



# **INCREASING THE GENDER GAP: THE IMPACTS OF THE BIOECONOMY AND MARKETS IN ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ON WOMEN**





# Rejecting False Corporate-driven solutions

- Crises of capitalism = “Green” capitalism
- ODA reduced, governments in crisis thus public-private partnerships and the sell out of UN policies to corporations give them influence over public policy
- Fossil fuel replaced with living biomass - Scale of demand?
- Result: False, destructive solutions benefit elites, women worse off...



There cannot be unlimited growth on a limited planet: the 'carrying capacity' or 'ecological space' of Mother Earth is limited

### **'Bioeconomy + Green Economy'**

The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity report proposes to value water, forests, biodiversity etc. in monetary terms – environmental services

The 'green economy' promotes markets in products based on biomass (the 'bioeconomy')

Replacing fossil fuels with biomass requires biotechnologies and massive production of biomass







**Rural and Indigenous women's reliance on natural resources: role as water & food producers, traditional caretakers of nature, related knowledge, cultural identity**



## Privatization and Land Grabbing

Women, with weaker land tenure rights will lose their land and their access to natural resources for livelihoods

e.g. Ethiopia

“Degraded and marginal land” is a fairy tale





**False solutions to climate change create real problems for women, in addition women more affected from CC**

**Large-scale biofuel production & wood-based biomass for heat and power (e.g. bioenergy production requires 400 times more land than advanced solar energy).**

# Green Economy proposals

## Bioeconomy proposals

- **Women do not count as 'environmental service' providers** (e.g. Payment for Environmental Services, REDD+ - example from Congo Basin)
- **Emerging Risky Technologies:**
  - Genetically Engineered Trees
  - Synthetic biology
  - Nanotechnology
  - Geo-engineering

There are no international rules for most of these technologies, except for non-binding moratoria



Markets in 'environmental services'  
By far the largest market are forest carbon  
offsets – promoted through REDD+





# Risks of REDD+

- Weak land tenure rights and negotiation power of women: Powerful elites will capture the benefits by grabbing forest land and closing false and unfair deals with forest peoples
- Counting how much carbon is stored is expensive – most funds will go to (male) consultants
- REDD+ is a neo-liberal, market-driven approach that leads to commodification of life and undermining community values
- Focus on carbon promotes monoculture tree plantations and ignores social and cultural values
- The real causes of forest loss and forest land grabbing will not be addressed
- REDD+ will undermine the climate regime by allowing polluters to continue



The bioeconomy agenda is especially attractive to fossil fuel companies who want to be seen pursuing an exit-from-oil strategy, and biotechnology companies desperately in need of a Trojan horse to provide safe passage for risky and unpopular new technologies

- Companies promoting it include:
- Big Energy (Exxon, BP, Chevron, Shell, Total)
- Big Pharma (Roche, Merck)
- Big Food & Agriculture (Unilever, Cargill, DuPont, Monsanto, Bunge, Procter & Gamble)
- Big Chemical (Dow, BASF)
- Actively supported by UN (e.g. Sustainable Energy for All Initiative)





Financialization of nature is financialization of human life

# How to adapt (bio) economies to women

- Quick steps: Stop subsidizing destruction!! Redirect subsidies away from bioenergy, carbon offsets, meat consumption, financialization of life
- Respect and promote what works: Indigenous territories and community conserved areas, food, wood and energy sovereignty, buen vivir
- Social protection floor and rights-based public policies (education, health, transport)
- Long-term: Change to buen vivir: Change consumption and production and lifestyles, localization



Thank you

