestos-de-ambiente/item/download/11492_a797e6cb46b96f0ef653bd129de74875)

<sup>4</sup> See local testimonies collected by Guayubira <http://www.guayubira.org.uy/1999/10/tristezas-cerro-alegre/>, and Arrarte, 2007 <http://www.guayubira.org.uy/plantaciones/cicloagua.pdf>

## ULOS UPM2! NO UPM2

Coordinación Nacional de Organizaciones Sociales Contra UPM2, Uruguay  
Comisión Nacional en Defensa del Agua y de la Vida, Uruguay  
REDES - Amigos de la Tierra Uruguay  
Federación de Funcionarios de OSE (FFOSE), Uruguay  
Federación Uruguaya de Cooperativas de Vivienda por Ayuda Mutua (FUCVAM)  
Movimiento por un Uruguay Sustentable, MOVUS  
Asociación de Trabajadores Civiles de los Diques del Estado (ATCDE), Uruguay  
Plenario intersindical social María Romana - La Paloma Rocha, Uruguay  
Asamblea por el Agua del río Santa Lucía, Uruguay  
Comisión por un Canelones Libre de Soja Transgénica y en defensa del Agua, Uruguay  
Coordinación contra Monsanto y el Agronegocio, Uruguay  
No al tren de UPM, Uruguay  
Colectivo Recreo, Uruguay  
Comisión Laguna del Cisne, Uruguay  
Maldonado por la Tierra y el Agua, Uruguay  
Confederación de Pueblos Costeros, Uruguay  
Cotidiano Mujer, Uruguay  
Colectivo Ecofeminista Dafnias, Uruguay  
Ecofeministas de Fray Bentos, Uruguay  
Colectiva Feminista La Cuarta Ola, Uruguay  
Mujeres en Alerta de Ciudad de la Costa, Uruguay  
Integrantes de Por el Costado de la Vía, Uruguay  
Centro de Estudiantes del Instituto de Profesores Artigas (CEIPA), Uruguay  
Revista la bicicleta, Uruguay  
Radioactiva, Uruguay  
Radio Espika FM, Santa Lucía, Uruguay  
La Kandela FM, Tacuarembó, Uruguay  
Frente de Lucha Ambiental Delia Villalba, Uruguay  
Grupo Guayubira, Uruguay  
Colectivo Ñangapiré de San Gregorio de Polanco, Uruguay  
La Campana Verde, La Paloma, Rocha, Uruguay  
Mesa Nacional de Colonos, Uruguay  
Movimiento por la Tierra, Uruguay  
Asociación Uruguaya de Guardaparques  
Red de Acción en Plaguicidas de América Latina (RAPAL), Uruguay  
Movimiento de Protección Ambiental de Sarandí del Yi, Uruguay  
Asociación Civil Nativos Punta Negra, Uruguay  
Grupo Alas de Piriápolis, Uruguay  
Asociación de Estudiantes y Egresados de Conservación de Arrayanes (AEECA), Uruguay  
Conservación de Especies Nativas del Uruguay (COENDU)  
Slow Food, Uruguay  
Organización HUM de Maldonado, Uruguay  
Red Ánimas, Uruguay  
Asamblea del Callejón, Uruguay  
Sociedad para la Conservación de la Biodiversidad de Maldonado, SOCOBIOMA, Uruguay  
Our Voice, Uruguay  
Asamblea Pachamama, Uruguay  
Uni2 por Uruguay  
Jugando en la Naturaleza (JULANA), Uruguay  
Consejo de la Nación Charrúa (CONACHA), Uruguay

Friends of the Earth International  
European Water Movement  
Friends of the Earth, Finland  
Friends of the Landless, Finland

Global Forest Coalition  
World Rainforest Movement  
Red Latinoamericana contra los Monocultivos de Árboles (RECOMA)  
Global Justice Ecology Project, USA  
The Wilderness Society  
Earth Day Network  
Ähtärinjärvi Nature Association, Finland  
New Wind Association, Finland  
Emmaus Aurinkotehdas ry, Finland  
Katajamäki ry, Finland  
Foro Italiano dei Movimenti per l'Acqua, Italia  
Environmental Paper Network - Finance Working Group  
Bank Track, The Neatherlands  
Stand Earth, USA  
Rainforest Relief  
Dogwood Alliance, USA  
Gaia Foundation, England  
Mangrove Action Project, USA  
Ambiente Desarrollo y Capacitación, Honduras  
Forum Ökologie & Papier, Germany  
Pro REGENWALD, Germany  
Denkhausbremen, Germany  
GE Free New Zealand in Food and Environment, New Zealand  
Family Farm Defenders (members of La Via Campesina), North America  
Asamblea Veracruzana de Iniciativas y Defensa Ambiental (LAVIDA - México)  
Coordinadora Nacional Agua para [Tod@s](#) Agua para la Vida, México  
Otros Mundos Chiapas, México/Amigos de La Tierra, México  
Coalición de Organizaciones Mexicanas por el Derecho al Agua  
LPESM Riau, Indonesia  
Amigos de la Tierra, Argentina  
Guardianes del Iberá, Argentina  
Acción Ecológica, Ecuador  
Red Ecuatoriana de Alternativas a la Palma Aceitera, Ecuador  
SOBREVIVENCIA, Amigos de la Tierra Paraguay  
Sano y Salvo • Safe and Sound, Primera Asociación Campesina e Indígena de Cultura y Producción  
Ecológicas en la Biosfera del Sureste de Nicaragua  
Environment East Gippsland, Australia  
Fundación Chile Sustentable  
Boreal Action, Canada  
Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russia  
Biodiversity Conservation Center, Russia  
Ecology and Pioneering AB, Sweden  
Sindicato Nacional dos Trabalhadores de Instituições de Pesquisa Agropecuária e Florestal - SINPAF -Seção Solos, Brazil  
Sindicato dos Trabalhadores nas empresas de água, esgoto e saneamento de Maringá e região noroeste do Paraná – SINDAEN, Brazil  
Sindicato dos Trabalhadores nas Indústrias da Purificação e Distribuição de Água e em Serviços de Esgoto do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul - Sindiágua/RS, Brazil  
Observatório Nacional dos Direitos a Água e ao Saneamento – ONDAS, Brazil  
Federação Nacional dos Urbanitários – FNU, Brazil  
Frente Nacional pelo Saneamento Ambiental – FNSA, Brazil  
Abibiman Foundation, Ghana  
Tanzania Alliance for Biodiversity (TABIO), Tanzania  
CORD and National Adivasi Alliance, India  
Observatorio Petrolero Sur, Argentina

