COP 30: Entrenching the crisis of climate politics

As the dust settles after COP30 in Belém, the scale of the failure becomes impossible to ignore. The world is on a path toward catastrophic warming, ecological systems are collapsing, and millions across the Global South face annihilation, not in the distant future, but today. The world's political and economic elites arrived in the Amazon to negotiate when the 1.5°C target had already slipped out of reach, and they left with little more than symbolic gestures. No binding emissions cuts. No serious plan to phase out fossil fuels. No meaningful climate finance for adaptation. No accountability for the destruction already unleashed.

The gap between official international climate policy and the lived reality of a warming world has never been wider. In Belém, that gap became a chasm.

The world is heading towards roughly 2.8°C of warming by the end of the century. This is not a scenario compatible with human dignity – or even, for many, with life itself. Rising seas, extreme heat, drought, and flooding are eroding food security, displacing communities, and driving inequality to historic heights. The economic costs of climate disasters are skyrocketing, but the social and human costs are immeasurable: lives lost, livelihoods shattered, ecosystems irreversibly damaged.

These worsening crises play out in a world shaped by neoliberal austerity and debt dependency. Countries battling climate shocks are forced to cut social spending, privatise public goods, and surrender sovereignty to creditors. Governments continue pouring billions into militaries, fossil fuel subsidies, and the enrichment of corporate elites. The current political economy accelerates both warming and war.

The growing irrelevance of the COP

COP30 offered no mechanisms for enforcement, no firm deadlines, and no clear pathways to keep warming below 1.5°C. Nor did it include a fossil-fuel phase-out; oil-producing nations blocked binding language, and the final deal focused on voluntary road maps instead. What it did offer was an expanded space for corporate actors, carbon traders, and mining interests seeking to greenwash extractivist projects.

What is staring society in the face – and what too few scientists are willing to acknowledge – is that the climate-crisis regime cannot be separated from the logic of capitalism. So-called "green transitions" simply open new arenas for profit while remaining embedded in the same global system of accumulation. Renewable energy may be expanding, but it does not replace fossil fuels; it merely adds to an energy expansion rather than driving a real transition.

Climate summits have become a "safety valve" for capital. They offer the illusion of action, while allowing the core exploitative relations to continue. For workers and communities already suffering climate breakdown, it is indisputable that the COP has failed them.

The Just Transition heist

COP 30 adopted the Belem Action Mechanism for a Global Just Transition (BAM) – a proposed new institutional arrangement under the UNFCCC designed to address the current fragmentation and inadequacy of global just transition efforts. Trade unionists and workers should have no illusions about this mechanism. It has no finances or concrete plans to protect workers and communities affected by energy and other decarbonising initiatives. There are no resources for a re-industrialisation in harmony with the protection of nature. So workers and other vulnerable sectors will simply be left behind. Words and policies in COP statements are a dime a

dozen. Reality is harsher.

Why mass movements matter – and why institutions don't

If COP30 cannot deliver the mechanisms for decarbonisation or social protection, then the hope must lie in movements of people: workers, peasants, indigenous people, women, youth, and the urban poor. Outside of a global mass movement rooted in national realities, the necessary steps to confront the climate crisis will not occur. Yet such a movement cannot be built if it fails to address the immediate needs of the working classes and the poor. The fight for climate protection and ecological justice must therefore begin with the fight for life itself – for clean water, decent housing, jobs, food, and security against the elements.

Right-wing climate denialists exploit the desperation of the poor to drive a wedge between ordinary people and climate action. They present environmentalism as a threat to livelihoods rather than the path to survival. To win the majority, our movement must link ecological transformation with social justice. We must demand the redistribution of wealth and power away from the billionaire class, big tech, and ruling elites who plunder the planet for profit.

By Brian Ashley, First Published in Amandla!, 25 November 2025

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Manifesto for an Ecosocialist Revolution – Break with Capitalist Growth

Introduction

This Manifesto is a document of the Fourth International, founded in 1938 by Leon Trotsky and his comrades to save the legacy of the October Revolution from Stalinist disaster. Rejecting sterile dogmatism, the Fourth International has integrated the challenges of social movements and the ecological crisis into its thinking and practice. Its forces are limited, but they are present on every continent and have actively contributed to the resistance to Nazism, May 68 in France, solidarity with anti-colonial struggles (Algeria, Vietnam), the growth of the anti-globalization movement and the development of ecosocialism.

The Fourth International does not see itself as the sole vanguard; it participates, to the extent of its strength, in broad anti-capitalist formations. Its objective is to contribute to the formation of a new International, of a mass character, of which it would be one of the components.

Our era is one of a double historic crisis: the crisis of the socialist alternative in the face of the multifaceted crisis of capitalist "civilization".

The Fourth International is publishing this Manifesto now because we are convinced that the process of ecosocialist revolution, at different territorial levels but with a planetary dimension, is more necessary than ever: it is a question of not only of putting an end to the social and democratic regressions that accompany global capitalist expansion, but also saving humanity from an ecological

catastrophe without precedent in human history. These two objectives are inextricably linked.

However, the socialist project which forms the basis of our proposals requires a broad refoundation fed by a pluralistic assessment of experiences and by the major movements fighting all forms of domination and oppression (class, gender, oppressed national communities, etc.). The socialism we propose is radically different from the models that dominated the last century or from any statist or dictatorial regime: it is a revolutionary project, radically democratic, to which feminist, ecological, anti-racist, anti-colonialist, antimilitarist and LGBTQI+ struggles contribute.

We have used the term ecosocialism for some decades now because we are convinced that the global threats and challenges posed by the ecological crisis must permeate all struggles within/against the existing globalized order. The relationship with our planet, overcoming the "metabolic rift" (Marx) between human societies and their living environment, and the respect for the planet's ecological equilibrium are not just chapters in our programme and strategy, but its common thread.

The need to update the analyses of revolutionary Marxism has always inspired the action and thought of the Fourth International. We are continuing this approach in writing this Ecosocialist Manifesto: we want to help formulate a revolutionary perspective capable of confronting the challenges of the 21st century. A perspective that draws inspiration from social and ecological struggles, and from the genuinely anti-capitalist critical reflections that are developing around the world.

The objective necessity of an ecosocialist, antiracist, antimilitarist, anti-imperialist,

anticolonialist and feminist revolution

All over the world, far-right, authoritarian and semi-fascist forces are gaining power and influence. The lack of an alternative to the crisis of late capitalism is breeding despair which feeds misogyny, racism, queerphobia, climate change denial and reactionary ideas in general. Frightened because the ecological crisis objectively threatens accumulation for profit, billionaires are turning to a new far right that offers its services to save the system through lies and social demagogy. Authoritarian policies and oligarchs form a powerful alliance to safeguard the power of capital. They target environmental protection but also social programmes, and wage a war against workers and the poor, all the while claiming to represent them against the liberal establishment.

Capital triumphs, but its triumph plunges it into the insurmountable contradictions highlighted by Marx. Faced with these, Rosa Luxembourg issued her warning in 1915: “Socialism or barbarism”. One hundred and ten years later, sounding the alarm is more urgent than ever, as the catastrophe growing around us is unprecedented. To the plagues of war, colonialism, exploitation, racism, authoritarianism, oppressions of all kinds, is added a new scourge, which exacerbates all the others: the accelerated destruction by capital of the natural environment on which the survival of humankind depends.

Scientists identify nine global indicators of ecological sustainability. They estimate that danger limits have been reached for seven of them. Due to the capitalist logic of accumulation, at least six have already been crossed (climate, functional integrity of ecosystems, the nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, ground- and freshwater, land use change, pollution by new chemical entities). The poor are the main victims of this destruction, especially in poor countries.

Under the whiplash of competition, big industry and finance

strengthen their despotic hold on people and the Earth. The destruction continues, despite the warning cries of science. The craving for profit, like an automaton, demands ever more markets and ever more goods, hence increased exploitation of the labour force and plundering of natural resources.

Legal capital, so-called criminal capital and bourgeois politics are closely intertwined. The Earth is bought on credit by the banks, the multinationals and the rich. Governments increasingly strangle human and democratic rights through brutal repression and technological control.

The same causes underlie social inequality and environmental degradation. It is an understatement to say that the limits of sustainability have also been crossed on the social level.

Capitalism entails scarcity for billions of people and infinite wealth for a tiny number. On the one hand, the shortage of jobs, wages, housing and public services fuels the reactionary idea that there aren't enough resources to satisfy everybody's needs. On the other, with their yachts, their jets, their swimming pools, their exclusive massive golf courses, their many SUVs, their space tourism, their jewellery, their *haute couture* and their luxurious homes in all four corners of the world, the richest 1% own as much as do 50% of the world's population. The "trickle-down theory" is a myth. Wealth "trickles" towards the rich, not the opposite. Poverty is increasing even in "developed" countries. Labour income is squeezed ruthlessly, and social protections – where they exist – are dismantled. The world capitalist economy floats on an ocean of debt, exploitation and inequalities.

Within the working classes, the most vulnerable populations and racialized groups are hardest hit. Ethnic and racial communities are deliberately placed in areas contaminated by often toxic and hazardous waste, in more polluted, as well as in high-risk areas, lacking urban planning (hillsides, for example). Victims of environmental racism, these populations

are also systematically excluded from the design and implementation of environmental policies.

Assigning women the duty of caring for others allows capital to benefit from cheap social reproduction and encourages the implementation of brutal austerity policies in public services. Generally speaking, inequality and discrimination particularly affect women, who continue to provide most domestic and care work, whether free or paid. They receive only 35% of labour income. In some regions of the world (China, Russia, Central Asia), their share is declining, sometimes significantly. Beyond work, women are under attack on all fronts as women, from sexist and sexual violence – femicides, rapes, sexual harassment, sex and labor trafficking – to the right to food, to education, to be respected and to control their own bodies.

LGBTQI+ people, particularly transgender people, are the target of a global reactionary offensive that exacerbates their precariousness and discrimination, compromises their access to healthcare, and consequently, public health.

People with disabilities are discarded by capital because they cannot work for profit, or their work requires adjustments that reduce profits. Some are victims of forced sterilization. The spectre of eugenics is resurfacing.

While old people of the working classes are also discarded, the lives of future generations are generally mutilated in advance. Most working class parents no longer believe that their children will live better than they do. A growing number of young people observe the organized destruction of their world with dread, rage, sadness and grief, as it is raped, gutted, drowned in concrete, engulfed in the cold waters of selfish calculation.

The scourges of famine, food insecurity and malnutrition had receded at the end of the 20th century; they are now

burgeoning again as a result of a catastrophic convergence of neoliberalism, militarism and climate change: almost one in ten people are hungry, almost one in three suffer from food insecurity, and more than 3 billion cannot afford a healthy diet. One hundred and fifty million children under the age of five are stunted by hunger. The vast majority of them have the sole fault of having been born on the periphery of capitalism.

Hope for a peaceful world is evaporating. More than 30 countries are or have recently been in wars of considerable dimensions, including Sudan, Iraq, Yemen, Palestine, Syria, Ukraine, Libya, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Myanmar. The climate crisis itself, weather phenomena, and the resulting intense migratory flows are fuelling many conflicts around the globe. The suffering, displacement and death of populations is tremendous.

While imperialisms squabble, urgent measures for climate transition and a sustainable future are called into question. Wars, besides being calamitous in terms of human lives, attacking women's bodies, using rape as an instrument of terror and dehumanizing collective life, are harmful to the planet we live on. They destroy habitats, cause deforestation, poison the soils, the waters and the air, and are major sources of carbon emissions.

The brutal Russian war against Ukraine and the new level of ethnic cleansing perpetrated in Gaza and against the Palestinian people in general are major crimes against humanity. Both cases confirm the barbarian nature of capitalism.The Russian imperialist aggression against Ukraine has fostered geopolitical tensions on a global scale. It confirms the entry of a new era of inter-imperialist competition for global hegemony. Land, energy and mineral resources are an important stake of this inter-imperialist competition.

Everyone could have a good life on Earth, but capitalism is an

exploitative, macho, racist, warlike, authoritarian and deadly mode of predation. In two centuries, it has led humanity into a deep ecosocial impasse. Productivism is destructivism. The overexploitation of natural resources, rampant extractivism, the pursuit of maximum short-term yields, deforestation and land-use change are leading to a collapse of biodiversity, that is, of life itself.

Climate change is the most dangerous aspect of ecological destruction, it is a threat to human life without precedent in history. The Earth is in danger of becoming a biological wasteland uninhabitable for billions of poor people who are not responsible for this disaster. To stop this catastrophe, we must halve global carbon dioxide and methane emissions before 2030, and reach zero net greenhouse gases emissions before 2050. So, a priority is to banish fossil fuels, agribusiness, the meat industry and hyper-mobility… that is to say, produce less globally.

In this context, is it possible to meet the legitimate needs of 3 billion people living in appalling conditions, mainly in the countries of the Global South[1]? Yes. The richest 1% emit nearly twice as much CO2 as the poorest 50%. The richest 10% are responsible for more than 50% of CO2 emissions. The poor emit far less than 2-2.3 tonnes of CO2 per person per year (the average volume that must be reached in 2030 to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 with a 50% probability). A dollar spent to meet the needs of the richest 1% emits 30 times more CO2 than a dollar invested to meet the social needs of the poorest 50% of the world's population.

The climate impact of production aimed at satisfying human needs – especially when democratically planned and assumed by the public sector in a context of social equality – is much lower than that of production aimed at satisfying the needs of the rich through GDP growth and blind market competition for profit. It would be largely offset by the radical reduction of the carbon footprint of the richest 1% – they must divide

their emissions by 30 in a few years in the North as in the South! – and sobriety for all. In fact, stopping the catastrophe needs a society that provides well-being and guarantees equality like never before. Yet the rich refuse to make even the slightest effort! On the contrary: they want ever more privileges!

Governments have pledged to stay below +1.5°C, to maintain biodiversity, to achieve so-called "sustainable development" and to respect the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities and capacities" in the ecological crisis, while producing ever more goods, using ever more energy. These combined promises will not be respected by capital. The facts show this: 33 three years after the Earth Summit in Rio (1992), the global energy mix is still completely dominated by fossil fuels (84% in 2020). The total production of fossil fuel has increased by 62%, from 83 000 Terawatt-hour (TWh) in 1992 to 136 000 TWh in 2021. Renewables add to the mainly fossil energy system, offering more capacities and new markets to capitalists.2

· With the energy crisis unleashed after the pandemic and deepened by the Russian imperialist war on Ukraine, all capitalist powers revived coal, oil, natural gas (including shale gas), and nuclear power.

· The promotion of artificial intelligence (AI) by Big Tech companies and capitalist governments poses a new threat. Data centres and crypto-mining already consume nearly 2% of the world's electricity. This consumption will increase dramatically with the expansion of AI, which requires enormous amounts of energy and water. People's lives will be affected in numerous ways. The capitalist use of AI threatens tens of millions of jobs, degrades and undermines artistic and cultural creation, reinforces systemic racism, and accelerates the spread of far-right lies. Moreover, AI and data centres accelerate the frenzy of restless capitalism, which monopolizes people's attention, thus corrupting their free

time and social connections.

· The main force historically responsible for climatic shift, US imperialism, has enormous means to fight against the catastrophe, but its political representatives criminally subordinate this fight to the protection of their world hegemony, when they do not simply deny the crisis.

· The measures big polluters implement under the label of “decarbonization” not only fail to address the magnitude of the climate crisis but also accelerate extractivism, mostly in the dominated countries, but also in the North and in the oceans, at the expense of both populations and ecosystems.

· This so-called “decarbonization” exacerbates imperialist land grabbing and exploitation of labour in the South, with the complicity of the local bourgeoisies (as illustrated by various projects using solar and wind energy in the territories of traditional communities, indigenous peoples, farmers and small-scale fishermen in the countries of the South as well as in “free zones”, in order to produce “green hydrogen” for industries in developed countries).

· “Carbon markets”, “carbon offset”, “biodiversity compensations” and “market mechanisms” based on the understanding of nature as capital weigh on the least responsible, the poor, in particular indigenous people, racialized people and the peoples of the South in general.

Valid in theory, abstract concepts such as “circular economy”, “resilience”, “energy transition”, and “biomimicry” become hollow formulas in practice as soon as they are used in the service of capitalist productivism. If there is no plan implemented by society as a whole for the conversion of production, then technical improvements (e.g. to make energy production cheaper) have a rebound effect[3]: a reduction in the price of energy generally leads to higher energy and material consumption.

The right blames global warming and the decline in biodiversity on “galloping” population growth. In this way, they seek to blame the oppressed for the crisis and their own misery, in order to impose population control measures on them. In reality, high population growth rates are a consequence rather than a cause of poverty. Income security, access to food, education, healthcare, and housing, gender equality, and women’s empowerment all contribute to the demographic transition because mortality rates, and then birth rates, decline.

The capitalist fetish for accumulation prevents recognition of this truth. In the face of the climate crisis, the fetish will ultimately leave only two options: deploy sorcerer’s-apprentice technologies (nuclear, carbon capture/sequestration, geoengineering) or sacrifice billions of poor people in poor countries, saying that “nature” has so decided.

Politically, the impotence and injustice of green capitalism play into the hands of a fossil, conspiratorial, colonialist, racist, violently macho and LGBT-phobic neo-fascism, which is not put off by this second possibility. A sector of the wealthy is marching towards a huge crime against humanity, cynically betting that their wealth will protect them, letting the poor die.

World capitalism is not progressing gradually towards peace and sustainable development, it is going backwards and with great strides towards war, ecological disaster, genocide and neo-fascist barbarism.

In the face of this challenge, it is not enough to question the neoliberal regime and to revalue the role of the state. It would not even be enough to stop the dynamic of accumulation (an impossible goal under capitalism!). Global final net energy consumption must decrease radically – which means producing less and transporting less globally – while

increasing energy consumption in poorer countries to meet social needs.

It is the only solution that makes it possible to reconcile the legitimate need of well-being for all, and the regeneration of the global ecosystem. Just sufficiency and just degrowth – ecosocialist degrowth – is a *sine qua non* condition of rescue.

Getting out of the productivist impasse is only possible under the following conditions:

• abandon "techno-solutionism", that is, the idea that the solution will come from new technologies (their impact on energy and resources is often underestimated, or not taken into account). In an ecologically wise way, decide to use the means we have – they suffice to meet the needs of all;

• drastically reduce the ecological footprint of the rich to permit a good life for all;

• put an end to the free market in capital (stock markets, private banks, pension funds);

• regulate markets for goods and services;

• maximize direct relationships between producers and consumers at all levels of society, and the processes of evaluating needs and resources from the perspective of use values and ecological and social priorities;

• determine democratically what needs these use values must satisfy, and how;

• include, at the centre of this democratic deliberation, taking care of humans and ecosystems, careful respect for living things and for ecological boundaries.

• consequently, suppress useless production and useless transport, rethink and reorganize all productive activity, its

circulation and consumption.

These conditions are necessary but not sufficient. Social and ecological crises are one. We must rebuild an emancipatory project for the exploited and the oppressed. A class-based project which, beyond basic needs, favours being over having. A project that profoundly changes behaviour, consumption, the relationship with the rest of nature, the conception of happiness and the vision that humans have of the world. An anti-productivist project to live better by taking care of living things on the only habitable planet in the solar system.

Capitalism has plunged humanity into such a bleak situation before, notably on the eve of the First World War. Nationalist hysteria gripped the masses and social democracy, betraying its pledge to respond to war with revolution, gave the green light to the greatest massacres in human history. Nevertheless, Lenin defined the situation as “objectively revolutionary”: only revolution could stop the slaughter, he said. History proved him right: the revolution in Russia and its tendency to spread forced the bourgeoisies to put an end to the massacre. The comparison obviously has its limits. The mediations towards revolutionary action are infinitely more complex today. But the same awakening of consciousness is necessary. In the face of the ecological crisis, an anti-capitalist revolution is even more objectively necessary. It is this fundamental judgement that must serve as a foundation for the elaboration of a programme, a strategy and a tactic, because there is no other way to avoid catastrophe.

The world we fight for

Our project for a future society articulates social and political emancipation with the imperative to stop the destruction of life and to repair as much as possible of the damage already done.

We want to (try to) imagine what a good life would be for everyone, everywhere, while reducing the consumption of matter and energy, taking into account differentiated responsibilities, and therefore reducing material production. It is not a question of giving a ready-made model, but of daring to think of another world, a world that makes us want to fight to build it by breaking with capitalism and productivism.

“Yes, it is bread we fight for, but we fight for roses too.”

A good life for all requires that basic human needs – healthy food, health, shelter, clean air and water – are met.

A good life is also a chosen life, fulfilling and creative, engaged in rich and equal human relationships, surrounded by the beauty of the world and human achievements.

Our planet (still) has enough arable land, drinking water, sun and wind, biodiversity and resources of all kinds to meet legitimate human needs while renouncing climate-damaging fossil fuels and nuclear power. However, some of these resources are limited and therefore exhaustible, while others, although they are inexhaustible, require for their human consumption materials that are exhaustible or even rare and whose extraction is ecologically damaging. In any case, as their use cannot be unlimited, we must use them carefully and sparingly, in an ecologically wise way.

Essential to our lives, they must be excluded from private appropriation, considered as common goods because they must benefit humanity as a whole both today and in the long term. In order to guarantee these common goods over time, collective rules defining the uses but also the limits of these uses, the obligations to take care of or repair, must be drawn up.

Because a mangrove is not cared for in the same way as an icecap, a wetland in the same way as a sandy beach, a tropical forest in the same way as a river, because solar energy does

not obey the same rules, does not impose the same material constraints as wind or water power, the elaboration of rules can only be the fruit of a democratic process involving those immediately concerned, workers and inhabitants.

Our common good includes all the services that allow us to respond in an egalitarian way, and therefore free of charge, to the needs of education, health, culture, access to water, energy, communication, transport, etc. They, too, must be managed and organized democratically by the whole of society.

Services that deal with people and the care they need at the different stages of life break down the separation of public and private, all the while respecting the privacy of all, and end the assignment of women to these tasks by socializing them, i.e. by making them the business of the whole of society. These services for social reproduction are essential tools, among others, to fight patriarchal oppression.

All these decentralized, participatory, community-based “public services” form the basis of a non-authoritarian social organization.

On the scale of society as a whole, democratic ecological planning allows people to reappropriate the major social choices relating to production, to decide, as citizens and users, what to produce and how to produce it, what services must be provided, and the acceptable limits for the use of material resources such as water, energy, transport, land, etc. These choices are prepared and enlightened by collective deliberation processes that rely on the appropriation of knowledge, whether scientific or derived from the experience of populations, on the self-organization of the oppressed (women’s liberation movements, racialized peoples, people with disabilities, etc.) to push back the barriers to development and to continue the conscious fight against discrimination and oppression.

This global economic and political democracy is articulated with multiple decentralized collectives/committees: those that allow decisions to be taken at the local level, in the city or neighbourhood, on the organization of public life and those that allow workers and producers to control the management and organization of their workplace, to decide on the way to produce and therefore to work. It is the combination of these different levels of democracy that allows cooperation and not competition, a management that is fair from an ecological and social point of view, fulfilling from a human point of view, at the level of the workplace, the company, the branch … but also of the neighbourhood, the city, the region, the country and even the planet!

All decisions on production and distribution, on how we want to live, are guided by the principle: Decentralize as much as possible, coordinate as much as necessary.

Taking charge of one's life, and participating in social collectives, requires time, energy, and collective intelligence. Fortunately, the work of production and social reproduction only takes up a few hours a day.

Production is exclusively devoted to the satisfaction of democratically determined needs. Production and distribution are organized in such a way as to minimize the consumption of resources and to eliminate waste, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. It constantly aims at sobriety and "programmed sustainability" (as opposed to the programmed obsolescence of capitalism whether planned or simply due to the logic of the race for profit). Producing as close as possible to the needs that are to be met allows for a reduction in transport and a better understanding of the work, materials and energy required.

Thus, agriculture is ecological, small-scale and local in order to ensure food sovereignty and the protection of biodiversity. Processing workshops and distribution channels

ensure that most of the food is produced in short circuits.

The energy sector based on renewable sources is as decentralized as possible to reduce losses and optimize sources. Activities related to social reproduction (health, education, care of the elderly or dependent persons, childcare, etc.) are developed and enhanced, taking care not to reproduce gender stereotypes.

Although work occupies less time, it occupies an essential place because, together with nature and by taking care of it, it produces what is necessary for life.

Self-management of production units combined with democratic planning allows workers to control their activity, to decide how to organize work and to question the division between manual and intellectual work. This deliberation extends to the choice of technologies according to whether or not they allow the work collective to control the production process.Giving pride of place to concrete, practical and real knowledge of the work process, to collective and individual know-how, and to creativity, makes it possible to design and produce robust goods that can be dismantled and repaired, reused and, if necessary, recycled, and to reduce the consumption of materials and energy from manufacture to use.

In all areas, the conviction of doing something useful and the satisfaction of doing it well are combined. As for tedious tasks, everyone pays attention to reducing the load and difficulty. However, there remains an essential part which is performed by everyone in turn.

A large part of material production, because the volume is greatly reduced, can be deindustrialized (all or part of clothing or food) and artisan skills, in which everyone could be trained, should be better valued.

Liberating labour from alienation allows us to abolish the boundary between art and life in a kind of “luxury communism”.

We can keep or share tools, furniture, a bicycle, clothes … all our lives, because they are ingeniously designed and beautiful.

Being rather than having

“Only that which is good for all is worthy of you. Only that is worthy of being produced which neither privileges nor demeans anyone.” (A. Gorz)

Freedom lies not unlimited consumption, but in chosen and understood self-limitation, defined against consumerist alienation. Collective deliberation makes it possible to deconstruct artificial needs, to define “universalizable” needs – i.e. not reserved for certain people or certain parts of the world – which must be satisfied.

True wealth does not lie in the infinite increase of goods – having – but in the increase of free time – being. Free time opens up the possibility of fulfilment in play, study, civic activity, artistic creation, interpersonal relationships and with the rest of nature.

So we are opening the way to a lot of activity because we have time to think about it and because we can do it keeping care for people and the rest of nature at the centre.

The places where we live, each space in which we socialize, belong to us for building other interpersonal social relationships. Freed from land speculation and the car, we can rethink the use of public spaces, bridge the separation between the centre and the periphery, multiply recreational, meeting and sharing spaces, restoring nature to cities with urban agriculture and community market gardening, restoring biotopes embedded in the urban fabric… And beyond that, implement a long-term policy aimed at rebalancing urban and rural populations and overcoming the opposition between town and country in order to reconstitute liveable, sustainable human communities on a scale that allows for real democracy.

Our desires and emotions are no longer things to be bought and sold, the range of choices is greatly enlarged for everyone, everyone can develop new ways of having sexual relationships, of living, working and raising children together, of building life projects in a free and diverse way, respecting each person’s personal decisions and humanity, with the idea that there is no one possible option, or one option better than the others. The family can stop being the space for the reproduction of domination, and stop being the only possible form of collective life. We can thus rethink the form of parenthood in a more collective way, politicize our personal decisions about motherhood and parenthood, reflect on how we consider childhood and the role of the elderly or disabled, the social relations we establish with them, and how we are able to break the logic of domination that we have internalized, inherited from previous societies.

We are building a new culture, the opposite of rape culture, a culture that recognizes the bodies of all cis and trans women, and their desires, that recognizes everyone as subjects capable of deciding about their bodies, their lives and their sexualities, that makes it visible that there are a thousand ways of being a person and of living and expressing our gender and sexuality.

Sexual activity that is freely consented to and enjoyable for all who take part in it is its own sufficient justification.

We must learn to think about the interdependence of living beings and develop a conception of the relationship between humanity and nature that will probably resemble in some respects that of indigenous peoples, but will nevertheless be different. A conception in which the ethical notions of precaution, respect and responsibility, as well as wonder at the beauty of the world, will constantly interact with a scientific understanding that is both ever more refined and ever more aware of its incompleteness.

Our transitional method

From our analysis of capitalism and specifically the policies of the ruling class in relation to ecological dangers and climate change, it follows:

First, that there is a need for an overall alternative and a social plan based on production and reproduction oriented towards the satisfaction of human needs and not towards profits (producing use values rather than exchange values).Adjusting this or that screw within the system without changing the mode of production will not avert or even significantly mitigate the crises and catastrophes we are facing and those to come, due to the permanence of the capitalist system. One of the important tasks of revolutionary politics is to convey this insight.

The understanding of the need for global revolutionary change is a task that cannot be solved directly and without difficulty in practice. That is why, second, it is important to combine the presentation of the global perspective with putting forward immediate demands for which mobilizations can really be developed or promoted.

Third, it must be emphasized that people cannot be convinced by argument alone. To win people to turn away from the capitalist system, to encourage them to resist, successful struggles are needed that give courage and demonstrate that partial victories are possible.

And fourth, successful struggles require better organization. This is always true in principle, but today – in times when trade unions have in many parts of the world largely disappeared politically and the left is fragmented – it is important to promote practical cooperation in a non-sectarian way, especially among the anti-capitalist left, and at the same time to support workers in their self-organization.

On the one hand, time is pressing if we do not want to go

beyond crucial tipping points and see global warming accelerate beyond control. On the other, the vast majority of people are not ready to take up the fight for a different system, i.e. to overthrow capitalism. This is partly due to a lack of knowledge of the overall situation, but more to a lack of perspective on what the alternative could or should look like. What is more, the social and political relationship of forces between the classes does not exactly encourage confrontation with the rulers and the profiteers of the capitalist social order.

However, a programme that wants to reform capitalism or overcome it piecemeal (especially if directed from above) also has no chance of success. Reforms that accept the rules of the capitalist system are unable to confront the challenges of the ecological crisis. And gradual changes in the economy and state have never led to a change of system. The owners and profiteers of capitalism will not peacefully watch as their wealth is confiscated and their way for enrichment is deprived of its basis bit by bit.

Time is short, and there is the need for urgent measures. Some opponents of ecosocialism argue for mild reforms “because we cannot wait for world revolution”. Well, partisans of ecosocialism do not propose to wait! Our strategy is to begin NOW, with concrete transitional demands. It is the beginning of a process towards global change. These are not separate historical stages, but dialectical moments in the same process. Each partial or local victory is a step in this movement, which reinforces self-organization and encourages the fight for new victories.

In the upcoming class struggles – a basis for the battle of hegemony involving broader layers of the working class, the youth, women, indigenous peoples etc. – it must become clear that ultimately there is no way around a real change of system and the question of power. The ruling class must be expropriated and its political power overthrown.

For an anticapitalist transitional programme

The transitional method was already suggested by Marx and Engels in the last section of the *Communist Manifesto*(1848). But it is the Fourth International that gave it its modern meaning, in the *Transitional Programme* of 1938. Its basic assumption is the need for revolutionaries to help the masses, through the daily struggle, to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist programme of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of transitional demands, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class; the aim being to lead social struggles towards the conquest of power by the proletariat.

Of course, revolutionaries do not discard the programme of the traditional old "minimal" demands: they obviously defend the democratic rights and social conquests of the workers. However, they propose a system of transitional demands, which can be appropriately understood by the exploited and the oppressed, but at the same time directed against the very bases of the bourgeois regime.

Most of the transitional demands mentioned in the programme of 1938 are still relevant today: sliding scale of wages and sliding scale of hours; worker's control of the factories; open the "secret" business accounts; expropriation of private banks; expropriations of certain groups of capitalists; among others. The purpose of such proposals is to unite the broadest possible popular masses in struggle around concrete demands that are in objective contradiction with the rules of the capitalist system.

But we need to update our programme of transitional demands, in order to take into account the new conditions of the 21th century, in particular the new situation created by the ecological crisis and the imminent danger of catastrophic climate change. Today these demands must have a socio-

ecological and, potentially, an ecosocialist nature.

The aim of ecosocialist transitional demands is strategic: to be able to mobilize large sections of urban and rural workers, women, youth, victims of racism or national oppression, as well as unions, social movements and left parties in a struggle that challenges the capitalist system and bourgeois rule. These demands, which combine social and ecological interests, must be considered as necessary, legitimate and relevant by the exploited and the oppressed, according to their given level of social and political consciousness. In the struggle, people become conscious of the need to organize, to unite and to fight; they also begin to understand who is the enemy: not only local forces, but the system itself. The aim of transitional eco-social demands is, thanks to the struggle, to enhance the social and political consciousness of the exploited and the oppressed, their anti-capitalist understanding, and, hopefully, an ecosocialist revolutionary perspective.

Some of these demands have a universal character: for instance, free and accessible public transport. This is both an ecological and a social demand, and it contains seeds of the ecosocialist future: public services vs market, and free vs capitalist profit. However, their strategic significance varies according to the society and the economy. Ecosocialist transitional demands must take into account the needs and aspirations of the masses, according to their local expression, in the different parts of the world capitalist system.

Main lines of an ecosocialist alternative to capitalist growth

Satisfying real social needs while respecting ecological constraints is only possible by breaking with the productivist and consumerist logic of capitalism, which widens

inequalities, harms the living and “ruins the only two sources of all wealth – the Earth and the workers” (Marx). Breaking this logic implies fighting for the following lines of action. They form a coherent whole, to be completed and broken down according to national and regional specificities. Of course, in each continent, and in each country, there are specific measures to be proposed in a transitional perspective.

Against disasters, public prevention plans adapted to social needs, under popular control

Some effects of the climate catastrophe are irreversible (rising sea levels) or will last for a long time (heatwaves, droughts, exceptional precipitation, more violent tornadoes, etc.). Capitalist insurance companies do not protect the popular classes, or (at best) protect them poorly. Faced with these scourges, the wealthy talk only of “adaptating”. “Adaptating” to warming, for them, serves 1) to divert attention from the structural causes, for which their system is responsible; 2) to continue their harmful practices focused on maximum profit, without worrying about the long term; 3) to offer new markets to capitalists (infrastructure, air conditioning, transport, carbon compensation, etc.). This technocratic and authoritarian capitalist “adaptating” is in fact what the IPCC calls “maladaptation”. It increases inequalities, discrimination and dispossession. It also increases vulnerability to rising temperatures, with the risk of seriously jeopardizing the very possibility of adaptation in the future, especially in poor countries. To capitalist “maladaptation” we oppose the immediate demand for public prevention plans adapted to the situation of the popular classes. They are the main victims of extreme meteorological phenomena, especially in dominated countries. Public prevention plans must be designed according to their needs and their situation, through dialogue with scientists. They must encompass all sectors, in particular agriculture, forestry, housing, water management, energy, industry, labour

legislation, health and education. They must be the subject of broad democratic consultation, with the right of veto of the local communities and work forces concerned.

Share the wealth to take care of humans and our living environment, free of charge

Quality health care, good education, good care for young children, a dignified retirement and a care system that respects dependency, accessible, permanent and comfortable housing, efficient public transport, renewable energy, healthy food, clean water, internet access and a natural environment in good condition: these are the real needs that a civilization worthy of its name should satisfy for all humans, regardless of their skin colour, gender, ethnicity or beliefs. It is possible to achieve this while significantly decreasing the global strain in our environment. Why have we not got this? Because the economy is tuned to induce consumption created as an industrial byproduct by capitalists. They consume and invest ever more for profit, appropriate all resources, and transform everything into commodities. Their selfish logic sows misfortune and death.

A 180° about turn is required. Natural resources and knowledge constitute a common good to be managed prudently and collectively. The satisfaction of real needs and the revitalization of ecosystems must be planned democratically and supported by the public sector, under the active control of the popular classes, and by extending free access as much as possible. This collective project must harness scientific expertise to its service. The necessary first step is to fight inequalities and oppression. Social justice and a good life for all are ecological demands!

Expand commons and public services against privatization and marketization

This is one of the key aspects of a social and ecological

transition, in many areas of life. For instance:

• Water: The present privatization, wasteful consumption and pollution of water – rivers, lakes and subterranean – is a social and ecological disaster. Water scarcity and floods due to climate change are major threats for billions of people. Water is a common good, and should be managed and distributed by public services, under the control of consumers. Landscapes and cities should be made permeable to water and able to store water to avoid massive flooding.

• Housing: The basic right of all people to decent, permanent and ecologically sustainable housing cannot be guaranteed under capitalism. The law of profit entails evictions, demolitions and criminalization of those who resist. It also entails high energy bills for the poor and subsidized renewables for the rich. Public control of the real estate market, lowering and freezing of interest rates and profits of the banks, a radical increase in good, public, social and cooperative housing, a public process of climate insulation of houses and a massive programme of building energetically autonomous houses, are first steps of an alternative politics.

• Health: The results of the Covid-19 pandemic are crystal clear: privatization and cuts in the care sector fragilize the popular classes – in particular children, women and the elderly – and are strong threats to public health in general. This sector must be refinanced massively and the whole plaved into the hands of the collective. Investments priority must be in front-line medicine. The pharma industry must be socialized.

• Transport: Individual transport in capitalism privileges private cars, with dire health and ecological consequences. The alternative is a large and efficient system of free, accessible public transport, as well as a great extension of pedestrian and cycling areas. Commodities are transported great distances by trucks or container ships, with enormous

gas emissions; reductions in wasteful consumption and relocalization of production and transport of goods by train are immediate necessary measures. Air transport should be significantly reduced. No air traffic for distances less than 1,000 km where operational rail systems exist.

Take the money where it is: Capitalists and the rich must pay

A global transition strategy worthy of the name must articulate the replacement of fossil fuels by renewable energy sources, protection against the already perceptible effects of climate change, compensation for losses and threats, assistance for reconversion (in particular guaranteed income for the workers concerned) and the repair of ecosystems. Between now and 2050 this needs several trillion dollars. Who should pay? Those responsible for the disaster: multinationals, banks, pension funds, imperialist states and the rich of the North and South. The eco-socialist alternative requires a broad programme of tax reform and radical reduction of inequalities to take the money from where it is: progressive taxation, the lifting of banking secrecy, a register of land assets, taxation of assets, exceptional single tax at a high rate on inherited wealth, elimination of tax havens, abolition of tax privileges for companies and the rich, opening of company account books, capping of high incomes, abolition of public debts recognized as "illegitimate" (without compensation, except for small investors), compensation by rich countries for the cost of renouncing exploitation of fossil resources by dominated countries (e.g. the Yasuni Park project). Above all, genuine ecosocialist democratic planning is not possible without the public socialization of banks. "Credit for the common good" means definitively eliminating profit in determining interest rates and transaction margins, supporting the public and popular function of credit, and guaranteeing the public and cooperative role of banks.

No emancipation without anti-racist struggle

Racial oppression is a structural and structuring element of the capitalist mode of production. It accompanied the primitive accumulation of capital through colonization, the slave trade, and slavery. The forced displacement of millions of Africans, their commercialization in the Americas, and the exploitation of their labour ensured the enrichment of Europeans and still guarantees their privileges today.

Racism manifests itself centrally as a mechanism of oppression of sectors of the working class, the reservation of specific positions and socially determined access for whites (the supposedly universal subject) and for people perceived as racialized. It shapes social relations, reinforcing and complicating the mechanisms of bourgeois exploitation and wealth accumulation. Diversity that deviates from the norms of whiteness is transmuted into oppression.

Building a new world free from all oppression and exploitation requires a head-on struggle against racism. This is a central task of ecosocialist strategy. We must break with the genocidal logic against non-white groups and strengthen the anti-prison struggle against mass incarceration, imposed in particular through the liberal tactic of the so-called war on drugs.

The fight against police militarization must be at the heart of anti-racist struggle, as must access to decent living conditions in general. It is necessary to combat all austerity policies, which primarily and increasingly affect non-white people. They structure the environmental racism that unequally distributes the deadly consequences of capitalist production. It is necessary to confront all fiscal austerity policies, which deepen the precariousness of life for the working class as a whole and fall mostly and more heavily on non-white people. They structure environmental racism which, in this climate emergency, distributes the deadly consequences

of capitalist production unevenly.

Freedom of movement and residence on Earth! Nobody is illegal!

The ecological catastrophe is a growing driving force for migration and displacement of populations. An annual average of 21.5 million people were forcibly displaced by weather-related events between 2008 and 2016. Most of them are poor people from poor countries who are displaced within their own countries or in poor neighboring countries. Climate migration is expected to surge in coming decades: 1.2 billion people could be displaced globally by 2050. Unlike asylum-seekers, “climate refugees” do not even have any status. They bear no responsibility for the ecological catastrophe but the capitalist system, which is responsible, condemns them to swell the ranks of the 108.4 million people worldwide who were forcibly displaced in 2020 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations. The basic rights of these people are under constant attack: the right to be protected against violence; to have enough water and food; to live in a safe house; to keep their family united; to find a decent job. A growing number of them (4,4 million, probably much more) are even considered stateless by the UNHDR. All this is contrary to the most basic justice. It feeds the fascists who scapegoat the migrants and dehumanize them. This is a huge threat for the democratic and social rights of all. As internationalists, we fight for restrictive policies against capital, not against migrants. We oppose the building of walls, confinement in centres, the building of camps, expulsions, deportations, and the racist rhetoric. Nobody is illegal on Earth, everybody must have the right to move and to leave everywhere. The borders must be open to all those who flee their country, whether it is for social, political, economic or environmental reasons.

Eliminate unnecessary or harmful economic activities

Stopping the climate catastrophe and the decline of biodiversity necessarily requires a very rapid and significant reduction in net energy consumption at the global level. This discipline is unavoidable. First steps include drastically reducing the purchasing power of the rich, abandoning fast fashion, advertisement and luxury production/consumption (cruises, yachts and private jets or helicopters, space tourism, etc.), scaling down mass-produced meat and dairy and ending the accelerated obsolescence of products, extending their lifespan and facilitating their repair. Air and maritime transport of goods should be reduced drastically by relocation of production, and be replaced by train transport whenever possible. More structurally, energy constraint can only be respected by reducing economic activities that are useless or harmful as quickly as possible. The main productive sectors to consider are: arms production, fossil energy and petrochemicals, extractive industry, non-sustainable manufacturing, the wood and pulp industry, personal car construction, planes and shipbuilding.

Food sovereignty! Get out of agribusiness, industrial fishing and the meat industry

These three sectors pose serious threats to the climate, human health and biodiversity. Dismantling them requires measures at the level of production but also significant changes at the level of consumption (in developed countries and among the rich in all countries) and in our relationship with living things. Proactive policies are needed to stop deforestation and replace agribusiness, industrial tree plantations and large-scale fishing with small farmer agroecology, ecoforestry and small-scale fishing respectively. These alternatives consume less energy, employ more labour and are much more

respectful of biodiversity. Farmers and fisherfolk must be properly compensated by the community, not only for their contribution to human food but also for their ecological contribution. The rights of first peoples over the forest and other ecosystems must be protected. Global meat consumption must be drastically reduced, particularly in countries and among social classes that consume too much meat. The meat and dairy industry must be dismantled and a diet based mainly on local vegetable production be promoted. By doing that, we put an end to the abject treatment of animals in the meat industry and to industrial fishing. Food sovereignty, in line with the proposals of Via Campesina, is a key objective. It requires radical agrarian reform: the land should go to those who work it, especially women. Expropriation of big landowners and capitalist agribusiness who produce goods for the world market. Distribution of land to peasants and landless peasants (families or cooperatives) for agro-biological production. Abolition of old and new genetically modified crops in open field and elimination of toxic pesticides (starting with those whose use the imperialist countries prohibit but whose export they authorize in the dominated countries!).

Coexist with living things, stop the massacre of species

Respect for non-human life is fundamental to preserving the conditions for reproduction and evolution of the human species. Production methods must take into account relationships with other living things from the very beginning. Immediate action must be taken against the patenting of living things, the destruction of wetlands, and the exploitation of the seabed. Although partial and insufficient in the long term, the expansion of wildlife conservation areas must be encouraged, provided it does not lead to further social injustice, particularly to the detriment of indigenous peoples and rural communities.

Popular urban reform

More than half the world's population now lives in increasingly large cities. At the same time, rural regions are becoming depopulated, ruined by agribusiness and mining, and increasingly deprived of essential services. So called "developingcountries" have some of the largest megacities on the planet (Jakarta, Manila, Mexico City, New Delhi, Bombay, Sao Paulo, and others), a growing number of homeless people and slums where millions of human beings (around Karachi, Nairobi, Baghdad…) survive and work informally in undignified conditions. It is one of the most hideous wounds left by capitalist development and imperialist domination. In addition to violence, heat waves make survival increasingly difficult in slums and poor neighbourhoods, especially in humid climates. The ecosocialist alternative demands the launch of a vast social housing construction programme accompanied by a popular urban reform that changes the organization of large cities, designed in cooperation with homeless associations. This has to be combined, on the one hand, with labour legislation that protects workers and, on the other, the attraction of agrarian reform, in order to initiate a movement of rural counter-emigration.

Socialize energy and finance without compensation or buyback to get out of fossil fuels and nuclear power as quickly as possible

The energy multinationals and the banks that finance them want to exploit every last tonne of coal, every last litre of oil, every last cubic metre of gas. They initially hid and denied the impact of CO2 emissions on climate change. Now, in order to continue to exploit these resources despite everything, and while soaring prices ensure them gigantic surplus profits, they promise all kinds of phony techniques (greenwashing, exchange of "polluting rights", "emissions offsetting", "Carbon capture, sequestration and utilization") and promote nuclear energy as "low carbon". Have no doubt: these profit-

hungry groups are taking the planet from climate catastrophe to cataclysm. At the same time, they are at the forefront of capitalist attacks on the working classes. They must be socialized by expropriation, without compensation or buyback. To stop the social and ecological destruction, to determine our future collectively, nothing is more urgent than constituting public services of energy and credit, decentralized and interconnected, under the democratic control of the people.

Open the “black box” of data centres, socialize Big Tech

Data centers owned by Big Tech companies consume increasing amounts of energy and water. They are “black boxes”: what happens there is covered by trade secrets. In addition to the fact that these centres power surveillance capitalism, create algorithms for targeted advertising, and artificially generate new needs, a growing part of their activity involves supporting AI. This “black box” must be opened. People must be able to control energy usage and decide which functions are socially useful and which are not. Big Tech and social media giants must be socialized and democratically managed to create truly public digital spaces.

For liberation and the self-determination of peoples; against war, imperialism and colonialism

We defend an internationalist programme based on social justice, and an ecosocialist transition led by liberating and collective forces, and peace among peoples, confronting oppressive policies. We oppose NATO and other military alliances, which drive the world towards new inter-imperialist conflicts. We fight against increases in military budgets, for the dismantling of manufacturing and stocks of all nuclear, chemical and bacteriological armament and cyber weapons, for dismantling of all private military companies. Weapons must not be commodities; their use must be under political control

for the purposes of defence and protection against aggression.

The sole road to peace is through the victorious struggles for the right to self-determination, the end of occupation of lands and ethnical cleansing. As internationalists, we are in solidarity with the oppressed people fighting for their rights, notably in Palestine and in Ukraine.

Guarantee employment for all, ensure the necessary retraining in ecologically sustainable and socially useful activities

Workers engaged in wasteful and harmful fossil fuel activities, in agribusiness, big fishing and the meat industry should not pay the price of capitalist management. A green job guarantee must be instituted to ensure their collective retraining, without loss of income, in the activities of the public plan to meet real needs and restore ecosystems. This green jobs guarantee will overcome the legitimate fears of the workers concerned. Thus, there will be an end to the cynical instrumentalization of these fears by the capitalists, in the service of their productivist/consumerist interests. On the contrary, the green jobs guarantee will encourage and motivate workers in condemned sectors to train and mobilize to actively take charge of carrying out the plan, in dialogue with the public benefiting from it, by investing their knowledge, their skills and their experience in an activity rich in meaning, emancipatory, truly human because concerned with the lives of future generations.

Work less, live and work better, live a good life

Radically reducing energy consumption by eliminating useless and harmful production/consumption logically has the effect of reducing the time of salaried social work. This reduction must be collective. Capitalist waste is of such magnitude that its suppression will undoubtedly open up the concrete possibility of a very significant reduction in weekly working time (about

a half-day’s work) and a significant lowering of the retirement age. This trend towards reduction will be partly offset by the necessary reduction in work rhythms and increase in social and ecological reproduction work necessary to take care of people (including by socializing part of the domestic work carried out for free mainly by women) and ecosystems. Democratic planning will be essential for the articulation over time of these movements in various directions. The ecosocialist break with capitalist growth implies a double transformation of work. Quantitatively, we will work much less. Qualitatively, it will create the conditions for making work an activity of the good life – a conscious mediation between humans (therefore also between men and women), and between humans and the rest of nature. This deep transformation of work and life will more than compensate for the changes in consumption affecting the best paid layers of the working class, mainly in the developed countries.

Reduce, reuse, recycle

The concepts of product life cycle, recycling, repair, and circularity are essential. Their consistent application requires production focused on meeting real human needs. However, the production of organic and solid waste is an unavoidable reality of life in society. It is therefore essential to have adequate means for its disposal, treatment, and reuse. Therefore, alongside drastically reducing consumption, it is necessary to implement adequate methods for treating organic waste (such as composting) and to develop techniques for recycling and reusing solid waste, based on the knowledge accumulated by science and workers collectively organized in waste collection and recycling. Ecosocialist policies will promote the adequate collection and treatment of hospital, contaminated, and toxic waste, aiming for the lowest possible socio-environmental impact.

Guarantee the right of women to control over their own bodies and a life without violence

Humanity will not be able to consciously manage its relationship to the rest of nature without consciously managing its relationship to itself, that is to say its own biological reproduction, which passes through the body of women. It is not by chance that patriarchal attacks on women's rights are intensifying everywhere: these attacks are an integral part of political projects that seek to establish strong powers at the service of the rich and the capitalists. They are most often carried out in the name of a reactionary "pro-life" ideology, which incidentally denies anthropogenic climate change. But, alongside these reactionary forces, there are also technocratic currents that blame the ecological crisis on "overpopulation" and thereby attempt to impose authoritarian policies of birth control. Faced with these two types of threats, we maintain that no morality, no higher reason, even ecological, can be invoked to deny women their elementary right to control their own fertility. The denial of this right is consubstantial with all other mechanisms of domination, including "human domination" over the rest of nature, for the benefit of patriarchy and its current capitalist form. Human emancipation includes the emancipation of women. This implies as a priority that women must have free access to contraception, abortion, education on how to use them, and reproductive care in general. This also involves the fight against all forms of physical, psychological, social or medical violence against women and LGBTQI+ people.

Knowledge is a common good: Reform of the education and research systems

Knowledge is a common good of humankind. Implementation of the ecosocialist emergency programme has a crying need for decolonized and decapitalized knowledge, embodied by numerous and competent teachers and researchers in all disciplines. For reform of the education system, expansion of public schools

and universities, an end to discrimination in education, of which girls are particularly victims in certain countries. For recognition and integration of indigenous knowledge and know-how. Deep reform of research in order to put an end to its submission to capital. Research to be directed primarily towards repairing ecosystems and meeting the needs of the working classes, and determined in consultation with them.

Hands off democratic rights! Popular control and self-organization of struggles

Powerless to curb the ecological catastrophe it has created, the ruling class is toughening its regime, criminalizing resistance and picking on scapegoats. Its policies pave the way for nihilistic, nationalist, racist and macho neo-fascism. Faced with the bourgeoisie unmasked, ecosocialism raises the flag of extending rights and freedoms: right of association, of demonstration, right to strike; free election of parliamentary bodies in a multi-party system; a ban on private financing of political parties; legalization of popular initiative referendums; abolition of non-democratic institutions (such as an autonomous Central Bank); prohibition of private ownership of major means of communication; abolition of censorship; a fight against corruption; dissolution of militias serving leaders; respect for the rights and territories of indigenous communities and other oppressed peoples, etc. Ecosocialism is a societal alternative that requires the broadest democracy. It is being prepared now through the democratic self-organization of popular struggles and the demand, at all levels, for transparency and popular control, with the right of veto.

Foster a cultural revolution based on respect for the living and “love for Pachamama”

A radical break with the ideology of human domination of nature is essential for the development of both an ecological and a feminist (an ecofeminist) culture of “caring” for people

and the environment. The defence of biodiversity, in particular, cannot be based solely on reason (the human interest properly understood): it requires just as much empathy, respect, prudence and the kind of global conception that the first peoples sum up by the phrase “love of Pachamama”. Maintaining this global conception or reacquiring it – through struggles, artistic creation, education and production/consumption alternatives – is a major ideological challenge in the ecosocialist struggle. Western modernity has systematized the idea that human beings are divine creatures whose mission is to dominate nature and instrumentalize animals, which are reduced to the rank of machines. This non-materialist conception, intimately linked to colonial and patriarchal dominations, is completely disqualified today by scientific knowledge. We are part of the living Earth; human life would be impossible in the absence of the network of life on this planet.

Self-managed ecosocialist planning

The ecosocialist transition needs planning. In particular, the transformation of the energy system (exit from nuclear and fossil fuels, energy savings and development of renewables) needs to be planned. Contrary to what is often claimed, planning is not contradictory to democracy and self-management. The disastrous example of the countries of so-called “really existing socialism” shows that self-management is incompatible with authoritarian, bureaucratic planning, imposed from above in contempt of all democracy. What does democratic ecosocialist planning mean? Concretely, that the whole of society will be free to democratically choose priorities for production and the level of resources which must be invested in education, health or culture. Far from being “despotic” in itself, democratic ecosocialist planning is the exercise of freedom of decision-making of the whole of society, at all levels, from local to national to global. It is a necessary exercise to free oneself from “economic laws”

and “iron cages” that are alienating and reified within capitalist and bureaucratic structures. Democratic planning associated with the reduction of working time would be a considerable step forward for humanity towards what Marx called “the kingdom of freedom”: the increase in free time is in fact a condition for the participation of workers in the democratic discussion and self-management of the economy and society. Ecosocialist democratic planning is about key economic choices and not about local restaurants, grocery stores, bakeries, small stores, craft businesses. Likewise, it is important to emphasize that ecosocialist planning is not in contradiction to the self-management of workers in their production units. Self-management therefore means democratic control of the plan at all levels – local, regional, national, continental and planetary, since ecological issues such as climate change are global and can only be addressed at that level. Ecosocialist democratic planning is opposed to what is often described as “central planning” because decisions are not taken by a “centre” but determined democratically by the populations concerned, according to the principle of subsidiarity: responsibility for public action, when necessary, must be allocated to the smallest entity capable of solving the problem itself.

Material global degrowth in the context of uneven and combined development

There will be no national solution. A just ecosocialist alternative can begin in one country but its full implementation requires the abolition of capitalism at the global level. From now on, the exploited and the oppressed therefore need a consistent anticapitalist, anti-imperialist, anti-racist and internationalist strategy, aiming at a global outcome. This strategy must articulate the struggles that unfold in very different contexts. It means that the main lines of an ecosocialist programme breaking with capitalist growth have general relevance but they apply differently in

different countries. Some demands are more important in some countries than others, according to their place in the uneven and combined development of capitalism under imperialist rule.

After centuries of slavery and colonial plunder, the populations of so-called “developing” countries are victims of a new monstrous injustice. While their responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions is small, almost nil in the poorest countries, the climatic shift caused by two hundred years of imperialist capitalist growth places 3.5 billion women, men and childrenin the front line of catastrophes that are hitting them harder and harder.

The populations of the dominated countries have the basic right to access dignified living conditions. Imperialist governments, international institutions and the governments of the peripheral countries themselves claim that capitalist growth will enable people in the South to “catch up” with the standard of living of the developed capitalist countries. All it would take is “good governance” to “adjust” societies to the needs of the global market. But this is a dead end, as shown by the fact that inequalities continue to grow (between countries and, more and more, within countries), while the “carbon budget” compatible with 1.5°C is vanishing rapidly.

In reality, the imperialist model of development keeps the dominated countries in a neocolonial position of subordination, as suppliers of raw materials and low-cost labour power, producers of plant and animal goods for export, places for storing waste – among others carbon sinks appropriated by capitalists for their profit – and the chief victims of the ecological crisis. Added to this now are the scandalous policies of developed countries to pay dominated countries to play the role of border police. The local corrupt “elites” carry a major responsibility. Instead of promoting an alternative development, based on alternative social values, they have come to serve imperialism.

The discourse of the “the South catching up with the North” is a chimera, a smokescreen to conceal the continuation of capitalist and imperialist exploitation, which widens inequalities. With the increase in ecological disasters, this discourse is losing all credibility.

The multipolar world of the BRICS is not an alternative to imperialism, as shown by the politics of Russia and China, the two main leaders of this bloc. Their autocratic leaders do not oppose the imperialist and oppressive practices of “classic” Western imperialism – they want to have the same rights. Likewise, what they object to is not the gap between rights and realities in the practices of Western societies, it is the rights themselves (of workers, women, LGBTQ+, etc.). Putin wants to rebuild a colonial empire by force and coercion. Taking advantage of the huge fossil fuels reserves, he seeks alliances with oil monarchies, other dictatorships and powerful interests in the energy and crime industry to prolong the exploitation of fossil fuels as long as possible. The Chinese Communist Party claims to show the countries of the South that they can escape domination and develop by entering the New Silk Roads, but its project of global capitalist hegemony is one of the main drivers of ecological destruction and accumulation by dispossession.

Now is not the time for “catching up” but for planetary sharing. The great mass of the working people, of women, of youth, of the ethnic minorities in the “North” and in the dominated countries are victims of climate change. According to scientific analysis of current climate policies, the richest 1% will emit even more CO2 by 2030; the poor 50% will emit a little bit more but remain largely under the level of individual emissions compatible with 1.5°C; the intermediate 40% will support the greatest part of the emissions reduction (with the proportionally greatest effort imposed on low incomes in rich countries). This is the basis for an international struggle for justice and equality. The meagre

carbon budget still available must and can be shared according to historical responsibilities and capacities, not only between countries but more and more between social classes. Mineral resources and the wealth of biodiversity must be harvested carefully, according to the real needs of all.

The capitalists of the imperialist countries are by far the most responsible for the ecological crisis and they must pay the consequences. The bill must be paid, too, by countries like the "oil monarchies", Russia, and China, although their historical responsibility is not the same. The industrialized countries of the "North" – Europe, North America, Australia, Japan – must make the greatest efforts in terms of a rapid degrowth in useless and/or harmful productions. They are also responsible for giving the dominated countries access to alternative technologies, and to provide funding for an ecological transition and real reparation for the loss and damage. The abolition of patents must allow the peoples of the South to freely access technologies that can meet real needs without using even more fossil energy.

To satisfy their needs, the people in dominated countries need a development model radically opposed to the imperialist and productivist one, a model that prioritizes public services (health, education, housing, accessible transport, sewage, electricity, drinking water) for the mass of the population, and not the production of goods for the world market. This anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist model expropriates the monopolies in the sectors of finance, mining, energy, agribusiness, and socializes them under democratic control.

Especially in the poorer countries, the necessity to meet the needs of the population will require increased material production and energy consumption over a period of time. Within the framework of the alternative development model and other international exchanges, the contribution of these countries to global ecosocialist degrowth and respect for ecological balances will consist of:

· Imposing just reparation on imperialist countries.

· Cancelling the conspicuous consumption of the parasitical elite.

· Fighting ecocidal megaprojects inspired by neoliberal capitalist policies, such as giant pipelines, pharaonic mining projects, new airports, offshore oil wells, large hydroelectric dams and immense tourist infrastructures appropriating natural and cultural heritage for the benefit of the rich.

· Ecological agrarian reform to substitute industrialized agro-business.

· Refusing the destruction of biomes by breeders, palm oil planters, agribusiness in general and the mining industry, "forest compensation" (REDD and REDD+ projects) as well as "fishing agreements" which offer fishery resources to industrial fishing multinationals, etc.

Through their struggles, the popular classes of the dominated countries can contribute in a decisive way by engaging the exploited of the whole world in this path, the only one compatible with both human rights and with terrestrial limits.

Against the tide, make the struggles converge to break with capitalist productivism. Seize the government, initiate the ecosocialist rupture based on self-activity, self-organization, control from below, and the broadest democracy

The economy, the state, the politics of the bourgeoisie and its international relations are deeply affected by the eco-social impasse in which capitalist accumulation and imperialist plunder have plunged humanity. Around the world, the exploited and the oppressed are gripped by deep anguish.

Movements of resistance are developing against the tide. Even

in extremely difficult contexts, people stand up for their social, democratic, anti-imperialist, ecological, feminist, LGBTQI, anti-racist, indigenous, and peasant rights. Significant struggles have been waged and sometimes remarkable victories have been won: the Yellow Vest movement and the movement to defend pensions in France, the ecosocialist struggle of the GKN factory workers in Italy, the struggle of the auto workers union in the United States, the closure of a copper mine owned by First Quantum in Panama in 2023, thevictory of the Indian peasants against the Modi government, the victory of the "zadists" in France against the airport of Notre-Dame-des-Landes, the victory of women in the fight for abortion in Argentina, and of the Sioux in the United States against the XXL pipeline… But the enemy is on the offensive and many struggles are defeated. Our task, as activists of the Fourth International, is to help organize and extend the struggles, bringing our ecosocialist and internationalist perspective to bear.

While the history of the labor movement is rich in struggles for workers' health and environmental protection, the productivism of the hegemonic forces of the left, parties and trade unions, is a serious obstacle on the road to an ecosocialist response commensurate with the objective situation. Most of the leaderships have abandoned any anti-capitalist perspective. Social democracy and all other variants of reformism have become social-liberal, their only ambition being to bring some social correction to the market within the limits of the neoliberal framework. Most leaderships of the big trade union organizations limit themselves to accompanying neoliberal policies with the illusion that capitalist growth will improve employment, wages and social protection. Instead of organizing an awareness of the ecosocial impasse, these policies of class collaboration deepen it and conceal its gravity.

Fortunately, some political forces and trade union currents –

notably in Europe, the United States and Latin America – are beginning to distance themselves from productivism and neoliberalism. In the trade unions, activists aware of the ecological challenge have advanced the concept of a "just transition". Social democracy and ITUC trade union leaders have hijacked this in the direction of supporting productivism and business competitiveness. The dominant class is expert in manipulation. This is how "just transition" has joined "sustainable development" in the discourse of governments that trample on justice and organize unsustainability.

In the "developed" capitalist countries, the ranks of the traditional forces have been reinforced by the green parties. It took four decades for the vast majority of these parties to join the layer of the political managers of capitalism. Their pragmatism based on the individual responsibility of consumers is extended in civil society by numerous environmental associations. It has allowed social democracy and traditional labour leaderships to disguise their class collaboration in defence of the "lesser social evil" in the face of ecotaxes and other so-called "realistic" solutions of "neither left nor right" ecology.

In other parts of the world, although still in a minority, ecosocialism is beginning to gain an influence on social movements and the radical left. Some important local experiences – in Mindanao, Rojava, and Chiapas, among others –have affinities with the ecosocialist perspective. However, capitalist growth still falsely appears to most as the only way to improve social conditions.

Given the depth of the crisis and disarray, there is a real risk of seeing a growing tendency in sectors of the working classes to sacrifice ecological objectives on the altar of development, job creation and increased income. This trend would only accelerate the catastrophe of which these same classes are already the first victims and would deepen the loss of legitimacy of the unions. It would also create fertile

ground for neo-fascist attempts to greenwash racist, colonialist and genocidal projects. The migrants fleeing their devastated lands are the main targets of these hate campaigns.

The socialist project is deeply discredited by the record of Stalinism and social democracy. It is from struggles that we must reinvent an alternative, not from dogmas.

Who is today on the front lines of the real ecosocial movement? Indigenous peoples, youth, peasants, racialized people who pay a heavy price for the social and ecological destruction. In these four groups, women play a decisive role, in connection with their specific, ecofeminist demands, for which they fight and organize themselves autonomously.

The international peasant alliance Via Campesina offers numerous examples that demonstrate that it is possible to combine the defence of the rights of poor peasants and indigenous peoples, the fight against extractivism and agro-industry, the fight for food sovereignty and the preservation of ecosystems with feminism.

The vast majority of wage-workers is absent or standing back from anti-productivist struggles. Some then infer that the class struggle is outdated, or must be waged by an “ecological class” that exists only in their imagination. But stopping the catastrophe is only possible by revolutionizing the mode of production of social existence. This revolution is not possible without the active and conscious participation of producers, who also form the majority of the population.

Others, on the contrary, deduce that it is necessary to wait for the moment when the mass of workers in struggle for their immediate socio-economic demands will have reached the level of consciousness that allows them to participate in the ecological struggle on a “class line”. However, how would the level of consciousness of the mass of employees integrate ecological issues in time if no major social struggle comes to

shake up the productivist framework within which they, increasingly on the defensive, spontaneously raise their immediate socio-economic demands? Moving beyond the productivist framework requires a logic of public initiative and planning of the necessary reconversions, with guaranteed employment and income.

The class struggle is not a cold abstraction. “The real movement that abolishes the current state of things” (Marx) defines it and designates its actors. The struggles of women, LGBTQI people, oppressed peoples, racialized peoples, migrants, peasants and indigenous peoples for their rights are not simoy adjacent to the struggles of workers against the exploitation of labour by the bosses. They are part of the living class struggle.

They are part of it because capitalism needs the patriarchal oppression of women to maximize surplus value and ensure social reproduction at a lower cost; needs the discrimination against LGBTQI people to validate patriarchy; needs structural racism to justify the looting of the periphery by the centre; needs inhuman “asylum policies” to regulate the industrial reserve army; needs to submit the peasantry to the dictates of junk food-producing agribusiness to compress the price of labour power; and needs to eliminate the respectful relationship that human communities still maintain within themselves and with nature, to replace it with its individualistic ideology of domination, which transforms the collective into an automaton and the living into dead things. In particular, indigenous peoples and traditional communities are at the forefront of the struggle against the destructive domination of capitalism over their bodies and territories. In many regions, they are even the vanguard of new revolutionary movements of the subaltern classes. Therefore, we recognize that they are a fundamental part of the revolutionary subject of the 21st century.

All these struggles and those of workers against capitalist

exploitation are part of the same fight for human emancipation, and this emancipation is only really possible and worthy of humanity in the awareness of the fact that our species belongs to nature while at the same time having, because of its specific intelligence, the responsibility, now unavoidable and vital, of taking care of it. Such is the strategic implication arising from the fact that the destructive force of capitalism has ushered the planet into a new geological era.

This analysis is the basis of our strategy of convergence of social and ecological struggles. Whenever possible, this convergence should also be coordinated at the international level through democratic forums. The struggle is global, and our movement must be too.

This convergence of struggles should not be limited to the search between social movements, or between apparatuses of social movements, for the greatest common denominator in terms of demands. This conception can imply the disregard of certain demands of certain groups – to the detriment of the weakest among them – that is to say, the opposite of convergence.

The convergence of social and ecological struggles includes all the struggles of all social actors, from the most seasoned to the most hesitant. It is a process of dynamic articulation, which raises the level of consciousness through action and debate, in mutual respect. Its goal is not the determination of a fixed platform but the constitution of the unity in combat of the exploited and the oppressed around concrete demands opening a dynamic aiming at the conquest of political power and the overthrow of capitalism in the whole world.

In practice, the ecosocial convergence of struggles implies above all that those sectors most aware of ecological threats address themselves to the sectors most aware of social threats, and vice versa, in order to overcome together the false capitalist opposition between the social and ecological.

In this approach, the defence of an eco-unionism that is both class struggle and anti-productivist plays an essential role, based on the concrete concerns of workers for the preservation of their health and safety at work and on the role of whistle-blowers about[1] the damage to ecosystems and the danger of production that they are best placed to play.

As ecosocialist activists, we encourage resistance in the workplace through strikes and all initiatives that promote the organization and control of workers. We work to strengthen mobilizations by combining the extension of strikes, building ever greater demonstrations, by promoting all forms of self-organization and self-protection in the struggle against repression, as well as its popularization to counter the lies of the dominant media and the government apparatus.

We are also inspired by forms of civil disobedience, from blocking sites to boycotting rent payments, which have also proven their effectiveness.

Experiences from struggles help to feed the strategic debate.

Anti-productivist struggles are diverse, but generally their starting point is very concrete, often local, in opposition to new transport infrastructure (motorway, airport, etc.), commercial or logistical infrastructure, extractivist infrastructure (mines, pipelines, mega-dams, etc.), the grabbing of land or water, the destruction of a forest or a river, etc. It is, first, the threat to daily life, to livelihoods and health that mobilizes people, not a generalizing discourse. By confronting political decision-makers, capitalist groups and the institutions that protect them, by forging alliances between actors with different histories and commitments, the struggle becomes more and more global and political.

These combinations of struggles anchored in a specific territory with a precise objective and general combat exist

throughout the world and form a new political reality which may be called “Blockadia”.

The formation of an ecosocialist class consciousness also implies a convergence in struggles in which (young) scientists can contribute by using and sharing their knowledge (agronomic, climatic, naturalist).

Strike committees, community health centres, company takeovers, land occupations, self-managed living spaces, repair workshops, canteens, seed libraries, etc., allow the experimentation of a social organization free of capitalism. They allow those who are deprived of political and economic power to experience their collective power and intelligence. Contradicting the illusions about possibly bypassing or simply adjusting the system, they sooner or later come up against the state and the capitalist market, showing that it is impossible to do without political power and the necessary overthrow of the system. In industrialized countries, the general political strike will be a decisive instrument. However, by establishing, even temporarily, another legitimacy that is popular, democratic and based on solidarity, the concrete alternatives allow the oppressed to become aware of their own power and to work towards the construction of a new hegemony.

More globally, the construction of self-organized organs of popular power is at the heart of our strategy.

The systemic crisis of “late capitalism” dominated by transnational finance nurtures both a disgust in the face of the phenomena of the decay of the bourgeois regime and a feeling of helplessness in the face of the profound deterioration, both quantitative and qualitative, of the balance of power between classes. In this context, the question of government takes on increased importance. The seizure of political power by the working classes is a prerequisite for the implementation of a plan initiating a policy of rupture. At the same time, recent years have shown

the deadly illusions of political projects which exploit popular aspirations, channel mobilizations, even stifle them in the name of realpolitik, and thus strengthen the far right.

There is no shortcut. An ecosocialist strategy of rupture involves the struggle for the formation of a popular power, fighting for a transition plan, emanating from the self-activity, control, and direct intervention of the exploited and oppressed at all levels of society. No consistent measures against exploitation, oppression, and the destruction of ecosystems can be imposed without a balance of power based on this self-organization. Self-emancipation is not only our goal; it is also a strategy for overthrowing the established order.

New institutions must be built to deliberate, to decide democratically, to organize production and the whole of society. These new powers will have to confront the capitalist state machine, which must be broken. The overthrow of the social order, the expropriation of the capitalists, will inevitably come up against the violent, armed response of the ruling classes. Faced with this violence, the exploited and the oppressed will have no choice but to defend themselves, it will be a question of democratically self-organizing legitimate violence while refusing virilism and substitutionism.

Everything depends on the outcomes of the struggles. No matter how deep the disaster, at every stage, the struggles will make the difference. Within them, everything depends on the ability of ecosocialist activists to organize in order to orient themselves in practice according to the compass of a historically necessary option. Reflecting and acting, building struggles and tools of struggle, comparing experiences and learning from them: the international implementation of this immense task requires a political tool, a new International of the exploited and oppressed. Through this Manifesto, the Fourth International expresses its readiness to help meet this

challenge.

Adopted by the World Congress February 2025

Notes

1 We use the term “Global South” to describe dependent countries, dominated countries, and peripheral countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We use all these expressions to refer to the same reality. We do not include in the Global South countries like China, Russia, the oil monarchies, or substantially autonomous middle powers like India, etc., which occupy a specific place in the global capitalist system of domination and cannot be considered “dominated”.

2 Terawatt-hour (1 TWh = 1 billion kWh). This energy unit is used to measure the electricity production of a power plant (a few TWh) or a nation state. A kilowatt hour is equivalent to a steady power of one kilowatt running for one hour and is equivalent to 3.6 million joules or 3.6 megajoules.

3 This rebound effect is also known as “Jevons’ paradox”.

2023 was hottest year on record, close to 1.5°C

Every day was over a degree above the pre-industrial level, *writes the Climate & Capitalism blog.*

The European Commission’s Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) says 2023 was the first year on with all days over 1°C warmer than the pre-industrial period.

Unprecedented global temperatures from June onwards led 2023

to become the warmest year on record – overtaking by a large margin 2016, the previous warmest year. The 2023 Global Climate Highlights report presents a general summary of 2023's most relevant climate extremes and the main drivers behind them.

C3S Director Carlo Buontempo comments:

"The extremes we have observed over the last few months provide a dramatic testimony of how far we now are from the climate in which our civilization developed. This has profound consequences for the Paris Agreement and all human endeavor's. If we want to successfully manage our climate risk portfolio, we need to urgently decarbonize our economy whilst using climate data and knowledge to prepare for the future."

Global surface air temperature highlights

- 2023 is confirmed as the warmest calendar year in global temperature data records going back to 1850.
- 2023 had a global average temperature of 14.98°C, 0.17°C higher than the previous highest annual value in 2016.
- 2023 was 0.60°C warmer than the 1991-2020 average and 1.48°C warmer than the 1850-1900 pre-industrial level.
- It is likely that a 12-month period ending in January or February 2024 will exceed 1.5°C above the pre-industrial level.
- 2023 marks the first time on record that every day within a year has exceeded 1°C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial level. Close to 50% of days were more than 1.5°C warmer then the 1850-1900 level, and two days in November were, for the first time, more than 2°C warmer.
- Annual average air temperatures were the warmest on record, or close to the warmest, over sizeable parts of all ocean basins and all continents except Australia.
- Each month from June to December in 2023 was warmer than the corresponding month in any previous year.
- July and August 2023 were the warmest two months on

record. Boreal summer (June-August) was also the warmest season on record.
- September 2023 was the month with a temperature deviation above the 1991–2020 average larger than any month in the ERA5 dataset.
- December 2023 was the warmest December on record globally, with an average temperature of 13.51°C, 0.85°C above the 1991-2020 average and 1.78°C above the 1850-1900 level for the month. You can access information specific for December 2023 in our monthly bulletin.

Ocean surface temperature highlights

- Global average sea surface temperatures (SSTs) remained persistently and unusually high, reaching record levels for the time of year from April through December.
- 2023 saw a transition to El Niño. In spring 2023, La Niña came to an end and El Niño conditions began to develop, with the WMO declaring the onset of El Niño in early July.
- High SSTs in most ocean basins, and in particular in the North Atlantic, played an important role in the record-breaking global SSTs.
- The unprecedented SSTs were associated with marine heatwaves around the globe, including in parts of the Mediterranean, Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and North Pacific, and much of the North Atlantic.

European temperature highlights

- 2023 was the second-warmest year for Europe, at 1.02°C above the 1991-2020 average, 0.17°C cooler than 2020, the warmest year on record.
- Temperatures in Europe were above average for 11 months during 2023 and September was the warmest September on record.
- European winter (December 2022 – February 2023) was the

second-warmest winter on record.
- The average temperature for the European summer (June-August) was 19.63°C; at 0.83°C above average, it was the fifth-warmest on record.
- European autumn (September-November) had an average temperature of 10.96°C, which is 1.43°C above average. This made autumn the second-warmest on record, just 0.03°C cooler than autumn 2020.

Other remarkable highlights

- 2023 was remarkable for Antarctic sea ice: it reached record low extents for the corresponding time of the year in 8 months. Both the daily and monthly extents reached all-time minima in February 2023.
- Arctic sea ice extent at its annual peak in March ranked amongst the four lowest for the time of the year in the satellite record. The annual minimum in September was the sixth-lowest.
- The atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane continued to increase and reached record levels in 2023, reaching 419 ppm and 1902 ppb respectively. Carbon dioxide concentrations in 2023 were 2.4 ppm higher than in 2022 and methane concentrations increased by 11 ppb.
- A large number of extreme events were recorded across the globe, including heatwaves, floods, droughts and wildfires. Estimated global wildfire carbon emissions in 2023 increased by 30% with respect to 2022 driven largely by persistent wildfires in Canada, greenhouse gas concentrations, El Niño and other natural variations.

First published by Climate & Capitalism: https://climateandcapitalism.com/2024/01/09/2023-was-hottest-year-on-record-close-to-1-5c/

The Hydrogen Economy – yet another mirage

Sean Thompson writes on Red Green Labour:

Over the past few years, much has been made (particularly by fossil fuel industry lobbyists) of the potential for the development of a 'hydrogen economy'. The great attraction of hydrogen to the proponents of the status quo, whether Tory or Labour, is that it feeds into their fantasies about 'green growth' – a lower carbon version of business as usual. Hydrogen, it is claimed, could replace fossil fuels as an energy source, not only for energy intensive heavy industries like steel and glass production but also for powering cars, public transport, aviation and home heating. However, as the estimable Ben Goldacre said of other sensational claims "I think you'll find it's more complicated than that."

Hydrogen comes in three colours:

- Grey: Hydrogen produced from a natural gas feedstock.
- Blue: Hydrogen produced from a natural gas feedstock with capture of the by-product CO2.
- Green: Hydrogen produced by splitting water molecules through electrolysis using renewable energy sources

According to the International Energy Agency, 95 million tonnes (Mt) of hydrogen is produced worldwide and 99% is 'grey'. In 2022, hydrogen production generated more than 900 Mt of CO2 emissions – more than the entire global aviation industry footprint of almost 800 Mt. At the same time, less than 0.1 per cent of the world's hydrogen production (less than 0.08 Mt) was green hydrogen.

In the run-up to COP28, its president, Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology of the United Arab Emirates and head of theAbu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), repeatedly urged agreement by governments to almost double current global hydrogen production from 95 Mt to 180 Mt per year by 2030. Reaching that goal with green hydrogen would require a 2,068-fold production increase in seven years. This is, to say the least, a highly unlikely scenario, so the reality would be a massive boom in grey hydrogen and good news for ADNOC and the rest of the fossil fuel industry.

The idea that green hydrogen can replace the energy currently provided by fossil fuels for most transport and for domestic heating/cooling is fanciful in the extreme. Even more fanciful is the suggestion currently being promoted by aviation industry lobbyists that hydrogen might be used to power zero carbon flying, either by using it to manufacture yet to be discovered 'alternative' aviation fuels or via hydrogen fuel cells for electrically powered aircraft.

- A kilogram of hydrogen – the unit of measurement most often used – has an energy value of about 33.3 kWh.So a tonne of hydrogen delivers about 33 MWh and a million tonnes about 33 terawatt hours (TWh). To provide a sense of scale, the UK uses about 300 TWh of electricity a year.
- Many estimates of the eventual demand for hydrogen are of at least 500 Mt. A world that requires 500 Mt of hydrogen will need to produce 22,000 TWh of green electricity a year just for this purpose. 22,000 TWh is roughly equivalent to 15% of total world primary energy demand, and today's global production from all wind and solar farms is a little more than 10% of this figure.
- A huge global increase in green energy generation capacity will thus be needed to produce 500Mt of hydrogen. As an example of the scale of of increase needed, for every gigawatt of capacity, a well-sited

North Sea wind farm will provide about 4,400 GWh a year, or 4.4 TWh. At a future efficiency level of about 75%, this will produce around 100,000 tonnes of hydrogen. Therefore most of the UK's current North Sea wind output from 13 GW of wind would be needed to make just one million tonnes of H2.

- The amount of electrolysis capacity required to make 500 million tonnes of hydrogen a year depends on how many hours a year that the electrolysers work and how efficient they are. If we assume an average of about 60% of the time, at a prospective 75% efficiency level, then the world will need around 4,500 gigawatts of electrolysis capacity – about five hundred times what is currently in place.

While the creation of such a vast new industry is clearly possible over a period of time, particularly if such an huge initiative isn't left to the hidden hand of the market or the not so hidden hands of the fossil fuel industry, it is clearly not possible in the time left to us to avoid global catastrophe. Nonetheless, the use of hydrogen and the development of green hydrogen production capacity will be essential if we are to move to a zero carbon economy – but because the supply of truly clean hydrogen is going to be limited – certainly for the next two or three decades – it should be prioritised for uses where there are no alternatives.

In an analysis for Bloomberg in 2020, Michael Liebreich pointed out that hydrogen has serious limitations in many applications:

"as an energy storage medium, it has only a 50% round-trip efficiency – far worse than batteries. As a source of work, fuel cells, turbines and engines are only 60% efficient – far worse than electric motors – and far more complex. As a source of heat, hydrogen costs four times as much as natural gas. As a way of transporting energy, hydrogen pipelines cost three

times as much as power lines, and ships and trucks are even worse."…"What this means is that hydrogen's role in the final energy mix of a future net-zero emissions world will be to do things that cannot be done more simply, cheaply and efficiently by the direct use of clean electricity and batteries"

The [UK] Government's own Climate Change Committee (CCC) analysis in their [6th Carbon Budget Report](), showed that hydrogen production is not the best use of renewable energy if it can be used in other ways, thus we should only use hydrogen where it is near-impossible to reduce demand or use electricity directly. As a leading analyst at CCC has put it: *"In our view, you should be looking to electrify wherever you can. Where that's prohibitively expensive , or where that's not feasible, that's the role that you're looking for hydrogen."*



The EU Energy Cities network has actually put together [a hierarchy of uses for hydrogen]()(see graphic) which seems a good starting point. *A* is use by energy intensive heavy industrial processes needing high temperature heat like steel, chemicals or glass, *B* is grid-level storage – storing otherwise 'waste' energy produced by off shore wind during periods of low electricity demand, *C, D* and *E* for powering heavy transport – shipping, trains and buses/HGVs respectively. Way down at *F* and *G* are hydrogen fuel cells for cars and home heating. Speculative technologies like synthetic aviation fuel don't even figure on the list.

It's important that an incoming Labour [UK] government doesn't commit to high cost options involving blue – or even grey –

hydrogen, which would suit the gas industry, but which would do little or nothing to reduce CO2 emissions. And it's equally important that governments realise that, whilst green hydrogen is vital, it will not be available in infinite quantities and isn't going to be a panacea for all the delivery challenges and investments that need to be made across buildings, transport and industry.

Despite this, both Tory and Labour politicians, along with a rag bag of lobbyists for various techno-fix solutions, from nuclear to carbon capture and sequestration and the wilder regions of geo-engineering, try to avoid the reality that there are no silver bullets that will somehow exempt capitalism from the laws of physics.

For example, in 2020, the Tory [UK] government launched its 'Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution', which included a commitment to investing up to £500m in new hydrogen technologies. It claimed that the energy produced could be used *"to carry on living our lives, running our cars, buses, trucks and trains, ships and planes, and heating our homes while keeping bills low."* It announced that as part of a trial of hydrogen heating, two 'hydrogen villages' of around 1,000-2,000 homes, in Whitby, near Ellesmere Port and Redcar, Teeside, where the homes would be converted to hydrogen for heating instead of natural gas. In July this year, the plans for the Whitby pilot were abandoned in the face of local opposition and in December the proposed Redcar pilot was also scrapped. This leaves National Grid's £32m pilot project in Fife, where about 300 homes in Methil and neighbouring Buckhaven in Levenmouth were due to be converted from natural gas to hydrogen next year, as only remaining attempt in the UK by energy industry to show that hydrogen is a viable (and cost effective) alternative to natural gas for domestic heating. Unsurprisingly, the project is much delayed and the are doubts whether it will actually get going. Ofgem has warned that *"delay in the commencement of this project would*

materially impact the evidence base for an energy system transition to hydrogen as a means of decarbonising heat and industry".

Capitalism, dependent as it is on the constant and infinite expansion of the production of commodities, is being forced by the inescapable reality of climate change to move from denial to a (partial) recognition of the terrible price that humanity and the planet as a whole is beginning to have to pay. However, its enthusiasm for the mirage of 'green growth' is making it grab more and more desperately at technological straws – some of which, like green hydrogen, have the potential to actually play a valuable, if limited, role in combatting global heating.

Originally published on Red Green Labour: https://redgreenlabour.org/2024/01/01/the-hydrogen-economy-yet-another-mirage/

The UK's suicidal Rosebank decision – Scotland needs a stronger response

Rishi Sunak's scandalous decision to go ahead with the exploitation of the Rosebank oil and gas field, alongside Keir Starmer's cringe-worthy non-response – 'yes, we're opposed but no, we won't do anything about it' – has left the Scottish government and the SNP with an open goal. Unfortunately, Humza Yousaf and his Net Zero and Just Transition minister, Mairi McAllan, are being so careful not to blast the ball over the bar, they seem reluctant to kick it at all.

The desire seems to be there, sort of. After weeks of edging himself off the fence on the issue, the First Minister did say this was the wrong decision. Mairi McAllan said the same. The Scottish government's Energy Secretary, Neil Gray, said, rather tamely, that the SNP administration was "disappointed" while pointing out, correctly, that Rosebank would not contribute to 'energy security', as most of the oil produced would be sold abroad. In fact, Equinor, the Norwegian state oil company that has been given the go-ahead to exploit Rosebank, was more forceful in its dismissal of the bogus argument about energy security used by the Tory government in London and the oil lobby in Scotland. It said if the UK wanted any of the oil it plans to extract from Rosebank, it would have to buy it on the open world market.

The sound of opposition from SNP ministers is a lot weaker than that coming from Caroline Lucas, still the only Green MP in Westminster, who called it "morally obscene" and "a climate crime", or from the Scottish Green Party, the SNP's partner in the Scottish government, whose spokesman, Mark Ruskell, called it an "utter catastrophe" that showed "total contempt for our environment and future generations".

The day after the announcement, Mairi McAllan told the BBC's Good Morning Scotland that the Scottish government had had "long-standing concerns" about Rosebank and had been "calling for a very strict climate compatibility test, an evidence-led test, to be applied". When quizzed on what evidence was needed, she said there were a series of things that needed to be evaluated: firstly, whether it was in line with both Scotland and the UK's climate commitments, including to the Paris Agreement and its goal of keeping global warming within 1.5 degrees Celsius; but also to things like energy security and the rights of workers in the northeast of Scotland.

We may agree these are vital concerns (although what exactly was meant by energy security could be controversial). However, insisting on them now seems pointless, unless it is just a

rhetorical device to avoid saying clearly that no oil or gas should be extracted from Rosebank, or any other new field in the North Sea or elsewhere. We already know because we have been told, endlessly, by the scientists of the UN's IPCC, by the International Energy Agency, and by Antonio Guterres himself, not to mention the climate justice movement across the world and thousands of representatives and experts from the Global South, that staying within the 1.5 limit is simply incompatible with any new oil or coal extraction, and that we also have to phase out, rapidly, the wells and mines that are currently operating.

Most recently and conclusively, we have also been told by the very oil company responsible (as we mentioned before) that Rosebank and any other new North Sea fossil fuel production will contribute more or less zero to any kind of energy security. And although there are many, justified fears among workers in the northeast, oil workers themselves have told researchers that they want to be involved in a just transition away from fossil fuels. Some of them have begun to push for that themselves and to design what it might look like, through the important Our Power campaign.

The SNP government's problem is that it feels unable, or unwilling, to confront the oil lobbies or its right wing. It's unclear if the suspension of the right-wing, anti-Green, anti-woke MSP, Fergus Ewing, might signal a small shift in this respect. But the roots of such reluctance run deeper. They flow from the party's history and its character – as a nationalist party caught between its genuine, social democratic desire to build a fairer, more decent country, that seeks to combat poverty and exclusion at home and deal decently with migrants, the Global South and the planet, and its refusal to challenge or even query the iron laws of the market economy. The latter is cemented by its yearning to become a junior outpost of the supposedly progressive, European capitalist class.

This has been accentuated since the bruising leadership campaign at the beginning of the year, when Kate Forbes' explicitly right-wing, business-first, climate-light campaign came within a whisper of beating Humza Yousaf as bearer of the legacy of former First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon.

The police investigation into the party's accounts a few weeks later, with the formal questioning of Sturgeon's husband and then herself, drove the process further. Whatever the reality, if any, behind the case, it was certainly used to try to discredit the SNP as a whole and to push the new Yousaf administration to the right.

Ironically, the central target of that campaign, Nicola Sturgeon herself, has come out more strongly against the Rosebank go-ahead than her proteges. She tweeted her agreement with Caroline Lucas calling the approval an act of environmental vandalism, and saying risks slowing the green transition that oil and gas workers need to happen at pace.

The fact is that a sizeable majority of people in Scotland want their government to take urgent action to combat climate change. And despite its constrained powers under devolution, there is a lot it can do too. Taking a clear, unequivocal stand against Rosebank and any other new fossil fuel projects in the North Sea would be a start. It would be one way of marking a clear difference with the pusillanimous position of Starmer's Labour leadership and might even help win the crucial Rutherglen election.

More strategically, that stance against any new oil and gas needs to be clearly stated in the Scottish government's long-overdue response to the public consultation on its seriously inadequate Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan, and built into its new Climate Change Plan, due to be published in November.

It should look at how it can use its existing powers – in

areas like planning, transport, and health – to wage a guerrilla campaign against the implementation of new fossil fuel extraction.

And it could put in serious doubt the long-term viability of investments like those of Equinor, if it promised that any government of an independent Scotland would make a priority of nationalising and closing down Rosebank and any other new fields, without compensation.

Such bold action may seem unlikely, unless there is some serious pressure pushing in this direction.

We could all take courage from the historic success of the *Yes to Yasuni* campaign in Ecuador, led by environmentalists and the powerful Indigenous movement, which persuaded nearly 60% of the population to vote in August in favour of mandating their government to leave the oil in the soil beneath the mega-diverse Amazonian rainforest.

Iain Bruce

28 September, 2023

Photo: Steve Eason

Friends of the Earth Scotland

video brilliantly exposes Carbon Capture greenwashing

> *How the oil industry is pushing Carbon Capture greenwashing pic.twitter.com/bSR8oilicy*
>
> *— Friends of the Earth Scotland (@FoEScot) July 31, 2023*

Uprising: the October Rebellion in Ecuador – Book launch Glasgow & Grangemouth Weds 12 July, online Monday 10 July

*ecosocialist.scot is pleased to be working with Resistance Books, Anti*Capitalist Resistance, and other organisations to bring the authors of*

Uprising: the October Rebellion in Ecuador

Leonidas Iza, Andres Tapia and Andres Madrid to Britain in July 2023.

PDF version of info below >>> here

Wednesday 12 July Grangemouth 8pm

The big public event will be at the opening session of **Climate Camp Scotland at Grangemouth on Wednesday 12 July at 8pm**. (This is approximately four miles from Falkirk, 25 miles from Glasgow/Edinburgh, 50 miles from Dundee). In order to attend this you will need to **register** with Climate Camp Scotland – details are >>> here

Wednesday 12 July Glasgow STUC offices 3pm-4.30pm

A meeting will also be held **on Wednesday 12 July from 3pm-4.30pm** at the offices of Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC), 8 Landressy Street, Bridgeton, Glasgow G40 1BP (Google Maps). Public Transport – nearest station: Bridgeton, 5 mins from Glasgow Central/Argyle Street; Bus 18, 46, 64, 263 (SPT Journey Planner).

This meeting is kindly hosted by STUC and will particularly focus on Trade Union Solidarity and Climate Justice issues.

Monday 10 July Online/London 7pm

The visit to Britain kicks off with a public meeting and book launch in London on **Monday 10 July** that will also be available to watch and participate online. In person details: Lumen Community Centre, 88 Tavistock Pl, London WC1H 9RS and on zoom https://bit.ly/ecuadorbkregister

Meeting sponsored by Resistance Books, War on Want, Global Justice Now, the Climate Justice Coalition as part of the We Make Tomorrow series, Plan C, and Anti*Capitalist Resistance

Buy the book >>> here

Organised by Resistance Books

About the book

UPRISING is a detailed description and analysis of the Indigenous-led uprising of October 2019 in Ecuador, written by three people deeply involved in the revolt. The lead author, Leonidas Iza, came to national prominence as one of the central leaders of the rebellion. On the final day of the paro, when the movement forced the government of Lenin Moreno to withdraw Decree 883 and accede to live televised talks with the leaders of CONAIE, the main Indigenous umbrella organisation, it was Leonidas Iza who tore apart the arguments of the finance minister in front of the nation, giving him a master class in the implications of neoliberal economics and the government's deal with the IMF.

About the authors

***Leonidas Iza** is President of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), and is the best-known of a new generation of Indigenous leaders in Ecuador. He emerged as one of the central leaders of the October uprising, when he was President of the Cotopaxi Indigenous and Campesino Movement.*

***Andrés Tapia** is Head of Communications at the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuadorean Amazonia.*

***Andrés Madrid** teaches at the Central University of Ecuador. He is the author of In search of the spark on the prairie. The revolutionary subject in the thought of the left intellectuality in Ecuador.*

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1. *Foreword, Michael Löwy*
2. *Prologue, Leonidas Iza, Andrés Tapia, and Andrés Madrid*
3. *Preface: Back to October, Hernán Ouviña*
4. *Introduction*
5. *Imminence: Background, accumulated experience and*

rupture

6. *Awakening, determination, struggle and resistance*
7. *Impact: lessons, debates and perspectives*
8. *Epilogue: Our day-to-day October*
9. *Appendix: Platform for the 'Campaign of Escalating Struggle'*

Recommendations

The October 2019 rising in Ecuador was a sign of things to come, as estallidos, or uprisings, erupted later in Chile and Colombia. They represented a "people in movement" – the construction of a new kind of power from below, the merging of new forms of popular resistance with historic expressions of indigenous rebellion, all reflected in the collective voice of rebellion which this remarkable book presents. In the course of those October days, as one speaker puts it, "the everyday became extraordinary", and a different future beckoned. ***Mike Gonzales,*** *Emeritus Professor of Latin American Studies, Glasgow University*

This book is an account of a semi-revolutionary confrontation, written by one of its key protagonists, Leonidas Iza, who is now arguably the most important Indigenous leader in Latin America, and two of his comrades. It combines a detailed, first-hand account of what happened, with a profound, Marxist analysis of why and how, and what social movements and the ecosocialist left can learn from it. Unmissable! ***Iain Bruce,*** *journalist and writer, former head of news at teleSUR TV*



Climate Change Committee Report – None of this is Working

Mike Small, editor of Bella Caledonia, reports on the latest report of the government's Committee on Climate Change and exposes the latest incarnation of climate denialism and pandemic disinformation at the heart of Westminster.

John Gummer's latest (and last) Committee on Climate Change report has just dropped and it's damning. It says we're falling behind and nowhere close to enough on all fronts in tackling the climate crisis and this is caused by the total vacuum of political leadership at the heart of the British government. The headlines are: "UK has made 'no progress' on climate plan, say government's own advisers".

Incredibly fewer homes were insulated last year under the

government-backed scheme than the year before, despite soaring energy bills and a cost of living crisis. There is pitiful progress on transport emissions, and no coherent programme for behaviour change (there's a surprise).

The report also found:

The number of homes receiving energy efficiency improvements under the government's Energy Company Obligation scheme more than halved, from 383,700 in 2021 to 159,600 in 2022. At least 1m to 2m homes should be upgraded each year to meet net zero.

Homes are still being built that will need to be retrofitted with low-carbon heating and efficiency measures, because the government has not yet brought in its promised future homes standard.

No decision on whether to use hydrogen for home heating will be made until 2026, leaving households and boiler companies in complete limbo.

Emissions from transport have remained "stubbornly high" as the government has "made a political choice" to allow an increase in road traffic, instead of encouraging people on to public transport.

There is no clear policy to decarbonise steel production, or emissions from other heavy industries.

In a letter from Lord Deben (Gummer), Chairman of the Climate Change Committee, to Rishi Sunak about the 2023 Progress Report he bemoaned "The failure to act decisively in response to the energy crisis and build on the success of hosting COP26 means that the UK has lost its clear global climate leadership." This idea of the success of COP26 or of Britain's 'climate leadership' is a Tory myth and an appeal to national hubris. He also complained about the 'Inaction has been compounded by continuing support for further unnecessary investment in fossil fuels.' Like, No Shit Sherlock.

The illusion of action, the mythology that meaningful change is underway is laid bare.

Climate Denialism and Pandemic Disinformation

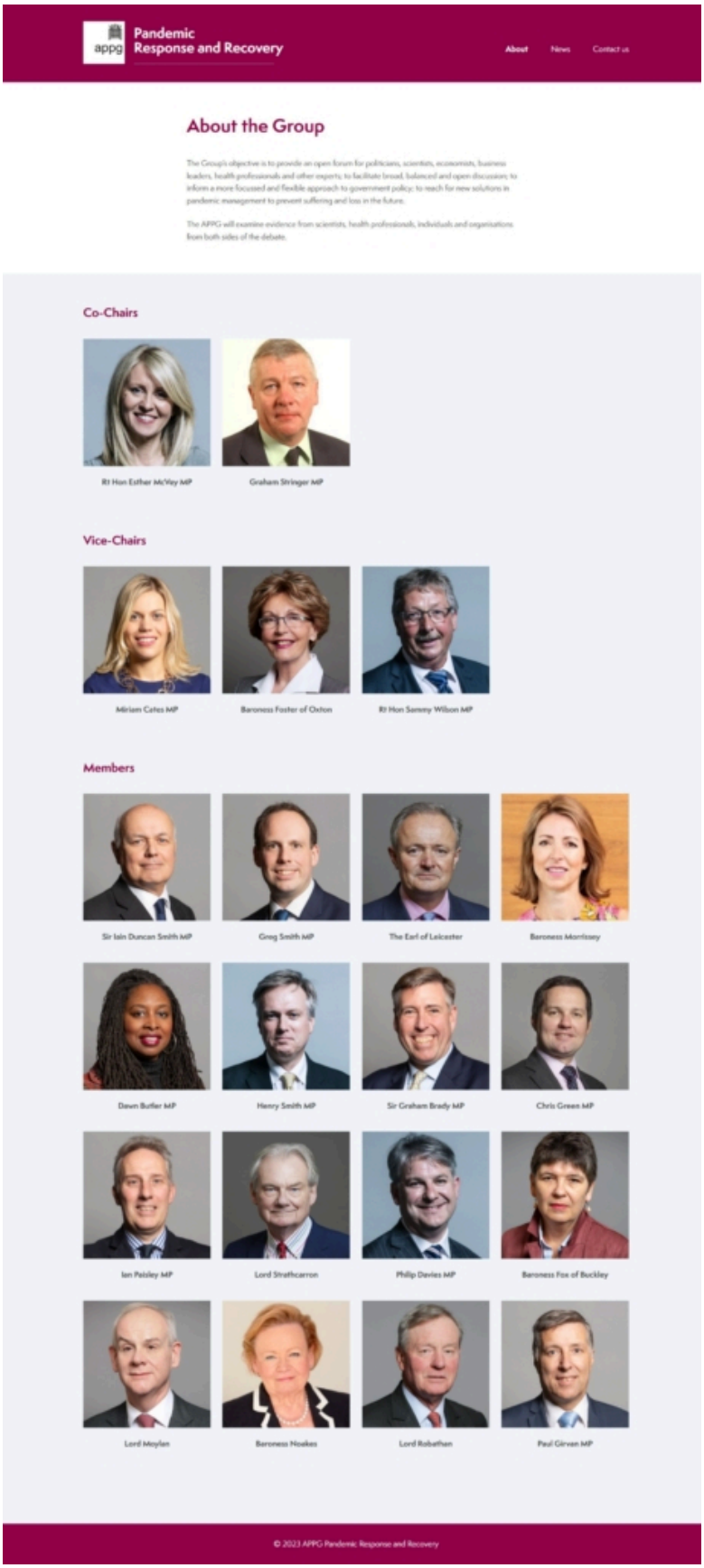
Meanwhile (h/t to Leo Hickman) a letter to the Daily Telegraph has revealed for the first time the names and numbers of the tiny grouping of climate-sceptic UK parliamentarians who call themselves the "Net Zero Scrutiny Group". There's no surprises:

Craig Mackinlay MP (Con)
Sir Iain Duncan-Smith MP (Con)
Sir Jacob Rees-Mogg MP (Con)
Lord Frost (Con)
Esther McVey MP (Con)
Sir John Redwood (Con)
Dame Andrea Jenkyns (Con)
Sir Robert Syms (Con)
Mark Francois (Con)
David Jones (Con)
Kelly Tolhurst (Con)
Sammy Wilson (DUP)
Andrew Lewer (Con)
Jack Brereton (Con)
Miriam Cates (Con)
Chris Green (Con)
Jonathan Gullis (Con)
Philip Hollobone (Con)
Adam Holloway (Con)
Julian Knight (Ind)
Marco Longhi (Con)
Karl McCartney (Con)
Holly Mumby-Croft (Con)
Philip Davies (Con)
Bob Seely (Con)
Greg Smith (Con)
Andrew Bridgen (Reclaim)
Scott Benton (Ind)
Baroness Foster of Oxton (Con)
Baroness Lea of Lymm (Con)
Lord Lilley (Con)
Lord Moylan (Con)
Lord Strathcarron (Con)

The Telegraph splashed with a front-page 'scoop' from the "Net Zero Scrutiny Group" clearly designed to distract from the Committee on Climate Change's damning report But as John Bye has pointed out there's an interesting crossover between the

Net Zero Scrutiny Group and the All-Party Parliamentary Group ‘Pandemic Response and Recovery’.

This crossover includes such luminaries as Esther McVey (Chair), Sammy Wilson (Vice Chair), Iain Duncan Smith, Baroness Foster of Oxton, and Lord Strathcarron.



The APPG group has some interesting backers. As Byline Times reported the group is “being funded and managed by Collateral Global – the successor organisation to the ‘Great Barrington

Declaration' (GBD), established by two of its co-founders, Oxford epidemiologist Professor Sunetra Gupta and Ministry of Defence contractor Alex Caccia."

"The GBD is a pandemic disinformation group backed by the Koch climate science denial network, known for promoting a 'herd immunity by natural infection' approach to the Coronavirus crisis."



Support from HART and Climate Science Deniers

The APPG has also received PR support from the Health Advisory and Recovery Group (HART), which harbours a range of conspiratorial anti-vaxxer views about the pandemic – including the idea that Coronavirus death certificates are fake, that deaths are really being caused by vaccines rather than COVID, and that the both the disease and vaccines are part of a global depopulation conspiracy by elites.

A press release announcing the creation of the APPG was sent out by Jemma Moran – HART's head of communications.

Baroness Foster was conferred a Life Peerage after a nomination by Prime Minister Boris Johnson as part of the 2020 Political Honours. In January 2021, she was elevated to the Lords as Baroness Foster of Oxton. Not to be confused with Baroness Fox (aka Claire Fox, aka Claire Foster), also a great

Koch enthusiast, also present.

This convergence between the far-right, libertarian conspiracism and climate denialism is not a coincidence.

The APPG also include Labour MP Graham Stringer who is a trustee of the Koch-connected Global Warming Policy Foundation, Britain's most prominent climate science denial lobby group which takes funds from fossil fuels companies.

Stringer has denied the IPCC's conclusion that humans are the dominant cause of current climate change. So has his colleague in the APPG, the DUP's Sammy Wilson, that human-induced climate change is a "myth based on dodgy science".

Today's revelations will be no real new news to anyone. We all knew this anyway, but now it's official, laid out by the government's own committee. While we are led to believe that progress is being made and everything is in hand, the government is actually going backwards, introducing anti-climate policies so that nothing can change.

28 June 2023

Mike Small

Republished from: https://bellacaledonia.org.uk/2023/06/28/none-of-this-is-working/

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Scottish Government Energy Strategy – what's wrong with it and what we need to change

The public consultation on the Scottish Government's Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan ends on **Tuesday 9 May 2023**, *writes Iain Bruce*.

That means responding to it will be one of the first big tasks for the new leader of the SNP and Scotland's new First Minister.

The deeply disappointing consultation document was published on 10 January after a year or more's delay. It fails to build on the recent positive steps taken by Nicola Sturgeon towards opposing any more oil and gas extraction from the North Sea – after she came out against Shell's proposed Cambo oilfield following the mass protests in Glasgow at COP26 in November 2021.

The consultation document reiterates, at great length, the SNP Government's obsession with false 'techno-fixes' to the climate crisis, in particular hydrogen and carbon capture and storage. It ignores the pressure from environmental organisations and some offshore oil workers and their unions, for a just transition to renewable energy that is led by the communities and workers most affected. And it is partly at odds with the positive steps taken by Sturgeon herself and the outgoing SNP administration, through their initiatives on 'Loss and Damage', to recognise that a just transition must be just for the global south too.

In the coming weeks we need to build maximum pressure on the

government to change the most negative aspects of this draft strategy.

The interview below with Mary Church of Friends of the Earth Scotland, for the Rising Clyde Climate Justice show on Independence Live, gives a lot of important context and background for such a campaign.

However, it is also important, for the climate justice movement in Scotland and for the radical forces in the independence movement, to understand and challenge the deeper contradiction that underpins this energy strategy, as it does almost all the Scottish government's economic policy. This is its attempt to combine progressive, humane and necessary steps on a number of environmental and social issues, with an inability or refusal to question the underlying systemic factors which hinder such action, and makes it necessary in the first place – in other words its unwillingness to challenge the priorities of the free market.

Link to Video:

Also on Facebook:

Rising Clyde Episode 10: Scotland's Energy Strategy- leading the way or sitting on the fence? | We talk to Mary Church of Friends of the Earth Scotland, about the Scottish government's new Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan – where it needs to… | By Independence Live | Facebook

7 March, 2023 (YouTube link added 10 March 2023)

COP27 was a spectacular failure – boycotting future COP conferences, however, would only compound the problem

Alan Thornett offers his thoughts on a troubling end to COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh.

COP27, the 27th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, held last month in Sharm El-Sheikh to confront the planetary emergency caused by climate change, failed spectacularly in the face of the most challenging set of circumstances a COP conference had faced since the Framework Convention was launched at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

It faced a critical situation from the outset, both in terms of the global geopolitical situation today arising from Putin's invasion of Ukraine and the stage that has been reached in the implementation of the UN COP process itself.

Only a last-minute agreement to establish a "loss and damage" (or "reparations") fund into which the rich countries, which are the most responsible for climate change, would subscribe to help the poor countries, which are the least responsible for global warming, minimise and mitigate the impact of climate change and transition to renewable energy saved COP27 from total ignominy.

Prior to the COP, UN Secretary General António Guterres had argued strongly for such an agreement, warning that unless there is what he called an "historic pact" between the rich and poor countries on this issue, the planet could already be

doomed.

The creation of such a fund had been scandalously kept off the agenda by the rich countries for 30 years and was only forced onto it this year after heavy pressure from the developing countries. There was no agreement, however, as to how much money should be paid into it, who should pay it, or on what basis. It was still a step forward, but it was the only one that could be claimed at this conference.

Arguments will continue about the size of the fund and which countries will benefit, and there is a proposal to ask the International Panel on Climate Change (the IPCC) to prepare a recommendation for the COP28 next year in Dubai in the UAE.

When it came to carbon emissions reduction, however, COP27 was an unmitigated disaster.

The UN carbon emissions reduction plan—the so-called "ratcheting up" process adopted at COP21 in Paris in 2015—which required *each member state to determine its own carbon reduction target—or* "Nationally Determined Contributions"—and then enhance them annually at implementation conferences that would be held for that purpose—had fallen apart before the conference was open.

Exactly what happened is not clear. What is clear is that the pledges made in Sharm El-Sheikh, far from building on those made in Glasgow, were well behind those made there, and that the process had suffered a disastrous retreat.

The energy debate

The general debate on energy was also a disaster. Not only had the Egyptian Presidency produced a draft text that blatantly favoured the oil and gas petro-states and the fossil fuel industries in the region, but it had also opened the door to the biggest contingent of fossil fuel lobbyists that a COP

conference had ever seen. All the world's biggest oil and gas producers were there in force, and they used it to the full. Saudi Arabia (no less) ran an event to promote the "circular carbon economy," under which carbon capture, hydrogen, and other bogus technologies were scandalously presented as clean.

A major target for them was the 1.5°C maximum temperature increase that had also been agreed in Paris. The session dealing with this became so heated that the EU threatened to walk out at one point if the 1.5°C maximum was not protected. Although a reference to 1.5 °C has remained in the final text, the language is ambiguous and widely regarded as unreliable.

The agreement in Glasgow, which for the first time named (and shamed) coal, gas, and oil as major threats to the future of the planet and additionally, in the case of coal, fixed a date for ending its use altogether, was also under attack. In the end, Saudi Arabia and other petro-states, along with China, Russia, and Brazil, who had been campaigning for their removal, were able to get rid of it. Fossil fuels that had been declared obsolete or obsolecent in Glasgow had been rehabilitated in Sharm el-Sheikh. To add insult to injury, the conference agreed to define natural gas as a renewable energy source.

Alok Sharma, no less, the UK's (Boris Johnson appointed) president of COP26, recently sacked from the cabinet by Sunak—but who appears to have become more strongly committed to the cause having been appointed as a stop-gap—was visibly outraged by what had happened to the energy text and lambasted the conference in the closing session:

> *"Those of us who came to Egypt to keep 1.5C alive, and to respect what every single one of us agreed to in Glasgow, have had to fight relentlessly here to hold the line. We have had to battle to build on one of the key achievements of Glasgow, including the call on parties to revisit and strengthen their "Nationally Determined Contributions.*

Repeatedly banging the table, he said:

> *"We joined with many parties to propose a number of measures that would have contributed to this. Emissions peaking before 2025, as the science tells us is necessary – NOT IN THIS TEXT. A clear follow-through on the phase down of coal – NOT IN THIS TEXT. A commitment to phase out all fossil fuels – NOT IN THIS TEXT. The energy text, he said had been weakened in the final minutes of the conference to endorse "low-emissions energy", which can be interpreted as a reference to natural gas.*

The result is a disaster and will directly lead to more death, destruction, poverty, and people having to leave their homes. Climate events become ever more severe as constraints on carbon emissions are lifted. It will speed up the arrival of tipping points that can take climate chaos out of control—possibly disastrously so. It will also give succour to the climate deniers and offset the defeats they suffered in Paris and Glasgow.

It's true that this COP27 faced very difficult conditions. Putin's war triggered an obscene scramble back to fossil energy when it is abundantly clear the only answer to either the economic or the environmental crisis is a rapid transition to renewable energy, which is getting cheaper all the time. The UK government immediately issued 90 new gas and oil extraction licences for the North Sea and is seeking an agreement to import large quantities of fracked natural gas from the USA.

Putin's war, however, was there long before COP27, and the Egyptian organisers did nothing to counter it. In fact, they cynically exploited it for their own ends in order to get emissions restrictions lifted or watered down.

So where do we (and the movement) go from here?

One thing that must be avoided as a result of all of this is a boycott of future COP conferences or the entire COP process by either the radical left or the wider movement. It would simply compound the problem. It was being discussed widely before Sharm El-Sheikh, and it has continued since, both within the radical left and in the broader movement. Gretta Thunburg called for it before Sharm El-Sheikh, and George Monbiot advocates it in his November 24 Guardian article.

A boycott by the radical left would primarily be an act of self-harm (or self-isolation), whereas a boycott by the wider movement would demobilise the climate struggle at a critical juncture. Most climate campaigns and NGOs would refuse to follow such a call anyway. The front-line countries certainly would do so because they see the COP process, with all its problems, as their only chance of survival. That is why they mount such ferocious battles at every COP conference.

There has also been a major change in the climate struggle since the 2015 Paris Accords. This is because the job of the UN COP process has changed from agreeing on a plan to cut carbon emissions (the Paris Accords) to convincing 190 countries with different political systems and vested interests to accept their responsibilities and carry them out. This is a huge task, not least given adverse global geopolitical conditions.

It is clear that the UN has failed to do this, and it is a big unresolved problem. It is important that the left and the climate movement recognise this reality. It is pointless to pretend that this problem does not exist. That they are simply refusing to act when all they would have to do if they wanted to resolve climate change is snap their fingers—which is exactly what George Monbiot argues in his Guardian article. He

puts it this way:

> *"So what do we do now? After 27 summits and no effective action, it seems that the real purpose was to keep us talking. If governments were serious about preventing climate breakdown, there would have been no Cops 2-27. The major issues would have been resolved at Cop1, as the ozone depletion crisis was at a single summit in Montreal".*

(He is referring to the 1987 UN Montreal Protocol which banned the use of ozone depleting substances in order to protect the ozone layer that was threating the future of the planet.)

This is glib in the extreme since there is absolutely no comparison between banning a substance that was easy to replace with no major consequence to anyone involved and abolishing fossil fuels, to which the planet has been addicted for 100 years and has massive vested interests behind it. If you misunderstand (or misrepresent) the scale of the problem, it is hard to contribute to its solution.

The key strategic dilemma

What we actually face is some hard strategic choices. The problem, as I argued in my first article, is that only governments—and ultimately governments prepared to go on a war footing to do so—can implement the structural changes necessary to abolish carbon emissions and transition to renewable energy in the few years that science is giving us. The radical left can't do it, the wider movement can't do it, and a mass movement can't do it—other than by forcing governments to act.

We are facing a planetary emergency. And under these conditions, it is only the UN Framework Convention—or something with a similar global reach and authority – organised on a transnational basis that is capable of

addressing the 190 individual countries that will need to be involved and convinced if it is to be effective.

In terms of the climate justice movement, it is also the only forum through which the climate movement can place pressure and demands on the global elites and around which we can build the kind of mass movement that can force them to take effective action.

A socialist revolution (unfortunately) is not just around the corner, but the task we face is time-limited. We have less than ten years to stop global warming; remember, an ecosocialist society can't build on a dead planet.

The task we face, therefore, whether it fits our plans or not or whether we like it or not, is to force the global elites (however reluctantly) to introduce the structural changes necessary to halt climate change within the timescale science is giving us, and we can't do that by turning our backs on the COP process; we can only do that by engaging with it more effectively and building a mass movement to force it to act against the logic of the capitalist system that they embrace.

What kind of mass movement?

Everyone in this debate argues that a powerful mass movement will be needed to force the change that is necessary in this struggle—including George Monbiot. It is an aspiration, however, that begs many questions. What kind of mass movement do we need? It would have to be the largest coalition of progressive forces ever assembled (because we have to save the planet), so it would not be socialist at first, a movement capable of confronting the kinds of societal breakdowns that are likely as climate impacts worsen. But how would it come to be, and how would its future path be decided?

Such a movement must include those defending the ecology and climate of the planet in any number of ways. It must include

the indigenous peoples who have been the backbone of so many of these struggles, along with the young school strikers who have been so inspirational over the past two years. And it should include the activists of XR who have brought new energy into the movement in the form of non-violent direct action.

Movements that emerge spontaneously are more likely to move to the right than to the left, depending on the experiences gained by the forces during their formation and the balance of political forces within them; the strength of the socialist (or indeed ecosocialist) forces within such a movement will be determined, at least in part, by the role such forces have played in the movement's development and the political legacy they have been able to establish. It must also have a progressive political and environmental driving force within it that fights for an environmentally progressive direction of travel.

Forcing major structural change against the will of the ruling elites will not only need a powerful mass movement behind it but also an environmental action programme behind it such as abolishing fossil fuels, making a rapid transition to renewables, ensuring a socially just transition, making the polluters pay, and retrofitting homes that can command mass support, not just amongst socialists and environmental activists but amongst the wider populations as they are impacted by the ecological crisis itself.

The key to this is to make fossil fuels far more expensive than renewables by means that are socially just, that redistribute wealth from the rich to the poor, that can bring about a big reduction in emissions in the time available, and (crucially) are capable of commanding popular support. This means heavily taxing the polluters to both cut emissions and ensure that they fund the transition to renewables.

As long as fossil fuel remains the cheapest way to generate energy, it is going to be used. An important mechanism,

therefore, for bringing about big reductions in carbon emissions in a short period of time must be carbon pricing—making the polluters pay. This means levying heavy taxes or fees on carbon emissions as a part of a strongly progressive and redistributive taxation system that can win mass popular support.

One proposal on the table in this regard is James Hansen's fee and dividend proposition. It provides the framework for very big emissions reductions, here and now while capitalism exists, and on the basis of a major transfer of wealth from the rich to the poor (as argued above) in order to drive it forward.

As he recognises, it would need to go along with a crash programme of renewable energy production to meet the demand that his incentives would create. It would also need a major programme of energy conservation, a big reduction in the use of the internal combustion engine, the abolition of factory farming, and a big reduction in meat consumption.

Conclusion

The UN has made a unique contribution to the struggle against climate change, a capitalist institution as it inevitably is, having identified the problem soon after it entered public consciousness 32 years ago. It has confronted opposition from many of its member states, and it has been successful, along with its specialist divisions such as the IPCC, in winning the war both against the climate deniers—who were massively backed by the fossil fuel producers for many years—and in winning the scientific community very strongly over to the climate struggle, without which we would not be where we are today.

It has also been key—along with relentless pressure from the ecological crisis itself—in transforming global awareness of climate change to a level without which the options we are discussing today would not exist.

Today, however, the UN faces a pivotal moment. Its carbon reduction strategy has fallen apart, thanks to the Paris Accords and the Glasgow Agreements. Unless this is addressed urgently, it could paralyse the UN's environmental work for many years. It could weaken the global justice movement and open the door to increasingly disastrous climate events, leading directly to tipping points that could take climate chaos out of control.

Unless drastic changes are made, not only the Paris Accords and the Glasgow Agreements will be rendered obsolete, but also the entire approach to climate change adopted in 1992 under the UN Framework Agreement on Climate Change; the 1997 Kyoto Agreement.

The UN must stop handing COP conferences over to countries that cannot:

- Support the project the UN is collectively seeking to promote
- Ensure the basic right to campaign and protest
- Support the project the UN is collectively seeking to promote
- Drastically limit fossil fuel lobbies the kind of access to its conferences
- Seek to ensure that the UN's carbon reduction project is a success.

A very good start would be to accept Lula's offer to hold the 2025 COP in the Amazon rain forest, which would be a huge boost to the movement.

Guterres told us in his opening speech in Sharm El-Sheikh that "the clock is ticking." We are in the fight of our lives, and we are losing. Greenhouse gas emissions keep growing. Global temperatures keep rising, and our planet is fast approaching tipping points that will make climate chaos irreversible. We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot still on the

accelerator.

In his closing speech, he told us that:

> *"Our planet is still in the emergency room. We need to drastically reduce emissions now – and this is an issue this COP did not address. The world still needs a giant leap on climate ambition."*

He was absolutely right on both counts. His commitment and his passion for the cause have never been in doubt. His task now must be to make the necessary changes in order for his warnings to be translated into actions by making the UN COP carbon reduction process fit for purpose in terms of the challenges we face in the twenty-first century.

This article was originally published on Alan Thornett's ecosocialist discussion blog. This version is reprinted from the website of Anti*Capitalist Resistance (a revolutionary ecosocialist organisation in England and Wales): https://anticapitalistresistance.org/cop27-was-a-spectacular-failure-boycotting-future-cop-conferences-however-would-only-compound-the-problem/
Alan Thornett was a prominent trade union leader in the 1970s in Britain and is the author of "Facing the Apocalypse: Arguments for Ecosocialism" (£15), published by Resistance Books, and several volumes of memoirs of trade union struggles.

COP27 (Climate) – Fossil victory in Sharm el-Sheikh: only the fight remains

Daniel Tanuro writes on the COP27.

A few days before the opening of COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, I wrote that this conference would be a "new height of greenwashing, green capitalism and repression". It was a mistake. Greenwashing and repression were more than ever on the shores of the Red Sea, but green capitalism suffered a setback, and fossils won a clear victory.

In matters of climate, we can define green capitalism as the fraction of employers and their political representatives who claim that the disaster can be stopped by a market policy that encourages companies to adopt green or "low carbon" energy technologies, so that it would be possible to reconcile economic growth, growth in profits and rapid reduction in emissions, and even to achieve "net zero emissions" in 2050. This component, known as "mitigation" of climate change, is then supplemented by a so-called "adaptation" component to the now inevitable effects of global warming, and a "funding" component (mainly aimed at southern countries). On these two levels too, the proponents of green capitalism believe that the market can do the job – they even see an opportunity for capital.

From Copenhagen to Paris, from "top down" to "bottom-up"

The agreement reached in Paris at COP21 (2015) was typically a manifestation of this policy. It stipulated that the parties would commit to taking action to ensure that global warming "remains well below 2°C, while continuing efforts not to

exceed 1.5°C". It should be remembered that COP19 (Copenhagen, 2009) had buried the idea of a global distribution of the "2°C carbon budget" (the quantity of carbon that can still be sent into the atmosphere to have a reasonable probability of not exceeding 2°C during this century) according to the responsibilities and the differentiated capacities of the countries. Such a global distribution was (and remains) the most rational approach to combining climate efficacity and social justice, but this "top-down" approach involved settling the accounts of imperialism, which the United States and the European Union European did not want at any price. COP20 (Cancun, 2010) therefore adopted a "bottom-up" approach, more compatible with the neoliberal air of the time: each country would determine its "national contribution" to the climate effort, and we would see, in the course of the annual COP, 1°) if the sum of the efforts is sufficient; 2) if the distribution of efforts complies with the principle of "common but differentiated responsibility" which is enshrined in the Framework Convention on Climate (UN, Rio, 1992).

As a reminder, this Framework Convention affirmed the will of the parties to avoid "a dangerous anthropogenic disturbance of the climate system". Six years after Copenhagen, twenty-three years after Rio, Paris finally came to clarify a little what should be understood by this. This is the formula that we recalled above: "stay well below 2°C while continuing efforts not to exceed 1.5°C…". But one ambiguity hits you in the face: at the end of the day, where is the threshold of dangerousness? At 2°C or 1.5°C? Asked to shed light on the answer to be given to this question, the IPCC submitted a specific report from which it is very clear that half a degree more or less leads to enormous differences in terms of impact. In the process, COP26 (Glasgow, 2021) gave satisfaction to the representatives of the small island states who are sounding the alarm bell: we must stay below 1.5°C of warming.

But how to do it? The gap between the "national contributions"

of the countries and the path to follow to stay below 1.5°C (or to exceed this threshold only very slightly, with the possibility of going back below quite quickly) is an abyss: on the basis of the national contributions, warming will easily exceed the objective. The drafters of the Paris agreement were aware of this "emission gap". They therefore decided that the parties' climate commitments would be subject to an "ambition-raising" exercise every five years, in the hope of gradually bridging the gap between the commitments and the objective to be achieved. Problem: six years later, the objective to be reached (1.5°C maximum) has become much more restrictive, and the time available to reach it has become ever shorter.

From Paris to Glasgow: "raising ambitions"?

In Glasgow, the message from scientists was crystal clear: a) global emissions reductions must start now, b) the global peak must be reached no later than 2025, c) CO2 emissions (and methane!) must decrease by 45 per cent globally by 2030, and d) climate justice implies that the richest one per cent divides its emissions by thirty while the poorest 50 per cent will multiply them by three. All this, without mentioning the gigantic efforts to be made in terms of adaptation and financing, particularly in poor countries…

In this context, Glasgow could only note the accelerated obsolescence of the five-year strategy of "enhancing ambitions" adopted in Paris: no one could seriously claim that a round table every five years would make it possible to fill the emissions gap. In a very tense context, the British Presidency then proposed that the "mitigation" component be subject to review every year during the "decisive decade" 2020-2030, and this procedure was adopted. The presidency also proposed to decide on the rapid elimination of coal but, on this point, it came up against a veto from India, so that the participants had to content themselves with deciding on a

reduction (“phasing down”) rather than an elimination (“phasing out”) of the use of this fuel.

In Sharm el-Sheikh: place your bets, there’s no more time left

At the end of COP27, the results are quite clear: there is almost nothing left of these commitments made in Glasgow.

The annual raising of ambitions has not taken place. All the countries should have updated their “national contributions”: only thirty complied with the exercise, and even then, very insufficiently (see my article preceding the COP). It is very likely that this attempt will be the last and that we will henceforth be content with the process of five-year reviews provided for by COP21… while hypocritically pretending to ignore the impossibility by this means of respecting the 1.5°C limit!

COP26 had adopted a “mitigation work programme” which COP27 was supposed to implement. It was content to decide that the process would be “non-prescriptive, non-punitive” and “would not lead to new objectives”. Moreover, the objective of the 1.5°C maximum, adopted in Glasgow, came very near to being explicitly called into question (it was explicitly called into question, outside the plenary session, by the representatives of Russia and Saudi Arabia, not to mention the trial balloons launched by China and India at certain G20 meetings).

Nothing was decided to materialize the “phasing down” of coal. The Indian delegation, cleverly, proposed a text on the eventual phasing out of all fossil fuels (not only coal, but also oil and gas). Surprise: eighty countries, “developed” and “developing”, supported it, but the Egyptian presidency did not even mention it. The final statement says nothing about it. The term “fossil fuels” appears only once in the text, which calls for “accelerating efforts to reduce (the use of) coal without abatement and the elimination of inefficient

subsidies to fossil fuels". The formula is strictly identical to that which was adopted in Glasgow… (the expression "coal without abatement" refers to combustion installations without CO2 capture for geological sequestration or industrial use…). According to some leaks from the debates between heads of delegations, the Saudis and the Russians opposed any further mention of fossil fuels in the text. The Russian representative is said to have even declared on this occasion: "It is unacceptable. We cannot make the energy situation worse" (*Carbon brief*, Key Outcomes of COP27). It's the pot calling the kettle black!

We thought we had seen everything in terms of greenwashing, but no: some decisions taken in Sharm -el-Sheikh open up the risk that pollution rights could be counted twice. Paris had decided on the principle of a "new market mechanism" to take over from the CDM (Clean Development Mechanism, set up by the Kyoto Protocol). From now on, the rights market will have two speeds: on the one hand a market for emission credits, on the other hand a free market for "mitigation contributions", on which nothing stands in the way of the so-called emission reductions being counted twice (once by the seller and once by the buyer!). In addition, countries that conclude bilateral emission reduction agreements will be free to decide that the means implemented are "confidential"… and therefore unverifiable!

The very fashionable theme of "carbon removal" from the atmosphere considerably increases the risks of greenwashing on the emission credits market. Several methods and technologies could theoretically be used, but there is a great danger that they will serve as a substitute for reducing emissions. So, things have to be very strictly defined and framed. Especially when they involve the use of land areas for energy purposes, because this use obviously risks coming into conflict with human food production and the protection of biodiversity. A previously designated technical body was to look into the

problem. It is faced with such a mass of proposals which are contested, or which have never been tested, that the worst is to be feared, pushed forward by an alliance between fossil fuels and agribusiness.

“Loss and damage”: the tree that hides the forest

The media made much of the decision to create a fund for “loss and damage”. This is a demand that poor countries and small island states have been putting forward for thirty years: the climatic disasters that they are experiencing are costing them dearly, whereas they are the product of the warming caused mainly by the developed capitalist countries; those responsible must therefore pay, through an ad hoc fund. The United States and the European Union have always opposed this demand, but in Sharm el-Sheikh, the pressure from “developing” countries was too strong, it was no longer possible to quibble: either a fund was created, or it was the end of the COP process and a deep split between North and South. You should know that this “South” includes countries as different as the oil monarchies, China, and the so-called “least developed” countries…. To prevent all this little world from forming a bloc supported by the “anti-Western” discourse of the Kremlin, Western imperialism could not afford to do nothing. The EU unblocked the situation by setting the following conditions: 1°) that the fund be supplemented by various sources of financing (including existing sources, and others, “innovative”); 2) that its interventions benefit only the most vulnerable countries; 3°) that the COP “enhances the ambitions” of mitigation. The first two points have been met, not the third.

The creation of the fund is undoubtedly a victory for the poorest countries, increasingly impacted by disasters such as the floods that recently hit Pakistan and Niger, or the typhoons that are increasingly ravaging the Philippines. But

it is a symbolic victory, because COP27 only took a vague decision of principle. Who will pay? When? How much? And above all: to whom will the funds go? To the victims on the ground, or to the corrupt intermediaries? On all these issues, we can expect tough battles. Saudi Arabia, the Emirates and Qatar will refuse to pay, citing the fact that the UN defines them as “developing countries”. China will most likely do the same, arguing that it is contributing through bilateral agreements, as part of its “New Silk Roads”. It is not tomorrow or the day after that capitalism will take its responsibilities in the face of the catastrophe for which it is responsible and which is destroying the existence of millions of men and women, in the South, but also in the North (even though the consequences there are, for the moment, less dramatic)…

The cries of victory over the “loss and damage” fund are all the less justified since the other promises in terms of financing are still not honoured by the rich countries: the hundred billion dollars a year are not paid into the Green Fund for the Climate, and the commitment to double the resources of the adaptation fund has not materialized.

A victory for fossils, acquired in the name of… the poorest!?

This is not the place to go into more detail, other publications have done it very well (*Carbon Brief*, *Home Climate News*, CLARA, among others). The conclusion that emerges is that the climate policy of green capitalism, with its three components (mitigation, adaptation, financing) suffered a failure in Sharm el-Sheikh. Champion of green capitalism, the European Union almost walked out and slammed the door behind it. On the other hand, COP27 ended in a victory for fossil capital.

This victory is first and foremost the result of the geopolitical context created by the exit (?) from the pandemic

and accentuated by the Russian war of aggression against the Ukrainian people. We have entered a conjuncture of growing inter-imperialist rivalries and all-out rearmament. The wars, so to speak, are still only local, and not all have yet been declared, but the possibility of a conflagration haunts all capitalist leaders. Even if they do not want it, they are preparing for it, and this preparation, paradoxically, implies both the acceleration of the development of renewable energies and the increased use of fossil fuels, and therefore a considerable expansion of the possibilities of profit for the big capitalist groups of coal, oil, gas… and the finance capital behind it. It is no coincidence that, a year after Glasgow, the balloon of Mark Carney ’s GFANZ (Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero) is deflating: banks and pension funds are less willing than ever to comply with UN rules (“Race for Zero net”) on the banning of fossil fuel investments…

Secondly, it is the result of the very nature of the COP process. From Paris onwards, the capitalist sponsorship of these summits has experienced explosive growth. In Sharm el-Sheikh, it seems that quantity has turned into quality. Of the twenty corporate sponsors of the event, only two were not directly or indirectly linked to the fossil fuel industry. The industrial coal, oil and gas lobbies had sent more than 600 delegates to the conference. To this must be added the “fossil moles” in the delegations of many countries (including representatives of the Russian oligarchs under sanctions!), not to mention the official delegations composed solely of these “moles”, in particular those of the fossil monarchies of the Middle East. All this fossil scum seems to have changed tactics: rather than denying climate change, or its “anthropogenic” origin, or the role of CO2, the emphasis is now on “clean fossils” and technologies of “carbon removal”. The delegation of the Emirates (one thousand delegates!) thus organized a “side-event” (on the sidelines of the official programme) to attract partners to collaborate on a vast

project of “green oil“ consisting (stupidly, because the technology is known) of injecting C02 into the oil deposits, to bring out more oil… the combustion of which will produce more CO2. The *Financial Times*, which is, it will be agreed, above all suspicion of anti-capitalism, was not afraid to go to the heart of the problem: the grip of fossils on the negotiations has grown so much that COP27 was in fact a trade fair for investments, in particular in gas (“green energy”, according to the European Union!), but also in oil, and even in coal (*Financial Times*, 26/11/2022).

A third factor came into play: the role of the Egyptian presidency. During the final plenary, the representative of Saudi Arabia thanked it, on behalf of his country and the Arab League. The dictatorship of General Sissi has indeed achieved a double performance: establishing itself as a country to be visited despite the fierce repression of all opposition, on the one hand; and on the other portraying himself as the spokesperson for peoples thirsty for climate justice, especially on the world’s poorest continent…even when he was in fact acting in collusion with the most relentless of fossil exploiters, so wealthy that they no longer know what to do with their fortunes. In his final speech, the Saudi representative added: “We would like to emphasize that the Convention (the UN Framework Convention on Climate) must address the question of emissions, and not that of the origin of the emissions.” In other words: let us exploit and burn fossil fuels, no need to remove this energy source, let’s focus on how to remove CO2 from the atmosphere, by “offsetting“ the emissions (capture and geological sequestration, tree plantations, purchases of “rights to pollute, etc.).

Only the mass struggle remains

The Europeans, Frank Timmermans in the lead, are weeping and wailing: “the possibility of staying below 1.5°C is becoming

extremely low and is disappearing", they say in substance. In effect. But whose fault is it? It would be too easy to unload the responsibility on others. In reality, these heralds of green capitalism are caught up in their own neoliberal logic: do they swear by the market? Well, fossils, which dominate the market, have dominated the COP… Time will tell if this is just a hiccup of history. COP28 will be chaired by the United Arab Emirates, so there is nothing to expect from that side. The answer, in fact, will depend on the evolution of the global geopolitical conjuncture, that is to say, ultimately, on social and ecological struggles. Either mass revolts will make the powerful tremble and force them to let go; in this case, whatever the source of the struggle (inflation? one assassination too many, as in Iran? a police confinement, as in China?), a space will open up to unite the social and the ecological, therefore also to impose measures in line with another climate policy. Or else the race to the abyss will continue.

Nobody, this time, dared to say, as usual, that this COP, "although disappointing", nevertheless constituted "a step forward". In fact, two things are now crystal clear: 1°) there will be no real "steps forward" without radical anti-capitalist and anti-productivist measures; 2°) they will not emerge from the COP, but from the struggles and their convergence.

27 November 2022

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Rising Clyde 8: latest issue of Scottish Climate Show on "COP27"

The latest issue of Rising Clyde, the Scottish Climate Show hosted by Iain Bruce, is now available on YouTube via the Independence Live video service.

In this episode Iain is with Sabrina Fernandes in Rio and Nathan Thanki in Ibagué, Colombia, talking about the few signs of hope among the failures of COP27 – the agreement on Loss and Damage, the return of Lula, and the blistering critique from President Gustavo Petro. .

Watch the programme here:

Previous Issues

Previous Rising Clyde shows on Independence Live can be found here:

(1035) SHOW: Rising Clyde – YouTube

Climate Camp Scotland: Meet & Camp Out @ the Kelpies, Saturday 15 October/

From our friends at Climate Camp Scotland …

Hey there campers!

We've got some tasty stews on the stove this Autumn so make sure you stop by the kitchen tent…

Meet & Camp Out @ the Kelpies, 15 Oct

We are beginning to lay foundations for an incredible 2023 climate camp.

On Saturday 15th October we are going to Falkirk / Grangemouth for a series of **informal tea-time chats** with local organisers, community members and trade unionists to hear about living with **Scotland's biggest polluter**, the recent wildcat strikes, the cost of living crisis, and their aspirations for a just transition.

After our meetings we'll head to a (secret) **fire and camp spot** to enjoy the Autumn leaves and hopefully some stars! It should be a very wholesome and productive day and night, and everyone is welcome to join for as much of the runnings as they feel able.

The day starts at **1.30pm** with the community meeting at **the Kelpies** Visitor Centre Cafe.

To get a briefing with venue details, travel info, and how to take part click here.

It should be a wholesome and fun day for the group so we hope you'll consider joining us!

Climate Camp have our regular meetings online, organised via Signal. To find our more about these or to get more involved, join our Signal groups here.

Autumn love and solidarity,

Climate Camp Scotland

The return of the dinosaurs

As the planet burns, and Britain faces a massive cost of living crisis, writes Alan Thornett on his ecosocialist discussion blog, Jurassic Park has taken over in Westminster, with the climate denier – and 'hand-out' hater – Liz Truss as Prime Minister.

Truss has been cynically foisted on the British electorate against their will. Only 6 per cent expect her to make a good Prime Minister, even most Tory voters are not convinced. She was the choice of neither Tory MPs nor Tory voters. Most of them preferred Sunak or for Johnson to stay in office.

Despite such fragile support, she never hesitated in gifting all the top jobs to the cronies who backed her. Only one MP who backed Sunak is a cabinet member today, which is Michael Ellis, the new attorney general. How long such a concoction will hold together when the proverbial hits the fan, of

course, is another matter. (She is also trying to model herself on Margaret Thatcher, though whether she is up to that one only time will tell.)

You couldn't make it up. Jacob Rees-Mogg, the climate denier in chief – who wants to squeeze the last cubic inch of oil and gas out of the North Sea, bring back fracking, and who has claimed that climate alarmism is responsible for high energy prices – is now Energy Secretary. His ravings are not only bizarre but completely unworkable, since anything that is extracted – at huge cost the environment – would have zero impact on UK oil or gas prices which are set by the international market.

Lurch to the right

Truss's election is yet another lurch to the right by an increasingly xenophobic Tory party – driven by the fundamentalists of the European Research Group.

She is to the right of her (corrupt and despicable) predecessor Boris Johnson, as he was to Theresa May. She was elected in what is now a well-established and dangerous charade. Candidates in a Tory leadership contest, are required, in order to win, to convince the ever-more-extreme Tory members that they are racist enough, little Englander enough, and anti-migrant enough, for the job. Truss fully understood this process and played it to the full.

Nor is Truss any better than Rees-Mogg when it comes to the environment. In fact, her record is appalling.

As Theresa May's Environment Secretary, Truss was an arch deregulator of environmental standards. She cut subsidies for renewables and banned on-shore wind farms – which was (and remains) a huge blow to the UKs renewable energy capacity.

She is also responsible for the catastrophic pollution of our rivers and beaches with raw sewage by cutting millions of

pounds earmarked for tackling water pollution. She cut the budget of the *Environment Agency* by £235m, including £24m that had been allocated for the surveillance of water companies in order to prevent the dumping of raw sewage in rivers and on beaches.

Her newly appointed chief economic adviser, Matthew Sinclair – the Gaudian columnist Zoe Williams tells us – "wrote a book entitled *Let Them Eat Carbon* in 2011, in which he argued that "the temperatures we face today may not be the ideal conditions for humanity to live and flourish". Let warming go wild, in other words. It might be fun."

Trickle-down economics

Her version of low-tax trickle down, free market, economics will further devastate the UK economy. She told Laura Kuenssberg last week that she was OK with the obvious fact that her cancelation of the proposed national insurance rise would be worth twice as much to the richest 5 per cent of the population as it is to the whole bottom half of taxpayers.

The scrapping of Sunak's planned return of corporation tax to 25 per cent will cost an estimated £19 billion and will be a bonanza for big business. Her approach will be tested to destruction as the crisis develops further.

She insists, moreover, that the only factors that are driving the current crisis – which is more acute in Britain than any other European country – are the Covid pandemic and Putin's invasion of Ukraine. Otherwise, she says, the British economy is "in good shape".

This is arrant nonsense. There are two other crucial factors as well. The first is that economy has been wrecked by 20 years of Tory rule of which she was an active and uncritical participant. The second is that and it has been ravaged by Brexit – a factor which is being deliberately ignored (or obscured) by both the government and by Kier Starmer.

The idea that Johnson ‘got Brexit done’ is a sick joke. The whole economy has been destabilised by the ending of free movement of labour and by the developing trade war with the EU – which is the UK’s biggest trading partner many times over. Brexit permeates every aspect of British political and commercial life from restricting trade relations to boosting racism and xenophobia.

Sectors such as agriculture, fishing, hospitality, retail, health care and meat processing, have been traumatised by it, whilst racism and xenophobia have been boosted. The problems created by Brexit in the North of Ireland remain entirely unresolved.

Truss’s pledge to rip up the North of Ireland Protocol if she does not get her way on it threatens both an all-out trade war with the EU, plus retaliation from Biden in terms of a future trade agreement with the US.

It remains regrettable that most of the radical left in Britain voted for Brexit. The claim that they were voting for a different kind of Brexit that did not exist makes no sense. The only Brexits on offer were those proposed by various sections of the Tory party.

Truss’s energy package

Having refused to discuss rocketing electricity bills during the election campaign – bills that were set to more than quadruple by January – she has now been forced to make a dramatic U-turn after no doubt contemplating the alternative, which was the likelihood that the current strike wave would be joined by rioting on the streets over energy prices and increasing social unrest. She also, no doubt, hopes that the package will give her political breathing space to launch the programme she really wants. We will see.

The resulting U-turn was her so-called the *Energy Price Guarantee*, which she refuses to put a figure on – though some

estimates put it at 150 billion pounds. It will freeze household bills for two years, at £2,500 a year. Businesses and public sector organisations like hospitals and schools will get an equivalent deal for six months, after that, only 'vulnerable' businesses will be supported. There will also be more licences issued to drill for oil and gas, and the ban on fracking will be lifted.

Whilst her package is better than nothing, given the scale of the problem, the average UK household will still be worse off, its energy bills will still be shockingly high, and the cost of living will continuing to rise. Many businesses see the package as little better than a stay of execution. The *Joseph Rowntree Foundation* has calculated that it will leave low-income families with around £800 shortfall this winter, leaving them at risk of poverty or at the mercy of high-interest loans.

Her method of repayment says it all. She refuses even to contemplate a wind fall tax on the eye-watering and unexpected super-profits that are being made by the oil and gas companies and insists instead on financing by government borrowing which means that it will be paid for by taxation. She has done this under conditions where three quarters of Tory voters say they would prefer a windfall tax to more government borrowing. The long-term consequences of such borrowing, however, might prove a very hard sell.

Starmer has challenged the method of payment, but he also ruled out the nationalisation of the oil companies, arguing, ludicrously, that to do so would be too expensive. His position is a huge liability as the possibility of a Labour government comes closer.

The big losers

The biggest loser in all this – along with the poorest in society as argued above – will be the planet and the future of

life on it. The Truss premiership is a direct challenge to the zero carbon reduction targets that are crucial to the protection of life on Earth. And this, moreover, with COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh only two months away.

Her perspective was challenged on the *Today Program* on Tuesday September 6th by none other than John Gummer (now Lord Deben), who was John Major's Environment Secretary from 1993-97, and is now the chair of the *Climate Change Committee* – an independent body formed under the *Climate Change Act of 2008* (i.e. under Gordon Brown) to advise the government on tackling and preparing for climate change. The *Committee* has long been critical of recent Tory administrations on the issue.

Gummer argued that whatever the government chooses to do or otherwise the harsh realities remain the same. Human activity has caused the global temperature to rise by 1°C since preindustrial times, and the disastrous consequences are clear to see. At the moment we are on course for an increase of 3°C and if we fail to reverse it the consequences we are seeing would at least treble.

The future, he argued, is with renewables – as is the way out of the current crisis. There are two crucial things, he insisted, that we have to do to defeat global warming and climate change – and we have to do them now. The first is to reduce carbon emissions to net zero, the other is to reduce the demand for electricity and gas via a major programme of energy conservation.

He is right, and the scope for both in the UK is enormous. Recent research by the *Institute for Government* found that the UK is particularly vulnerable to spikes in the price of gas since more than four-fifths of UK homes are still heated by gas boilers, which is much higher than most countries. The UK's housing stock is also the oldest and least energy efficient in Europe. More than 52% of homes in England were

built before 1965 and nearly 20 per cent before 1919.

It found that the UK scored worse than other countries in Europe in terms of the energy efficiency of its homes. Citing analysis of a 2020 study, it found that a UK home with an indoor temperature of 20C and an outside temperature of 0C lost on average 3C after five hours – up to three times as much as homes in other European countries such as Germany.

Renewables are getting cheaper whilst fossil fuels and nuclear energy are ever more expensive. Renewables are also being weaponised – in terms of both economic and military conflicts. Putin is currently holding Europe to ransom by withholding gas supplies. In Ukraine the biggest nuclear plant in Europe is being fought over in a terrifying game of (actual) Russian roulette.

Gummer warned governments that they ignore this reality at their peril. Whilst they can impede progress they can't turn the clock back. Public opinion, he argued has moved on in recent years and people today are far more aware of the consequence if we fail to tackle climate change.

We need a programme for rapid transition to renewables on a war-preparation scale. We don't want 'transitional fossil fuels, or any other kind of prevarication, we want renewables and we want them now. Governments can make major changes fast when they decide to do so, economies can be transformed within months.

This is the message that has to be taken to COP27 in November. We have to ensure that the gains of Glasgow are defended and that that new nationally determined pledges (NDPs) that are to be adopted at COP27 are radical enough to turn the corner on climate change and break the addiction to fossil fuel.

Alan Thornett, September 13 2022.