

GREENPEACE COMMENTS ON THE G8 Foreign Ministers' Conclusions, paragraph 19-21.

Greenpeace is disappointed with the Conclusions of the G-8 Foreign Ministers regarding forests. The G-8 Foreign Ministers "welcome the report on the Implementation of the G-8 Action Program on Forests". Rather, G-8 Foreign Ministers should have recognised the report as a report of failure and should have deplored their lack of action. The report shows that G-8 countries did not do much of relevance in order to combat illegal logging, one of their main commitments in the Birmingham Programme of Action on Forests of May 1998. The US openly admitted that "further work is needed in all five priority areas, particularly protected forest areas and illegal logging/trade". A scorecard produced by Greenpeace and soon available on the Web at <http://www.greenpeace.org> analyses the activities by the G-8 countries since 1998 and found them appalling.

The G-8 Foreign Ministers welcome the proposal for a new international arrangement on forests. Unfortunately, they did not inform the public that since the beginning of June 2000, informal consultations are held behind closed doors in New York on the design of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). Governments, including G-8 governments, are negotiating important issues for the future of the UNFF such as institutional and geographical location as well as the programme of work, without involving the NGO community. Only on the 17th of July, after several rounds of negotiations and after considerable pressure by the NGO community, they inform the public. The UNFF negotiations are so far not transparent and do not involve civil society, and this is unacceptable.

Greenpeace welcomes that G-8 countries will to focus in the future on the implementation of the proposals for action agreed by the International Forum on Forests and the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests.

G-8 Foreign Ministers say that they look forward to further collaboration among the FAO and ITTO. We hope that G-8 governments will ensure that ITTO and FAO will take on board the ecosystem approach to forest management as agreed by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and help implementing the programme of work on forest biodiversity of this important Convention. So far, FAO and ITTO failed to implement their own commitments. Some extra effort will be needed.

It is disappointing that G8 Foreign Ministers did not adopt more outspoken commitments on illegal logging as proposed in a previous draft of the Conclusions. This draft included the need to examine domestic measures so that internal policy and law does not hamper the fight against illegal logging. Such a commitment is long overdue, as the Birmingham Forests Action Programme calls already in 1998 to identify and assess "the effectiveness of their internal measures to control illegal logging and international trade in illegally harvested timber and identify areas of improvement". Perverse subsidies and the lack of a green procurement policy (only buying from certified sources) contribute to a large degree to illegal logging and the international trade of illegally harvested timber.

As the Foreign Ministers say, the 1990 Pilot Program to Conserve the Brazilian Rain Forest is indeed an important contribution to further sustainable forest management, including combating illegal logging. However, implementation has not yet taken place in a way that shows any result on the ground. Still, most of the timber in the Amazon is harvested illegally. That is why Greenpeace urges Governments to adopt the Greenpeace proposal for a "G-8 Project for the Protection of Brazilian Ancient Forests from Illegal Logging".

Greenpeace Demands at the G8 Summit:

Overall demand: Stop industrial development in all ancient forests until proven sustainable.
G8 must decide at their Summit in Okinawa 2000 to:

1. Adopt a green procurement policy. G8 Governments will only buy certified timber products, such as FSC-certified.

2. Stop subsidising destruction. All existing subsidies should be assessed and abolished if proven a threat to sustainable and ecosystem-based forest management.
3. Provide assistance to developing countries to combat illegal logging. In particular, in the framework of the PPG7, G8 should adopt a "Proposal for a G8 Project for the Protection of Brazilian Ancient Forests from Illegal Logging" put forward by Greenpeace.

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