

# The Dirty Energy Week: Challenging Climate Gangsters

Blue Waters Hotel, 22-25 November 2011



Often in response to a thank you in South Africa you hear, “it is a pleasure”. Well it was indeed no pleasure to host the 17th gathering of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in South Africa in November / December 2011. Why, we have to ask ourselves, must we continue to seek salvation in a system that has repeatedly failed people and their environments?

The official UNFCCC gathering, as predicted, failed to deliver on the bare essentials necessary to meet the Convention's objective of avoiding catastrophic climate change. African ministers met in Bamako earlier in the year and agreed what they thought is necessary to save the world: that we aim to limit the temperature increase to well below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, rather than let it rise to 2°C as agreed at Cancun; that the major historical polluters (AKA the rich Northern countries) must reduce their emissions by at least 40 percent by 2017; and that they must make new and additional public finances available to Southern countries to enable the urgent actions needed to save peoples' lives and the environment.

In the event, the Africa group scarcely stood up for these positions as the Conference of the Parties (CoP) agreed the 'Durban Platform'. This is to develop some form of new agreement with obligations applicable to all parties. It is an agreement to agree to at a date in the future. The negotiators avoided the one issue of substance that Pablo Solon, former lead negotiator for Bolivia, calls 'the number' – the amount by which carbon emissions must be cut.

The Durban CoP confirmed groundWork's view that the parties are there to defend the economic interests of their ruling elites and that those interests cannot be reconciled with saving the climate. Hence, the 'Durban Platform' may produce an agreement but will not produce an agreement that saves the climate. If the world is to avoid catastrophic climate change, it will be because people take back their power from the economic overlords and so overturn the logic to which their governments are captive.

Nevertheless, the climate negotiations do create a theatre in which to expose and challenge the interests of the corporate and political elite. After much soul searching, groundWork decided to become involved in the process and, together with thirteen other NGOs and peoples organizations,<sup>1</sup> hosted the Dirty Energy Week prior to the official CoP. This was a pleasure despite the baleful context.

The world is in crisis. The ecological crisis is headlined by climate change but tears at all dimensions of the environment; the peak oil energy crisis is just getting started and manifests as rising prices and ever dirtier production from unconventional sources as the easy oil burns out; and the crisis of US imperial power manifest in global political and economic turbulence.

This makes for a triple crisis for the current system of capitalist development. And while they have brought it on, the world's rulers aim to pass it off on the poor. In the North, the costs of saving the banks are displaced onto national states for transfer to the people in the form of austerity programmes.

<sup>1</sup> Centre for Civil Society (University of KwaZulu Natal), Earthlife Africa (Johannesburg), Federation for a Sustainable Environment, Friends of the Earth International, Global Anti Incineration Alliance, Greenpeace Africa, Oilchange, Oilwatch, Sierra Club, South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, Vaal Environmental Justice Alliance and Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising.





In the South, governments appropriate more of the people's commons – the land, water and air – for polluting industries in the name of 'development'. South and North, social services are cut, people's health is compromised and their environments eroded, leaving them ever more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

The global temperature is now about 0.85°C above pre-industrial levels and this is already catastrophic for huge numbers of people around the world. In 2010, millions of people lost their homes to the floods in Pakistan and China while fires induced by an unprecedented heat wave swept across large areas of Russia. 2011 opened with unprecedented flooding in Australia and Brazil.

In much of Africa the temperature rises at 1.5 times the global average and already exceeds 1°C. In Niger, several years of drought were followed by heavy flooding in August 2010. People already vulnerable to malnutrition saw their crops destroyed and 200,000 people were flooded out of their homes. The 'international community' barely registered this disaster and emergency aid was not forthcoming. In 2011, the East African drought was unusually severe, threatening the livelihoods of ten million people and starting a famine which left thousands dead.

For Dirty Energy Week, around 100 people gathered daily for four days to consider how to strengthen people's struggles against dirty energy and show the bottom up demand for the cleaner energy and climate proofing of economies. People came from communities challenging oil extraction in the Niger Delta and Uganda, from communities challenging coal developments in South Africa, Kosovo, Mozambique and the United States, from those challenging shale gas extraction in the United States and South Africa and those challenging tar sands in Canada and Madagascar. The meeting heard from waste pickers defending recycling against incineration and from people resisting big dams in Mozambique and India. It heard who is funding the destruction and it heard of the multiplicity of false solutions – including carbon trading, REDDs, agro-fuel production, waste-to-energy and nuclear power – got up by the global elite in its desperation to avoid the one substantive solution to reducing carbon emissions.

People had the space to share their struggles and to work on common strategies and to link with key NGO's working at local levels supporting community campaigns and at policy level nationally and internationally in order that policy work is positioned on the experience and articulations of those for whom resistance is a daily necessity.

While the official Durban outcome was dismal, the dialogue and the process of the Dirty Energy Week were enlivening. It renewed people's determination that the powers will be challenged, not within the terms set by those in power but rather on the terms set by those that suffer. The outcome of the week was to build solidarity amongst people and movements. The participants looked beyond the official multilateralism of states and its dead-end commitments to the narratives of capitalist development, to the idea of a people's multilateralism founded on the experience of local struggles and bound together in the common exploration of a counter-narrative of people's sovereignty.



# Contents



|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>The Dirty Energy Week: Challenging Climate Gangsters .....</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>DAY ONE: Tuesday 22 November 2011 .....</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| Keynote Address: Nnimmo Bassey .....  | 5         |
| Moral Ground: Message from Archbishop Desmond Tutu (DVD) .....  | 6         |
| <b>Climate Change and Energy: Climate change and its connections with broader social justice struggles, understanding the common forces that drive social injustice .....</b>   | <b>6</b>  |
| Group discussion .....  | 6         |
| <b>Climate change and working at an international level: What is the role of multilateralism and what are its limits?... 8</b>  | <b>8</b>  |
| Why community people and NGOs have to contest the space at the UNFCCC. Meena Raman (Third World Network).....   | 8         |
| Which multilateral processes undermine society's attempts to combat climate change? Patrick Bond (Centre for Civil Society, University of KwaZulu Natal).....                   | 9         |
| A historical review and analysis of the politics of UNFCCC. Asad Rehman (Friends of the Earth, EWNI) .....  | 10        |
| The Cochabamba Process: Challenging the UNFCCC. Michael Dorsey (Dartmouth College) .....  | 10        |
| Discussion .....  | 11        |
| <b>Smoke and Mirrors: the pushing of false solutions! .....</b>   | <b>13</b> |
| Carbon trading: Marketing the Commons! Sarah-Jayne Clifton (Friends of the Earth, EWNI) .....   | 13        |
| Clean Development Mechanism. Payal Parekh (Climate and Energy Research and Campaigner) .....  | 14        |
| Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD). Daniel Ribeiro (Justiça Ambiental, Friends of the Earth Mozambique).....                                   | 14        |
| Agrofuels: Tanking our food! Wally Menne (Timberwatch).....   | 15        |
| Waste-to-energy: Incinerating livelihoods. Mariel Vilella (Global Anti-Incineration Alliance) .....   | 16        |
| Nuclear: Whose solution? Tristen Taylor (Earthlife Africa, Johannesburg) .....  | 16        |
| Discussion .....  | 16        |
| <b>DAY TWO: Wednesday 23 November 2011.....</b>   | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Stories from the ground: Parallel Session 1 – Energy from where and for whom? .....</b>  | <b>17</b> |
| Electricity struggles in Soweto. Simon Mthembu and Bobo Michael Makhoba (Soweto Concerned Residents) .....  | 17        |
| Oil in the Niger Delta. Akpobari Nkabari (Ogoni Advancement).....   | 17        |
| Coal-to-liquids in Sasolburg. Comfort Malakoane (Vaal Environmental Justice Alliance) .....   | 18        |
| Drilling for oil at the source of the Nile. Bwengye Rajab (Oilwatch, Uganda).....   | 18        |
| Coal in the Soutpansberg. Azwihangwisi Moses Mudau (Dzomo la Mupo – Voice of the Earth) .....   | 18        |
| Acid Mine Drainage in Gauteng. Mariette Lieferink (Federation for a Sustainable Environment).....   | 19        |
| <b>Stories from the ground: Parallel Session 2 – Beyond conventional fossils .....</b>  | <b>19</b> |
| Tar Sands in Canada. Macdonald Stainsby (Oil Sands Truth).....  | 19        |
| Total and Tar Sands in Madagascar. Jean Pierre Ratsimbazafy .....   | 19        |
| Shell and fracking in the Karoo. Amos Dyasi (Southern Cape Land Committee).....   | 20        |
| Incineration Struggles: Health risk to livelihood struggles. Khotso Polori and Simon Mbata (Global Anti-Incineration Alliance and South African Waste Pickers Association)..... | 21        |
| Dams as a false solution. Anabela Lemos and Dipti Bhatnagar (Justica Ambiental, Mozambique) .....   | 21        |
| Eskom's new build: Medupi. Elana Greyling.....  | 22        |
| Eskom's new build: Kusile. Thomas Mnguni (Highveld) .....   | 23        |
| PetroSA's proposed Mthombo Refinery at the Coega Industrial Development Zone in Port Elizabeth. Pierre Louise Lemerrier .....   | 23        |
| <b>The Main Global Players in the financing of dirty energy and climate change.....</b>   | <b>24</b> |
| World Bank: Kosovo to South Africa! Nezir Sinani (Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development).....   | 24        |
| Export Import Banks: Government facilitating destruction. Justin Guay (Sierra Club) .....   | 24        |







|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Questioning tax money to the World Bank for coal: Few reflections from the UK. Pascoe Sabido (Friends of the Earth, EWNI).....   | 25        |
| True cost of coal? Focus on South Africa. Melita Steele (Greenpeace Africa) .....  | 25        |
| <b>Southern Elites .....</b>   | <b>26</b> |
| Southern Governments and the Elites Agenda.....  | 26        |
| Elites in the energy crisis. Nnimmo Bassey (Friends of the Earth International, Environmental Rights Action and Oilwatch) .....  | 27        |
| China in Africa. Daniel Ribeiro ( <b>Justiça Ambiental</b> , Friends of the Earth Mozambique).....   | 28        |
| <b>Corporate Capture of Institutions and Processes.....</b>  | <b>29</b> |
| Coal and Banks: A reflection on global banks and coal investment. Heffa Schucking (Urgewald) - via skype. ....   | 29        |
| Multilateral bank funding. Traci Romine (Oilchange) .....  | 29        |
| The Green Economy: 'Capital capture of the environment and its services' OR 'GREEN WHAT?' .....  | 30        |
| Discussion .....   | 31        |
| <b>DAY THREE: Thursday 24 November .....</b>   | <b>31</b> |
| <b>Working beyond the UNFCCC: Creating options for peoples' lead action on climate change.....</b>   | <b>31</b> |
| Is there a possibility for an effective multilateral approach? Michael Dorsey (Dartmouth College).....   | 31        |
| Leaving the 'oil in the soil': Making the case for development model without fossil fuels. Ivonne Yanez (OilWatch, South America) .....                                  | 32        |
| Leaving the 'oil in the soil': Making the case for development model without fossil fuels. Godwin Ojo (Environmental Rights Action, Friends of the Earth, Nigeria) ..... | 32        |
| A gender perspective on oil in the Delta: Understanding women's struggle. Sorbarikor Demua (Ogoni Solidarity Forum) .....  | 33        |
| Will Cochabamba echo in Durban? Nnimmo Bassey (Friends of the Earth International and Environmental Rights Action) .....   | 33        |
| Legal strategies challenging coal fired power stations. Justin Guay (Sierra Club) .....  | 34        |
| Discussion: .....  | 34        |
| <b>Energy Sovereignty: Responding meaningfully to energy poverty! .....</b>  | <b>36</b> |
| Electricity for the people: A South African possibility. Tristen Taylor (Earthlife Africa, Johannesburg) .....   | 36        |
| Global access to energy for the poor: Global Feed in Tariff? Pascoe Sabido (Friends of the Earth, EWNI) .....  | 36        |
| Energy Sovereignty: Wild imaginations. Bobby Peek (groundWork, Friends of the Earth South Africa).....   | 37        |
| Discussion .....   | 38        |
| <b>Green Economy and climate finance: Undermining a people's climate change agenda.....</b>  | <b>38</b> |
| Moving beyond incineration to people's real economies! Or Waste-to-energy: Incinerating livelihoods. ....  | 38        |
| Million Climate Jobs: Possibilities for green labour! Thembeke Majali (AIDC).....  | 39        |
| Climate Finance: Mechanisms of addressing ecological climate debt: Innovative sources of finances. Trusha Reddy (Institute for Social Studies) .....                     | 40        |
| Questions and discussion:.....   | 40        |
| <b>Working with what we have? Working with people's power. ....</b>  | <b>41</b> |
| Communication, media and people's power. Samantha Bailey (350.org).....  | 41        |
| Communicating with media – making things work for journalists. Leah Temper (Real News Network).....  | 42        |
| <b>DAY FOUR: Friday 25 November 2011 .....</b>   | <b>43</b> |
| <b>What are we fighting for? What is our purpose? Ivonne Yanez (Oilwatch, South America).....</b>  | <b>43</b> |
| <b>Group Work .....</b>  | <b>44</b> |
| Group 1: Multilateral actions .....  | 44        |
| Group 2: Local actions.....  | 45        |
| Group 3: Beyond the COPs – changing the narrative .....  | 45        |
| <b>Closing Address. Pablo Solon .....</b>  | <b>46</b> |



# The Dirty Energy Week: Challenging Climate Gangsters

Blue Waters Hotel, 22-25 November 2011



## DAY ONE: Tuesday 22 November 2011

Bobby Peek welcomed participants from community groups and civil society organisations from around the world, and thanked the groups that organised the week. He outlined the programme: raising concerns and issues over the first two days and spending the next two days identifying possibilities to move forward creatively past the moribund state of climate change and energy. Above all, community groups and NGOs need to connect to carry messages forward to the 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP 17) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and beyond.

### Keynote Address: Nnimmo Bassey

([Friends of the Earth International](#) and [Environmental Rights Action](#))

#### "To Cook a Continent: Destructive Extraction and the Climate Crisis in Africa"

Africa is a platform for struggles around energy: powers of exploitation are focused on the continent, but it is also a theatre of resistance, with heroes who encourage us to fight.

We are told that Africa should adapt, but this is a slap in the face because climate change continues unabated as a life and death struggle. *Toxic Futures* captures these struggles and shows how that toxic system sucks the blood of the people. It is a handbook that every environmental justice activist should read to fight all kinds of grabs - environmental, soil and sky. There are no boundaries between us.

Climate negotiations packages are created to show that the world is going green. But we cannot call criminal acts "green" when they are really a rapacious grab of resources which lead to conflicts and wars. These are continuing all over "Oiled Africa". The continent is being parcelled into oil and gas blocks, most recently from off-shore Durban and along the entire eastern coast line, in the Great Rift Valley, and now with prospects for fracking for shale gas in the Karoo. Oil is found all over the continent, leading to conflict as concessions are given and oil extracted.

In the Niger Delta, oil extraction affects ground and surface water and makes it impossible for the people to live. The Ogoni resistance showed that 'leave the oil in the soil' worked. However, Shell never cleaned up. UNDP reports that it would take 35 years to clean up Ogoniland and would require consistent financial investment.

The Stone Age did not end because there were no more stones! The oil age must end because we demand change and shift to a future not built on dirty energy. Continuing to be dependant on oil will lead us to huge conflicts. For example, Nato's assault on Gaddafi's Libya was to grab oil from the Chinese whose power in the country was rising. The fragmentation of states leaves more opportunity to exploit them. In South Sudan, prospectors from the Nile Development Company managed a spectacular land grab when they bought full rights to all resources on thousands of hectares for \$25 000.

The world is divided into military commands by the US. They may be there under the guise of development but can use this as a pretext for a military invasion of the country. US submarines already patrol the waters off Nigeria and the whole West African coast.

Then there are the destructive activities in South Africa. It has more coal-fired power than the rest of Africa and is building the biggest coal stations on the continent. Mining activities





are energy intensive. Corporations are provided with cheaper energy than domestic users. Coal coats the townships while the new petroleum pipeline is routed through poor areas. This is a continuation of apartheid. Businesses see opportunities in three key areas: platinum for fuel cells, uranium to feed nuclear energy, and copper for electric motors. Then there is Johannesburg's gold. The legacy of mining is acid mine drainage which poisons the water.

We face a serious crisis on four fronts: ecology, health/ damaging biodiversity, exploitation, and empowerment. We need to take action – mere talk will not save the climate and more dollars will not rebuild continents. We need to say “The time to end dirty energy is now! Leave the oil in the soil, leave the coal in the hole, leave the tar sands in the land!”

When we assess what Lawrence Summers, now an advisor to US President Obama, wrote while he was at the World Bank, we can see the thinking behind these oppressive activities. He said that ‘the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste in the lowest wage country is impeccable’ and that Africa is ‘vastly under-polluted’.

We need ecocide to be added as a crime against humanity, nature and future generations. Individuals behind corporations need to be held personally accountable, so they rethink how they lead Shell and other corporations to continue destroying our land.

“Agonise or organise!”

### **Moral Ground: Message from Archbishop Desmond Tutu (DVD)**

185 million Africans could die this century as a direct result of climate change, alongside untold suffering around the world. Famine, flood, disease, and global insecurity occur as a result of climate change's impact on water specifically and the environment in general. Those who produce the most CO<sub>2</sub> are not those who are suffering most, and this is a serious injustice. This is a call on ordinary people in rich countries to act as global citizens and not isolated consumers. And a call on governments that speak only about economic markets, which will cease to exist when there is climate chaos. In South Africa, we showed that by acting on side of justice, we have the power to turn tides. We need to work with campaigners in the global South, lobby for strong climate change laws and support organisations like the World Development Movement. We need to insist on 80% reduction of national emissions and hold our governments to account. We need to “Do unto others what we would wish them to do unto us.”

## **Climate Change and Energy: Climate change and its connections with broader social justice struggles, understanding the common forces that drive social injustice**

### **Group discussion**

Participants formed groups to think about their histories and to discuss: “What are the conditions that affect your work and what are the forces behind creating those conditions? How does this relate to energy and climate change?”

Activists from all settings along the chains of extraction, production, consumption and disposal shared their experiences – from communities near coal mines, dumps, incinerators, oil and gas wells and pipelines and refineries. People are dispossessed of their land and their air and water is polluted. The damage to their health is such that, finally, people are dispossessed of their own bodies. The corporate and government elites are making a wasteland in paradise.





Participants identified the following common forces behind the conditions in which they struggle to live:



### Capitalist forces unite against us

- The economy is dependent on big business so there is widespread commodification of natural goods and essential services. Thus people must buy water and energy but cannot afford it. Municipalities and government impose technologies like prepaid meters and government ends up in court against its people over the payment of bills.
- Companies are only focused on making profit from the export of raw materials. They are not concerned about communities and they are not held accountable for the damage they do or have done to people. They act with impunity and are protected by governments ready to use repressive force.
- Companies locate dirty industrial plants near rivers and wetlands, or on roads where people live, for their ease of operating. They do not attend to the ecological damage they do but are quick to 'greenwash' their operations. Governments and corporations use divide and conquer tactics, claiming to share the concerns of activists and always promising jobs and a better life to the people. They do not engage people in good faith.

### Political regime

- Repressive regimes or one party democracies leave citizens with no real choices. Weak institutions expose people to "grasping talons of corporations".
- Political leadership is poor and focused on the money and the needs of capital. Governments and corporations look to profiteer off climate change and so promote false solutions such as carbon trading and REDDs (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation).
- Many leaders benefit personally from corrupt relations with big corporations, and they distribute government posts and contracts to relatives and cronies.
- Governments, national and local, do not respond to the challenge of stopping pollution or treating problems such as already polluted water. They do not protect people's rights even if national constitutions require it.

There are few if any effective laws to protect areas where people live and make their livelihoods. Regulatory frameworks are weak: where there are laws, there is no enforcement beyond the occasional imposition of paltry fines; and authorities do not produce appropriate information and/or do not provide people with access to information.

### Civil society is weak

- People have not yet organised on the scale needed to turn the balance. In part, this is because they are kept in the dark about what is happening and do not see the inter-connectedness of the impacts they experience: dispossession, ill-health, ruined land and poisoned water, disruptive shifts in climate, rising costs and ever deepening poverty. In part, they see it but do not know how to respond. There is no transitional vision or plan for people to live in a more sustainable way. We must make the links between communities and issues to create solidarity and a common awareness and vision.





## Climate change and working at an international level: What is the role of multilateralism and what are its limits?

Interrogating the UNFCCC: Has it delivered? Can it deliver?

**Why community people and NGOs have to contest the space at the UNFCCC. Meena Raman (Third World Network)**

Grassroots struggles are key, as this is where people feel the impact and suffer the consequences of climate change. Climate change goes beyond our own boundaries and beyond the immediate impact of corporations and governments. Africa, except for South Africa, is not responsible for climate change but we all suffer the impacts. On the other side, the rich industrialised countries got rich on unrestrained carbon emissions. We are used to fighting our own governments but we now have to take on the great powers. Global warming is a global phenomenon so we must have a global response to it.

The United Nations Framework on Climate Change was negotiated in 1992. It was a watershed treaty which established that countries have an obligation to do something about climate change. Importantly, it recognised the historical responsibility of the North and the principle of “common but differentiated responsibility” in terms of which the North must take the lead to reduce emissions and support a paradigm shift to a clean development pathway. It followed that they must pay for the consequences, particularly to poor countries who are not responsible for causing climate change. These countries have no choice but to adapt but have no resources to do so because they must use the resources they have on citizens’ basic needs. Rich countries must also support the transfer of technologies to developing countries to help them onto a clean development path.

Rich countries did not cut emissions, however, and the Kyoto Protocol (KP) was negotiated in 1996 to create binding emission cuts for developed countries. Kyoto was ratified in 2005. Developed countries, known as Annex 1 countries, agreed to reduce emissions by 5% compared to 1990 levels during the ‘first commitment period’ that would run from 2008 to 2012. This period expires next year.

To live up to their historical responsibility, these countries should have done much more. The KP also gave them the flexible mechanisms which allowed them to trade away their responsibility. The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) allowed polluting companies to off-set emissions at home by investing in supposedly clean projects in the South. The CDM was also made to substitute for financial transfers through a climate development fund. The CDM was imposed by the US and, once it got it, it walked away from the Kyoto Protocol although it is still a member of the UNFCCC.

The negotiations are now about the second commitment period. Developed countries should commit to much deeper binding emission cuts based on the science, on equity in terms of common but differentiated responsibility and without the trading mechanisms.

The US is trying to destroy both the UNFCCC and the KP. It wants to replace the present climate regime with a ‘pledge and review’ system and it wants to get rid of the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. This is far worse than the Kyoto Protocol. The COP is a contested space, and we need to make sure all our governments make the right demands. If the existing regime is unravelled, we will have no way to make meaningful and ambitious agreements and no way to deal with the climate crisis. We need to be in the UNFCCC to make sure progressive voices go forward and that there is a regime we want, which depends on the power we give our governments. It is an important space and we cannot let it be hijacked by corporate interests.





## Which multilateral processes undermine society's attempts to combat climate change? Patrick Bond (Centre for Civil Society, University of KwaZulu Natal)

Our approach should be "Occupy COP17". Inside UNFCCC we will see the 1%. We are the 99%. We need to utterly *de-legitimise* this 1%. The spirit of the Occupy movement puts this in the proper perspective. And it is part of our local tradition. In 2001 here in Durban, 15 000 of us demonstrated because they refused to table Israel's racist occupation of Palestine and reparations owed for centuries of slavery, colonialism and apartheid. In 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Jo'burg, 30 000 people marched against the commodification of nature, the United Nation's 'Global Compact' with big corporations, and the privatisation of water and air (known as 'emissions trading').



In Copenhagen, US President Barak Obama together with the BASIC country governments – Brazil, India, China and South Africa represented by President Jacob Zuma – agreed the Copenhagen Accord in a back room. They wrecked the chance of any real deal and the Accord was not accepted at Copenhagen. Following that disaster, some say that Cancun saved the multilateral system but what it actually saved was the carbon markets. And what they did was adopt the Copenhagen Accord.

US chief negotiator Todd Stern is quite clear on the agenda. They refuse to recognise the climate debt and they therefore refuse to recognise the polluter pays principle. The Wikileaks files revealed how far they went with diplomatic arm twisting and bribery to turn the debacle in Copenhagen into the agreement in Cancun. Even the Maldives which will end up under water did a U-turn on its position in Copenhagen.

President Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia capitulated on Africa's tough negotiating position even before Copenhagen, having stopped off in Paris to do a deal with Nicolas Sarkozy. So Zenawi and Zuma together sold out the African position. They surrendered on demands for emission cuts and full payment of the North's climate debt to the South.

As President of COP17, the South African hosts have called this the African CoP and they posture as part of the Africa group. But it is not in their interests to do a real deal for Africa. They are a sub-imperial power and they owe a massive climate debt to the rest of Africa which they refuse to acknowledge. The South Africa economy heavily hooked on fossil fuels and is one of the most carbon intensive in the world. To add to that, with the help of the World Bank, they are building what will become two of the biggest coal-fired power stations in the world.

And here in Durban you can see their real commitment with the brand new King Shaka airport, the Moses Mabhida Stadium built for the 2010 World Cup and now mostly empty, the expansion of South Africa's largest petro-chemical complex and a doubling of Durban-Johannesburg oil pipeline capacity, and the promise of a massive expansion of the port and related trucking that threatens the displacement of whole residential neighbourhoods in south Durban. Across town you can see Bisasar Road waste dump where they piloted CDM in Africa.

- The Green Climate Fund looked like the most positive outcome from Cancun. We had hoped that this would become a mechanism for payment of the climate debt even though R100 billion is far short of what is required. Instead, they made the World Bank the trustee despite its rotten environmental record and its central role in promoting carbon trading and other false solutions. South Africa's Trevor Manuel is co-chair of the body responsible for designing how the fund will work. He was the Finance Minister who presided over South Africa's neo-liberal economic policy and he is now the minister in charge of the National Planning Commission which supports fracking for shale gas. He has suggested half the money come from carbon trading.





- COP17 is the Conference of the Polluters. They have no intention of addressing climate change.

### **A historical review and analysis of the politics of UNFCCC. Asad Rehman (Friends of the Earth, EWNI)**

I agree with most of the previous analysis of powers, but is the UNFCCC a dead space? The answer is, "No, it is a political space". They are making decisions which are condemning our planet and people. We need to make sure our voices are heard in that space. It is a global issue that cannot be resolved at lower levels. Letting governments do what they want will mean a 5 degree increase worldwide and a 7 degree increase in Africa.

What is unique about the UNFCCC and why it is important is that every government has a voice. The alternative forum is the G20! For all its flaws, at least we are there at the UNFCCC and can try to hold to world leaders to account.

This is not to say that this is the *only* place we must concentrate on. We work on each case, mobilise local communities, and challenge the powers that be. We don't say "let's ignore them", but "make them listen" by being inside and outside their meetings. If our voices aren't heard, they will not stop so the mainstream civil society voices will be the only ones there and will conclude all on one side. Decisions are being made; they want to make sure that these decisions will benefit them. Our job is to make sure we hold those people accountable. The media is also there. We need a powerful voice for climate justice. We talk about system changes and false solutions, based on real voices of real communities. This is the impact of your decision on real communities.

This contested space is one that we cannot ignore. It is wrong to say that there is only one approach. It is not like the World Trade Organisation (WTO), where the task was to de-legitimise, close it down and seek real solutions elsewhere. There are some good progressive country delegations at the UNFCCC. We can get better leverage via the climate justice movement to hold decision makers accountable and not sell out our communities and people. They are discussing who will live and die, have food, or be a climate refugee. We need to make sure they don't make decisions without us in the room collectively making our views known. So it is false to ask whether we should be inside or outside. We need to organise and be everywhere, it is not an either/or situation.

### **The Cochabamba Process: Challenging the UNFCCC. Michael Dorsey (Dartmouth College)**

We need to think about the room, what kind of room is it and who is in it.

The deaths of 185 million Africans in this century – Archbishop Desmond Tutu's message was much earlier than this year. Those deaths were projected in 2008. Even earlier, at COP12 in Nairobi in 2006, Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki said that climate change will permanently undermine the livelihoods of Africans. Even so, what they were most concerned about was the CDM – the Corporate or Corrupt Development Mechanism.

US law includes the concept of 'reckless endangerment'. That is behaviour or conduct that you know will put people at risk. That is what is happening at the COPs. Leaders have decided to engage in conduct they know will compromise lives and livelihoods. Governments are now deciding that they will not do anything until 2020. What kind of group gets together and decides not to do anything for almost ten years, knowing that many lives lie in the balance? Leaders put themselves forward as leaders, but opt to do nothing in face of deaths.

This is not just a Conference of Polluters. It is a Conference of Criminals. Do we want to be in the room with these characters? We should not just avoid the room, but be honest about what they are doing.



The Cochabamba process was an effort started in 2010. It was in part led by the Bolivian government and social movements and NGOs inside and outside of Bolivia to draw attention to the criminal conduct inside and outside of the UNFCCC meetings. This was a conference to get ahead of the climate catastrophe and articulate rights for Mother Earth. Its vision is one of people 'living well', in harmony with Mother Earth and in solidarity and equity with each other. Its vision treats people as people and not as property owners. And it rejects the false solutions such as the carbon markets, nuclear power and geo-engineering.



The people's commitment articulated at Cochabamba emboldened Bolivia to stand alone at Cancun. It broke rank with all other countries because they were not looking for real solutions, they were not doing what is necessary. If one tallies pledges made, we will see a 4 degree temperature increase on the planet, which will result in catastrophic human and ecosystem failures worldwide.

The UNFCCC started as a treaty based on principles, but the process now supports criminal conduct. How are we going to reign in criminals and hold them accountable? The alternative to the UNFCCC is not the G20. The alternative is to throw these leaders out. What we need is heads on pikes. And we've been seeing that all year starting with Ben Ali and Maburak. That comes from the people, not from sitting in rooms playing games through an infinity of meetings with the criminals.

## Discussion

Justin Guay ([Sierra Club](#)): This is an important discussion, all have made compelling arguments. Orwell warned of replacing one set of thugs with another. What would we replace the UNFCCC with – how do we ensure something positive comes out? What if something else steps into the vacuum of power?

MacDonald Stainsby ([Oil Sands Truth](#)): We started movements but then compromise meant collapse because we engaged with the system and negotiated. We had little effect. The Israeli summer collapsed in six weeks because they wanted to engage. In Egypt they compromised and allowed the military to move in. The strength of the Occupy movement is that has not set out to negotiate a set of demands. It refuses to have leaders who would then lose everything. We need heads on pikes.

Michelle Maynard (PACJA): Is this the right question? The main thing we want to do is to see people engaging at all levels. Throwing a stone in water makes many circles, and we cannot choose which to engage in. Different spaces are equally rotten. So the question is: how do we bring about the transformation? Leaving the oil in soil will stop degradation and preserve life, but there are no models for alternative approaches or even the restoration that needs to be done. Eco-villages, moving from the GDP to other measurements—are these initiatives the greatest hope? Let's look at the roots of how to bring about real transformation.

We are dealing with neo-colonial politics, and this is dangerous for future generations. It promotes a system of profit and greed that impacts at the local level.

Meena agreed with Michelle. The question is not "which space?" but "how can we amplify our strength best given our limited capacity as movements?" Each one of us can find a space that we can work with best, and still share a common vision called climate justice. We can use Durban as a space to look at how we relate these. Indigenous peoples are engaged in the UNFCCC, but it is a large worldwide movement doing all sorts of other engagement on the ground and pursuing a coherent strategy. We are not just confronting our governments, but other governments like the US. Strong movements exist all over, and we need to link them.







Patrick Bond: Going in the UNFCCC our comrades can watchdog, sabotage, whistle blow, and de-legitimise. But you are not going to win anything. What can we replace UNFCCC with? As Susan George said about the World Bank, just get it out, like cancer.

Asad Rehman: Once we commit to oil in the soil, there are still real challenges. Bolivia is still exploiting natural resources to lift people out of poverty? Climate justice is an economic justice fight as well. People cannot find answers by themselves. The imagery of cancer doesn't work because the patient is dying, no matter what we do the climate has moved into irreversible cycles and impacts. We can't just move out of that space. Sure we will slow and harass and expose, but the real solution is people power. But we have mobilised 10,000s of people, not the millions we need. We have to be united about vision, accept that we are diverse and all move in the same direction.

Michael Dorsey: We have to recognise when we are being kidnapped. Consider the Stockholm syndrome: you are kidnapped and then fall in love with your kidnapper. We need to be serious about criminality. These are ants we can step over, that are falling down on themselves. We have got to know history, so we see when the door is left open by our kidnapper and we can walk out! Learn how to walk away; there are victories all over the place. Work across scales and levels. Move away from foolishness and build climate justice together.

Barry Wuganaale ([Ogoni Solidarity Forum](#)): We are busy responding to the agenda set by the people destroying the environment. The best defence is attack. When will we take the battle to the devil's backyard?

Thomas Mnguni (Highveld): Our agenda starts from where we live. It starts with air pollution and AMD that affect people on a daily basis. We say we have a problem with climate change, but we don't address issues of alternative means for energy, or consider products that we consume. We need to develop and rethink alternatives to current systems.

Mzi Mngeni (ILRIG) noted comment that governments lack political will. Will for what? Our governments have the will but their agenda is for capitalism. So what is our will as the movements? We need strong movements on the ground but there is still a gap between unions and environmental movements. For example, we hear from the [Vaal Environmental Justice Alliance](#) about Sasol but what is the National Union of Mineworkers doing?

Fidelis Allen (Centre for Civil Society) asked if the project to delegitimise COP17 was indicative of social power relations now, and, if so, could the speakers develop the concept to where civil society can use it?

Michael agreed that forging alliances [as between movements and union] and building on them is critical to moving toward real solutions. In Africa there is space for technology "leapfrogging" development through this alliance – for example, most Africans got their first telecommunications connection via cell phone. The alternatives are there and we must not under-estimate our own power.

Asad agreed that we need to connect movements, unions, women's movements, land movements etc. We can fight one site battle after another, but we must win transformation as well. We have enough ideas around energy sovereignty and energy access, and need to reach global levels. We are not negotiating inside. We are opposing deals around REDD and carbon markets. We go into that space with principles from the ground, not to negotiate.

Patrick Bond: I don't doubt the principles of the climate justice people working on the inside. But there is a legitimisation of the negotiations process by some of the big international NGOs like WWF who come out with statements like, 'we are close to agreement on REDDs'



and in support of market solutions. Whether around the World Bank and WTO, or the Security Council, the multilateral reform process is not working. The last successful multilateral agreement was in 1987 with the Montreal Convention on phasing out ozone depleting CFCs. UN environmental processes have not worked because the balance of forces in those spaces is too adverse.



We ended apartheid in 1994, only for it to be replaced with class apartheid. Nevertheless, in 2003 HIV+ people in the Treatment Action Campaign won access to medicines and this was a huge victory against an array of forces. What we need to do is connect climate change with people's immediate issues: electricity and water, unemployment, extreme weather, xenophobia and climate refugees, the fossil fuel complex and what it does to people. The south Durban community is constantly rocked by explosions at Engen's refinery. Not in our backyard! Not in the planet's backyard!

## **Smoke and Mirrors: The pushing of false solutions!**

### **Carbon trading: Marketing the Commons! Sarah-Jayne Clifton (Friends of the Earth, EWNI)**

The false solution of carbon trading was first introduced by the US and is backed by the EU and corporate lobbyists. They are now looking to expand carbon trading and COP16 (Cancun) decided that new forms of market solutions should be developed. This is a smokescreen for an increase in emissions, and destructive impacts on ground.

To avoid tipping points we need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, especially dirty fossil fuels. Which country takes most responsibility is one of the most contentious issues in the COPs. The Kyoto Protocol is weak, but contains the principle of legally binding emissions reduction. It is also based on the UNFCCC's principle of common but differentiated responsibility which means that the rich countries most responsible for global warming must cut first and cut most. However, there are no penalties if commitments are not adhered to.

The European Emissions Trading System (ETS) is the most developed market. In theory, it works like this. Carbon trading covers specified industries and sets of industries. Taken together, they are allowed x amount of carbon emissions – that is the cap. This is divided between sectors and industries which are given permits to produce these emissions. If they emit less than their permitted amounts, they can sell the permits and if they emit more they must buy permits to cover the difference. This is supposed to create incentives for reducing emissions but this is disputed even in theory. It does not help make necessary changes in the economy but instead it locks in the current situation.

In practice, the situation is even worse because of the power of industries. In Europe, they were given permits rather than having to buy them. They then did serious lobbying and so got even more permits than they needed. So most of them did not have to cut emissions and the system simply delivered additional profits to fossil fuel based industries in Europe.

Carbon trading is deliberately made complex so people cannot engage with it. It conceals both the additional profit and who is really paying for it. ArcelorMittal was given more permits than it needed and made money selling them to power corporations. Those corporations added the cost to people's bills so everyone paid for them, including poor people had to go without energy because they couldn't afford the increase.

The involvement of global finance in carbon trading is about privatising the air and making a commodity out of the right to pollute. Buying and selling permits in the EU ETS is done by speculators who add to the overall cost. The carbon trading model is now being taken into discussions about 'ecosystems services' relating to water and the diversity of species





etc. Businesses that want to exploit those resources by increasing biodiversity trading. What they pay for is the right to damage one place (where their factory is) in exchange for not damaging somewhere else. That somewhere else is usually in a Southern country and in the territories of indigenous people. So what happens is that they take people's collective resources and give them to corporations and financial interests which then have rights to exercise power over them.

### **Clean Development Mechanism. Payal Parekh (Climate and Energy Research and Campaigner)**

The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is framed as a win-win solution. Instead of reducing emissions at home, developed countries pay developing countries to reduce emissions for them. In exchange, the developing country supposedly gets some "sustainable development". So the mess created by the North is supposed to be cleaned up (or 'offset') in the South.

This shifts emission reductions pressure from developed to developing country. So developed countries do not have to make the necessary transformational change to how they produce goods. In the South meanwhile, CDM projects are supposed to be 'additional'. That means that something cheaper and dirtier would have been built under 'business as usual' but the extra income from carbon trading allows something cleaner to be built. However, many CDM projects are in fact dirty and adversely affect communities who do not get the advertised benefits. And many projects are not really additional – they were going to be built anyway – so there is no reduction. The end result may be an overall rise in emissions.

Approved CDM projects include landfill gas, biomass, energy efficiency, hydropower and treatment of potent greenhouse gasses, such as nitrous oxide, emitted by particular industries. Projects are paid in 'certified emission reduction' credits that can be sold on the carbon market. Most of the projects certified are not really innovative or truly renewable energy projects. Many projects are not sustainable and many have impacts that are ignored such as human rights abuses. A project in Honduras has led to the killing of local residents and projects in China have resulted in the eviction of poor farmers from their land.

Trading of CDM credits is linked to the system of permits in Europe. At the end of year, developed countries buy offset credits from developing countries to meet their reduction targets. At the same time, traders sell speculative carbon credits that have not been verified.

### **Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD). Daniel Ribeiro (Justiça Ambiental, Friends of the Earth Mozambique)**

REDD has the same problems as offsets and the same negative impacts. The logic of REDD is that there are carbon emissions from destroying the forests, so you 'save' carbon if you slow down the rate of destruction. This claimed carbon saving can then be traded to offset real pollution. This commodifies the carbon stored in the forest but ignores everything else.

REDD readiness changes the way governments see forests. Before 2008, the Mozambican government was beginning to address forest issues but now it sees the forest just as carbon. They recognised that there is a big difference between natural forests and plantations but now they do not differentiate. They also choose areas where forests are not being degraded and do not deal with areas that really need protection. This is a way of manipulating the figures: REDD claims are based on good areas measured against full national baseline of degradation so you can get credits for doing nothing.

But those who buy the credits still get rights so indigenous people are dispossessed of forest resources. The so-called safeguards are easily circumvented and land grabs become an issue.





This is dividing civil society because conservation NGOs support REDDs while justice organisations support indigenous rights so people don't get moved. We also question the justification for REDD in terms of carbon saving. No details are provided by REDD proponents but it doesn't make sense. It does not address the causes of deforestation; it has in fact created an incentive to log more so as to push down baseline and claim bigger savings; and finally, measuring carbon is very complicated so claims are based on various assumptions which are likely to be false.



To address deforestation and forest degradation, we need to deal with the cause. In Mozambique, the government says that communities use bad practices and cannot manage forests so they cause deforestation. In fact, the government now works even less to solve problems because its interest is to have a low baseline. Meanwhile, the players pushing for REDD are corporate loggers and plantation owners. They are destroying forests and replacing natural ecosystems with monoculture plantations and the damage done by plantations is not counted. So those groups who support REDD are the ones causing the problem.

### **Agrofuels: Tanking our food! Wally Menne (Timberwatch)**

There is confusion about claims around biofuels. Biofuels are promoted as an alternative to fossil fuels (petrol and liquid fuels from coal), using plants and crops to fuel vehicles and provide electricity. A major rush by northern countries to use biofuels to reduce emissions resulted in a land grabbing spree. The EU set itself a biofuel target of 10% by 2012, which required destructive development in the South, extending to India, Indonesia, Africa and South America.

Jatropha was to be the wonder crop in Africa but has been a big failure; in the US the conversion of corn to ethanol was developed with massive subsidies; Brazil is one of biggest producers of ethanol from sugar cane and has expanded production along with the ills of the sugar industry; in Indonesia the production of bio-diesel from palm oil has led to all kinds of problems including staggeringly high carbon emissions as plantations replace forests and peat lands; and Europe makes ethanol and biodiesel from sugar beet and rapeseed.

There is not enough land available to meet Europe's targets. What was thought to be a great solution has failed at the cost of local people. Tanzania provides a good example. Sun Biofuels signed an agreement with the government and communities to lease large areas of land. (They also leased land in Mozambique, Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana). They promised schools, new boreholes, and jobs to the communities. In Tanzania none of these promises was fulfilled – but the community has lost 8,000 hectares. Eleven villages agreed to give up this land so that the company could lease it for 99 years, based on their promise that the villagers would be compensated, employed and benefit from sustainable development. The company has since folded and the lease has been sold to another company.

Biofuels are produced for export for cars in Europe on people's land that was used for people's food. Without this land, people are displaced onto adjacent land, so creating greater concentration of people and farming and making farming unsustainable. This in turn results in people selling charcoal to survive and so accelerates deforestation.

Small scale biofuels that provide energy and livelihoods to communities could be a good thing. Agrofuels are not!





## **Waste-to-energy: Incinerating livelihoods. Mariel Vilella ([Global Anti-Incineration Alliance](#))**

GAIA is a worldwide alliance of more than 650 grassroots groups, non-governmental organisations, and individuals in over 90 countries. Our vision is for a just, toxic-free world without incineration.

There are large potential profits from waste-to-energy and big corporations want it. Waste disposal is increasing, primarily in open dumps where dry waste is mixed up with organic (food and garden) waste (comprising 40-60% of waste). This creates landfill gas (dirty methane) which contributes to climate change.

The UNFCCC has validated two responses through the CDMs: allowing carbon credits for incinerators that burn the rubbish and landfill gas systems which capture the gas and use it to generate energy. In Durban, the Bisasar Road landfill has a gas-to-energy CDM project.

Incineration is a toxic crime. Waste does not disappear but is transformed into toxic emissions to air while destroying the resource that waste pickers gather for recycling. In landfill gas systems, the capture of gas is not efficient so it doesn't stop methane emissions. And the gas that is burnt for energy is dirty so it emits toxics to air. But since it makes money, it encourages putting more waste into landfills.

We need to stop carbon credits for incineration and landfills! Worldwide, there are 50 million waste pickers and what they want is separation at source with recycling of dry waste and composting or biogas digesters for wet waste.

## **Nuclear: Whose solution? Tristen Taylor ([Earthlife Africa, Johannesburg](#))**

South Africa has two reactors at the Koeberg power plant in Cape Town and a small research reactor at Pelindaba north of Johannesburg. Koeberg's capacity is 1,800 MW. The government is looking to expand the nuclear industry. It wants to build a fleet of six new power plants with a total capacity of 9,600 MW. The first is to be up and running by 2022 and the last by 2030.

In the 2010 'Integrated Resource Plan for Electricity', the South African government modelled energy needs against the criteria of low carbon, cost effectiveness and reliability of supply. Nuclear came out badly mainly because the nuclear fleet would cost around R1 trillion! But government insisted on reinserting nuclear into energy policy and changed the modelling process to favour nukes. Why?

Part of the answer is foreign pressure and diplomatic trade-offs. The corporations bidding for the fleet contract are from France, the US, China, Korea and Russia. Then there are domestic pressures. The size of the deal dwarfs the arms trade and allows for a lot of corruption. Given the uncertainties of ANC politics, those in power need to get deals signed now lest they be removed at the ANC conference in 2012.

## **Discussion**

The same themes keep emerging in presentations and discussion: people are dispossessed, polluted and excluded from decision making and this is organised in interests of corporations who want to get their hands on the money.

CDMs are not working ... what can civil society do? We need to articulate that we don't want carbon trading and convince African governments that it is not in their interest. This requires growing pressure from civil society. African countries generally see carbon credits as a source of money and complain that they don't get enough CDM projects. However, carbon trading is complex and developing countries typically cannot cover all the issues because they have only a handful of negotiators whereas the big countries have up to 500.



Under Kyoto, there is no clear method for enforcing country commitments to cut carbon and enough loopholes to let countries get around them. On the way to Copenhagen, Canada simply threw its commitment in the bin.

There are voluntary carbon markets in which private business organisations create their own pseudo-credits. The rules are even weaker than for CDM credits and voluntary markets usually apply where projects are rejected by CDM.



## **DAY TWO: Wednesday 23 November 2011**

### **Stories from the ground: Parallel Session 1 – Energy from where and for whom?**

#### **Electricity struggles in Soweto. Simon Mthembu and Bobo Michael Makhoba (Soweto Concerned Residents)**

The issue that concerns our group is electricity privatisation in the township. We always question as to why Eskom privatised electricity without consulting citizens. We wrote to Eskom, marched on Eskom, delivered memorandums to Eskom, but they did not answer. We then had to take an initiative such as boycotting the payment. The bills are exorbitant, and many of the residents are pensioners and cannot pay the bills. We are not the people who don't want to pay, but we are forced by the rising electricity prices to default on the bills.

We are fighting for basic rights to get clean drinking water, electricity and housing. These are parts of our Freedom Charter, which was promised to us when we fought for the democracy in this country. Eskom is making lots of profits, whereas we are going bankrupt to pay mere electricity bills. Some people owe R17, 000 to Eskom but none of us have jobs to pay those bills. We struggled to get the re-connections for 65 families but Eskom have not cleared our debts. Prepaid meters are not working for the communities. When we buy R100 credit, it lasts only for three days. The price hike by the National Energy Regulator of South Africa is killing us and we are looking for cleaner solutions like solar panels to solve our electricity problems. There are less operating costs for solar panels, and the tax-payers money should be invested in the clean energy solutions. Why should the poor pay the high electricity prices, whereas the rich are getting subsidized?

#### **Oil in the Niger Delta. Akpobari Nkabari (Ogoni Advancement)**

The government and the corporations are dispossessing communities from their homes and beautiful land. The Niger Delta used to be the food basket, with abundance of fish and fresh water. There were rich mangroves everywhere. When oil companies came, the people were brainwashed by the lure of getting profits from the oil and development. The only electricity we got was the reflections from the gas flaring in the night. We saw the gas flares, transportations and oil spills. The gas was flared 24 hours and soot covered the villages. Within 10 years people were dispossessed and made poor. People took the oil companies to the court, but the oil companies are very strong and rich and fighting them is tough. We started very successful peaceful campaigns along with Ken Saro Wiwa. But thousands of Ogoni people died for the oil. Many weapons used for wars and combats were used to kill people who were opposing the oil companies. Many young people died in the struggles.

Ken Saro Wiwa came with the demands for local people and people decided that, if they are not getting any profit from Shell company, then Shell should leave. They have polluted everything and not shown any remorse, but they have made things even more difficult for communities. We cannot talk to the government until leaders truly represent the people







It was a “do or die” situation for us to keep the oil in the ground. We took the campaign to Europe and picketed Shell gas stations in different parts of the world to get them out of Ogoni land. However, Shell is now buying land in Ogoni again, and they want to start oil extraction again. Crude oil is supposed to be a blessing for the local communities, but is a huge curse for us.

### **Coal-to-liquids in Sasolburg. Comfort Malakoane (Vaal Environmental Justice Alliance)**

Sasolburg houses many industries, despite this there is an unemployment rate of 38% in the area. They are polluting our communities. Sasol projects an image of a good company. Sasol's Secunda plant is the world's largest single point source of greenhouse gas pollution, but the corporation has positioned itself to be part of the climate negotiating and is on the SA government delegation. From 1953 till today, there are huge emissions from the plant and they even now flare the gas. Sasol has been doing business as usual and has changed nothing much.

While peoples' bodies are getting polluted by these industries, they have to burn coal indoors to keep themselves warm and cook. Sasol and South African government are encouraging the burning coal indoors. They are also looking for some carbon credits for pushing the coal burning, as they claim that they have reduced the emissions.

### **Drilling for oil at the source of the Nile. Bwengye Rajab (Oilwatch, Uganda)**

The Nile is the longest river in the world. It originates in Uganda and the water flows 6,700 km across Uganda, Sudan and Egypt. The area where oil is planned to be drilled is the Albertine rift valley area, and is bordered by Sudan and the DRC. Upstream, Lake Victoria is shared between Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya. There are ongoing conflicts in all these countries and oil will aggravate the problem.

There are nine oil blocks, and these are in some of the most sensitive areas in terms of ecosystems and biodiversity, both in Uganda and globally. When you want to drill for oil, there has to be proper planning and a proper legal framework, but Uganda doesn't have those framework. Companies are already dragging Uganda in the international court for not respecting prospecting contracts. How can you expect the foreign courts to be fair to the poor countries?

We are dreading the impacts of oil drilling in this area and the ecological and political conflicts it will bring about. There are no redress systems, no accountability by the governments to the people and the courts don't deliver justice to the communities.

### **Coal in the Soutpansberg. Azwihangwisi Moses Mudau (Dzomo la Mupo – Voice of the Earth)**

Mining companies came with the promise of jobs in our area. They are dividing the communities to further their interest. Even our local government is not looking after us although we gave our lives to get this democracy – to get this 'peoples' government'.

Coal of Africa is a mining company that doesn't have water license and thus is operating illegally. They have no respect for natural sacred sites which are very important to us. People are organising against the coal mines and have asked the government to revoke their license, and not give them any water license. Coal of Africa has been holding meetings, and not inviting the communities. Coal of Africa has threatened the local communities for criticizing the company, but we do have the right to raise our concerns without any fear of persecution.



## Acid Mine Drainage in Gauteng. Mariette Liefferink (Federation for a Sustainable Environment)

There are 80 existing coal mines in Mpumalanga province, and hundreds of new permits have been given for coal mining in the Highveld region. This is the area with the highest rain fall and is the source of various rivers. The real cost of coal mining is not assessed and many external costs are born by poor black African communities.



We can learn from the acid mine drainage challenge in Gauteng. Acid mine drainage is one of the most damaging environmental issues for the people to deal with. South Africa has a legacy of 120 years of gold mines which has left us with 6 billion tonnes of iron pyrite tailings and acid mine drainage will continue for hundreds of years to come. The mining wastes also contain uranium and they have devastating impacts on human health.

There are hundreds of poorly managed tailing dams. On windy days parts of Johannesburg and Soweto are covered with a cloud of white dust. Communities are living on the uranium waste dumps in houses with no concrete floors and are thus exposed to many ills. They are manufacturing bricks from the mining waste which are elevating radioactive levels in the region as the bricks are distributed to the public. These lessons from the legacy of gold mining cannot be ignored and the problems repeated by coal mining.

## Stories from the ground: Parallel Session 2 – Beyond conventional fossils

### Tar Sands in Canada. Macdonald Stainsby (Oil Sands Truth)

Tar sands are based on converting bitumen to oil. Its massive scope and scale is important, using enormous trucks with 20-30 in each mine, 8 mines running 24 hours/ 365 days. First they chop down all trees and carve all life and biodiversity out. Pits are up to 70 m deep and truck loads go to a separating plant, an upgrader, and then a refinery. Slurry is heated and then cooled with tremendous amounts of water: each barrel of oil uses four barrels of fresh water, drawing from the Athabasca River.

Slurry waste collects in massive tailing ponds. Government estimates that 67 litres every second gets into the river and people live on this river. A study of the flesh content of fish and moose tests highly toxic – 400 times over the safe limit for arsenic – and diseases that were rare have become common. Government denies the problem but it is clearly a massive human rights abuse.

Tar sands oil is three times worse for climate change than regular oil. It produces oil for jet fuel, domestic use and the US military. It is not good for cars.

Canada has lost 25% of fresh water in North America because the river is now highly toxic (and leads to the Arctic). Only 1% of water used is re-useable. Plants grow on natural bitumen before mining but not on replanted areas after mining.

Our campaign has been running for over five years, and has raised global consciousness. The Occupy campaign plus the indigenous environmental network have campaigned around the White House to block the Keystone pipeline (planned to take tar sands oil to the US), which was not approved so it will financially collapse on itself, and bring an end to four mines.

### Total and Tar Sands in Madagascar. Jean Pierre Ratsimbazafy

Tar sands operate in a non-conventional way to produce fuel because it requires a complicated process of extraction, more infrastructure and enormous amounts of water. It produces a very dense liquid that is rich in carbon. There are lots of tar sands – 2 billion barrels a





year are produced across the world, from Saudi Arabia, Canada, Venezuela, and Madagascar (south of Bemolanga).

The prospecting process starts with ground samples which are analysed for quality and quantity. Eventually this results in the development of a mine, boreholes, and infrastructure. If they extract in an open mine, it is necessary to replace sand and rehabilitate the mine. Other technology, such as steam injection, uses less water. There may be economic benefits from tar sands, but Madagascar risks depending on one industry, to the decline of other sectors, corruption and bad governance, and the unbalance of benefits leading to unrest. It uses great amounts of energy and extraction emits much more than conventional oil.

In Madagascar, Total is presently prospecting in an arid area where there is already the problem of water scarcity. People and their livestock depend on that water. Tar sands development uses the water and pollutes it. It also kills biodiversity and the polluted river runs into the sea so maritime biodiversity is also affected. There is a lack of access to information, a lack of public participation and no process for environmental justice.

Tar sands are spreading across the African continent and further abroad: there are tar sands in southern Nigeria, they are being considered in Congo Brazzaville and the DRC, as well as in Latin America and Russia.

### **Shell and fracking in the Karoo. Amos Dyasi ([Southern Cape Land Committee](#))**

We are learning through the campaign against fracking. The Karoo is a water-stressed area with 300mm of rainfall per annum. 'Hydraulic fracturing' breaks up shale rock deep underground to release methane gas. The process uses millions of litres of water mixed with sand and chemicals. This 'fracking fluid' is pumped into the well at high pressure.

The gas itself is highly carcinogenic and the water used in the process comes back to the surface and is highly toxic.

Shell SA, a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell, wants to explore for shale gas in the Karoo. Each time they frack a well, they will use between 6 and 25 million litres of water – enough to fill 3 to 10 Olympic size swimming pools. Where will Shell get this water? And they will mix between 150,000 and 500,000 litres of chemicals into that water. No one is allowed to prevent frackers from coming on their land because the mineral rights below ground belong to the government.

They are making big claims about job creation to get local support. But in the end more people will lose their jobs. We also need to find ways of providing sustainable energy for our children. Shale gas energy is not sustainable because without clean water, there is no life, food or jobs.

Why don't we know what is happening? The present status is as follows. In April 2011 the South African government placed a moratorium on the approval process until February 2012. It then selected a technical task team to advise on fracking but has refused to release the names of the people on the team. We are concerned that there are no people with environmental and agricultural expertise who can advise about measures for ecology and biodiversity. Meanwhile, the National Planning Commission has said we need the energy without waiting for any studies.

Fracking will affect farmers, farm workers and dwellers. The [Southern Cape Land Committee](#) works with farm worker and will help them engage directly with decision makers. But this is turning into a very polarised issue as the Treasure the Karoo Action Group is excluding farm workers and the urban poor. So they are creating class divisions.





## **Incineration Struggles: Health risk to livelihood struggles. Khotso Polori and Simon Mbata (Global Anti-Incineration Alliance and South African Waste Pickers Association)**



In 2007, the Incineration Forum was started by young people near cement plants in the North West Province to address contradictions between humanity and nature. Our community is adjacent to two big cement kilns – Afrisam and Lafarge. After 60 years, 60% of the young are unemployed and people suffer from pollution related diseases. We have high levels of asthma, TB and skin diseases including cancers. They are still regulated using a 1965 Air Pollution Prevention Act, which regulates for dust and particulates only and does not regulate for other emissions from the kilns.

In the process of cement manufacturing, they have appropriated a huge amount of land for lime quarries. The old quarries are now ponds and children between the ages of 13 and 17 year have drowned in them.

The government remains determined to capitalise on cheap energy – including burning toxic waste as ‘alternative fuels’ in cement kilns. Public participation is really a public relations stunt as the politics of the elite have overpowered people and their lives. Burning is not a solution to waste management – recycling is power to waste pickers and they return waste as resources.

We are confronted by a false solution supported by CDMs: incineration and waste to energy projects. Waste is a problem globally, but it can be solved by trying to minimise the production of waste. Incineration reduces the amount of waste going to landfill but there is no consideration of its impacts. Resources are not only valuable to waste pickers, but also to society as a whole. Waste pickers save on energy use and carbon emissions all down the production chain. If recycling can be supported, and a zero waste model can be taken up, we will be headed in the right direction.

## **Dams as a false solution. Anabela Lemos and Dipti Bhatnagar (Justica Ambiental, Friends of the Earth Mozambique)**

### **Damming the Zambezi in Mozambique**

There is a rush to build big dams in Africa, and they are looking for CDM credits as part of a claim that dams produce clean renewable energy. But they do in fact emit greenhouse gases in construction and from rotting vegetation when they flood the valleys. Dams also trap sediment that was previously deposited downstream. They kill the livelihoods of millions of people dispossessed by the flooding and people downstream who relied on healthy river ecosystems. On top of this, climate change also impacts water, damaging rivers and livelihoods.

The government of Mozambique wants to build yet another dam on the Zambezi, a river that runs through eight countries. They want to extend the reach of the existing Cahora-Bassa dam in Mozambique, and build another dam 7 kilometres downstream called Mphanda Nkuwa. Justica Ambiental (JA) has been fighting against this for 10 years. The government kept an environmental study secret and did not let JA see it. JA worked with communities to raise awareness so that people understand the impacts of such infrastructure projects on their day to day livelihoods. Last year, the government started another environmental assessment study and JA has responded by organising community petitions.

We reject the technical side of government studies and the process. Their studies are totally inadequate and underplay most of the serious impacts. So JA comments on the issues and we also do our own studies. Our concerns include: When water from the dam is released suddenly, the flow causes destruction all the way to the sea and destroys people’s livelihoods. 80 per cent of the population of Mozambique do not have electricity and will not get it with this dam.





Instead the power will be exported to Eskom in South Africa. There is no place to relocate the thousands of households displaced by the dams.

JA is also doing work on sediments and it tries to understand and warn the government how dams cause an increase in seismic activity. Finally, government has not considered climate change impacts when planning the dams.

Powerful people stand to make big money from the dam project and JA has faced intimidation and death threats. The government tries to counter JA by going to the community with its own messages. But we will keep on with our work. We have a petition and will still carry on the fight.

### **The Narmada Struggle in India**

The Indian government wants to build a whopping 30 large dams in the one catchment of the Narmada River and her tributaries in central India. The struggle in the Narmada valley against these dams began in 1985. One of the largest and most controversial of these dams was first funded by the World Bank. But the affected people struggled and they managed to throw the World Bank out in 1993. This was a huge step, as it was one of the first projects where the world that the World Bank had been challenged and been forced to withdraw.

Unfortunately, the Indian government still went ahead with the dam construction. Today the Sardar Sarovar dam is 80 per cent completed, but further construction has still been kept at a stand-still by the resistance of affected people. Thousands of hectares of agricultural land, forests, villages and even some towns that are not already under water or face the threat of submergence. But people continue to fight using the principles of non-violence. People were promised land-based rehabilitation and are fighting for land to continue to survive. The government is offering them money, even running behind them to give them money, but they don't want it. They know the money will disappear. They want land so that they can continue to be self-sufficient.

The World Commission on Dams, a global process, concluded that there are some benefits but that the dams have had unacceptable socially and environmentally destructive impacts. This was the first time that a global multi-stakeholder body made such a strong statement, so we thought things would change. However, there is another tool being used by dam-builders these days to pass their dangerous, outdated technology as "green energy" – CDMs. CDMs create income for "green" projects that would have trouble getting funded without this source of money.

However, it is nonsensical that big dams are on the list of approved technologies because of their terrible environmental and social impacts, let alone that they are the most common type of CDM project. As of 2008, there were 280 large hydro projects on the list out of a total of 828. 65% of the hydropower projects listed in the CDM are located in China.

These are all stories of the government not listening or paying attention to research. There are buckets of money to be made constructing large, centralised projects, hence governments react like flies to get it.

### **Eskom's new build: Medupi. Elana Greyling**

If you want to see beautiful bushveld in Limpopo, you had better come now because it is changing rapidly. The new Medupi power station is growing daily. It is not just a fight against Eskom but a struggle for our country and people, who need energy and jobs. The World Bank Inspection Panel is preparing a report on Medupi but has postponed it until after COP17. But we already know its cumulative effects on the community and environment. The Limpopo is threatened by a range of pressures on its system. We already have the Matimba power



station and the Grootgeluk coal mine. Medupi will be the last straw. But nothing we say has any impact on those who have the power to make the decisions.



This is a water scarce area, slightly drier than the Karoo. Water comes from the Mokolo Dam and the local township's water is cut off any time they want to open the pipes for Medupi. Air quality control measures (scrubbers) are on hold till 2018 but we don't know if there will be enough water to operate them. Medupi has also sparked a coal rush with three new mines to open and each will both demand and pollute water.

Right now, the infrastructure cannot handle the number of people brought in for construction at Medupi. Raw sewerage flows into the river and affects households drawing water from the river. The river is also being illegally mined for sand to supply the Medupi construction work. On top of this, there are many social problems because so many people are flooding into the area hoping to get work. Meanwhile, the local economy based on tourism is dying. People leave the farms to get jobs on Medupi but there will be nothing for them to go back to. Farm prices are falling dramatically as mining ruins their natural beauty and value. They are then forced to stop employing people.

### **Eskom's new build: Kusile. Thomas Mnguni (Greater Middleburg Residents Association)**

The Highveld area has the greatest concentration of coal fired plants in the country. Agricultural and residential land is sold for mining or people are forced to move as mining activities – like blasting and the traffic of heavy trucks – take place in close proximity to their homes. There is a scarcity of water, but mines use huge amounts at cheap rates while people face high tariffs. Mining also causes acid mine drainage, which is extremely expensive to deal with and leaves communities with poisoned water and associated health impacts. Mining creates a lot of dust laden with toxins and this also causes serious health impacts.

Kusile is the big new power station under construction and the problems are similar to those at Medupi. In addition to Kusile, Eskom has recommissioned three old power stations that were mothballed in the late 1980s. To supply them, more coal mines are opening in the Highveld near rail stations. Mines use a lot of water. Water cuts for households are frequent and are presented as a water saving method. But there are no cuts for mines.

The government failed to inform people of the environmental impact assessment for Kusile. It will cause huge damage to existing infrastructure – roads are damaged by huge trucks and sometimes rendered unusable. People are being removed from their land and put in urban areas that lack municipal services and where the quality of water is compromised. Eskom says that it is compulsory to continue. Government should be pointing to alternative energy sources but it runs away. All protest is blocked, there are threats and, if you question Eskom, you get called up by National Intelligence Agency. People's voices are ignored.

We are all facing issues in different countries but we have one thing in common: the need to develop national strategies in line with the Cochabamba agreement.

### **PetroSA's proposed Mthombo Refinery at the Coega Industrial Development Zone in Port Elizabeth. Pierre Louise Lemerrier**

The Coega IDZ includes the dedicated port of Ngqura and is earmarked for heavy industry. Eskom's failure to provide the necessary energy saved us from having Rio Tinto's aluminium smelter built although that plan may be resurrected once they have built new power plants. Meanwhile, Coega Development Corporation has signed deals for two large ferro-manganese smelters.







The next big step, however, is PetroSA's proposed petrol refinery. If it is built, the Mthombo Refinery will be a massive 400 thousand barrel a day plant that will cost at least R80 billion and have a huge social impact. This doesn't make sense because there is an overcapacity of refineries in the world. And with peak oil on the way they may not get anything to refine.

So we need to challenge perceptions and show that there are alternatives to this kind of development. We need a strong position locally to inform the municipality's Integrated Development Programme (IDP) (which is pushing for only manufacturing). However, we have not yet been able to get a meeting with the person in charge and we need a champion inside to push the issue. We need to engage with the Chamber of Commerce to set up a task team on green manufacturing. We need to occupy the place before the refinery is built. We need constructive participation at local level alongside protest.

Participation is complicated, however, because the municipality's planning unit does not have any real capacity and so drafting IDPs is generally outsourced to consulting companies. This results in poor buy-in by the municipality and poor implementation.

## **The Main Global Players in the financing of dirty energy and climate change**

### **World Bank: Kosovo to South Africa! Nezir Sinani (Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development)**

Kosovo is a country that illustrates the influence of different stakeholders on coal plants and privatising energy system grid. It has large deposits of lignite (brown coal) and the energy strategy rests on that. In 2005, the World Bank advised the country to use lignite to produce an enormous amount of electricity for export. Following public protest, they down-scaled their plans from a 2,100 MW plant to a 600 MW plant. At the same time, the IFC (the World Bank's commercial arm) is pushing for the privatisation of the energy system.

Civil society is a watchdog to ensure the World Bank follows standards in implementation. For example, the Bank has not followed its own Strategic Framework for Development and Climate Change because it has not properly considered alternatives. An expert panel is now expected to pronounce on the project. At issues is that the World Bank does not document alternative energy sources such as wind, geothermal, biomass, solar and hydro.

Kosovo civil society is working closely with organisations such as Sierra Club and Bank Information Centre in Washington and, with Kosovo is lining up for EU membership, WWF in Brussels. We are also working with the University of California, Berkeley to assess energy options and the economic development of the country. We can link campaigns and strategies where the same institution (the World Bank) is causing the same problems in other parts of the world.

They are deciding the energy future of our country. We are proposing an alternative energy future. It is clear that the World Bank did not learn from the Eskom campaign and has no intention to stop fossil fuel funding even as it tries to capture the corner in climate financing.

### **Export Import Banks: Government facilitating destruction. Justin Guay (Sierra Club)**

The Sierra Club was part of civil society opposition to the US Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank funding for Kusile. In the Move Beyond Coal Campaign, our first focus was in the US where we have stopped 130 plants being built. We are now campaigning to stop any public



finance going to any new coal plants anywhere. We need to look at the type of banks and their role in climate finance.



The Ex-Im Bank is an export credit agency (ECA), a state agency that supports corporations bidding for work in foreign countries. It normally provides loan guarantees and so reduces risk for private players, which reduces the overall costs to build the project. In this case they provided a \$800 loan to Eskom to support its hiring Black & Veatch, a US engineering corporation. Although this is a relatively small amount, this financing created confidence that made it possible for the project to move forward.

The Ex-Im Bank still financed Kusile in spite of a professed low carbon policy. It labels such projects “low carbon” if they are slightly more efficient in using less fuel – which they would do anyway because it saves money in the long term. In this it follows a more general trend in ECA funding with lots of oil and gas projects and increasingly more coal but much less for renewables. \$4.5 billion is being spent on fossil fuel projects, which leverages even more money, compared to \$300 million on renewables toward climate finance pledge. The US nevertheless counts Ex-Im Bank financing toward its climate finance pledge.

The Ex-Im Bank also used its meeting with NGOs for its own ends. It knew the project was going ahead but went to the press saying it engaged NGOs and would use their concerns to improve the project.

### **Questioning tax money to the World Bank for coal: Few reflections from the UK. Pascoe Sabido (Friends of the Earth, EWN)**

The UK government contributes £2 billion to the World Bank with £10 million intended to support a low carbon transition and energy access. The Bank is failing on both counts. In 2010 it spent \$6.6 billion on fossil fuels, which is equal to Benin’s GDP, of which two thirds (4.4 bn) was spent on coal – an increase of 356% on the previous year. In contrast, it spent just \$1.5 billion on renewables, an increase of only 11%.

We must keep the World Bank away from financing. What can we do about the World Bank? The Medupi campaign combined mass mobilisation, targeting board members, lobbying MPs, protesting in front of the WB headquarters and sending press releases on all these actions to the media. The Bank said that it felt the enormous pressure from civil society against the Medupi loan and that it would never fund such a large scale project again. Medupi shows that we can unite in calling for accountability.

The UK government abstained from the vote on Medupi, having said it will not support large coal fired stations. We have to call the World Bank on its accountability; there was a parliamentary investigation on how UK overseas support is being used and it called to move climate change money away from the World Bank.

We need a coherent strategy of alternatives based on energy sovereignty, bringing examples from everywhere. We need to take back control of energy through international solidarity, and hand power back to people. In short, we need to act against Dirty energy—call for the use of World Bank money from the UK to be committed to clean, affordable, and localised energy alternatives that puts power back in the hands of the people.

### **True cost of coal? Focus on South Africa. Melita Steele (Greenpeace Africa)**

Eskom is investing in coal because it is cheap and we need it. They say it must be our main source of electricity for the near future. But coal is not delivering. They have not supplied energy to millions of South Africans but instead contribute to global warming as well as health, social and environmental impacts. [Greenpeace Africa](#)





commissioned a study to assess the hidden costs of coal – the negative externalities – specifically from Kusile. The study looked at costs related to:

- Climate change
- Health impacts
- Water use
- Coal mining

Due to a lack of data, this study couldn't cover other externalities including:

- Water quality
- Noise pollution
- Damage to roads
- Impacts of ash lagoons on water resources
- Issues of occupational health and safety
- Impacts of radionuclides and heavy metals in causing cancer
- Health costs related to ash dumps

On this conservative basis, the study showed the true cost of Kusile running at between R31 and R60 billion a year. Externalised costs related to water are the highest by far. Eskom questioned this result, saying that they were using the latest, dry cooled technology. But that is the technology that the study looked at. If these costs were factored into the tariffs, people would pay R2.29 per kWh – but we will end up paying these costs in one way or another.

What about renewable energy instead? With renewables, the same cost could fund five times the amount of energy. We need to end Kusile construction, and invest in small scale decentralised renewables. But this won't happen until money from outside goes into this.

## Discussion

It was noted that the South African government gave Eskom R60 billion for its new build. It also provided loan guarantees of R175 billion and then doubled it to R355 billion so that Eskom could raise the money for Kusile.

Concern was expressed that renewable energy is being privatised in the hands of transnational corporations? How the renewable energy industry develops is key, and we need to grow local industries. It was also argued that the renewable targets advocated by most civil society organisations, including Greenpeace, are not adequate to the climate challenge.

It was clarified that the shareholders in the World Bank are national governments who are represented on the board. They are not equal, however. Their voting power is weighted according to their investments in the Bank. Members with permanent seats on the board are US, Germany, UK, France, and Japan. The US contributes 83% and so has enormous power (and the US will not change this now even if offered money).

It was questioned how a struggle about WB project standards could be combined with struggles to keep 'coal in the hole'. In response, it was argued that organisations with a Washington presence galvanised resistance against specific kinds of projects.

## Southern Elites

### Southern Governments and the Elites Agenda

A reflection on the BASIC countries and their place within the international climate dialogue. Sunita Dubey (groundWork US)





How are emerging countries playing a role in the changing world? They are exerting regional power, becoming new emerging imperial powers, and asserting their role in new world. What will they do differently than developed countries? They have huge economies that are not as much affected by the global recession as the Northern powers and their economic power can translate into political power. Their collusion in the Copenhagen Accord caused tensions but showed their common desire to avoid binding targets for themselves. They are also working together elsewhere, for example India, Brazil and South Africa on the Security Council of the UN and as BRICS to counterbalance US dominance.



BASIC countries have pledged to reduce emissions intensity (relative to economic output) by 20-40% and they also see economic opportunity in the renewable energy market. Nevertheless, they are still building fossil fuel plant and are surpassing the US and European Union in terms of carbon emission. This is not sustainable. There is a 3 to 4 degree temperature rise on the way and, even if developed countries eliminate emissions, the big emerging countries would still need to cut emissions in absolute terms.

The issues for each of the BASIC countries include:

South Africa: Can they bring out policies and implement them? South Africa has Eskom and Sasol, the big carbon culprits, on its UNFCCC delegation and has expressed its intent to retain its economic base in fossil fuels.

India: Although it announced a target to reduce emissions intensity, its right to economic growth drives both discussion and implementation and policy is formulated from top down.

China: This is a geo-political battle. They see the US refusal to move on climate as an historic injustice and that is one reason why China refuses to do anything. It sees action as possibly jeopardising its development opportunities and consequent power in the world.

Brazil: Its energy is hydro-based but the deforestation of Amazon and protection of the agriculture sector are central issues.

The elites are hiding behind the poor as they assert their right to development: in India it is the 1% against the 99% as it is elsewhere. What about equity and per capita emissions? Won't the poor suffer the consequences again as the lifestyles of the wealthy will not be challenged? Will BASIC stick together in an alliance in negotiations? They have such different interests. Does this call for an update on "common but differentiated responsibilities"?

### **Elites in the energy crisis. Nnimmo Bassey (Friends of the Earth International, Environmental Rights Action and Oilwatch)**

In the Niger Delta women are shutting down oil facilities. The struggle is between corporate power and people without power. Elites in government are looking after their own interests. There is not one country in Africa where oil is not found.

Meles Zenawi took the money on the way to Copenhagen. Now he says: "African countries will be very flexible in COP17 negotiations" – does this mean they will not have a position? It means that Africa will be thrashed. African leaders are still acting pre-colonial, responding to capital. Colonialism is still about mirrors and beads. They are captured by IFIs and the commodity web; this is apparent as all talks of finance were vague and mere aspirations at Copenhagen.

There are two sets of people on the continent and two kinds of economies, 99% informal sector – the poor without a candle; 1% control 99% of resources. The 1% of people secure





energy resources so they can lead 'fat cat' lifestyles with transnational corporations (TNCs) – they are parasitic and formal. Most people who are looking for energy sovereignty are survivalist, operate on a subsistence level, are peripheral, and are left to resist.

In terms of impact, people at end of pipelines suffer while the resources go North. High toxic gas flaring has been illegal in Nigeria since 1984, and it has been going on since 1958. There are CDM projects to capture the gas for electricity generation, but it is a false solution to gain credit by halting criminal activity.

Resistance is one of the most important forms of advocacy.

### **China in Africa. Daniel Ribeiro (Justiça Ambiental, Friends of the Earth Mozambique)**

The EU clearly has double standards in how it works at home and how it works in Mozambique. In contrast, China acts in Mozambique like it does at home. The environment in China is very bad but they are beginning to respond to some issues. For example, they are reforesting some areas although that includes plantations. Reality on the ground in China is that 10% forest cover has now increased to 18% due to improvements in regulations.

- In respect of forests in Mozambique, Chinese investors are informal, private and small scale investors are looking for timber resources, mainly tropical hardwoods. They are not controlled by the Chinese state. But China says new domestic forest laws are to be followed in foreign countries.

Mpande Nkuwe: the World Bank and Western countries pulled out (why is debatable) but that didn't stop the project. China gives money to Mozambique, and gets benefits such as work for 20,000 workers and land for Chinese food production. From their perspective, the scale of dam building in Africa is tiny. In China there is a dam every 20 kms and four million people were moved for the construction of the Three Gorges Dam.

We also made an issue of labour standards on Chinese backed projects, but labour standards are no different in China.

The Chinese admit that they are in Africa for economic gain. They won't demand any changes in policy from government. There is little space to put pressure on the government in China as the form of working is different – it is more direct than the "talk" of West so you know what you are dealing with. We need a different kind of lobbying with the Chinese.

### **Discussion**

Godwin Ojo commented that people in Nigeria experienced China as opaque in operations; it came in as one thing and did something else. There are studies on Chinese investment in oil in Nigeria. China just wants to copy what other oil companies are doing. The Nigerian government is so thrilled to be with the Chinese, simply because it wants to make inroads.

Ivonne Yanez: When we focus on one "bad guy" we lose the bigger issues about fossil fuels, but we need to understand the new roles of actors. China is a big actor in Ecuador, a creditor giving loans to Ecuador in exchange for the advanced sale of oil. National oil companies now control far more of existing oil reserves than the 'supermajors'.

South Africa's geopolitical role was noted. Its economy is not controlled by the state but by transnational corporations. South Africa wanted to join the BRICs as the gateway of investment in Africa. Leaders want to be part of the emerging global elite. Nigeria is looking taking a similar role. NEPAD should also be challenged. It was argued that we need to focus our energies on getting new leadership.



It was observed that there is a tension between the issue of local elites 'hiding behind the poor' and geo-political equity. US carbon emissions are at 20t/person against India's 1.4t/person. If India takes binding cuts, it was argued, the poor will suffer.



## Corporate Capture of Institutions and Processes

**Coal and Banks: A reflection on global banks and coal investment. Heffa Schucking ([Urgewald](#)) - via skype.**

A study by [Urgewald](#), published in cooperation with [groundWork](#), [Earthlife Africa](#) and [Banktrack](#), looked at what private banks are funding major coal miners and producers of coal-fired electricity. It shows that funding is mostly through investment banking (issuing of bonds and shares) and loans. Since the Kyoto Protocol came into force, private bank funding for coal has increased.

The top twenty climate killer banks have provided over €171 billion to the coal industry since 2005. They are headed by JP Morgan Chase, Citi, Bank of America, Morgan Stanley and Barclays. Their actions contradict the statements of all these banks about their commitment to combatting climate change.

The costs of coal are not only about climate change. The process from mining through combustion to waste disposal has a dire impact on the environment and people's health. It severely disrupts ecosystems and contaminates water supplies and it displaces communities and destroys livelihoods. These costs are paid by society and the heaviest price is paid by the poor.

### Multilateral bank funding. Traci Romine ([Oilchange](#))

[Oilchange](#) is building a map what all the multilateral banks are doing: the World Bank, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (these are the largest) and the Asian Development Bank, the American Development Bank and the African Development Bank. The map is documented on the [Oilchange](#) web site: [priceofoil.org/campaign/subsidy-action/](http://priceofoil.org/campaign/subsidy-action/)

We've looked at their funding in three categories: Fossil fuels (coal, gas and oil); all clean projects (on our definition – solar, wind etc.); and other (nuclear, big transmission expansion, biofuel e.g. sugarcane to ethanol). The development banks fund energy for what sounds like great sounding aims. The World Bank leads this and says it supports energy access and clean energy. But this is all rhetoric and these aims are neither followed nor achieved.

Taken together, the development banks handed out \$42.2 billion for fossil fuels, \$25.8 billion into clean energy, \$39.8 billion into other in the three years to 2011. So that's \$25.8 billion for clean energy out of \$107.8 billion. And only 5% of World Bank investments are for energy access.

National development banks are playing an increasingly important role. Brazil's National Development Bank (BNDES) is increasingly active internationally. It doesn't invest directly in other countries but does it indirectly through support to Brazilian transnational corporations – including through a newly established ExIm Bank. In Brazil, it supports the national oil corporation, Petrobras's deep sea 'pre-salt' projects.

These projects are partly privatised to Chevron and one of their wells recently sprang a leak from the ocean floor (about 2 kms below the surface). Under heavy government pressure, it took Chevron two week to cap the leak. However, there is less transparency about the impact than there was in the US following the BP Deep Horizon blow out. Civil society needs to work for greater transparency in Brazil and to resist air and land grabs.







## The Green Economy: 'Capital capture of the environment and its services' OR 'GREEN WHAT?'

Traps and instruments of green capitalism in the real world, Brasil on the road to Rio+20". Lucia Ortiz ([Friends of the Earth, Brazil](#))

We use popular education as an opportunity to promote system change. When we asked people about the colour of our economies, they said it was black for the people who are made poor, red for the impact on people's health and grey for the smoke. And they had one word for this economy: Capitalist.

Here is how corporate and state elites change or adjust policies in a country to get into the green economy. First they describe our system as capitalist and then ask how to make it green. Companies that are 'green' are doing dirty work but with a correct rhetoric. They can even make their own NGOs. At WSSD the corporates presented themselves as the agents of sustainable development. They also do plenty of lobby work. "Greenwash" describes the traps and instruments of green capitalism.

Within this system they talk of 'transition to the green economy' and of 'growing the green': more environmental projects and more 'clean coal', biofuels, etc. – never say 'less' – it is never 'less coal'. This is the roadmap for Rio+20.

What is this transition? In Brazil in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century they brought in alienable property rights in land; in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century they brought in intellectual property rights (IPRs); now, in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century, they are creating tradable property in carbon in trees and soil. In Brazil they change environmental laws, create markets and secure rights for the new green markets. To commodify everything, to create demand, they must first create scarcity of clean water and clean air – pollution creates this demand.

You can sell anything as an environmental service. You can sell futures in symbolic and sacred meanings. They are creating new forms of title for polluters to buy and sell as commodities on market in the same way they created titles in land. And the new opportunities to make money will also block land reform.

The objectives of Rio+20 are to erode the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibility' and to create more obligations for developing countries. It will identify blockages and problems, but not the root causes.

The green economy was not there in the original Rio objectives but is brought in with the neoliberal faith in the incompetence of states and the efficiency of business. They concluded the process of structural adjustments in the 1990s and what they now need are domestic strategies (public policies) that developing countries (not industrialised countries) need to put in place to meet the challenges of the transition to the green economy. This includes a neoliberal structural adjustment of environmental policies and a false new green consensus.

In Brazil, carbon markets are being constructed through various processes while a \$1 billion World Bank loan is targeted at improving national policies on the environment. They are also designating green industrial sectors. Thus, business as usual for steel production is coal-based. Brazil does not have any coal and they are switching to wood fuel plantations. To accommodate that, they have changed the legislation so there is less protection of forests. The new law is aligned with REDD and says Brazil will provide carbon credits and other eco-services from the forests. It guarantees access to the land for investors who are paying for the service. Theoretically, this will pay for the people who live in the forest to care for the forest but not to produce from the forest. The effect will be that those who had people's food sovereignty will have to go to the supermarket for their food.



## Discussion

Fidelis Allen observed that the logic of capitalism is embedded in the green economy and does not work in the interest of the ecology or the people. The concept of sustainable development works in the same way: it is appropriated by developed countries for their own agenda. We need to get the social back into the green economy.



Asked about the conditions for the real green economy, Lucia argued that systems are in crisis and the instruments for resolving the crisis are themselves in crisis. Nevertheless, the pre-conditions for alternatives are all there. We need people organised to explore experiences and knowledge based in a solidarity economics, instead of the economics of accumulation and profit, and making visible women's unpaid labour of domestic work and caring.

On energy sovereignty, Lucia noted that 60% of Brazil's energy comes from large hydro dams. The Belo Monte Dam under construction in the middle of the Amazon will be the third largest in the world and requires resources equivalent to building the Panama Canal. This makes it carbon intensive but the propaganda of clean hydro energy is strong in Brazil. Indigenous people have been resisting this dam for 30 years.

Brazil's dams are state owned but, since the 1990s, distribution has been privatised. Energy sovereignty is about people's control, not state control. Traci agreed that it is people's rights to decide how to live well. We have the technology but are not investing in it. We can create new grids using solar that are decentralised and return power back to the people. Ivonne cautioned that the idea that we are owners of natural resources and processes is problematic. This is not just about corporations. Latin America's '21<sup>st</sup> Century socialist' governments also say 'the oil belongs to us'. We need a different way of thinking about how we relate to nature.

## DAY THREE: Thursday 24 November

### Working beyond the UNFCCC: Creating options for peoples' lead action on climate change

We have debated our involvement in the UNFCCC, this session will consider what we can do beyond the UNFCCC framework.

#### Is there a possibility for an effective multilateral approach? Michael Dorsey (Dartmouth College)

Given the emptiness of official processes there is a prior question about effective multilateralism. But if we choose to, there are two 'minimums' for engaging effectively on the terrain of UNFCCC or other such bodies:

First, we must be context aware: there is a train of meetings leading up to COP, so we must be aware of this larger context, even if minimally via other groups. The big meeting is just one meeting in process of other meetings. The road to Rio+20 didn't start this year but in 2007. Second, we must therefore start of planning in time and for the full road including events in future.

So our ability to move multilateralism forward is rooted in:

- a. Action targets: what do you really want to see happen? For example, targets for keeping oil in the soil next year and the year after etc.
- b. Condemnation targets: these are the large institutions and organisations on their side – and they are more vulnerable targets than we think.





### **Leaving the 'oil in the soil': Making the case for development model without fossil fuels. Ivonne Yanez (OilWatch, South America)**

Yasunisation of the planet is not a proposal but a local, national and global strategy. The idea to leave the oil in the soil started 40 years ago when oil companies arrived in Amazonia and local communities began to fight against everything changing in their lives. This inspired ecological groups to work with communities. Leaving the oil in the soil was asserted as the only solution but people thought it was a far-fetched idea. But it is the most clear solution and the only intelligent way to save lives, nature, and humanity.

We need to convince others to think about these arguments and the case of Yasuni National Park. There are natural, social, cultural, and ecological arguments about preserving biodiversity, protecting cultural rights and avoiding the damage of the Texas Legacy.

The components of Yasunization include:

- Recognition of ecological debt
- Zero emissions
- No indebtedness
- Leaving the oil
- Respect for human rights
- Recognition of the rights of nature

When we presented this proposal to government, they started to talk about CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and biodiversity. This changes everything. For us, Yasuni is a proposal about oil, not about carbon or biodiversity. It is a proposal for leaving 1/5 of Ecuador's reserves in the ground.

In Spanish, 'petroleum' is a colour and people say that the colour of capitalism is petroleum. They say, 'El Sumak Kawsay es sin petroleo' [Living well is without petroleum].

### **Leaving the 'oil in the soil': Making the case for development model without fossil fuels. Godwin Ojo (Environmental Rights Action, Friends of the Earth, Nigeria)**

A new world social order is imminent, coming from the discourse of climate change and a shift from fossil fuels to renewables. Do we see signs of transition? Nigeria has no energy policy, so is willing to take anything. It is surprising to see the Nigerian Energy Commission claims to make energy from renewables – hydro and solar. Could these be signs of transition? Globally, there is a large increase in renewables.

We need to be aware of notions of "unequal exchange" between weak and strong countries, between the periphery (raw materials extraction, export-led, dumping for finished products) and centre (capital, technological and military dominance). When the European Union sneezes, Africa catches cold. There has been an increase in biofuels and land grabs.

There is a new EU–Africa Partnership and a minerals initiative but most African countries are not benefitting from their own natural resources. The EU wants security of supply and the removal of barriers and taxes.

Oil is a finite resource – Nigerian oil will last less than 50 years. We are in the era of peak oil because demand is rising and supply is falling.

What are the obstacles to an energy transition? The main obstacle is a lack of resolve since oil is an easy way for producing countries to make money. We need to leave the oil in the soil, and signal a post-petrol economy. We were able to eject Shell from Ogoniland ever since 1993 but the area is still a wasteland.





ERA has proposed that there should be no new oil blocks. We can develop a clean energy policy that specifies transition from fossil fuels to renewables, with localisation of control and management of resources. This is essential to avoid the loop of poverty and misery that the continent has been subjected to.



### **A gender perspective on oil in the Delta: Understanding women's struggle. Sorbarikor Demua (Ogoni Solidarity Forum)**

The oil industry in Nigeria impacts on the environment and also affects women emotionally, physically, and psychologically. The Niger Delta was a food basket and women decided what to do with land. You could cook a pot of soup without using money. When oil companies came in 1958 they destroyed the land to the extent that it is not fertile even with fertiliser. Women also went to the river to soak cassava but the pollution has destroyed water and land. They took our food basket and returned it empty.

The army raped women, farmland was taken over by fire, and the river was filled with oil. Pipelines are not below the ground but right in or near villages. Gas flares kill men, damage unborn children, and result in people getting cancers.

All problems are left for women. Women have protested and mobilised. But the government doesn't do anything because they benefit from oil extraction.

### **Will Cochabamba echo in Durban? Nnimmo Bassey (Friends of the Earth International and Environmental Rights Action)**

After the failure of Copenhagen, civil society was locked out of the conference and walked away. Cochabamba is a spirit of the outside, but also the inside. The People's Space at COP17 will be a place for the contest of ideas and movement building. Cochabamba provides a platform for this.

Inside, there will be a struggle to keep the Kyoto Protocol alive; will there be a Durban "something"? When the Copenhagen Accord was signed, only a few countries endorsed it so large countries began arm twisting by linking it with funding. But will they sign Kyoto if given money?

Cochabamba responds to the needs of the continent and the world. There were 35 000 participants, 9 000 from outside Bolivia, 56 governments, and 142 countries. It was a broad based meeting representing genuine voices around the world, with robust engagement. It needs to be a major plank and input in negotiations. To date it has been met with a stony silence and attempts to completely ignore what people want.

The People's Agreement rejected the Copenhagen Accord and the Cancun Agreement. Instead it calls for serious measures including:

- A temperature increase not more than 1 degree above pre-industrial levels,
- 6% of the GDP of industrialised countries for adaptation and mitigation (which is what they spend each year on defence),
- cut 50% emissions at source,
- climate debt recognised,
- reject climate markets including REDD,
- promote food sovereignty,
- form a climate and environmental justice tribunal,
- a global referendum on climate change

Let us recall a slogan taken up by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez: "Be reasonable, demand the impossible."





The Cochabamba agreement is available at [www.cmpcc.org](http://www.cmpcc.org)

### **Legal strategies challenging coal fired power stations. Justin Guay (Sierra Club)**

There is great people's power behind the [Sierra Club](#), and this can hurt Congress people running for re-election. [Sierra Club](#) ran the Beyond Coal Campaign in response to Bush wanting another 150-170 coal fired plants. Most coal plants have been retired because they were built back in 1950-70s. Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) began in the mid-West with communities taking on individual fights, loose informal networks being established and spreading (Climate Hope is a book about it).

The campaign of [Sierra Club](#) has three principles: organising, legal engagement, and communications (offering a different narrative to what the industry is saying: coal is dirty and destroys lives). The campaign succeeded in stopping 156 coal plants and it now aims to shut down existing ones – 10% by 2020 and the rest by 2030. Driving up the costs of coal is central to the strategy. We have pushed for regulations, resisted by the coal corporations, requiring pollution controls on coal plants. The controls are very expensive and combine with the rising coal price to push up costs. This forces utilities to make an economic decision: retrofit an old plant with pollution controls, build a new plant with controls or build with renewable energy technologies. Clean energy is not the expensive option and utilities are deciding to retire old plants and not build new ones.

This campaign began with people's struggle, which is different in the US than in the global South, but is the same in terms of building success on success and organising a powerful campaign. So we are sharing our story with others fighting coal plants and hope they can draw useful lessons.

Clean energy is cheap, and is the way to go for the environment.

#### **Discussion:**

It was argued that women need to stand together and not simply use the struggle to access benefits for themselves. In South Africa there are women in parliament but they represent only their own pocket. In the Niger Delta women's survival is threatened by the oil in the water. Middle class people have access to boreholes and can go lower to get water so people's wells go dry.

On whether the climate movement has the power, whether built on ideas, economics, and physical counter-power, to prevail, Michael asserted that we have the idea power and we will win. It is a mischaracterisation to say we don't have economic power – we don't need or want neoliberal economic power. But ecology and economy have the same root and that is where our livelihoods are and that is where we have power. And we do have physical power as we are showing with the 'Occupy' movement sweeping the planet. We shut down California for a day and there are moves to do so for a longer period. We will win against coal and we will win against oil. But that's when we face the real challenge: the corporates are moving into renewables. BP is the largest solar power on the planet and wants an energy monopoly for profit. So how will we maintain the democratic space for energy sovereignty?

Polori argued that people have a choice between activism and victimisation. When the minerals have been extracted, when the oil in the Delta is gone, what will be left for the local economy?

Ivonne agreed. Sometimes we forget we have power. Discussions focusing on emissions, adaptation, and degrees make us weak. If we consider ourselves victims, we miss the opportunity to be the actors and make proposals.

Pierre Louis: It is a question of the UN system versus the reality of the people. Cochabamba is what we need but there is no real plan to use it. The local work is what is missing and that's where women are often at the forefront. There is action against coal energy in US



and oil in Nigeria, yet we are told that green energy is inefficient. In the US, is being replaced by wind and natural gas. Natural gas comprises 50% but fracking is an issue. Solar and wind are cheaper than coal in some parts of the US. It is a question of political clout held by the fossil fuel industry.



Michelle: It is not just capitalism or neoliberalism. Socialist governments have the same problem with environmental degradation. They have the same foundations, the same underlying assumptions. Cochabamba produced an alternative vision. There is a clash of world views of how people view and relate to the earth. In the modern period, people came to see it as dead and there to be exploited and consumed. We need to see our relationship with the earth differently, starting with the ideas of localisation and an earth democracy. What came from Cochabamba is a beginning.

Sunita Dubey: Is there a discussion on lifestyle changes? We cannot sustain life if everyone aspires to the US lifestyle. Traci responded that we have the notion that everyone should have the same right to development, but how do we design it? We aim to create resistance to a consumption based lifestyle model. In Brazil people use 2,000kW hours energy per year for a wonderful lifestyle. In the US, people use 14,000 kW hours but do not have a better life. On the other side, Indian people have just 700kW hours.

Michael Dorsey: In addition to lifestyle changes, on the economic front we need to rethink the basis of the GDP. The green economy conception has been weak because it hasn't involved the grassroots or built on citizen power. It is treating people as ignorant. We do have the power to make change but it will take a long term commitment over decades. The battle of movements won't go away.

George commented that fossil fuels are at the core of everything we are talking about. The way to move forward is to intensify the space around fossil fuels and pressure to leave the oil in the soil. Godwin agreed. Neither capitalism nor socialism can provide an answer. The model of a new system will come from the movements, from the collation of all our struggles.

Ivonne similarly observed that Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador – the new left governments – remain tied to extractivist economies. We are defending our lives and need to build a new paradigm on the idea that nature has rights. We are obligated to restore nature, to allow it to recover life. Half of the population of the world has a sustainable lifestyle – most peasants live almost without oil. We too will have to start to live in a different way. And going beyond the UNFCCC, it is important to “not put a cap but close the tap”.

Justin Guay: The [Sierra Club](#)'s work focuses on the US but what it has learnt from fighting in US is transferable: we can share information and campaign materials. We are developing ways to actively support groups on the ground. We need to have the imagination to work out what happens when we get rid of coal, particularly with structures that grew up around certain forms of energy. Decentralising and democratising energy will have huge implications for how society is structured and for social power dynamics. We need to capture and direct change in a way that has a broader impact.

Nnimmo Bassey: A lot of the challenge is due to a clash of world views. How can the Cochabamba call for a tribunal be made practical? The UN system recognises crimes against humanity but does not recognise ecocide. Cochabamba's Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth takes the extra step. So far, Ecuador and Bolivia are the only countries that recognise the rights of nature. But this is important because we can sue BP in Ecuador for the oil spill in US waters in the Gulf of Mexico. If a company is harming communities – it doesn't matter where it happens – we can take it to court somewhere in the world. They will kick and scream but we will win.







## **Energy Sovereignty: Responding meaningfully to energy poverty!**

**Electricity for the people: A South African possibility. Tristen Taylor ([Earthlife Africa, Johannesburg](#))**

Energy struggles are often contentious and people are arrested, especially around prepaid metering. But people are not denied electricity for technical, supply or capacity issues as Eskom and government argue. Earthlife commissioned research that showed that we can supply 200 kWh per month free to all household with no means testing. This contrasts with 50 kWh 'free basic electricity' supplied to households defined as 'indigent'.

The extra generating capacity needed for everyone to get 200 kWh is the equivalent of 20% of Medupi's output. Assuming a step block tariff – with the price rising more steeply as people consume more – this would cost R1.5 billion. Eskom's profit last year was R12.5 billion.

This is a socio-political issue of how we view things as society. Is electricity a commodity or a basic social right like health care? A public hospital is not supposed to make a profit but to make you well. Similarly, without electricity people are kept poor. Poor people must burn alternative fuels like paraffin, chipboard or coal dust and this is at a heavy cost to their health.

So this is about how people are regarded and it comes back to the ideological domain – cost recovery and infrastructure that supports this. Prepaid meters were imposed on the poorest people and they pay the most per kWh in the country. Why? Eskom assumed no risk because it is prepaid. So people bypass meters as a form of resistance. In contrast, the richest organisations such as Anglo and Billiton pay less than Eskom's cost of production. So everyone else is made to subsidise them.

Electricity is not a technical struggle, can we do it or not? It is a socio-political struggle.

**Global access to energy for the poor: Global Feed in Tariff? Pascoe Sabido ([Friends of the Earth, EWN](#))**

We have to address energy issues at all levels – locally, nationally and globally – because we see a similar pattern everywhere: the energy system is built not for people's access but for corporate profit. This fossil fuel system does not serve people or the planet. We need a transformation of our energy system which is about forms of governance as much as it is about energy technologies. This is not just necessary, it is do-able.

We are faced with three options:

1. Business as usual with centralised grids. This will push global warming to 5 degrees and higher even as it leaves about 1.5 billion people without electricity.
2. The corporate appropriation of renewable energy and the discourse of energy access, for example BP brings renewables into the existing system without changing how it works. This is the agenda that the corporates are pushing with the support of the United Nations.
3. Reject fossil fuels and the corporate structures of power built around fossil fuels and move to renewables in the hands of the people.

What does this last option look like? It is small-scale, localised and people-centred both off-grid and on-grid. It brings real benefits to people's health and local environments and it begins to address poverty. It is based on cooperation and organised around people's needs, not corporate profit. So this is a way to break the power of the big centralised utilities.



Technically this is possible, it is a question of political will. How would we do it? Fossil fuels do not pay the real cost, so we would need to subsidise renewable energy. In Europe we have used a feed-in tariff to guarantee payment for groups for power produced. So communities can get loans to build renewables and pay back the loans from the assured income from the electricity they will produce. In Europe, that income has allowed them to decide on and pay for other projects as well. This changes the way that communities are organised.



**Energy Sovereignty: Wild imaginations. Bobby Peek ([groundWork](#), [Friends of the Earth South Africa](#))**

The slave ships of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century were powered by wind. We must ensure that any new system is about energy for people and not slavery. So we need to get to the core of the issue of how we change our system.

We were lied to by our politicians during the battle against the World Bank loan for Medupi. They said there were no conditionalities attached to the loan. But there were conditions around cost recovery. They said we must have base-load power to supply energy to people. But it is really to supply energy intensive industry and because big base-load is what Eskom does – Eskom doesn't know about small-scale, local or democratically controlled energy.

At one stage Sasol gave – under the cover of night – the coal dust waste that it cannot use to people to burn. They mix it with a bit of water to make briquettes. The health costs of indoor air pollution are very high for people and cost the South African state R4 billion a year. Yet now there is talk of processing waste from coal and even from torbanite – a form of oil shale – for people to burn in their homes. They even want to use those processes to claim CDM credits. This is how government thinks about energy for poor people.

We must find ways to decolonise the types of energy that we are using and move beyond fossil fuels. We are starting on a long journey, moving at different paces and with different politics. There is not one way to think about energy sovereignty, we need more discussions with people experiencing it.

The Nyeleni Declaration focuses on food sovereignty and defines it as:

... the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.

We can start there as we construct the concept of energy sovereignty. The central question is, 'How do we regain power?' At local level, how can municipalities operate properly when the wider system does not allow them to?

How do we distribute what we have? In South Africa, residents only use 16% of electricity and most of that is used by the rich. For them, power is available at the flick of a switch. In off-grid rural areas, 'solar home systems' yield limited power only. People think this is second class electricity. They say they don't want solar but want a switch connected to the grid like urban people have. Yet many urban people have a grid connected switch but the supply is limited by trickle-feeds and there is no electricity when the meter runs out. We need to change the way that renewables are introduced.

When we discuss a new tomorrow, it is about a new system. We need to cross over and bring our different issues together. If we do not, the solution will not be for all but only for a few in society.





## Discussion

If people produce energy at home, what happens to the surplus? Can they sell it back to Eskom or the municipality? Policy does not address this. We need local development models and policies that do.

But are we not commodifying energy even if we can sell it back? Who pays? Shack dwellers need electricity to live and to reduce the number of fires in their settlements.

Electricity was promised them but has not been provided. Resistance to the model of cost recovery has focused on pre-paid meters. This is the most expensive electricity so the poor are subsidising the rich. It should be the other way round.

On this ground, Alan Murphy (Eco-Peace) criticised the Earthlife study: It is regressive because first, it is based on households and some households are larger than others. Second, the price curve on the electricity tariff blocks goes the wrong way. It has a big price step from the free block to the first block that you pay for and the steps then get smaller and smaller. The first step should be smallest with bigger increases as people consume more.

Tristen responded that the Earthlife Study was about what we can do within the existing paradigm. We own Eskom but the political will to make it amenable to people's needs is not there. There is a law to make it act like a private corporation. The National Energy Regulator (Nersa) also limits the possibilities. When it published feed-in-tariffs (since cancelled) to promote renewable energy, it made a bottom limit of one megawatt and so excluded household scale generation. You can run the old analogue meters backwards so the power you generate would be worth the same as the municipal tariff. You can't run pre-paid meters backwards so that technology prevents any return on household generation. Pre-paids also inhibited the introduction of rising block tariffs. We need to think, what can we do about the pre-paid system?

Pascoe noted that a feed-in-tariff guarantees a price for energy produced, but not necessarily to feed into the grid. Communities can produce their own electricity and make their own decisions. For example, a mini-grid with 20 houses can produce enough electricity for those houses. The question is what is appropriate and what that means for governance structures, as it is part of a wider, holistic view of what we use energy for, for example food.

Ivonne was concerned about the use of some concepts, such as "energy poverty". We need to think about the idea of a right to energy. Energy sovereignty should be redefined with two principles: 1. No energy sovereignty can be achieved by damaging food sovereignty and 2. No energy sovereignty can be achieved by damaging Mother Nature. It must take account of the rights of nature.

Bobby concluded that we all recognise that concepts can mean different things in different places, and we grapple to pull them together. Energy sovereignty must be local, it must be democratically defined, controlled and managed, and it cannot be at the cost of damaging another part of the struggle. We don't have final answers but we must ask how energy defines our lives. The ANC has sustained a politics of energy oriented to capital. We need to mobilise and work with all sectors to challenge that.

## **Green Economy and climate finance: Undermining a people's climate change agenda**

**Moving beyond incineration to people's real economies! Or Waste-to-energy: Incinerating livelihoods.**

**Simon Mbata (South African Waste Picker's Association) and Mariel Vilella (GAIA Climate policy campaigner)**





## Simon

We formed the South African Waste Pickers' Association because waste picking is unrecognised. Waste pickers faced exploitation, and were neglected, undermined, and called names. We are owed a climate debt because we collect and recycle waste and this saves on carbon emissions as well as on landfill space. We want green climate funding to flow directly to waste pickers.



We have gained some social recognition of the value of what we do, but there is still a need for public education and we need civil society to be part of this.

## Mariel

Incineration is a toxic crime – it is also economic nonsense. It is promoted as emissions saving but what about the cost of the technology and the jobs lost by waste pickers?

In contrast to incineration, which reduces less than 100kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per ton of waste, recycling reduces 1,600kg CO<sub>2</sub> per ton of waste. Recycling costs R5,300 per day compared to R136,000 per day for incineration, but recycling creates 10 times more jobs than incineration and really improves livelihoods.

Waste pickers want to avoid middlemen and increase their power and earning. There are powerful examples of this in Bolivia and in India. In Mumbai, they gather organic waste from door to door and make compost and biogas from it. Here it is clear that waste pickers can become agents in the fight against climate change.

## Million Climate Jobs: Possibilities for green labour! Thembeke Majali (AIDC)

On the narrow official definition, unemployment stands at 25-26% according to the South African Statistical Services. This definition does not include people who are so discouraged that they are no longer looking for a job but it does include informal work, even begging, as employment. In reality, about 40% of South Africans are unemployed with 60% of women and 75% of youth unemployed.

This is not a passing crisis but is rooted in South Africa's economic structure. Democracy didn't win economic rights and, with the adoption of GEAR in 1996, the ANC restructured the economy so that the state is not responsible for creating employment.

So in South Africa we need to do something to create decent jobs but also to reduce emissions. In March 2011, we initiated the Million Climate Jobs Campaign which is led by a coalition of labour, social movements, progressive academics, and climate justice movements. It is based on the principles of ecological sustainability, social justice and the need for state to take the lead in creating climate jobs. These must be decent jobs and can be about adaptation as well as mitigation. They can promote clean air and water and small scale labour intensive ecological agriculture as well as a shift to public transport and renewable energy.

Our initial research indicates the potential to create even more than 1 million climate jobs at a cost of about R90 billion. In the State of the Nation address, President Zuma declared 2011 as the "Year of Job Creation" but he gave responsibility of creating jobs to big business – the greatest contributors to climate damage.

We see the value of a collective approach to poverty, inequality and climate change. The campaign aims to mobilise thousands of South Africans to demand solutions to the crisis of climate change and the crisis of unemployment.





## Climate Finance: Mechanisms of addressing ecological climate debt: Innovative sources of finances. Trusha Reddy (Institute for Social Studies)

In Copenhagen, and then in Cancun, the rich countries said they would 'mobilise' \$30 billion in 'fast start' climate financing by 2012 and \$100 billion a year by 2020. These promises are a bad joke. The fast start finance has not been delivered and the amounts promised do not meet the needs of addressing climate change. The economic costs of climate change are estimated at 1.5-3% of Africa's GDP and the African Group asked for \$67 billion per year. They have not seen this in terms of commitments and disbursements.

How could we raise real climate finance money? Civil society groups have proposed several means which do not rely on 'mobilising' money from corporations but are based on the principle that climate finance should be from public funds. But several of them do require cracking down on corporate greed.

1. The Financial Transaction Tax (FTT), also known as the Robin Hood Tax, is a small tax on all kinds of transactions and could help curb financial speculation. It could raise \$650 billion per year, and would be administratively easy. It could be raised unilaterally or regionally, and countries can benefit without having to raise the tax themselves. It has support from many quarters. Apart from civil society groups, there is a 'Coalition of the Willing' which includes several European countries, Ethiopia, South Africa and Argentina but not the US!
2. Illicit capital flight organised by Transnational Corporations (TNC) represents a huge loss particularly to countries. Effective enforcement is a regulatory issue and would yield substantial returns.
3. Corporate tax breaks, although legal, also represent a huge loss to public finances. Even Warren Buffet now talks about taxing the super-rich (although not necessarily for climate funding).
4. Shifting subsidies from fossil fuels to renewables. Producer subsidies, including tax breaks, amount to around \$100 billion each year.
5. Defence spending in the North amounts to around 6% of GDP and the People's conference in Cochabamba demanded that they commit this amount to climate funding. South Africa spent R74 billion on the arms deal which would go a long way to meeting the R90 billion cost of creating a million climate jobs.

Other funding possibilities include carbon taxes and direct budgetary contributions.

### Questions and discussion:

#### Carbon Tax

Asked to elaborate on the carbon tax, Trusha said the idea is that the tax must be high enough to create incentives for emissions reductions. There cannot be exemptions. For example if Eskom is exempted, the tax would have no impact. And the danger is that the tax could be passed onto consumers through price increases. This option is not as straightforward as regulation. Whatever we do most be done in a way to achieve the ends we want. Externalised costs imposed on communities need to be factored into production costs. There is also a need to deal with collateral damage and reparations.

#### Waste Pickers

Participants affirmed that everyone should recycle and separate their waste at source. Simon was asked how broad SAWPA's membership is, if they organise waste pickers at the dumps as well from the streets, and what wastepickers can do when middlemen bypass them.



He replied that waste pickers have limited resources but want the broadest possible organisation. Whether on the street or at the dump, all are waste pickers. Waste pickers are opposed to middlemen, so they started engaging with industries and pushing them to establish a market for their materials. We need to educate ourselves and the masses to know recyclables and wet waste, and separate at source. We have good relations with foreigners and are against xenophobia, but because we register all waste pickers only refugees with papers are members.



On standards and pollution controls for incineration, Mariel said that many countries have not developed standards and are not monitoring pollution. Pollution control is better than no control but even with high technology filters in Europe, they are still polluting.

### **Climate Jobs and economy**

Participants were concerned that the promised jobs may not materialise and others may lose jobs based on fossil fuel. Government jobs might also be made dependent on political party patronage. Thembeke noted that people lost jobs because of economic restructuring. Government used to be responsible for many services which are now outsourced. The Climate Jobs Campaign indicates areas where jobs could be created through expanding the Extended Public Works Programme and Working for Water.

More broadly, participants questioned if a solar panel built in South Africa with inputs and technology from all over the world is really a green job? We need to be careful that a new kind of labour is not created with false solutions, for example indigenous people hired as rangers to protect their own forest. We need to ask, economy for what, and think about climate funding in terms of a post-oil economy. Why not support those who want real change, who want to keep the oil in the soil?

### **Working with what we have? Working with people's power.**

#### **Communication, media and people's power. Samantha Bailey (350.org)**

If we wait for the leaders, we will be dead in the water. People need to rise up locally and connect globally. We got media attention through our global days of action and these actions also let us see the bigger movement for ourselves. If these actions are linked to different parts of the world, it is inspiring in the face of challenges and difficulty.

350 thinks we need to get more strategic and the campaign against the Keystone pipeline, meant to carry oil from the Canadian tar sands, shows some ways this has worked. It included:

- Linking action to key issues – it linked Canadian tar sands protests to people in the US, and it focused on the Keystone pipeline and the fact that Obama can veto it.
- Huge collaboration with lots of organisations on the pipeline route and at the White House.
- Using information strategically – the State Department hired people who would benefit from the pipeline to conduct the Environmental Impact Assessment and Hilary Clinton's main campaign funders were proponents of the pipeline.
- Providing alternatives,
- Huge public actions to get media attention – two weeks of rolling arrests in front of the White House then protesters held hands around the White House and circled it three times. We raised more awareness about Obama's powers.
- Obama delayed this decision, but what will happen after his election next year? We are asking for an independent Environmental Impact Assessment that focuses on climate impacts.







In South Africa we used some of those tactics in response to the Integrated Resource Plan which lays out government's plan for electricity over the next 20. We worked collaboratively, shared information, and organised some actions. We did get them to change some things but weren't entirely successful – we did not stop Kusile and nuclear power remains part of the plan.

We need greater collaboration and common ground, using research strategically, and getting public actions into the media.

It is important that we don't insist that people who join the network participate in every action. We need to be open to where people are at the moment and let them do what they are ready to do. It needs to remain a diverse movement for everyone from tannies to rural kids. People will get involved in the areas where they are comfortable and then may be willing to take it up a notch.

### **Communicating with media – making things work for journalists. Leah Temper (Real News Network)**

Our aim is to expose and show who benefits from the occupation of Palestine and the West Bank. Large reserves of sub-sea gas have been found off the shore of Israel and off Gaza. Israel treats this as strategic, as part of the way it can leverage power, and it has no intention of allowing Palestinian control of Gaza's gas.

The next big project is oil shale which has been found under 15% of the country – the third or fourth largest reserve on earth. At Adullam, they plan to extract it by putting giant coils into the shales and heat the area with natural gas for five months until the rock bleeds. There is an aquifer nearby. Water is already a point of conflict and this will clearly get worse. Investors in the extraction company include Dick Cheney and Rupert Murdoch. The media has generally ignored it but it has positive coverage from Fox News.

Adullam is in the fertile Alah Valley. Palestinian peasants were driven out in 1948 and the area is now occupied by mostly middle class white Jews. They have formed the 'Save Adullam' group with a NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) strategy.

The Israel Petroleum Law was passed in 1952. It gives companies free range of a giant territory, water exemptions and exemption from damages, with the assumption that the government will take responsibility for fixing it. The law also says that sacred land cannot be mined. Most right wing Israelis consider Adullam sacred so Save Adullam looks to them for allies. This determines their NIMBY strategy. Despite his work around unconventional oil, they wouldn't even give MacDonald Stainsby an interview because he also does pro-Palestinian work. They feared that any association with him would lose them support. They are also not interested in solidarity with Arab groups within Israel who are also threatened with shale oil extraction.

The Israeli right, however, is also courted by extractive industries, notably the Zionist Oil and Gas Company which is, as the name implies, explicitly nationalist and Zionist. They proclaim that extracting shale oils will free Israel and the world from dependence on Arab oil.

In terms of media strategy, journalists are on tight schedules and are looking for something that fits into their scheme. We can see that there is so much that needs to be covered, but the same clichés get coverage again and again. The main point is that you need to recognise the reality you have rather than the one you want. In other words, it is not good to sell activism or strong emotional statements to journalists. Instead you need to pay attention to the rule of three: the story must be new, different, or weird. You need to provide concise and clear information and to be accurate with statistics and sources. Otherwise journalists will disqualify your group and subconsciously their fight.



We need to learn from the opposition because they handle the media well. With good media spokespeople, it doesn't actually matter what you know or what you have to say. Points to take away:



1. Come with three clear concise accurate points. Get people who are not your natural allies to practice on as they are the perfect sounding board because they will challenge you. Or practice with a journalist.
2. Ask "Why should an average news consumer care? We must connect their issues with our struggles.
3. Develop a media strategy. Just because you work hard, they won't find you. You need to identify someone good on camera as a spokesperson.

Asked how people can act in dangerous situations, Leah suggested it is a question of finding little avenues that are available. For example, a young girl in Iraq took an extremely brave action – she stood in Bagdad with a [350.org](http://350.org) poster which was an illegal action. It is possible to couch things in certain terms and to speak on the surface level, so that it is not readily apparent that what you are saying is fairly radical. For example, 350's 'radio wave' campaign uses a climate song as an 'in' to the radio station in order to get an interview. In Sudan, however, the radio is so strictly controlled that even this is difficult.

## **DAY FOUR: Friday 25 November 2011**

### **What are we fighting for? What is our purpose? Ivonne Yanez (Oilwatch, South America)**

The notion of dirty energy immediately makes us think about clean energy. But if we are thinking about ecology and human rights, this is not enough. People also talk of energy security for households or for countries, like the UK or Europe, but this is also not enough because they don't ask how the energy is produced. So we have to move forward and talk about energy sovereignty. But what does it mean? This comes up differently depending on culture, people, and relationships.

In Latin America, we are thinking about this. We talk about energy that is clean, decentralised, and renewable; that does not undermine food sovereignty and human rights, and is not based on fossil fuels. It also means energy that is under social control, so people decide what it is for, for whom, from where, and what kind of energy.

Even this debate should go further. For instance, how quickly can we achieve energy sovereignty? How can we imagine a path to a post-oil society? In Ecuador, we call this path "sumak kawsay" – living well. In South Africa, "Ubuntu" is about respect and solidarity and we can think this not only about the relationship between people but to solidarity with nature as a whole. We need to start now to leave fossil fuels in the ground. This is not easy, but it is possible and it is imperative to start now.

Despite this urgency, the elites are extending consumerism, increasing dependency, promoting the exploration of new types of crudes, expanding the fossil fuel frontiers in the ocean and forest deep, investing money in dirty energy, and increasing waste. They are criminalising people who are opposing this model of development as well as criminalising sumak kawsay and ubuntu.

Non-conventional fossil fuels are abundant. A map of worldwide shale gas and oil would show that it is everywhere. They want to explore ever further for all kinds of fossil resources. But this is not being denounced. We are being sedated. We are used to repeat a specific language, to talk about degrees and amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>, market environmentalism, safeguards, and CDM and REDD etc.





But mostly they talk about the price of oil. This comprises 90% of the news, not the impact of oil on people, because they are in crisis. The economic crisis is about over-production, over-consumption, over-accumulation. They thought it could be solved in 1980 and 1990 with structural adjustment imposed on the South. In 2008, they thought China would help solve the crisis and they are looking to the green economy, to the commodification of life, to solve the crisis. These responses have extreme consequences for human rights and nature.

There are different ways to see and understand energy, as a switch linked to a bulb, a service, a right, or a common good. But all of these ways of seeing energy are from the point of view of humans. What about the cosmos and the planet. What about nature and the rights of nature? What is nature in this context? Both capitalism and socialism are based on the extraction of resources, which humiliate people, exploit labour and denigrate nature and the energy cycles from the sun. On any path towards post-oil civilisations, we need to define energy in the context of nature.

### Questions:

Q: We seem so far from this, with the huge attitudinal change that is needed.

A: NO! Local struggles are part of this. What is energy for communities? Indigenous people have no word for energy perhaps because it is a part of them. We need to understand energy as part of life and not dissociate it from the other rights of people.

## Group Work

### Questions for groups:

What are the key areas and processes of resistance?

Where do we want to take the initiative?

- How do we learn from our struggles?
- How do we link our struggles?
- How do we develop strategies and agendas across our struggles?

### Group 1: Multilateral actions

#### Summary of group work:

The group identified a range of spaces in which a people's multilateralism takes place alongside the multilateralism of states and capital. These include:

Mobilisations alongside the UNFCCC COPs, including COP17. Beyond the COPs, Cochambamba created a new space and process.

What can we do now? The mobilisation of people in COPs is strong, but world powers just do what they decided prior to COP, even with pressure.

Some key processes include G20, WEF/ WSF, Rio+20 and resistance to the World Bank.

Mobilising around the G20. In the 1990s there were big mobilisations in response to G8. The G20 is a reflection of what the real powers can do – they relegate to lesser body.

The World Social Forum was set up at a distance from the World Economic Forum in Davos. WEF took some things that we put on the agenda, diluted them and gave us something we don't want.





We need to build an alternative social, economic and political system but, in doing so, we need to find synergy between the environmental and social movements.



## Group 2: Local actions

What are the key areas and processes of resistance?

The group included people engaged in local struggles from around South Africa, Africa and the world. They observed that forms of struggle ranged from contestation over information and policy in South Africa to armed resistance in the Niger Delta. A common theme was the need for solidarity between struggles in different localities. Thus, in the Vaal Triangle over the last 18 years of struggle around Sasol and ArcelorMittal, people have built alliances to take issues from the local to the national and to the international level because these are transnational corporations (TNCs).

The group discussed engaging with local authorities to force them to respond to challenges. In South Africa, the Air Quality Act shifts responsibility to local municipalities to regulate big industries but they do not have capacity to do it without support from the national level. We fought for national emissions and air quality standards as a measure to hold them to.

For some, the local level presents opportunities because there is a vacuum of policy and positions. Decisions are made in the formal political system so that must be contested. For others, government and the ruling party resist change. The environmental struggle is political and government and business work hand in hand. The possibility of fielding independent candidates in local elections was mooted. Others argued for community control.

In the Highveld, people struggle to get any response from government. The same issues were taken forward by the last generation. We have written many letters, but it is demonstrations and protest that get a response from government.

For people, the key issue is health. We need to establish what management and government are doing, use the media, campaign door to door with pamphlets and mobilise communities. We need to focus on our common position and get the message to the people on the street, at a non-party political level. We must say, 'Stop this' but we also need to have constructive alternatives.

Ideas for the future:

- Raise awareness to build support for 100% renewables. Get people to pledge their support.
- Launch a joint campaign with high level of success. In South Africa, this might be aimed at closing aluminium smelters and engaging with COSATU around this.
- Localise production. Focus on what matters such as the rights of people to produce their own food and biodiversity. It is a simple message.
- March on centres of power (Union Building in South Africa). All gather there to present memorandum of the demands of all struggles.
- Solidarity with other local struggles. Join forces with neighbouring communities, for example, in the Highveld and Limpopo.
- Set up a communication and a reference network so we know what is going on in each other's areas. Share information and updates.

## Group 3: Beyond the COPs – changing the narrative

How do we sustain action beyond the provocation of the COPs? Our thinking needs to go beyond the framework of successive COP agendas. The group argued that climate change is





a product of the current capitalist system. We need to take issues out of the technical realm and connect them to people's reality, experiences and struggles.

A key problem is that the narrative is already set by the corporations and government and we are left chasing or contesting their narrative. When they propose a project, such as resource extraction, the narrative of job creation and local development comes before people see and feel the impacts. How can we take action before the devastation begins? How do we take our narrative to the ground so that it precedes the 'corporate/state' narrative and how? How do we highlight linkages between climate change and local realities in a very simple way?

We need to demonstrate alternatives for people to reclaim power. People need energy as a pathway from poverty but it doesn't have to be within the current system. What feasible and credible alternative scenarios are there? The question is also about shifting the mode of production and building an alternative.

We need to measure development differently to the mainstream method based on growth and justifying profit at any cost. We need to build statistics and information systems, including on climate science, to discredit mining and oil companies, and bring back indigenous practices in relation to adaptation. We need to build a meta-story which connects all of us. Through it all is the question of how we link and learn.

These are some of the challenges in building a common narrative, but it is not impossible and one of the best examples is the uprising of people in the last year, whether the Arab Spring or the Occupy movement. Their stories challenge greed, inequity and wealth accumulation and power in the hands of very few individuals.

## **Closing Address. Pablo Solon**

*Pablo Solon was the sole dissenting voice at COP 16, exhibiting "prescience" about the human right to water and rights to Mother Earth.*

What do we know about inside negotiations and where do we stand? The key issue is how much emission reductions will be from developed countries. G77 wants 40-50% by 2020, but countries made pledges of 13-17% in Cancun. If COP17 ends up with emissions reductions that result in a temperature increase of more than 4 degrees Celsius, we will burn our world and cook Africa.

We can talk about finance, transfer of technology, and a binding agreement. These are issues of form which are all important. But the key issue is "what is the number"? If it is too low, we will lose this decade and will be unable to recover the next decade. Reports say exactly that: even Price Waterhouse Coopers reports that last year, for the first time, greenhouse gas emissions grew more than GDP. The issue is the number! This is the only issue of substance. They are playing around with the form as a means to hide the key issue.

I am pessimistic about what can happen inside because the vast majority of delegations are accepting 13-17%. It is not really even 13% for the next period: they subtract 5% from the last period, which makes it 8-11% in the second period. If the EU reduces 20%, they will do LESS than during the first period of the KP. In the first period, they agreed to 8%, and divided by 5 years (2007-2012) that is just 1.6%. Then take 20% -8% from the first period which is 12% over 8 years, which comes to 1.5%. So we are moving backwards.

We need to highlight the issue of the number for emission reductions. Whether we have binding or non-binding emissions targets is secondary. We don't want a binding commitment for a reduction that will burn Africa. We need a second period, but we need to have



different figures. This is the key issue, which is not really highlighted by media or discussions.

Negotiations are taking place around the form. For the negotiators, the problem is how they avoid the issue of substance without showing it to the public. They do it through:



1. An empty KP with the Cancun agreement for a pledge and review system embedded in it. So there is no aggregate number, just a list of voluntary pledges.
2. In a decision of COP17 for a new agreement, but number is the same.

They will aim for a new agreement by 2020 which means it must be agreed by 2015 or 2018. They are really agreeing that the new agreement will be weaker even than the KP. The US is leading the demand for a weaker agreement. But China, India, Brazil and South Africa also want it weaker because these know that they will be treated as Annex 1 countries at some time in the future. So if there are binding targets, they will face the question of binding to what – something weaker or stronger than KP?

The other issue under discussion in Durban is new market mechanisms. Developed [Annex 1] country pledges add up to a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 3.1 gigatons by 2020. In reality this is only 2 gigatons because they will buy the other 1.1 gigatons from developing countries through existing and new market mechanisms. So developed countries are more interested in saving the climate market than in the impact on the climate on humanity and Mother Earth.

There are 192 country delegations at the COP, but there are key groups who frame the negotiations. The main negotiators are accompanied by consultants from corporations and are defending corporate interests, not their people's interests. The carbon traders want to save the KP so they can save the market mechanisms. Who else wants to preserve market mechanisms? The countries who sell most credits: China, India, Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa. So there is an alliance between the buyers and sellers of CDM.

The EU is now proposing new market mechanisms in both the KP and the LCA [Long-term Cooperative Action] negotiating tracks. They are discussing sectoral crediting and other ways of creating new markets. However, there is opposition to this from big players in the carbon market because they want to preserve market share and value and fear the market will be swamped.

This part of the negotiations has nothing whatever to do with the climate.

The promise of climate funding is the reason why developing countries accepted the deal in Cancun. They saw that the number (the sum of the pledges) would mean a high temperature increase, but they told themselves "at least we will have the money". There were two promises:

1. 'Fast-start finance of \$30 billion was promised for 2010, 2011 and 2012. Now it has been two years and the fast-start money hasn't arrived. Developing countries have received only recycled aid money that was already due. So now they are asking, 'Where is the money?'
2. Green Climate Fund (GCF) of \$100 billion a year by 2020. The architecture for the fund will be approved in Durban but it will probably not begin to function before 2015.

They are managing to shift what was agreed under the UNFCCC in 1992: that developed countries should 'provide' technology and resources. In the new text agreed at Cancun they changed 'provide' to 'mobilise'. I have asked how much money will come from developed country public finance but they don't answer. Estimates in various studies indicate that only 23-30% will be public funding with the rest coming from the private sector, loans, market mechanisms and rebranded development aid. In reality, the \$100 billion doesn't exist. We negotiate as states







and must commit ourselves as states. We cannot commit an amount from private corporations or the carbon market! At this point the carbon market is going down and demand for carbon credits will decline further if we do cut emissions.

The developed countries want the climate debt to vanish and they want the agreed principle of "common but differentiated responsibility" to vanish. They are busy diluting their responsibilities.

We can only change the situation if there is enough pressure from social movements and civil society. Otherwise the result will be a bad one. We will hear some strong speeches in Durban, but presidents call delegates in the last two days and the real decisions are driven by diplomatic deal making and bribes.

The key issue is how to link the climate justice movement with the great movements that are rising at Occupy and elsewhere. We are all part of the same battle of the 99% against the 1% who don't care about the climate, who control most resources and care only about their business. I am not optimistic about the negotiations, but I am optimistic for the world because we have seen how fast these movements emerge.

The underlying cause of climate change is the capitalist system. We can't all follow the US way of life. If that is how we see development, we will need eight planets. We need a new model for our one planet and a world where we can all live, not just the 1 per cent.

