

Ecosocialism

What is Ecosocialism?



To avoid ecological disaster, we need a fundamental change in the ways we live and in our relationship with the rest of nature, of which we are a part. Those of us alive and active today are probably the last generations with a chance to limit such a catastrophic collapse of our planet's ecological systems. If we don't, billions will die or be displaced. The possibilities of humane civilisation, much less socialism, will disappear.

That is why we need mass pressure now to demand, and win, significant, immediate steps to curb greenhouse gas emissions, protect biodiversity, stop deforestation and stave off environmental disaster.

However, we know that the capitalist mode of production, and the governments that defend it, are incapable of coming up with a genuine, lasting solution to these threats, for a very simple reason. Capitalism, by its very nature, requires endless growth. This is incompatible with planetary ecosystems that have finite resources.

That is why we are ecosocialists. This demands both a shift in our practical priorities, and a reworking of some aspects of our theoretical tradition. We have always supported an open, critical marxism. This now needs to abandon any remaining aspects of the productivist views that many marxists held in the 20th century – for example, the idea that a transition to socialism hinges on further expansion of the forces of production. Instead, we need to evaluate critically and

incorporate where appropriate a whole range of lessons from ecofeminism and feminist economics, social reproduction theory, queer and decolonial theory, agroecology and the practices of the most radical peasant and Indigenous movements of the Global South.

Ecosocialist theory and practice has a solid basis in the best of revolutionary marxism. But it remains a work in progress.

Here is some suggested further reading.

“What is Ecosocialism?” A short pamphlet by Jess Spear and John Molyneux, jointly published in Ireland by the new Irish Ecosocialist organisation RISE and the People Before Profit Alliance of which RISE is a part. Ordered from Ireland and costs 3.50 Euros. Link to buy: <https://www.letusrise.ie/what-is-eco-socialism-pamphlet>

“Facing the Apocalypse – Arguments for Ecosocialism” by longstanding Fourth International and trade union activist Alan Thornett. Sets out the ecological crisis in detail and puts forward arguments for the ecosocialist programme including controversies around carbon taxes and population growth. Published by Resistance Books and now available for £15. Link to buy: resistancebooks.org/products/facing-the-apocalypse-arguments-for-ecosocialism

“Ecosocialism – A Radical Alternative to Capitalist Catastrophe” by Brazilian/French Fourth International activist Michael Löwy. In a series of essays, Löwy offers a vision of ecosocialist transformation. Published in USA by Haymarket Books and priced at 11.20 dollars with a free e-book version. Link to buy: Ecosocialism – A Radical Alternative to Capitalist Catastrophe

The ***Global Ecosocialist Network*** is composed of a range of organisations describing themselves as ecosocialist and regularly publishes material on Ecosocialism. Link: <http://www.globalecosocialistnetwork.net/>