Capitalism and the environment

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Our objective is to advance socio-economic and environmental justice by developing critical knowledge about, for and in dialogue with civil society through teaching, research and publishing.
Durban’s COP17
‘Conference of Polluters’
28 Nov-9 Dec 2011
International Convention Centre
Civil society 'C17' unity at Durban Univ of Technology alternatives summit

UNFCCC negotiations

'Civilised' society in Africa Pavillion marquee (parking lot)

civil society 'C17' unity at Durban Univ of Technology alternatives summit
World Summit on Sustainable Development

Johannesburg, 31 August 2002: 30,000 protested UN ‘type-two partnerships’, privatisation of water, emissions trading, neoliberalism

last time SA hosted global environment conference: WSSD
Major sites for neoliberal plus sustainable dev. discourses

A GIFT FROM THE CORPORATE WORLD!

johannesburg World Summit 2002
their idea: World Bank’s ‘impeccable’ logic of capitalist pollution trade

DATE: December 12, 1991
TO: Distribution
FR: Lawrence H. Summers

‘I think the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste in the lowest wage country is impeccable and we should face up to that…’

(preparing for original Rio Earth Summit, secret memo of Bank chief economist Larry Summers, later US Treasury Secretary and Obama’s economic manager – full memo: www.whirledbank.org)
our theory: ‘impeccable logic’ of capitalist/non-capitalist relations

Rosa Luxemburg

‘Accumulation of capital periodically bursts out in crises and spurs capital on to a continual extension of the market. Capital cannot accumulate without the aid of non-capitalist organisations, nor ... can it tolerate their continued existence side by side with itself. Only the continuous and progressive disintegration of non-capitalist organisations makes accumulation of capital possible.’

The Accumulation of Capital, 1919.
DAVID HARVEY
THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM
26TH APRIL, 2010

IS IT TIME TO LOOK BEYOND CAPITALISM TOWARDS A NEW SOCIAL ORDER THAT WOULD ALLOW US TO LIVE WITHIN A SYSTEM THAT COULD BE RESPONSIBLE, JUST & HUMANE?
Ugandan marxist Dani Nabudere’s ‘financialization’ thesis vindicated

The Crash of International Finance Capital and The Rise and Fall of Money Capital

source: The Economist
‘overaccumulation’ and GDP stagnation: source of decline in finance-adjusted US profits

US corporate profits derived much less from manufacturing products; much greater sources of profits came from abroad; profits also came more from returns on financial assets.

Source: Gerard Dumenil and Dominique Levy

Figure 3. US, nonfinancial corporations: Profit rates prior to the payment of real interest (---) and after (-----), %

In the first series, profits are equal to the net product minus the cost of labor, and business and profit taxes. They are divided by the net worth (total assets minus debt). For the second series, real interest is subtracted from profits, i.e., interest minus a correction for the depreciation of debt resulting from inflation.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators 2003 (online version) and World Bank, Global Economic Prospects 2004

World GDP per capita growth, 1961-2003 (annual change in per cent)

World GDP per capita growth (---); Mean per decade (arithmetic) (-----).

Sources: World Bank, World Development Indicators 2003 (online version) and World Bank, Global Economic Prospects 2004

Rest of the world: (---); Financial sector: (-----); Manufacturing: (------)
context: US economy as core site of overaccumulation and financialisation

when crisis sets in, 3 displacement techniques:
’shifting’, ‘stalling’, ‘stealing’
the spatial fix, temporal fix and accumulation by dispossession
can ‘global governance’ fix world crises?

recent record of elites: repeated top-down failures

• last solution: 1987 Montreal Protocol on CFCs (ozone hole)

but since then:

• dominant neoliberals (1990s), neoconservatives (2000s)
• World Bank, IMF Annual Meetings: trivial reforms (Chinese voting power rising a few %, Africa stagnant)
• ‘Post-Washington Consensus’: Stiglitz fired, 1999
• UN Millennium Development Goal rhetoric, 2000
• WTO Doha Agenda 2001: failure
• Monterrey Financing for Development summit, 2002, then G20 global financial reregulation, 2008-09: failure
• renewed wars in Central Asia, Middle East, North Africa
• UN Security Council reform attempts failed, 2005
• G8 aid promises (especially for Africa) broken, 2005
• Kyoto Protocol on climate: Copenhagen Accord tragedy
Copenhagen Accord, COP 15, December 2009

- Jacob Zuma (SA)
- Lula da Silva (Brazil)
- Barack Obama (USA)
- Wen Jiabao (China)
- Manmohan Singh (India)

“they broke the UN!”
(Bill McKibbon, 350.org)

non-binding! 4 degree increase!
world's biggest polluter
lead US climate negotiator Todd Stern, on demand for recognising climate debt?

'The sense of guilt or culpability or reparations – I just categorically reject that'

Stern thus rejects core principle: ‘polluter pays’

WikiLeaks revealed (Feb ’10) Stern/Pershing bribery and bullying:
Ethiopia, Maldives, Bolivia, Ecuador
concept of 'ecological debt' now recognised in serious research

The debt of nations and the distribution of ecological impacts from human activities

U. Thara Srinivasan\textsuperscript{ab}, Susan P. Carey\textsuperscript{c}, Eric Hallstein\textsuperscript{d}, Paul A. T. Higgins\textsuperscript{de}, Amber C. Kerr\textsuperscript{d}, Laura E. Koteen\textsuperscript{d}, Adam B. Smith\textsuperscript{d}, Reg Watson\textsuperscript{f}, John Harte\textsuperscript{cd}, and Richard B. Norgaard\textsuperscript{d}

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As human impacts to the environment accelerate, disparities in the distribution of damages between rich and poor nations mount. Globally, environmental change is dramatically affecting the flow of ecosystem services, but the distribution of ecological damages and their driving forces has not been estimated. Here, we conservatively estimate the environmental costs of human activities over 1961–2000 in six major categories (climate change, stratospheric ozone depletion, agricultural intensification and expansion, deforestation, overfishing, and mangrove conversion), quantitatively connecting costs borne by poor, middle-income, and rich nations to specific activities by each of these groups. Adjusting impact valuations for different standards of living across the groups as commonly practiced, we find striking imbalances. Climate change and ozone depletion impacts predicted for low-income nations have been overwhelmingly driven by emissions from the other two groups, a pattern also observed for overfishing damages indirectly driven by the consumption of fishery products. Indeed, through disproportionate emissions of greenhouse gases alone, the rich group may have imposed climate damages on the poor group greater than the latter’s current foreign debt. Our analysis provides \textit{prima facie} evidence for an uneven distribution pattern of damages across income groups. Moreover, our estimates of each group’s share in various damaging activities are independent from controversies in environmental valuation methods. In a world increasingly connected ecologically and economically, our analysis is thus an early step toward reframing issues of environmental responsibility, development, and globalization in accordance with ecological costs.
who owes in 2000?
GHG/capita by country

Australia
USA
Saudi Arabia
Canada
Kazakhstan
Russia

Map showing GHG/capita emissions by country.
who loses from climate change?
a ‘Climate Demography Vulnerability Index’

main losers:
Central America, central South America, the Arabian Peninsula, Southeast Asia and much of Africa

Geographic disparities and moral hazards in the predicted impacts of climate change on human populations

J. Samson, D. Berteaux, B. J. McGill and M. M. Humphries
Green Climate Fund – $100bn/year by 2020 (promised), co-chaired by SA’s Trevor Manuel

- $100 billion *isn’t enough*!
- *direct access?* ‘Basic Income Grants’ preferable to corrupt ‘aid’ (Manuel opposed)
- *False Solutions* to be funded
- Manuel wants *carbon trade* to provide 50% of GCF revenue
- *World Bank is interim GCF trustee* despite terrible record of managing climate and development funding
Should the World Bank be lead climate financier?

- fossil fuel loans: $6.3 billion in 2009-10 year, up from $1.6 bn in 2006-07;
- commodity export dogma;
- resource curse financing;
- carbon trading promotion;
- Robert Zoellick qualifications:
  - WB prez after Wolfowitz was fired
  - Goldman Sachs int’l banker, 2006-7
  - US State Dep’t #2, 2005-6
  - US Trade Rep to WTO, 2001-5
  - Bush Jr’s Florida vote-counter, 2000
  - Enron ‘senior political advisor’, 1999
  - neocon Project for a New American Century founder, 1998 (‘invade Iraq’)
  - Fannie Mae #2, 1993-98
  - Presidential deputy chief of staff to George Bush Sr, 1992
  - US Treasury: Deputy Assistant Secretary during S&L crash, 1980s
Should the **IMF** be run by the likes of...
Cancun COP 16 revived market fix

in theory, as a ‘castle in the sky’...
but in reality, relying upon carbon markets is like
building that castle atop quicksand! –
given the market’s
• corruption,
• fraud,
• thievery,
• stagnation and
• speculation
carbon trading gimmick: in 1997, US vice-president Al Gore (later a carbon trader) pushed for Kyoto to include emissions markets, in exchange for Washington’s promised support ... promise soon broken

‘The European Union has adopted this US innovation and is making it work effectively there.’
(An Inconvenient Truth, p. 252)
emissions market’s five major crashes, 2006-09, 2010 stagnation, 2011 theft-closure, 2012 denouement?

**does EU carbon trading ‘work effectively’?**

*impossible to finance renewable energy with such low carbon prices*
how does carbon trading look in the South?

Plantar’s ‘green desert’ timber plantation

alien-invasive trees grow 10 years, then die and become charcoal for pig-iron, for Brazilian auto industry
Durban, South Africa: $15 million CDM pilot

Bisasar Road conversion of methane-to-electricity at environmentally-racist toxic dump

Africa’s largest landfill placed in black residential suburb (Clare Estate) by apartheid; municipality refused to close it thanks to World Bank 2002 investment hype: Prototype Carbon Fund credits

Sajida Khan’s family home
Sajida Khan (1952-2007)
though felled by cancer from dump, she had co-hosted ‘Durban Group for Climate Justice’ (2004) and her challenge to Bisasar methane flaring temporarily rebuffed World Bank in 2005

project went ahead in 2008-09 and currently CDM is paid just €14/tonne
New Film by *Story of Stuff* Creator Offers Provocative, Humorous Look at CAP & TRADE on Eve of Copenhagen Summit

*The Story of Cap & Trade:*
Why you can’t solve a problem with the thinking that created it

San Francisco, CA -- The Story of Stuff Project and Climate Justice Now!—an international network of climate justice advocates—will release *The Story of Cap & Trade*, a 9 minute animated film on carbon trading, on December 1st worldwide at www.storyofcapandtrade.org.

Hosted by Annie Leonard, the creator of the viral video *The Story of Stuff*, (viewed worldwide over 8 million times), the *Story of Cap & Trade* is the first in a series of six short films the Story of Stuff Project is releasing over the coming year with Free Range Studios (www.freerangestudios.com) and more than a dozen of the world’s leading sustainability organizations.

*The Story of Cap & Trade* takes a provocative but humorous look at cap and trade, the leading climate solution under consideration in Copenhagen and on Capitol Hill. Employing the same urgent honesty that made *The Story of Stuff* so successful—and flash animation that makes it clear who wins and who loses—*The Story of Cap & Trade* points to the ‘devils in the details’ in current cap and trade proposals: free permits to big polluters, fake carbon offsets and, most importantly, distraction from the significant tasks at hand in tackling the climate crisis.

free download: www.storyofstuff.org
Climate Change, Carbon Trading and Civil Society

Negative Returns on South African Investments

Editors Patrick Bond, Rehana Dada and Graham Erion of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the TransNational Institute have assembled this cutting-edge collection to highlight the urgent situation.

'The most destructive effect of the carbon offset trade is that it allows us to believe we can carry on polluting. This crucially-needed book provides ample evidence of the trade's other dangers to "beneficiaries", with case studies of fraud, accounting tricks and maltreatment of people and the environment.'

George Monbiot, Guardian columnist and author of Heat

'As representatives of people's movements and independent organisations, we reject the claim that carbon trading will halt the climate crisis. This crisis has been caused more than anything else by the mining of fossil fuels and the release of their carbon to the oceans, air, soil and living things. This excessive burning of fossil fuels is now jeopardising Earth's ability to maintain a liveable climate.'

'Climate Justice Now! The Durban Declaration on Carbon Trading'

Order your copy from
http://www.ukznpress.co.za
pbond@mail.ngo.za

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9 781609 141233
what is ‘climate justice’?

core principles from Rights of Mother Earth conference, Cochabamba, Bolivia (April 2010)

• 50 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2017
• stabilising temperature rises to 1°C and 300 Parts Per Million

• acknowledging the climate debt owed by developed countries (6% of GDP)
  • full respect for Human Rights and the inherent rights of indigenous people
  • universal declaration of Mother Earth rights to ensure harmony with nature
  • establishment of an International Court of Climate Justice

• rejection of carbon markets, and REDD’s commodified nature and forests
  • promotion of change in consumption patterns of developed countries
  • end of intellectual property rights for climate technologies
CJ movement: leave the oil in the soil, the coal in the hole, the tarsand in the land, and the fracking shale-gas in our earth’s ass

- Niger Delta women, Environmental Rights Action, MEND halted majority of oil exploitation in 2008
- Ecuador’s Amazon indigenous activists + Accion Ecologica halt oil drilling in Yasuni National Park
- British Climate Camp (Crude Awakening block Coryton oil refinery, 2010 – MI5 spy couldn’t crack it)
- Australian Rising Tide regularly block Newcastle coal exports
- Norwegian environmentalists and Attac win against state oil company in Lofoten region, 2011
- Canada: Alberta anti-tarsands green and indigenous activists
- stopping US King Coal: Mountain Top Removal nearly halted in Appalachia; Navajo Nation forced cancellation of Black Meza (Arizona) mine permit against world’s largest coal company, Peabody; Powder River Basin (MN, WY) farmers and ranchers fight coal expansion
- derailing US coal energy: nearly all 151 proposed new coal power plants in Bush Energy Plan cancelled, abandoned or stalled since 2007; key community forces: Indigenous Environmental Network, Energy Justice Network and Western Mining Action Network, plus Sierra legal team
- preventing incinerators: since 2000, no new waste incinerators (more carbon-intensive than coal and leading source of cancer-causing dioxins)
  - Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, Detroit victory, world wastepickers movement
- defeating Chevron expansion in Richmond, CA
- undamming Mega Hydro at Klamath River: indigenous communities defeat Pacificorp Power
- building resilient communities through local action: frontline communities winning campaigns linking climate justice to basic survival - e.g., Oakland Climate Action Coalition Just Transition
- movement to halt fracking of shale gas: France, Quebec, Pittsburgh, South Africa’s Karoo
GREED WRECKED
COPENHAGEN
NOW IT'S UP TO US ALL
One million climate jobs

Solving the economic and environmental crises

UK labor’s search for ‘Just Transition’

Making renewable electricity 425,000 jobs
Renovating buildings 175,000 jobs
Changing transport 300,000 jobs
Industry and landfill 50,000 jobs
Education 50,000 jobs
Total 1,000,000 jobs

- £27 billion in wages for one million jobs over one year.8
- £5 billion in employers’ national insurance and pension contributions.9
- £20 billion in costs like materials, fuel, supplies, rent and interest.
Total cost £52 billion

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vital need for SA ‘Million Climate Jobs’ campaign, so metalworkers get ‘Just Transition’: guaranteed, well-paid jobs in public/community renewable sector that help society and save the planet

http://www.climatejobs.org.za
1/3 of Eskom’s four million customers have ‘zero’ consumption – most were disconnected.
Ten reasons to reject Medupi

- Climate destruction
- Local ecologies, health
- Procedural problems in World Bank process
- Poor people pay excessive prices
- Multinational corps. get ultra-cheap power
- Profit outflow to multinationals
- Increased foreign debt
- Privatisation
- ANC corruption
- World Bank's apartheid history

25%/year price rise; 127% real increase for 2008-12; electricity disconnections, ubiquitous ‘service delivery protests’ and threatened national labour strike
upsurge of **community protest** against electricity disconnections, price increases, World Bank loan
Durban’s COP17
‘Conference of Polluters’
28 Nov-9 Dec 2011
International Convention Centre
‘going away party, for the beach’!

7 July 2010

World Cup ‘fanfest’ party

December 3 march route: Curries Fountain to beach
working together
Saving Tomorrow Today

warming together
Stealing Tomorrow Today
Durban climate activist targets?

Gandhi’s ‘Satyagraha’ origins in Phoenix

airport smelters
Bisasar Rd CDM
convention centre
City Hall, US consul
harbour
petrochemicals
auto industry

anti-apartheid traditions: Dube, Luthuli, Naicker, Biko, Meer, Mxenges, Turner, Brutus, women, 1973 dockworkers, students, communities, Diakonia faith centre, etc
Climate Justice Now! SA opposes emissions, privatised electricity, Eskom coal and nuclear, carbon trading: demands conservation/renewables and electricity-as-a-right to avoid this danger: