

Rights Action letter to: World Wildlife Fund, Solidaridad Network, SNV Netherlands Development Organisation, ProForest

Indifference By The RSPO (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil) To Systemic Repression In Aguan Region, Honduras, Related To African Palm Production

To Whom It May Concern:

- World Wildlife Fund USA, Washington DC, Roberto Troya, Latin America and Caribbean VP/Regional Director, roberto.troya@wwfus.org
- Solidaridad Network, (<http://solidaridadnetwork.org/>, "Making Markets Work For The Poor"), Michaelyn Bachhuber Baur, Directora Regional Centroamérica, michaelyn.baur@solidaridadnetwork.org
- SNV Netherlands Development Organisation, Reintje van Haeringen, rvanhaeringen@snvworld.org, Damien van der Heyden, dvanderheyden@snvworld.org, <http://www.snvworld.org/en/regions/latin-america>
- ProForest (a Tree Work & Forestry Services company), Oxford, Oxfordshire, South East, England, Ruth Nussbaum, Dr.Ruth.Nussbaum@proforest.net, americalatina@proforest.net, <http://www.proforest.net/>

Greetings from Rights Action (www.rightsaction.org).

I write to ask you if your organizations are helping organize and/or participate in the 4th international palm oil conference to be held by RSPO in Honduras on 6th August?

If so, I urge you to pull out.

On August 6, the RSPO (www.rspo.org) is holding the 4th international palm oil conference in Honduras. (Conference website: <http://rspo2013.com/>). One event sponsor is the Dinant Corporation, controlled by Miguel Facusse, the largest landowner in Honduras.

Facusse was a major supporter of the June 2009 military coup in Honduras, has been linked to narco-trafficking, and, since June 2009, has been linked to the targeted killing of over 100 campesinos in the northern "Aguan" palm producing region.

The holding of this conference in Honduras effectively turns a blind eye to systemic repression (forced evictions of entire communities, the killings of over 100 campesinos, threats, etc) carried out by African palm producers in Honduras and serves to reinforce the impunity with which the large-scale palm producers operate.

THE COUP

Your organizations know or should know that since the June 2009 military coup in Honduras, that ousted a democratically elected government, Honduras has become known as the "Murder Capital of the World", and is also known as the "Repression Capital of the Americas". State repression, by the military backed government in power, has reached levels not seen since the 1980s.

THE AGUAN REGION

More particularly, the most violent and repressive region in Honduras since the military coup, is the Aguan region. Over 100 campesinos have been killed. Entire communities have been burned to the ground and forcibly evicted, and this due directly to the African palm production interests of Honduras' largest land-owners.

Most particularly, the RSPO conference in Honduras will be attended by palm producers who are responsible for much of the repression, killings and evictions, including the World Bank-funded

company Dinant that is controlled by Miguel Faccusse who forcibly controls 22,000 acres of plantations.

WORLD BANK FUNDING

Rights Action co-director Annie Bird wrote to the World Bank in November 2010, because it gave large loans to Dinant for biofuel development. "The World Bank decision to release funds to Dinant sent a clear message that the company and its owners enjoy impunity for their actions, and the World Bank will tolerate violence [and] illegal land grabbing".

More recently, Annie co-authored a major report on the repression in the Aguan - "Human Rights Violations Attributed To Military Forces In The Bajo Aguan Valley In Honduras", February 20, 2013 (http://rightsaction.org/sites/default/files//Rpt_130220_Aguan_Final.pdf) – documenting what I summarize above.

In 2011, DEG, the German development bank, cancelled a \$20 million loan to Dinant, based on "evidence of the involvement of private security forces hired by companies owned by Miguel Facussé in human rights abuses and, in particular, in the murder of peasants in Bajo Aguán."
(http://www.rightsaction.org/articles/Honduras_WB_&_massacre_112110.html)

As global organisations concerned with sustainable development issues, it is imperative that you re-evaluate the impacts and implications of your work in Honduras, and cease endorsing, however indirectly, those who are repressing, evicting and killing impoverished farmers, so as to expand their own palm producing empires in the name of 'green energy' and "sustainable development".

I look forward to your response to this email.

Grahame Russell, co-director
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MORE INFORMATION:

Annie Bird, annie@rightsaction.org

www.rightsaction.org

www.facebook.com/rightsaction.org

WHAT TO DO – Write To These Organizations:

Please send your own letters, based on this information, asking that the World Wildlife Fund, Solidaridad Network, SNV Netherlands Development Organisation and ProForest withdraw from this RSPO conference in Honduras.

FUNDS ARE NEEDED - TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS (in Canada and the U.S.)

Since 1998, Rights Action – with your support – has been a constant funder of, and partner with many grassroots development, environmental defense, human rights and democracy organizations in Honduras. Since the 2009 coup, we have been funding and supporting community based groups in the Aguan region, fighting for their lands, suffering repression and loss of life as a result.

To support the struggles of these not-for-profit organizations, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887

CANADA: (Box 552) 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS can be made (in Canada and U.S.):

<http://www.rightsaction.org/tax-deductible-donations>

Be a monthly credit card donor (Canada and U.S.)

To donate stock, contact: info@rightsaction.org

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