



Cargill in the Amazon and the environmental injustice

Soy and the devastation of the Amazon

While forests represent diversity, soybean fields represents the standardization of the landscape and the economic model, that is, the absence of life, the disappearance of stories, ways of life, and cultures. Therefore, we can say that soybeans fields are also green desert in the interior of the Amazon.

In particular, monoculture plantations have produced harmful effects against the peoples of the Amazon, such as deforestation, pesticide contamination, evictions, territorial conflicts, greenhouse gas emissions, as well as food and nutritional insecurity. One of the main agents of this destruction in the Amazon region is the Cargill company.

What is Cargill? And what are its impacts on the Amazonians?

Cargill is a transnational corporation, headquartered in the United States, that controls the trading of agricultural commodities such as cocoa, palm oil, soybeans and corn. The corporation has been the target of complaints and protests around the world and in Brazil for damage caused to the environment and other human rights violations. In the Amazon, Cargill already has 03 ports – in Santarém (PA), Itaituba (PA) and Porto Velho (RO) – and plans to build another one, this time in the municipality of Abaetetuba (PA).

The threat of the port in Abaetetuba already causes damage

The soybean economy does not consider the income generated by agro-extractivism, practiced by more than 40 thousand people in the regions of the islands of Abaetetuba and Barcarena and which does not cause deforestation of the forest or pollution of the waters. According to local residents, only around Ilha do Capim, in Abaetetuba, more than 120 fishing grounds are used daily, responsible for catching an average of 80 tons of fish per year, ensuring the survival of 188 families.

How Cargill Engages in Land Grabbing

For the construction of a port in the “Private Use Terminal (TUP)” modality, Cargill acquired a land ownership document in a riverside community in the municipality of Abaetetuba. It so happens that the area in question is part of a portion of land destined for a traditional community settlement project, the “PAE Santo Afonso”, under the responsibility of the federal government, and, therefore, there are strong indications that such a property document is invalid.

Harassment and pressure on communities, leaders and organizations

Cargill would have installed an electric fence in the territory of a traditional community, placed armed guards and started to control the natural resources of the area. In addition, the company recently resumed harassment of communities that will be affected by the “Semeia Cargill Foundation 2024” projects. This initiative aims to guarantee consent during the consultation for the installation of the port and contributes to internal conflicts in the communities.

Cargill's Greenwashing

Cargill invests in sustainability advertising, known as “greenwashing”. Its objectives with this are several: to get the support of a large part of society for its enterprises, to ensure the sympathy of government officials, in addition to presenting itself as a company committed to environmental causes. Such a strategy takes place by making communities and their struggles against the violations of their rights invisible.

Protecting the Amazon is guaranteeing territories and healthy food!

Life in the flow of waters: we are nature

Rivers are veins of life. The destruction of one river has impacts on all the others, on the whole body. Turning the great Amazonian rivers into waterways is to condemn them to death, preventing or hindering the reproduction of fish and other species that are fundamental to the ecosystem and the well-being of the populations of the region.

The capitalist expropriatory economy distances us from nature, to the point that we seek to dominate and exploit it to meet our infinite demands.



Such a vision is at the root of the climate and environmental crises that affect our planet. Contrary to this logic, we must affirm: “we are also nature”, as indigenous peoples and traditional communities understanding each other.

The logistics that the territories claim is necessary for the reproduction of their ways of living, a facilitator of the various productive systems and a potentiator of practices essential to life, and not to profit.

The territory for women

Women are on the front line of the mobilizations against the installation of large enterprises in the Eastern Amazon, since they play a fundamental role in social reproduction, which depends on nature. Its territorialities are expressed in activities that reconcile the conservation of socio-biodiversity, care work and food security, such as agroecological agriculture, extractivism and handicrafts in indigenous, quilombola, riverside and agro-extractivist territories.



PAE stands for Agro-extractivist Settlement Project, a modality created by Incra to benefit traditional communities in their territories. This is an environmentally differentiated type of settlement based on the common use of land, forests, and water.

Quilombola Territory is guaranteed by the Federal Constitution and Decree No. 4887/2003 to communities that recognize themselves as Quilombos. The protection of the quilombola territory goes beyond land titling and reaches the culture, health and education of the quilombolas.

Communities carry out territorial management

Abaetetuba has 72 islands and 49 localities, most of which are located on the roads, and the smallest part, in the transition area between roads and islands. In the region of the islands there are 24 Agro-extractivist Settlement Projects (PAEs) where 7,721 families reside. In addition, there are 17 quilombola communities throughout the municipality.

The lands of the communities affected by Cargill's TUP are collectively owned or defined as Agro-extractivist Settlement Projects (PAEs) or Quilombola territories. Each family residing there is entitled to a portion of the area and must obey a limit of respect. The management of the territory, in turn, is carried out collectively, either by residents' associations, or by community organizations AMIA, ARQUIA or other collective authorities. There are various forms and self-normative instruments used by the communities that guarantee the shared management of the territory, among which the utilization plans (Pus), consultation protocols and fishing agreements stand out.

Appreciation of history and memory

History and memory are maintained by the narratives and by the ways in which a given community organizes itself and reproduces its ancestral, cultural, social, religious, and economic dynamics. This knowledge, innovations, and practices represent their multiple ways of life and experiences.

Consultation Protocols

The *Consultation Protocols* are instruments prepared by traditional communities that contain the *rules and procedures* that governments must follow to carry out consultations whenever a law, administrative act (decree, environmental license, constructions) or any other measure that affects the community is foreseen. They are important to ensure that consultations are conducted in good faith and in a manner appropriate to the reality of each community, as guaranteed by Convention 169 of the ILO (International Labor Organization).

Territories produce healthy food

The Amazonian agricultural systems developed by the traditional communities of Abaetetuba are essential to guarantee food and nutritional security. All the production from these complex systems allows, in addition to food, income generation, environmental conservation and expansion of biodiversity. Investment in public policies that encourage the expansion of this mode of production is essential for the survival of these peoples and the continuity of the existence of the Amazon.

Agroecology is the alternative

Agroecology recognizes traditional agricultural practices as complex systems that produce food and economy and preserve water, forest, and culture. Indigenous and traditional peoples have ancestrally managed the areas of floodplains, igapó, fields, solid ground and waters, developing practices that are conservative of biodiversity. Agroecology, therefore, is the valorization of these knowledges and practices that oppose degrading agricultural systems, configuring itself as a political construction of society, going beyond the merely technical issues of agriculture.



If there is agroecology, there are free traditional territories and environmental justice!

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