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Discussions on reducing deforestation take place behind closed doors while developed countries seek to hide emissions

BONN, Germany – While only one meeting on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD) was held at the UN climate talks which end here today, numerous discussions on a parallel initiative outside the UN framework occurred behind closed doors, warned forest and climate experts from the [Ecosystems Climate Alliance](#) today.

Several meetings to advance the so-called REDD+ Partnership, launched at the Oslo Climate and Forest Conference on 27 May, have been held on the margins of the two-week UN conference. But representatives of civil society, indigenous people and local communities are being largely excluded from the process driven by the partnership's co-chairs, Japan and Papua New Guinea.

“Our concerns about the closed REDD Partnership negotiations have escalated since nothing on the REDD agreement has happened here,” said Nathaniel Dyer of Rainforest Foundation UK. “We now know that there will be a series of parallel negotiations up to October but we have received no commitments that indigenous peoples and environmental representatives will participate. If the partnership does not slow its stampede to make time for genuine participation of these groups then REDD could do more harm than good.”

Meanwhile, attempts by rich developed countries to hide their carbon emissions from logging have delayed negotiations and thwarted expectations of reaching a decision on reducing emissions from forestry and land use (known as LULUCF¹), which include massive emissions from wetland soils.

Many countries, almost exclusively from the developing world², have challenged developed countries to genuinely cut logging emissions. But developed countries have resisted, and persisted in proposing new accounting procedures that create the illusion they are doing more than they are to stop catastrophic climate change. The G77 and China ended the session by suggesting a transparent review of the carbon-hiding scams, but it falls short of plugging the logging loopholes.

A decision on the accounting policy has been delayed until the next round of talks in August, but observers including the Ecosystems Climate Alliance are wary, fearing that a cobbled-together compromise excluding civil society input will be presented then as a done deal.

“As long as these negotiations go round in circles on logging loopholes, alarming land use emissions will continue in developed countries, including almost 500 Mtons of CO₂ from peat drainage alone. Parties acknowledge the emissions, but don't yet have to account for them, so there is no incentive to reduce them,” said Susanna Tol of Wetlands International.

“All of climate science says we need at least a 25 to 40 per cent reduction in global emissions by 2020, but you've got the richest countries in the world using a logging loophole to actually go *below* their commitments,” said Sean Cadman of The Wilderness Society. “What we have here is a compromised situation for the climate.”

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(1) LULUCF = Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry

(2) Including the Africa Group, the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC), Belarus, Tuvalu, Micronesia and the Coalition of Rainforest Nations