

# THE GREEN SHOCK DOCTRINE

BY GLOBAL JUSTICE ECOLOGY PROJECT



In the midst of tear gas, police prepare to fire into the crowd during protests against the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) in Miami, Florida in 2003. Photo: Langelle/GJEP & PhotoLangelle.org

*“It is war. A war against humanity. The globalization of those who are above us is nothing more than a global machine that feeds on blood and defecates in dollars.”*

**Subcomandante Marcos, Zapatista Army of National Liberation (2003)**

There is much being said and written today about how to effectively address the oncoming catastrophe of climate change, which is already, for many, tragically real.

There is a crucial and obvious need for a powerful global movement to tackle the climate crisis. But this movement will not be based on reform. Capitalism and the markets have led us to the brink of the abyss. They will not provide our parachute. The system cannot be reformed. It must be transformed.

The more we understand how the roots of the many issues we are fighting are intertwined, the better we can cooperate to change the system driving them. In diversity is strength, as any ecologist understands, and our movements for change are no exception.

Global Justice Ecology Project is publishing *The Green Shock Doctrine* as a means to help expose and examine the deeper issues behind the climate crisis and their links to many of the other crises we are facing. In doing so, we hope to help advance the effort to transform the global system driving climate catastrophe.

## PART I: INTRODUCTION

Many are talking about “solutions” to the crisis of climate change. Some, like US President Barak Obama, argue that we can achieve effective action on climate change by merely tweaking the status quo—making business as usual a little more energy efficient; or promoting the use of industrial-scale “clean” energy like fracked natural gas, nuclear power, or wood-based bioenergy—all part of the scheme to create a “green” version of capitalism. Others feel change will best be achieved by divesting from fossil fuels. Still others believe lobbying UN delegates and politicians is the best way to avert climate catastrophe.

Because these approaches do not address the underlying systems of injustice, however, they do nothing to stop the climate train from hurtling off the cliff. Nothing short of fundamental systemic transformation away from the economy of death and toward a society based on justice and ecology will be sufficient to head off, or at least dampen the effects of, the oncoming climate catastrophe.

*“Today more than ever, another world is necessary. We are facing a major crisis in our history, which is systemic. The destruction of our world, through overexploitation and dispossession of people and the appropriation of natural resources [,] is resulting in the current climate crisis and deep inequalities which endanger humankind and life itself.”*

**Egidio Brunetto of La Via Campesina, “The Jakarta Call” (2013)**



Zapatista Comandante in La Realidad, Chiapas, Mexico in 1996. The Zapatistas rose up against the North America Free Trade Agreement on New Year's Day 1994, calling it a "death sentence for the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico." Their uprising and struggle against neoliberalism inspired many who stood up against corporate globalization in the 1990s, including those who shut down the WTO Summit in Seattle in 1999. Photo: Langelle/GJEP & PhotoLangelle.org

In our decade of work within the global climate justice movement, and the work since 1992 against unjust trade and neoliberalism by Global Justice Ecology Project co-founders Orin Langelle and Anne Petermann, one thing has become abundantly clear: It is not enough to merely move money around—we must fundamentally challenge the very idea of wealth accumulation, the commodification of both people's labor and the natural world, and the existence of the corporate and power elite.

The climate crisis is one of the most serious problems we face. However, rather than seriously responding to climate change, rich and corrupt governments are teaming up with corporations, the United Nations, World Bank, and other institutions to implement a new type of "disaster capitalism," which advances market-based climate mitigation strategies to create new business opportunities. These schemes do nothing for the climate, but rather promote and prolong the dominant development model that is unjust, immoral, genocidal, and ultimately, suicidal.

The dominant worldview that turns land, life, and humans into market commodities is antithetical to *buen vivir*: life in harmony between humans, communities, and the Earth—where work is not a job to make others wealthier, but a livelihood that is sustaining, fulfilling, and in tune with the common good.

But while the capitalist system seems inextricably entrenched, too powerful to change, in fact that change is inevitable. How it will change is the challenge we must collectively face.

## **THE GREEN SHOCK DOCTRINE AND THE NEXT PHASE OF CAPITALISM**

In *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, Naomi Klein revealed how global elites use public "shocks" such as military coups and natural disasters to push through neoliberal economic reforms. These reforms, designed to liberate trade from

*"Someone warned that to go against globalization would be like going against gravity. Then...Down with the law of gravity!"*

**Subcomandante Marcos, Zapatista Army of National Liberation (1998)**



On December 3, 2011, thousands marched in Durban, South Africa to protest the UN Climate Conference, which was nicknamed "The Durban Disaster." Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org

*"The global elite would like to privatize the atmosphere through carbon markets; carve up the remaining forests, bush and grasslands of the world through the violation of Indigenous Peoples' rights and land-grabbing; [...] convert real forests into monoculture tree plantations and agricultural soils into carbon sinks; and complete the capitalist enclosure of commons. Virtually every proposal discussed [in the official UN climate negotiations] was based on a desire to create opportunities for profit rather than to reduce emissions."*

**Climate Justice Now! Copenhagen Statement (2009)**

regulation and open markets to exploitative foreign private investment, create new wealth for the economic elite while pushing the rest of society and the planet further into a hole of despair and inequality.

In the shadow of both worsening climate chaos and the 2008 financial collapse, bankers, corporate elites, and international institutions have evolved the Shock Doctrine into a Green Shock Doctrine. This “Green” version of the Shock Doctrine involves use of the global ecological and social crises to create a whole new system of economics based on financial speculation and trade in so-called “environmental services.” It is called The Green Economy and sets the framework to privatize and commodify every natural organism and ecosystem on the planet, along with the so-called “services” they provide—such as clean water. Social movements, Indigenous Peoples, peasants, and grassroots groups are denouncing this greening of capitalism, which has the sole purpose of enabling the continuation of business and profits as usual.

As Gerak Lawan, the Indonesian People’s Movement Against Neocolonialism and Imperialism, explained:

The capitalist system is in a deep crisis. Since the 2008 financial crisis [when] the system nearly imploded, it has yet to fully recover. And instead, the crisis has spread and has deepened the food, economic, energy and climate crises. The deep systemic crisis is crystal clear evidence that the neoliberal regime must come to an end. ... [But instead] there is a new push for further free trade liberalization, pushing a new wave of free trade agreements (FTAs) such as the Transpacific Partnership Agreement... and a new model of capitalist exploitation of nature called the ‘green economy.

## THE GREEN ECONOMY

**T**he Green Economy is being advanced at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), UN Environment Programme, and other bodies in partnership with some of the planet’s greatest corporate and governmental pillagers.

Their efforts are being aided by corporate non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Conservation International, Environmental Defense Fund, The Nature Conservancy, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The collaboration of these corporate NGOs in the greening of capitalism is not surprising given who sits on the Boards of Directors of these giant organizations, including representatives of Goldman Sachs, Google, the National Bank of Mexico, Citigroup, Walmart, JP Morgan Chase, Unilever, Coca Cola, and Bank of America, to name a few.

The UN FCCC (also called the UN Climate Conference) laid the foundation for what would later become the Green Economy back in 1997 during the negotiations around the Kyoto Protocol, where the US used the climate crisis to create new markets in carbon pollution. While the Kyoto Protocol is the only legally binding international climate agreement, it was hopelessly weakened when US Vice President Al Gore insisted it include carbon markets or the US—then the world’s largest polluter—would not sign on. The markets were included, but the US never joined. In *The Guardian*, Madeleine Bunting commented on the US role in weakening the Kyoto Protocol: “[The] whole international effort had been hijacked and corrupted by the United States’ ideological obsession with the disciplines of the market as a panacea for all ills.”

Countries in Europe did sign the Kyoto Protocol, and the development of the Emissions Trading Scheme led to record profits for some of Europe’s largest polluters, though it did nothing to limit carbon emissions and has since collapsed. This has not discouraged climate profiteers, however, who are now creating markets in the carbon stored by forests.

At the UN FCCC in Bali, Indonesia in 2007, the UN and World Bank announced the development of new markets in forest carbon, that is, carbon stored by living trees. The UN’s Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD)

*“The largest corporation in the world is not Walmart or General Motors, the largest corporation in the world is nature.”*

**Ahmed Djoghlaf, then-Executive Secretary of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity at the CBD Conference in Bonn, Germany 2008**

*“They see our Mother Earth as a business, and for us you should never see it like that. It’s our Mother, she can’t be sold.”*

**‘Francisco,’ Lacandon Jungle, Amador Hernandez, Chiapas, Mexico in *A Darker Shade of Green* (2012)**

scheme was developed to pay countries in the Global South to reduce their levels of deforestation and protect their intact forests. Once this occurs, the carbon stored by those forests can be quantified and sold to polluters in the Industrialized North who want to buy that stored carbon to “offset” rather than reduce their own carbon emissions. Corporate profit making and pollution as usual continue unabated at the expense of forest dependent communities, Indigenous Peoples, and communities located near industrial polluters.

At the Bali climate conference, the World Bank launched their Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, designed to bring developing countries into REDD by providing financing to make them “REDD-ready.” REDD was launched without input from the Indigenous Peoples and forest dependent communities whose lands are in the cross-hairs of REDD agreements, and REDD has already led to land grabs and human rights violations. The World Bank launched the new facility with a press conference that was met with a huge protest outside. Since then, REDD’s dubious objectives have led to numerous protests at the UN FCCC—most led by Indigenous Peoples.

During another protest in Bali by Indigenous Peoples against their exclusion from UN FCCC decisions impacting them, Fiu Mata’ese Elisara-La’ulu, of the O Le Siosiomaga Society of Samoa stated,

[This] process has become nothing but developed countries avoiding their responsibilities to cut emissions and pushing the responsibility onto developing countries. Projects like REDD sound very nice but they are trashing our indigenous lands. People are being relocated and even killed; my own people will soon be under water. The money from these projects is blood money.

In 2008 in Bonn, Germany, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) launched its own models for marketing environmental services through the Business and Biodiversity Initiative, which includes the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme (BBOP), The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB), and a new Green Development Mechanism.

*The Little Biodiversity Finance Book*, published in 2010 by the Global Canopy Programme (GCP) with the financial assistance of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation is widely distributed at CBD conferences. In it, Andrew Mitchell, founder of the GCP, twists a quote by Oscar Wilde to justify its premise that privatizing the natural world is the best way to protect it:

The English [sic] playwright Oscar Wilde once commented that the cynic



2007 UN climate talks in Bali: Protest outside the World Bank’s press conference to launch its Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org

*“[This] process has become nothing but developed countries avoiding their responsibilities to cut emissions and pushing the responsibility onto developing countries. Projects like REDD sound very nice but they are trashing our indigenous lands. People are being relocated and even killed; my own people will soon be under water. The money from these projects is blood money.”*

**Fiu Mata’ese Elisara-La’ulu, O Le Siosiomaga Society of Samoa**



Fiu Mata’ese Elisara-La’ulu speaks out at the UN Climate Conference in Bali. Photo: Petermann/GJEP-GFC

knows the price of everything, but the value of nothing. Today's cynics are those who claim that biodiversity is priceless, yet are not prepared to pay for it. ... the financial crisis is forcing a re-think of how products and services are valued. Investors are thinking, 'if we got it so wrong with one property, what else out there is incorrectly valued?' There is a growing realization that wealth creation cannot continue based on financial and social capital alone, but must recognize natural capital too—for without this, national accounts, business accounts and consumer accounts—long term, are ultimately built on sand.

In this way, Mitchell uses the economic crisis to advance the GCP's true agenda of using so-called "natural capital" to create new wealth.

As REDD redefines forests as carbon, these biodiversity markets transform the vast, ancient interconnected web of life into an array of environmental services to be quantified, privatized, and sold on the market. Tropical forests, oceans, grasslands and their "services" (i.e. biodiversity protection or water purification) become a source for offset credits to be priced according to supply and demand.

Corporations and governments may purchase these offsets and continue ecological destruction as usual. Biodiversity offsets have been described as "a license to trash nature," as Carrington reported for *The Guardian*. In the same article, Carrington quotes Sandra Bell of Friends of the Earth: "Nature is unique and complex—not something that can be bulldozed in one place and recreated in another at the whim of a developer."

*"Nature is unique and complex—not something that can be bulldozed in one place and recreated in another at the whim of a developer."*

**Sandra Bell, Friends of the Earth**



Indigenous Peoples march with an anti-REDD banner in Durban, South Africa to protest the UN Climate Conference. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org

Additionally, because the price of ecosystem services is linked to supply and demand, the price rises and profits increase as the ecosystems providing the services become more scarce—which is inevitable under an economic system that transforms natural resources into capital. Similarly, because some REDD funding is tied to how much a country reduces its deforestation, it creates a perverse incentive for countries to increase their deforestation now in order to receive more REDD funding in the future.

At the 2008 UN Climate Conference in Poznan, Poland, the Climate Justice Now! alliance denounced REDD as creating

the climate regime's largest ever loophole, giving Northern polluters yet another opportunity to buy their way out of emissions reductions. With no mention of biodiversity or Indigenous Peoples' rights, this scheme might give a huge incentive for countries to sell off their forests, expel Indigenous and peasant communities, and transform forests into tree plantations under corporate-control.

*"In reality [carbon trading schemes are] a lot like trying to lose weight by paying someone else to go on a diet. [With REDD] it's a lot more like starving somebody someplace else as a way of losing weight."*

**Gopal Dayaneni, Movement Generation Justice & Ecology Project**

In the film *A Darker Shade of Green: REDD Alert and the Future of Forests*, Gopal Dayaneni, of Movement Generation Justice & Ecology Project adds,

In reality [carbon trading schemes are] a lot like trying to lose weight by paying someone else to go on a diet. The idea is you give somebody else a bunch of money to lose weight and you add your two weights together, divide by half, and your average weight goes down if they lose enough weight. [With REDD] it's a lot more like starving somebody someplace else as a way of losing weight.

*"It is unfortunate that the industrialized countries fail to assume their responsibility and expect developing countries like Bolivia to carry on their shoulders the crisis generated by capitalism."*

**Evo Morales, President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, at the 2010 UN Climate Conference**

## THE GREEN SHOCK DOCTRINE, CLIMATE FINANCE AND DEBT

As extreme weather continues to take its toll on public budgets, countries in the global south—already struggling under decades of neoliberal World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies designed to ransack natural resources, dismantle public services, and saddle them with debt—are having to fight for financial assistance from the very countries responsible for the climate crisis in the first place.

The battle over 'climate finance' has increasingly taken center stage at the UN FCCC as developing countries demand that rich countries pay compensation to help them recover from climate-related disasters they played no role in causing.

Led by the US, however, rich countries have repeatedly rejected these demands. Instead, they are borrowing a page out of the Green Shock Doctrine playbook to use these climate "shocks" to push through yet more unjust conditional finance, through which rich countries set conditions on money lent or given to the South to help them recover from climate disasters.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was formally established at the UN FCCC conference in Cancun in 2010, to oversee \$100bn in climate finance pledged through President Obama's secretly negotiated "Copenhagen Accord" in 2009. It is modeled on the same old unjust development financing of the World Bank, IMF, and others, but this time it is being done through a sort of climate blackmail. If countries want critically needed climate assistance, they must agree to the strict conditions.

Not coincidentally, in Cancun, the US and its allies successfully positioned the World Bank to be the first trustee of the Green Climate Fund. The Bank is now a leading facilitator of private-sector investment in climate mitigation strategies.

## THE UN PROMOTES PRIVATIZED RESPONSE TO CATASTROPHE

In theory the "multilateral" consensus-based decision-making process of the UN is designed to prohibit the most powerful countries in the world from exerting control over the weakest nations. It is intended to be transparent and participatory, and to distribute power more equally. This has not been the case with international efforts to slow climate change.

About the 2007 UN Climate Conference in Bali, Walden Bello, then Senior Policy Analyst at Focus on the Global South, wrote,

Bali will probably be remembered as the conference where big business came to climate change in big way ... Shell and other big-time polluters have been making the rounds touting the market as the prime solution to the climate crisis, a position that meshes well with the U.S. opposition to mandatory emission cuts.



*The International Day of Action, December 8, 2007, march against climate change: On an extremely hot and humid day, the march drew thousands to the streets in Denpasar, close to the UN Climate Conference in Nusa Dua, Bali. Photo: Langelles/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelles.org*

*"We are shocked by the level of corruption that UNFCCC has reached in allowing corporations to take over the political process of climate negotiations. Instead of tackling climate changes, what is being discussed in Poznan is how to create business opportunities in the face of a global disaster."*

**Alice Muñoz, La Via Campesina, Poznan, Poland, 2008**

The trend has continued, and at the 2008 UN Climate Conference in Poznan, Poland more than 1,500 industry lobbyists attended.

US negotiators and their allies, acting on behalf of the corporate elites, have repeatedly denounced legally binding targets and accountability mechanisms, arguing instead for voluntary action. They have used bribes to force small countries to go along with positions against their best interests; included corporate representatives on government delegations; and met in small secret cabals to hammer out agreements in direct contravention to the official consensus-based process.

After the disastrous outcomes of the Durban, South Africa FCCC in December 2011, where once again no concrete action was taken to address the climate crisis, *Nature Magazine* stated, "It is clear that the science of climate change and the politics of climate change now inhabit parallel worlds."

Nnimmo Bassey, Chair of Friends of the Earth International similarly condemned Durban's outcomes: "Developed countries, led by the US, accelerated the demolition of the world's international framework for fair and urgent climate action. And developing countries have been bullied and forced into accepting an agreement that could be a suicide pill for the world." A report from Petermann and Langelle on Durban later quoted him saying,

An increase in global temperatures of four degrees Celsius, permitted under this plan, is a death sentence for Africa, small island states, and the poor and vulnerable worldwide. This summit has amplified climate apartheid whereby the richest 1% of the world have decided that it is acceptable to sacrifice the 99%.

## PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Parallel to the official UN climate negotiations, events organized by corporate alliances such as the Avoided Deforestation Partners (which claims to be an NGO), the Consumer Goods Forum, and the World Climate Summit harness global concern about climate change to promote so-called "public-private partnerships." These partnerships, or PPPs, divert public funds into privately managed and profit-oriented false solution schemes. These schemes include lofty-sounding initiatives like Zero Net Deforestation, Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All), and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD).

The World Climate Summit described its preparations for the 2013 UN Climate Summit in Warsaw as such:

For the first time this year, World Climate Ltd and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development are collaborating to provide a complementary series of business activities over two days alongside the annual United Nations Climate Change Conference. The World Climate Summit will take place on Sunday, 17 November 2013 and the WBCSD Business Day on Monday, 18 November 2013. These two days, united under CLIMATE SOLUTIONS, will provide the pre-eminent business platform for debate and action during the Warsaw Climate Change Conference: COP19.



*Christina Figueres, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, speaks to protesters at the march in Durban, South Africa during the UN Climate Conference. South African activist Virginia Setshedi (left) watches in disgust. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org*

*"One way to look at climate protection is to regard it as a business model, because our only option to stop climate change is for industry to make money from it." Sir Richard Branson*

*"People have to think more holistically about their actions. Everything comes down to 'how much money can I make from this.' Until this changes, all this talk of environmental protection is bullshit."*

**Cree Helen Atkinson in Whapmagoostui, Quebec, Canada 1993**

Ambassador Donald Steinberg of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) emphasized the importance of these private gatherings during the Rio+20 UN Earth Summit in 2012, saying, “These events are not side events, these are the main events.”

Indeed, it is increasingly at these private forums where the world’s largest institutions and corporations sit down with the Big Green NGOs like the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Conservation International (CI) to devise new policies completely protected from public oversight or input. Ironically, these events get very little attention from organizations negotiating at the international level—preferring as they do the familiarity of the dysfunctional and largely irrelevant halls of the UN climate summits.



The Southern Sun Elangeni Hotel in Durban, South Africa was host to the World Climate Summit, 3-4 December 2011. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org

*“We conservation organizations sit very well together with corporations.”*  
**Julia Martin-LeFevre, Director General, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**

## **NGO COMPLICITY IN PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND THE GREEN SHOCK DOCTRINE**

**B**ig Green NGOs are complicit in the advancement of the pro-corporate, market-obsessed, and profit-motivated Green Economy—including prominent organizations like the IUCN, CI, the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), The Nature Conservancy, and Environmental Defense Fund (EDF).



As the 2008 UN FCCC opened in Poznan, Poland, climate activists, including Rachel Smolker, took over the Environmental Defense Fund’s Washington DC office. Photo courtesy of *It’s Getting Hot in Here*

At an event organized by the Avoided Deforestation Partners during Rio+20, IUCN’s Martin-LeFevre argued that the way to protect nature was to “harness the capacity of the markets through [strategies like] payment for biodiversity and ecosystem services,” adding that big NGOs play an important role in this process.

Counseled by big green NGOs and seduced with promises of easy money, some countries are initiating REDD-type programs to “protect” their forests for use as offsets. The model of forest conservation promoted by the big corporate NGOs often results in the forced removal of local land stewards. This is considered necessary in

*“My father was one of the 4 men who founded [Environmental Defense Fund]. They were all avid ornithologists, who were concerned with the decline of osprey and peregrine falcons, which was linked to DDT-caused eggshell thinning. While I grew up holding EDF in great respect, that all dissipated and dissolved into a sense of dismay and disgust as EDF became the leading proponent of carbon trade and other market mechanisms and, in general, corporate-friendly approaches to ‘environmentalism.’... [EDF] is not much different from most of the other large environmental orgs, who depend upon funding from the ‘system’ to keep their desk chairs padded.”*

**Dr. Rachel Smolker, Biofuelwatch**



order protect biodiversity, ecosystems, or the carbon stored by trees from traditional uses.

With communities out of the way, these ecosystems can be privatized and re-engineered into income-generating commodities that can be traded on the market. This form of imperialist conservation, however, not only fails to recognize and uphold the customary rights and roles of local communities, it removes the very people who have traditionally protected the forest



*Indigenous residents of Nuevo San Gregorio, in the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve in Chiapas, Mexico were faced with forced relocation due to plans by Conservation International and the Mexican government. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org*

from destruction. It is not by accident that most of the remaining intact forests and ecosystems on the planet are home to indigenous peoples and communities that depend on them. Devoid of local community oversight, forests and ecosystems are an easy target for illegal loggers, poachers and developers, some with the support of corrupt state and local elites.

In 2003, Conservation International supported a plan by the Mexican government to forcibly relocate indigenous communities from the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve in the state of Chiapas. An emergency delegation organized by Global Exchange exposed the plan. Their press release stated,

We denounce the imminent forced relocation of indigenous communities settled in the Montes Azules. Further, we concur with other nongovernmental organizations that the dislocations are being carried out as a pretext for further commercial exploitation of the region, such as oil exploration, bioprospecting and the construction of hydroelectric dams.

Following the release of the findings, the communities were not relocated.

As a result of these and many other criticisms, the global REDD scheme of the UN and World Bank has been met with serious challenges. As a result, sub-national REDD agreements outside of UN oversight, such as one between California; Chiapas, Mexico; and Acre, Brazil are being developed. In Chiapas, this scheme is yet another attempt to take control of the resource-rich lands of the Montes Azules.

## PPPs, REDD AND IMPACTS IN CHIAPAS, MEXICO

A day-long event was organized at the UN's Rio+20 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 to promote private sector investments in subnational REDD projects. It was sponsored by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the Governors' Climate Change Task Force and included participation of government leaders from forested states in Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, and elsewhere, as well as private companies like Google and Wildlife Works. Unsurprisingly, the event lacked participation by indigenous peoples and local communities from those states that would be directly affected by REDD policies, and who have strongly condemned them.

In Chiapas, Mexico, the California-Chiapas-Acre REDD deal has been focused on the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve in the Lacandon Jungle, where the Mexican government is attempting to use the climate crisis to gain control over the carbon rich Lacandon Jungle for REDD projects—lands they have been trying to conquer for decades without success, in a large part owing to the indigenous Zapatista uprising

*“Not only does REDD+ corrupt the sacred and fuel financial speculation, it also serves as greenwash for extractive industries like Shell and Rio Tinto [by allowing polluting companies to buy forests that absorb carbon instead of reducing their pollution]. Don't be fooled, the Green Economy and REDD+ constitute a planet grab. Rio+20 is not an Earth Summit, it is the WTO of Life.”*

**Berenice Sanchez, of the Alliance of Indigenous Peoples Against REDD and For Life**

in 1994. Communities are again being pressured to relocate.

Several communities that agreed to relocate were moved into “sustainable rural cities,” which are part of former Governor Juan Sabines’ Chiapas Development and Solidarity Plan, and linked to the UN’s Millennium Development Goals. These cities consist of tiny, shabbily built shacks crammed together on steep barren hillsides with no room for growing food and no basis for making a living. As one community stated, “They offered us a dream, but they gave us a nightmare.”



Some of the housing in the “sustainable rural city,” Santiago El Pinar, Chiapas, Mexico. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org

In 2010, when the community of Amador Hernández refused to voluntarily leave their land in the Lacandon jungle, the Mexican government cut off medical supplies and emergency transport. The community also faced intense military intimidation



The indigenous village Amador Hernández, in the heart of the Lacandon Jungle. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org

and the threat of forced relocation for refusing to cooperate. When GJEP sent a photojournalist, writer, and two videographers to document and expose these injustices, the government backed off. Due to the resistance and organizing of the people of Amador Hernández, along with an international campaign that included other organizations like the Indigenous Environmental Network, Carbon Trade Watch and Friends of the Earth, Amador Hernández

was never relocated. Since then, the Chiapas side of the REDD agreement has been amended, and seeks to use 70% of the land area of Chiapas as a carbon offset.

## THE GREEN ECONOMY AND ‘ZERO NET DEFORESTATION’

WWF and other institutions are advancing “Zero Net Deforestation” schemes that use the deforestation and climate crises to promote the rapid expansion of fast growing industrial timber plantations. At the Avoided Deforestation Partners event in Rio during Rio+20, it was announced that the US government was joining the Consumer Business Forum to achieve the goal of “Zero Net Deforestation by 2020.” The Consumer Goods Forum is a global industry network of 650 corporations with combined sales of over US \$3 trillion.

Eliminating deforestation is not possible without a massive reduction in wood and paper consumption. It is highly unlikely that the world’s largest corporations, as well as the US government, are committed to this objective. In fact, Zero Net Deforestation does nothing to reduce wood consumption, and is being advanced hand in hand with the promotion of wood-based bioenergy—which is driving more rapid deforestation. What Zero Net Deforestation really promotes is the replacement of logged native forests with fast growing monoculture timber plantations. In their proposal for Zero Net Deforestation, WWF is careful to distinguish it from

*“REDD amounts to nothing more than a plan to grab the lands that our indigenous peoples have always cared for, in exchange for permits that let industries continue to pollute. REDD plus indigenous peoples equals genocide.”*

**Tom Goldtooth, Indigenous Environmental Network Executive Director**

*“[Forest] loss will not be halted if we do not achieve a profound change in the system itself, which continues to promote unlimited growth on a limited planet.”*

**Global Forest Coalition report  
Getting to the Roots**

'zero deforestation' They take for granted that forest loss will continue; for zero *net* deforestation, this loss can be *offset* by so-called reforestation efforts. Unfortunately, the "reforestation" they promote is problematic for many reasons.

The UN has no science-based definition for forests; they include plantations of non-native trees and ignore all non-tree components of a forest (biodiversity, soils, etc.). In addition, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization defines reforestation as "[forests] established artificially...on land which carried forest within the previous 50 years or within living memory, and [involving] the replacement of a previous crop by a new and essentially different crop." In other words, 'reforestation' allows deforestation to continue as long as industrial plantations of non-native trees like eucalyptus and pine replace the lost forest.

For this reason, 'Zero Net Deforestation' schemes carry a heavy price for forest dependent communities whose forests are converted to plantations. Industrial plantations of non-native trees provide no food, medicine or shelter, do not support biodiversity, and are heavily sprayed with toxic chemicals that contaminate ground water. Some plantations, like eucalyptus, even deplete precious groundwater and can cause or worsen droughts. Unless prohibited, future 'reforestation' could even include dangerous and unproven genetically engineered (GE) trees.



WWF Booth at the 2011 UN Conference on Climate Change in Durban. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org



Eucalyptus Plantation in Brazil. Photo: Petermann/GJEP

*"For Mapuche organizations, the conflict [over plantations] is not merely a dispute over land. ... The territorial conflict with the forestry companies is a fight for survival, for rights, dignity, recognition, and the possibility of autonomous development. [Stopping] the expansion of the forestry sector is also a means of preventing this activity from provoking even greater impoverishment, environmental damage and cultural deterioration for the Mapuche people and vast sectors of society."*

**Alfredo Seguel of the Mapuche group Konapewman**

## THE GREEN SHOCK DOCTRINE AND "SUSTAINABLE" ENERGY FOR ALL (OR AT LEAST FOR SOME)

The UN is teaming up with the fossil fuel industry in a scheme to use the 1.3 billion people who lack access to energy services to justify the diversion of public funds into private-sector projects designed to expand energy infrastructure globally. This scheme is called the "Sustainable Energy for All" initiative (SE4All). In 2011, the UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon established SE4All, which includes representatives from major energy and finance corporations, including Statoil, Eskom, Siemens, OPEC, and Bloomberg New Energy Finance, among others.

SE4All co-chair Charles Holliday described SE4All as "the greatest public-private partnership of all," with \$50bn in commitments and 50 countries having signed up to its initial assessment. SE4All's Action Agenda is clear: Government's role is "to spur investment [by creating] national policy and financial environments that enable change." In February 2012, SEFA co-chair Kandeh Yumkella told attendants at a private sector consultation that 'the initiative will focus on profit-making business opportunities, not charity.' Furthermore, as Biofuelwatch's Dr. Rachel Smoker pointed out,

*"Supplying energy to the billions who lack electricity and clean fuels is not just a moral imperative; it's also a strategic business opportunity with trillion-dollar potential."*

**Sustainable Energy For All co-chairs Charles Holliday, Chair of Bank of America and former CEO of DuPont, and Kandeh Yumkella, Director-General of the UN Industrial Development Organization**

While the term 'sustainable' is used, there is absolutely no indication what this means. Large-scale biofuels, natural gas projects, large hydroelectric dams, waste incinerators, even fossil fuels and nuclear energy all appear to be acceptable under this initiative and all are referred to as 'sustainable.'

During Rio+20's "Sustainable Energy for All Day," a Norwegian representative spoke about Norway's plans for Africa, including the "Oil for Development" program, which offers financing to develop Africa's abundant oil and gas reserves. One of SE4All's first national commitments was a natural gas pipeline through Ghana.

Likewise, the Climate Action Plan announced by President Barak Obama on June 25, 2013 used the umbrella of 'clean energy' to include virtually all energy options. Particularly emphasized were hydrofracked natural gas, new nuclear power plants, and oil produced from the Bakken shale oil fields of North Dakota. Also included were so-called clean coal and biofuels.

In November 2011, the US State Department launched the Energy Resources Bureau, which has been a leader in formulating the engagement strategy for SE4ALL, including the Ghana pipeline project. Like SE4All, the Bureau uses the concept of providing universal access to 'environmentally sustainable energy,' to further top-down neoliberal policies. This includes its "Connecting the Americas 2022" initiative. Modeled on international trade schemes, this initiative would create an interconnected power grid stretching from Canada to the southern tip of South America.

Even the non-fossil energies being promoted by the US and the UN are leading to rampant environmental destruction and human rights abuses. Land grabs, deforestation, forced displacement, toxic GMOs, slave labor, assassinations, loss of access to fresh water and food—these are just a few of the impacts of these supposedly alternative energies.

An example of one of the more destructive 'sustainable' energies is large-scale hydroelectricity, which was singled out for praise at Rio+20's SE4All Day. Prior to the Rio+20 summit, Brazil, which hosted the summit and wrote the manual on "sustainable hydropower" for SE4All, had begun constructing the Belo Monte dam in the middle of the Amazon jungle. This dam on the Xingu River would be the third largest in the world. If completed, it will flood vast expanses of forest, excavate more land than the Panama Canal, and displace 25,000 Indigenous People. Far from providing electricity to the poor, however, its energy will power a bauxite mine and aluminum smelter.

Fossil fuels and so-called "sustainable" energies are both being promoted and financed by the same companies and institutions, with grave consequences for communities, ecosystems, and the climate. Without a fundamental shift in how we live on this planet, including a transformed economy and a massive reduction in consumption, truly "sustainable" sources of energy are not possible.



(1993) Hydro-Quebec's La Grande project dam flooded thousands of hectares on Cree land, displacing all Cree in that area. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org

*"We will not be able to stop climate change if we don't change the neoliberal and corporate-based economy which stops us from achieving sustainable societies. Corporate globalization must be stopped."*

**Climate Justice Now! Poznan Statement (2008)**

*"Efforts to control corporations' destructive impacts must have a critique of corporate power at their heart and a will to dismantle corporate power as their goal, otherwise they reinforce rather than challenge power structures, and undermine popular struggles for autonomy, democracy, human rights and environmental sustainability."*

**Corporate Watch**

## FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT: REPLACING ONE DISASTER WITH ANOTHER

Bill McKibben argues that fossil fuel divestment will allow colleges to “do the right thing without great cost.” This is where the lack of a broader analysis gets problematic. As Keith Brunner of Global Justice Ecology Project and Rising Tide Vermont pointed out

Divestment sounds great, except when you look at the trends over the past few years of big institutional investors—like pension funds and university endowments—moving their money into, amongst other things, ‘emerging market’ natural resources and infrastructure funds, which are facilitating land and resource grabbing in the South. It’s what the ‘progressive’ climate-aware fund managers are advocating, and it’s a problem.

Christian Parenti further pointed out that the fossil fuel divestment campaign is grounded in a deeply flawed understanding of the root causes of the problem: “[The] assumption that we can hit the fossil fuel giants’ ‘bottom line’ by going after their stock prices is deeply flawed. It unconsciously plays into a very neoliberal, or right-wing, set of nostrums that markets can fix things.” He continues, explaining that dumping Exxon stock might actually “improve the company’s price to earning ratio thus making the stock more attractive to immoral buyers. Or it could allow the firm to more easily buy back stock (which it has been doing at a massive scale for the last 5 years) and thus retain more of its earnings for use to develop more oil fields.” On April 3, 2013, BP announced that, far from moving away from fossil fuels, it “decided to market for sale our US wind energy business as part of a continuing effort to become a more focused oil and gas company.”

Moreover, such divestment campaigns do not honestly take into account the dynamics of global markets as they exist currently. In its 2012 “World Energy



Log truck carries ancient tree in Acre, Brazil. Acre is one of the three states involved in the California-Chiapas, Mexico-Acre, Brazil forest carbon offset scheme. Photo: Conant/GJEP

Outlook,” the International Energy Agency said, “No country is an energy ‘island’ and the interactions between different fuels, markets and prices are intensifying...[One] current example is how low-priced natural gas is reducing coal use in the United States, freeing up coal for export to Europe (where, in turn, it has displaced higher-priced gas).”

In an interview for his book, *Green Illusions: The Dirty Secrets of Clean Energy and the Future of Environmentalism*, Ozzie

Zehner argues that the perceived sharp distinction between fossil fuels and clean energy technologies such as solar cells and wind turbines is an illusion:

Alternative energy technologies rely on fossil fuels through every stage of their life... for mining operations, fabrication plants, installation, ongoing maintenance and decommissioning. Also, due to the irregular output of wind and solar, these technologies require fossil fuel plants to be running alongside them at all times. Most significantly, alternative energy financing relies on the kind of growth that fossil fuels drive.

*“We cannot allow false solutions to destroy the Earth’s balance, assassinate the seasons, unleash severe weather havoc, privatize life and threaten the very survival of humanity...As inheritors of earth, youth play a vital role in continuing to defend what is left of their natural resources that were valiantly fought for by their ancestors.”*

**Declaration of the Kari-Oka II gathering of Indigenous Peoples outside of the UN Rio+20 Earth Summit in June 2012**

## GREEN ECONOMY + TECHNO-FIX FALSE SOLUTIONS = BUSINESS AS USUAL

In the rush to protect corporate profits from the impacts of climate change, a series of techno-fixes are being pushed forward without regard to their potentially devastating impacts. The most extreme of these is geoengineering. According to the ETC Group, "Geoengineering is the intentional, large-scale technological manipulation of the Earth's systems, often discussed as a techno-fix for combating climate change." It is a scheme backed by some of the world's richest men, including Bill Gates. According to Naomi Klein, "The appeal of geoengineering is that it doesn't threaten our worldview. It leaves us in a dominant position. It says that there is an escape hatch."



Aerial photograph of African palm oil plantation taken near the Lacandon jungle in Chiapas, Mexico. The Mexican government says that African oil palm plantations are going to be used for agrofuels (biodiesel). Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC &

Unfortunately, the technologies being considered for this "escape hatch" could have devastating impacts on entire continents, like Africa. One proposal, the spraying of millions of tons of reflective particles of sulphur dioxide thirty miles above earth, for example, could alter rainfall patterns and reduce the ability of crops to grow, increasing food and water crises, leading some activists to declare it genocidal.

Another set of novel technologies are being employed by the new "bioeconomy": Fossil fuels are being replaced with biomass derived from forests, cropland, grasslands and oceans for the manufacture of everything from gasoline to a vast array of commercial products, including plastics and chemicals. These transformations require a range of dangerous technologies including genetic engineering, nanotechnology, and synthetic biology. But the impacts of the bioeconomy go beyond these unproven technologies. In the rush to secure the land to grow this biomass, ecological destruction and violent 'green land grabbing' are worsening.

According to the International Land Coalition, biofuels were responsible for around 59% of all land grabs between 2000 and 2010. Additionally, the International Energy Agency warns that although biofuels are expected to contribute a mere five percent of the world's transportation fuels by 2035, they will increase their use of increasingly scarce fresh water from 38 to 70 billion cubic meters of water annually.

In the US, biomass and biofuels together account for 44% of all "renewable" energy. In the EU, they account for 55%. The result is a massively increasing demand for wood, vegetable oil, grains and crucially, for land.

In the case of biomass, increased European demand for wood to produce electricity is unleashing what Dogwood Alliance describes as a "green energy bomb" on forests in the southeastern US. Additional biomass production facilities, shipping corridors, and port expansion projects are planned in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

British government incentives for renewable energies are resulting in coal plants converting to biomass. The plans of the UK's largest coal-fired power plant—Drax—to convert three of its six generators to biomass will result in the burning of an area of forest four times the size of the US state of Rhode Island every year. Since these burners cannot use fast-growing young trees as biomass, the source of the 20 million green tons of wood they will need every year will be mature native forests from the Southeastern US and British Columbia, Canada.

New biomass facilities, however, are being redesigned to accept plantation wood. If industry gets its way, in the future this biomass will include dangerous and unproven fast growing genetically engineered (GE) eucalyptus and poplar

*"In April 2014 the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change issued a report on climate change mitigation that promotes large-scale bioenergy and biofuels, waste incineration, nuclear power, and carbon capture and storage (CCS) all as "low-carbon" solutions. They acknowledge concerns, for example pointing out that large-scale bioenergy can increase emissions, destroy livelihoods, and damage the environment. Nonetheless, they go on to state that "removing CO2" from the atmosphere will be essential, and that bioenergy with CCS is the most feasible approach. Bioenergy with CCS does not remove CO2 and would clearly make things worse rather than better."*

**Dr. Rachel Smolker, Biofuelwatch**

trees. Rubicon, one of the joint owners of GE tree company ArborGen, projects that if approved by the US government, ArborGen will sell half a billion genetically engineered freeze tolerant eucalyptus trees annually for bioenergy plantations across seven US states.

Even beyond the ecological impacts of logging forests and converting native ecosystems to plantations for electricity production are the impacts to the climate. Several studies have concluded that burning wood for electricity releases significantly more CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere than burning coal, belying the notion that biomass is part of the climate solution.

But even wind and solar are not without problems. Industrial-scale wind farms have numerous social and ecological impacts and are being opposed in many regions. In Oaxaca, the Indigenous community San Dionisio del Mar is fighting the construction of an industrial wind farm being developed by a consortium of Dutch, Japanese, and Australian funders. The wind farm threatens to impede the community's ability to cultivate their lands, and they have experienced violent repression and death threats due to their activism. The wind farm is intended to power a Heineken factory.

Ozzie Zehner further points out that the solar cell industry "is one of the fastest growing emitters of virulent greenhouse gases such as sulfur hexafluoride, which has a global warming potential 23,000 times higher than CO<sub>2</sub>, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change."

And the final nail in the coffin of using industrial-scale "renewable energy" to mitigate climate change is the fact that increasing renewable energy supplies actually encourages greater total energy consumption. As Richard York explained in the journal *Nature*: "The common assumption that the expansion of production of alternative energy will suppress fossil-fuel energy production in equal proportion is wrong...each unit of electricity generated by non-fossil-fuel sources displaced less than one-tenth of a unit of fossil-fuel-generated electricity."

## HONDURAS: FROM BANANA REPUBLIC TO BIOFUEL REPUBLIC

**I**n 2009, Honduras was rocked by a military coup that deposed democratically elected president Manuel Zelaya, whose administration had been ushering in progressive land and social reforms. The wave of shocks that followed were used to take over peasant lands for biofuel production—specifically the development of oil palm plantations for biodiesel.

Strongly supporting the military coup were the country's wealthy land and business owners, including biofuels magnate Miguel Facussé, described by the US Embassy as the "wealthiest, most powerful businessman in the country." Facussé controls thousands of acres of oil palm plantations in Honduras's lower Aguán valley, and he has been implicated in the murders of dozens of campesino farmers who are fighting the expansion of his green deserts of oil palm.

Shortly after the coup, then-US ambassador to Honduras Hugo Llorens, and US Representative Dana Rohrabacher hosted a meeting between the California-based firm SG Biofuels, and prominent Honduran policy-makers and businessmen to discuss investment opportunities. US Ambassador, Lisa Kubiske, who previously worked on US-Brazil biofuels cooperation, presided over the September 2012 signing of the Brazil-Honduras-USA Trilateral Partnership, a core pillar of which is the expansion of the biofuel sector in Honduras.

Facussé's oil palm operations were certified in 2011 for use as carbon credits under the UN FCCC's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), despite a major outcry against the egregious human rights abuses and ecological impacts connected to the plantations. The CDM Board concluded that human rights concerns are "outside of the parameters of its mandate," and that it is the responsibility of the government of Honduras to address these concerns—blatantly ignoring the involvement of the Honduran government's police and military in the assassination and repression of campesino leaders.

*"The common assumption that the expansion of production of alternative energy will suppress fossil-fuel energy production in equal proportion is wrong...each unit of electricity generated by non-fossil-fuel sources displaced less than one-tenth of a unit of fossil-fuel-generated electricity."*

**Richard York, *Nature***

*"With the militarization [of the Aguán Valley] they are trying to convert our zone into Iraq. Our settlements are being submitted to a permanent state of siege."*

**Committee of Families of the Detained and Disappeared of Honduras**

## INDONESIA: BIODIESEL, REDD, FOREST DESTRUCTION AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Indonesia ranks among the top greenhouse gas emitting countries, largely due to the burning of forest and peatlands for conversion to oil palm plantations. The country is the largest exporter of palm oil in the world, with exports projected to rise as demand increases for biodiesel. Combined with a ruthless, business-friendly regime, Indonesia is the perfect testing ground for Green Shock Doctrine reforms and projects.



A protester raises his fist during the International Day of Action, 8 December 2007 march in the streets in Denpasar, close to the UN Climate Conference in Nusa Dua, Bali. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org

To supposedly address this rampant deforestation,

in May 2010 Indonesia penned an agreement with Norway to develop and implement a national REDD strategy, with Norway pledging up to \$1bn. At the time, Chris Lang of the Jakarta-based REDD-Monitor stated that the deal would “do little or nothing to address the pressures faced by Indonesia’s forests, indigenous people, and local communities.”

When the first phase of the REDD strategy was unveiled—a two year “moratorium” on the granting of new permits for logging and the conversion of peatlands—it was a huge victory for the palm oil giants, due to major loopholes which let existing permits be extended, exempted land slated for energy extraction, and excluded disturbed or secondary forests. Upon its announcement, Agus Purnomo, Indonesia’s climate change advisor noted that: “We are not banning firms for palm oil expansion. We are just advising them to do so on secondary forests.”

In a presentation to Wall Street investors in September 2012, Indonesia’s President Yudhoyono revealed his true vision for Indonesia: “You can find almost everything in Indonesia: oil and gas, coal, geothermal energy, tin, copper, nickel, aluminum, bauxite, iron, cacao, coffee. When it comes to oil, we have oil underground, under the sea and even above the ground: palm oil.” A few hours later he received the first ever “Valuing Nature Award” from the World Resources Institute, Nature Conservancy, and World Wide Fund for Nature, for his “leadership in recognizing the importance of natural resources and working to conserve them.”

In 2011, Indonesia’s national land authority reported over 3,500 palm oil related land disputes across the country. In December 2012, Survival International declared that “Indonesia treats its indigenous and tribal people...worse than any other country in the world.”

## PLAN NORD & CANADA’S WAR ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

While Canada is well known for its tar sands gigaproject in Alberta which has devastated Indigenous lands in the region, another massive project is sliding under the radar: Quebec’s Plan Nord is an \$80 billion industrial infrastructure project that will “fast-track [the extraction of] iron ore, gold, uranium, diamonds and other natural resources from the territory of Québec, north of the 49th parallel.”

It is part of an emerging global trend to exploit the warming climate by moving industrial development and resource extraction further and further north.

At Rio+20, however, former Quebec premier Jean Charest sold Plan Nord as the “global model” for sustainable development, since it grants twenty percent of the territory protected status (leaving 80% open for development), and invests \$47 billion in 3,000 megawatts of new hydroelectricity. Far from sustainable, however,

*“There is \$10bn coming in from palm oil, \$4bn from pulp and paper, and the people who work in these concessions are many, so we cannot just stop it all or the IMF will collapse us as an economy...[Who] is going to help us just for the sake of climate change? Nobody. We were told to democratise and this is the price of democracy. Climate change is the price of democracy. Indonesia is trying to be a good boy, but we can’t paint the sky for you.”*

**Hadi Daryanto, secretary-general of the Ministry of Forestry, Indonesia**

*“We have every resource imaginable up north.”*

**Former Quebec premier Jean Charest**

*“In the future, there will be no more trees, no more animals, no more fish. Everything will be polluted. What will be left for our children? What kind of a life will they have?”*

**Elyse Vollant, an Innu activist and grandmother**



these new hydroelectric dams will destroy some of the largest and most pristine rivers on the planet, flooding vast expanses of Indigenous land and releasing immense quantities of methane, a greenhouse gas twenty times more potent than CO<sup>2</sup>.

While Charest sold Plan Nord to international investors, a group of Innu people blockaded roads to stop construction of the mega-dams and transmission lines that were moving ahead without their consent. Plan Nord, no matter how it is branded, is a sure death sentence for Quebec's last intact wild rivers and boreal forests, and the cultures that depend on them. For the original Innu inhabitants, Plan Nord represents the final chapter of a long history of oppression.



*The Rupert River, one of the rivers that was scheduled to be dammed as part of the James Bay Project. (1993). Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org*

*“Water is life. Without water there is no life. If people think they can control the elements, they’re in for a big surprise. As native people we have to be the arms, the legs and the mouths for the earth and try to tell people how wrong this is.”*

**Larry House, Cree activist, Chisasibi, Quebec, Canada 1993**

## **BUILDING THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT**

**A**s we pointed out in the beginning of *The Green Shock Doctrine*, turning land, life, and livelihoods into market commodities for the benefit of global elites is antithetical to *buen vivir*: life in harmony between humans, communities, and the natural environment, devoid of commodification. With *buen vivir*, work is not a job to make others wealthier, but a livelihood that is sustaining and fulfilling.

Achieving *buen vivir* requires an understanding that climate change is at once a social and environmental justice issue, an ecological issue, and an issue of economic and political domination that must be addressed through broad and visionary alliances.

*Buen vivir* and the many solutions to global warming will come, not from the top down, but from communities working together to identify truly sustainable solutions that are both decentralized and recognize the importance of local control and bioregional distinctions.

Movements will succeed when they make business as usual impossible. As climate chaos escalates, so must our resistance. Any real change is going to have to come from a powerful, diverse, and radicalized grassroots movement that takes important lessons from the successes and failures of previous movements, and which has a clear analysis of the root causes and key actors driving the problem.

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## **RESISTANCE TO THE UN FCCC**

**F**rom 2004 through 2012 Global Justice Ecology Project participated in various UN forums with special attention paid to the UN FCCC. It is doubtful if we ever will participate in them again. Too many decisions are made elsewhere and the entire process has proven to be a distraction from the real steps that are needed to address the climate crisis.

Over those years, GJEP helped build the climate justice movement internationally and in the US. We believe it is important to mention some of the radical activity that took place during the UN climate conferences and which helped to build the global climate justice movement.

The UN FCCC in Copenhagen, Denmark in 2009 was a watershed moment for the climate justice movement. As the climate talks entered their final days, thousands

demonstrated in the streets of Copenhagen as part of the “Reclaim Power” protest for climate justice called by Climate Justice Action. About 300 COP 15 delegates who were part of the Climate Justice Now! alliance marched out of the Bella Centre and attempted to meet climate justice activists marching toward the center for a Peoples’ Assembly at the Bella Centre fence. These delegates were met with police truncheons; some were badly bruised.

Following the march, hundreds of UN FCCC accredited Civil Society observers were denied re-entry to the Bella Centre, including the entire Friends of the Earth International delegation, which staged a sit-in in the lobby.

Planning for this confrontation with the UN took many meetings in places like Poznan, Poland, Belem, Brazil, Copenhagen itself and cafes and other sites internationally for more than a year. Alliances were formed. Indigenous Peoples, social movements, anarchists, progressive NGOs and some not so progressive worked together (sometimes uneasily) to show the world that the UN FCCC was a sham that catered to the power elite.

But, after Copenhagen, many NGOs, afraid of being permanently shut out of the UN process, opted for a less confrontational direction that complied with the rules and regulations of the UN FCCC. Others abandoned the UN process, deeming it illegitimate and corrupt. But protests on the inside continued.

The international peasant’s movement La Via Campesina joined with Indigenous Peoples for huge protests in the streets outside of the official UN FCCC conference in Cancun, Mexico in 2010.

During this day of action, named “Day of 1,000 Cancuns,” GJEP turned over our official press conference space to Indigenous Peoples, social movements (including the MST and La Via Campesina), and youth. At the end of the press conference, the youth contingent marched out of the venue, yelling and chanting. They were met by then Bolivian ambassador to the UN, Pablo Solon who gave an impromptu press conference in support of climate justice on the front stairs of the building.

At the Cancun press conference, Solon said, “What is most important is the struggle of the people and their demands for real solutions to climate change. Every year, 300,000 people die because of natural disasters caused by climate change. This will grow to millions if we do not have, here, a real agreement, instead of a Cancun-hagen.”

After the press conference many of the youth continued their march, and were



*Clayton Thomas-Muller from the Indigenous Environmental Network chants and drums while Indigenous Peoples lead the march out of the Bella Centre as part of the Reclaim Power action. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org*



*An accredited UN Climate Conference Observer is attacked by Danish police on a bridge outside of the Bella Centre during the Reclaim Power action after he and hundreds of others marched out. Photo: Petermann/GJEP*

*Solutions to the climate crisis will not come from industrialised countries and big business. Effective and enduring solutions will come from those who have protected the environment—Indigenous Peoples, peasant communities, fisherfolk, and especially women in these communities, have been living harmoniously and sustainably with the Earth for millennia.*

**Climate Justice Now! Copenhagen Statement (2009)**

then taken by security, stripped of their accreditation, and bused off the grounds. Another group of people occupied the lobby of the official conference in protest of the silencing of civil society at the conference and were thrown out. By the end, the only country that held its ground for a just and effective outcome was Bolivia, who stood alone in opposing the unjust Cancun climate agreement. Their protests were ignored.

Then Bolivian ambassador to the UN, Pablo Solon, stated that the Cancun accord

replaces binding mechanisms for reducing greenhouse gas emissions with voluntary pledges that are wholly insufficient. These pledges contradict the stated goal of capping the rise in temperature at 2C, instead guiding us to 4C or more. The text is full of loopholes for polluters, opportunities for expanding carbon markets and similar mechanisms – like the forestry scheme REDD that reduce the obligation of developed countries to act.

The following year at the UN FCCC in Durban, South Africa it felt as though the radical flickering spark was extinguished as the conference ended, but not before Anne Petermann and Keith Brunner from GJEP were carried out of the conference after sitting down and refusing to leave during a youth-led hours-long occupation inspired by Occupy Wall Street.

Will that spark reignite? Probably not at the UN, but there are flames of radical resistance all over the globe from social movements, Indigenous Peoples and many groups demanding, not politely asking, for real change. People are organizing and more people are getting involved in the movement for real climate justice and are working toward real solutions to avert climate catastrophe.

## IDENTIFYING THE REAL SOLUTIONS

Rather than define anew a list of solutions to the climate crisis, this section will put forward statements developed by social movements from around the world on the topic of real solutions. These statements were developed by hundreds of organizations, activists, and social movements from all over the world who discussed these issues at great length in a variety of venues.

## EXCERPTS FROM THE COCHABAMBA PEOPLES' AGREEMENT

The statement developed by organizations from all parts of the world in Cochabamba, Bolivia at the World Peoples' Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth in April 2010 clearly defined the problems facing the global community in addressing climate change and put forward solutions.

The corporations and governments of the so-called 'developed' countries, in complicity with a segment of the scientific community, have led us to discuss climate change as a problem limited to the rise in temperature without questioning the cause, which is the capitalist system.

*The capitalist ...regime of production and consumption seeks profit without limits, separating human beings from nature and imposing a logic of domination upon nature, transforming everything into commodities: water, earth, the human genome, ancestral cultures, biodiversity, justice, ethics, the*



Youth delegates march out of UN FCCC in Cancun, Mexico. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org



After the youth walkout, Bolivia's UN Ambassador, Pablo Solon (who was to speak at the press conference but was delayed) addressed the crowd and media. Photo: Langelle/GJEP-GFC & PhotoLangelle.org



GJEP's Anne Petermann (right, sitting) and Keith Brunner (left) were physically removed and ejected from the UN climate conference following a youth occupation of the hallway outside of the negotiations in Durban, South Africa. Photo: Powless

*rights of peoples, and life itself. It is an imperialist system of colonization of the planet.*

Humanity confronts a great dilemma: to continue on the path of capitalism, depredation, and death, or to choose the path of harmony with nature and respect for life.

We propose to the peoples of the world the recovery, revalorization, and strengthening of the knowledge, wisdom, and ancestral practices of Indigenous Peoples, which are affirmed in the thought and practices of

*buen vivir* "Living Well," recognizing Mother Earth as a living being with which we have an indivisible, interdependent, complementary and spiritual relationship. To face climate change, we must recognize Mother Earth as the source of life and forge a new system based on the principles of:



*Bolivian President Evo Morales addresses climate justice activists and others during a meeting in New York City prior to the Cancun Climate talks. Photo: Petermann/GJEP*

- harmony and balance among all and with all things;
- complementarity, solidarity, and equality;
- collective well-being and the satisfaction of the basic necessities of all;
- people in harmony with nature;
- recognition of human beings for what they are, not what they own;
- elimination of all forms of colonialism, imperialism and interventionism;
- peace among the peoples and with Mother Earth.

*In order to coordinate our international action and implement the results of this 'Accord of the Peoples,' we call for the building of a Global People's Movement for Mother Earth, which should be based on the principles of complementarity and respect for the diversity of origin and visions among its members, constituting a broad and democratic space for coordination and joint worldwide actions.*

Additional solutions advanced in Cochabamba and through other international strategy meetings include:

- Implementing people's food and energy sovereignty;
- Full recognition of Indigenous Peoples, peasant and local community rights including rights based resource conservation that enforces indigenous land rights and promotes peoples sovereignty and public ownership over energy, forests, seeds, land and water;
- Ending deforestation and its underlying causes;
- Ending excessive consumption by elites in the North and in the South;
- Stopping extractive industries from further destroying nature and contaminating our atmosphere and our land.

*The capitalist ...regime of production and consumption seeks profit without limits, separating human beings from nature and imposing a logic of domination upon nature, transforming everything into commodities: water, earth, the human genome, ancestral cultures, biodiversity, justice, ethics, the rights of peoples, and life itself. It is an imperialist system of colonization of the planet.*

### **Cochabamba Peoples' Agreement**

*Real solutions, as opposed to false, market-based solutions, will not be adopted until we overcome the existing unjust political and economic system. [We must] change the neo-liberal and corporate-based economy which stops us from achieving sustainable societies. Corporate globalisation must be stopped. We will take our struggle forward not just in climate talks, but on the ground and in the streets, to promote genuine solutions."*

### **Climate Justice Now! Copenhagen Statement (2009)**

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*“Ultimately, in the search for real solutions to the myriad crises we face, our movements may need to re-learn some of the lessons from the Indigenous Peoples of the world who have retained their traditional ways of living in balance with and as part of the Earth.”*

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## THE GREEN SHOCK DOCTRINE

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## MISSION

Global Justice Ecology Project (GJEP) explores and exposes the intertwined root causes of social injustice, ecological destruction, and economic domination.



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