

Open letter to the humans of Fabricom-

Whether you take anything written here seriously or not, or whether you even read it whatsoever, is out of our control. You, the humans representing your precious company, have been given these words. What you take from them, and what you do with them, is in your hands. Within is some information you might need to understand the viewpoint of those humans occupying “your” land, and some possible options to resolve our little stand-off.

Firstly, there will be no abandonment of the Lappersfort forest without an absolute guarantee that every piece of the 3.5 hectares stays standing. No compromises & no half-hearted deals. Your sad little attempt at bargaining us out of the forest, offering to let us leave voluntarily & to let us choose which trees you plant to “replace” those you wish to slaughter, is nothing but an insult to the people who have spent almost 10 months living in and protecting those woods, while trying to bring a message across that we humans must reduce our parasitic and destructive impact on our home, the planet. We have lived here through the winter; been arrested, kidnapped & imprisoned by the police of Brugge; and now you ask us not only to leave but to co-operate & collaborate with you. This was and never will be an option. Anything less than an absolute guarantee that the Lappersfort stays will inevitably result in an eviction. For you, this will mean a temporary but heavy loss of face through unwanted media attention: the rich, powerful company using the police, whose wages are paid by the working folk, to violently remove a group of people from the trees, so that they can plant some concrete, hangars and offices on top of it. An eviction would also mean paying those expensive robots to come with their toys and machines to drag us out of the woods. Most likely, you will try to get the cost of the eviction from us afterwards, or place some ridiculous & oppressive bail conditions above our heads, as you did with 13 people from the last occupation. You can cut and cut as long as you wish, but you will never get blood from a stone. An eviction, on top of all this, will mean for you an increase in actions taken against your company, not just in Belgium, but in whatever parts of Europe, or even the world, where Fabricom-GTI and Suez find themselves, in response to your treatment of the occupiers and destruction of the Lappersfort forest.

For us, an eviction would most likely mean being tortured & unjustly tried by the Belgian police and courts. This is something we have known since first occupying the forest in September, and your earlier threats to use the hundreds of police “and even the army” to get us out come as no surprise or shock. Police brutality is something most of us have witnessed or experienced, and something you get over. An eviction, for us, would be most tragic for, amongst others, two main reasons-

- the loss of our home, a space we have put so much life, energy and love into;
- the knowledge that, if you drag us out, the trees probably won't be there when the police finally release us.

In Flanders, there exists a sadly small amount of forest. An eviction, and the resulting destruction project of your company, the slaughter of the trees, the swamp, the eco-systems of the Lappersfort forest, will only reduce this percentage. 3.5 hectares may not be much, but this must be seen in the bigger picture. The Lappersfort itself was originally occupied with the 2 main intentions of protecting it from your greedy fingers, but also to display the case of the Lappersfort as a symbolic case, representing a total of 10,000 hectares of so-called “zonevremde” forests in Flanders. How can a forest be illegally occupying private property? Nature belongs to all, and we all belong to the earth. The 10,000 hectares of directly threatened forests deserve a voice besides that provided by those who colour it in wrong on

the maps & call it an industrial zone. By occupying the Lappersfort, we are not only trying to protect this specific piece of forest, but also give a voice to all other threatened forests in this corner of the planet. **Ultimately, what we seek is a re-colouring of all official maps & a legalisation of all “illegal” forests in Flanders.** Every tree counts, and the concrete you lay, suffocating all life beneath it, will ruin, again, some of the last remaining forest that the next generation of humans will not get to see, walk through, or even simply have around to filter the black-vomit pollution of ever-expanding industry.

An eviction may be avoided, but know that, if no solution is found, we are prepared for it. You don't know who we are, how many we are, and how well we know these woods you claim to own. We will outrun and outwit your highly-paid robots of state & industry, and if they do finally catch us, we will lock ourselves to the trees, delaying them as long as possible and costing you as much money as we can. So, maybe we should look at some other options....

The option of a land-swap is something the Groene Gordel Front has been trying to push ahead with for a long time, and something they will propose to you. It is an option which should of course be considered. Your attempt to put the matter entirely in our hands & to find & propose you a suitable piece of disused industrial estate is a little sad, however. You know as well as we do that such a decision can only be made by the so-called “democratically elected representatives” of the Flemish government. They speak your language of money, trade and private property. All you have to do is sit down with them, drink a little coffee & draw up a little plan. Take your empty industrial estate, build your useless offices and leave the forest alone. But let us not think that this is the only option available besides an eviction.

Why not give back the land, simply let it be, let it grow, for the people living in the area who don't want to see it disappear? For a future with at least a few more trees in it than the future we see coming if pointless, destructive industrial projects such as these are allowed to continue at the expense of all other life & existence. What about allowing the land to be bought back for a symbolic price of €1? An exchange of money would be simply for your sake, as we know that money is the only language you people & companies understand. The money with which you “bought” this land in the first place does not exist & has no value. The political & economic system which treats the planet as a commodity to be bought, sold & exploited for the sake of corporate profit, unfortunately does exist. But for us, just like your money, it also has no value. It is the pointless & worthless machine which surrounds us all, and presents itself at all times in many different faces. In this case, the face is one of abuse, exploitation and needless destruction of nature. You humans, and your company, are simply pieces of the pointless machine, and the current manifestation of a way of thinking which prevails in our society & is spreading like a virus across the planet. You, in the case of the Lappersfort, are the parts of the machine we are forced to deal with.

Such a symbolic purchase or “giving back” of the land, as a gesture to the people, may be the only way for Fabricom to save its face, and at the same time attempt to greenwash its corporate image as an “eco-friendly” business. Such a gesture may allow many to start thinking that companies do have a conscience after all. We know, however, that as long as companies such as yours exist, that the eco-systems and bio-diversity of our planet will suffer. A land-exchange may save the Lappersfort, but profit-hungry companies such as Fabricom, and their paternal earth-plundering owners GDF Suez, will remain the enemies of wild places & nature everywhere, until the absolute collapse of unsustainable, exploitative heavy industry. Failing such an absolute collapse, at the moment, we must focus on the options for the

Lappersfort. You have now read some of them, and probably many other potential outcomes exist. The future is unwritten- only in the concrete & clock based world of politics, business & industry is the future something to be sold & traded. In the real world of humans, nature & wilderness, the future looks grim, grey, mechanised & depressing. The next generation of humans deserve a few remaining trees, and the trees today deserve a voice.

The most simple & logical option would be to simply let it go. You people have enough offices, enough car-parks and hangars, and certainly enough money. Let it be, let it grow, and do your business somewhere else. Or, better yet, stop doing business altogether.

Failing that, go sit down with the Flemish government, the minister for planning, and all those other “important” humans who speak and understand your language of private property. Perhaps you can find a solution, which we mortal citizens are not allowed to take part in.

We’re not going anywhere, and we are everywhere.

We will stay in the Lappersfort until it is saved or your monkeys torture us out.

This doesn’t end with the Lappersfort, not for Fabricom and not for the rest of the threatened forests in Flanders, or anywhere else.

We hope this has given you a little more information needed to understand our viewpoint.

Good luck,

The Humans of the Forests