Climate crisis, ‘ecological debt’ and a (top-up) Basic Income Grant to pay for ‘loss & damage’

25 April 2013

cartoons by Zapiro
World Summit on Sustainable Development
Johannesburg, 31 August 2002: 30,000 protested UN ‘type-two partnerships’, privatisation of water, emissions trading, neoliberalism
I worry the corporates have too much say...
A GIFT FROM THE CORPORATE WORLD!

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Johannesburg World Summit 2002
A TIMETABLE TO REDUCE EMISSIONS?! 
...NOT UNTIL THERE'S MORE EVIDENCE OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE!
global leaders exacerbate climate crisis

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;
COP 16
UNFCCC revived along with carbon trading
Durban’s COP17
‘Conference of Parties’
28 Nov-9 Dec 2011
International Convention Centre
Durban’s COP17
‘Conference of Polluters’
Trevor Houser, a climate and energy analyst at the Rhodium Group and a former adviser to the chief American climate negotiator, Todd D. Stern, said that the Durban platform was promising because of what it did not say.

“There is no mention of historic responsibility or per capita emissions. There is no mention of economic development as the priority for developing countries. There is no mention of a difference between developed and developing country action.”
COP 17
Gambling on the future of the Planet
NO RIFFRAFF!
THE STAKES ARE TOO HIGH!

BIG POLLUTER NATIONS
BIG DEVELOPING POLLUTERS
BIG OIL
BIG NUKES
BIG COAL
BIG GAS
YESSIR!

CLIMATE JUSTICE!
structural problem: national self-interest at UN COPs
PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES VERSUS ECOLOGICAL REPARATIONS: THE ‘GREEN ECONOMY,’ LITIGATION AND A REDISTRIBUTIVE ECO-DEBT GRANT

Khadija Sharife* and Patrick Bond**

ABSTRACT

Since the December 2011 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties 17 in Durban and the Rio+20 Summit on Sustainable Development, attention has turned to whether the ‘Green Economy’, the concept of ‘natural capital’ and ‘Payment for Ecosystem Services’ together facilitate the management of new environmentally-financialised markets whose aim is to price nature and its pollution, so as to achieve maximally efficient exploitation of resources (an example of which is carbon trading). Alternatively, if there are flaws in such markets, should society instead move towards retributive payments for ‘ecological debt’ based on both ‘loss and damage’ accounting (introduced at the UNFCCC COP18 in Doha) and environmental justice, in order that the valuing of nature is limited to fines for damages and then prohibitions on further pollution. These two countervailing philosophies play out in high-profile projects and pilot social-policy schemes in southern Africa, in ways that will teach the world foundational concepts surrounding ecological reparations.

Keywords: ecological debt, ecosystem services, reparations, Basic Income Grant (BIG)
rich countries owe ecological debt
The debt of nations and the distribution of ecological impacts from human activities

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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 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.
Richard Norgaard, economist at University of California, Berkeley: “At least to some extent, **the rich nations have developed at the expense of the poor, and, in effect, there is a debt to the poor.** That, perhaps, is one reason that they are poor. You don't see it until you do the kind of accounting that we do here.”
World Council of Churches (Sept 2009): “ecological debt is the ecological damage caused over time to ecosystems, places and peoples through production and consumption patterns; and the exploitation of ecosystems at the expense of the equitable rights of other countries, communities or individuals.”
Accion Ecologica: ecological debt is ‘the debt accumulated by Northern, industrial countries toward Third World countries on account of resource plundering, environmental damages, and the free occupation of environmental space to deposit wastes, such as greenhouse gases, from the industrial countries.’
North-South climate debt rises if we include outsourced production.
the climate debt

greenhouse gas emissions per person, 2000

USA
Canada
Australia
Saudi Arabia
Kazakhstan
Russia

who owes?
who’s owed? climate change ‘creditors’

main losers:
small islands,
Central America,
central South America,
Central and Southeast Asia
and much of Africa
Table 4: Extreme Weather Risk: Top 20 Countries in 2015

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<tbody>
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<td>China</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,772</td>
<td>25,072</td>
<td>19,933</td>
<td>17,720</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>61.78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13,709</td>
<td>14,281</td>
<td>14,167</td>
<td>14,331</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>4.34</td>
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<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,599</td>
<td>11,704</td>
<td>9,531</td>
<td>9,153</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>71.61</td>
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<td>Kenya</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6,807</td>
<td>7,752</td>
<td>7,620</td>
<td>7,617</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>10.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2,382</td>
<td>4,011</td>
<td>3,807</td>
<td>5,482</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>56.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4,576</td>
<td>5,133</td>
<td>5,028</td>
<td>5,269</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>13.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2,134</td>
<td>5,161</td>
<td>4,607</td>
<td>5,102</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>58.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>823</td>
<td>5,487</td>
<td>4,611</td>
<td>4,844</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>83.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3,458</td>
<td>4,304</td>
<td>4,072</td>
<td>4,558</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>31.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3,791</td>
<td>4,892</td>
<td>4,747</td>
<td>4,540</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>10.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1,904</td>
<td>4,696</td>
<td>4,121</td>
<td>3,834</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>50.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>1,508</td>
<td>1,362</td>
<td>3,573</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>82.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong (China)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1,251</td>
<td>3,877</td>
<td>3,147</td>
<td>2,413</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>48.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2,190</td>
<td>2,221</td>
<td>2,213</td>
<td>2,227</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,314</td>
<td>2,203</td>
<td>2,076</td>
<td>2,122</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>38.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1,237</td>
<td>2,303</td>
<td>2,148</td>
<td>2,104</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>41.19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1,271</td>
<td>1,996</td>
<td>1,813</td>
<td>1,863</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>31.77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1,718</td>
<td>1,877</td>
<td>1,847</td>
<td>1,853</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>7.32</td>
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<td>Colombia</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,299</td>
<td>2,026</td>
<td>1,892</td>
<td>1,781</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>27.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,692</td>
<td>1,714</td>
<td>1,709</td>
<td>1,721</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>1.69</td>
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</table>
ActionAid ask: How much is required for climate mitigation, 2020?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Amount required per year</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation(^1)</td>
<td>US$36 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean technology(^3)</td>
<td>US$65 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combating deforestation(^4)</td>
<td>US$24 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural mitigation(^5)</td>
<td>US$7 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>US$182 billion</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

... how much is pledged?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Amounts pledged</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Climate Change Fund</td>
<td>US$12 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least Developed Countries Fund</td>
<td>US$182 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund</td>
<td>US$61 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>US$255 million</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>% of global total</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU17</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others⁸</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
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’

Maldives cabinet gets $50m in US aid = U-turn, to support Copenhagen

Ethiopian tyrant Meles Zenawi: UN Advisory Group on Finance cochair halved AU’s 2009 demands for climate debt

WikiLeaks revealed (Feb ‘10) Stern/Pershing bribery and bullying: Ethiopia, Maldives
instead of paying its debt, US plays the pollution markets

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... I’ve always thought that under-populated countries in Africa are vastly UNDER-polluted. (World Bank chief economist Larry Summers, later US Treasury Secretary, Obama’s economic manager, WB presidential candidate – www.whirledbank.org)

A global climate deal to extend the life of the Kyoto treaty and establish the parameters for negotiating a new pact by 2015 will provide a fresh stimulus to the world’s floundering carbon markets, according to bankers and analysts. “The deal provides a significant boost for investors in low-carbon technology,” said Abyd Karmali, global head of carbon markets at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, adding this was an achievement amid the woes of the eurozone crisis. In one of the more bullish business assessments of the new pact, which also includes a separate agreement to negotiate a new process aimed at legally obliging all countries to commit to cut their carbon emissions, he said the deal was “like a Viagra shot for the flailing carbon markets”. Carbon prices have plunged to record lows in recent weeks as Europe’s emissions trading scheme, the world’s largest, has been hit by eurozone uncertainties and fears of an oversupply of carbon credits.
carbon trading strategy:
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)
impossible to finance renewable energy with such low carbon prices

does EU carbon trading ‘work effectively’?
The Story of Stuff Project presents

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

ATMOSPHERIC CO₂ CONCENTRATION (PPM)


We're Here
387 ppm

350 ppm
We need to be here

Climate Justice Now!
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.storyofstuff.org.

Hosted by Annie Leonard, the creator of the viral video hit 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.
AMATEUR!

APARtheid

CLIMATE
APARtheid

IMF
WTO
WORLD BANK

SUBSIDISED OVER-CONSUMPTION

TRICKLE DOWN
transforming fossil-addicted systems and paying for adaptation and loss & damage:

Green Climate Fund – $100bn/year by 2020

• promised by Hillary Clinton at Copenhagen – but not available during current fiscal crisis
• $100 billion isn’t enough
• who benefits? existing power elite and aid industry – not poor climate victims
• ‘False Solutions’ to be funded
• carbon trade to provide 50% of GCF revenue? (so say Nick Stern and Trevor Manuel)
• World Bank is interim GCF trustee despite leading role in fossil fuel financing
a better precedent: the ICC

The International Criminal Court (ICC) created the Trust Fund for Victims, providing reparations to persons whose rights were violated, whether or not a criminal was convicted. The ICC defines reparations as “relieving the suffering and affording justice to victims not only through the conviction of the perpetrator by this Court, but also by attempting to redress the consequences”.
The results after one year of implementation have been remarkable.

- Before the pilot program, **42% of children in the village were malnourished**. Now the proportion of malnourished children has dropped significantly, to **10%**.

- The village school reported **higher attendance rates** ... children were **better fed and more attentive**.

- Police statistics showed a **36.5% drop in crime** since the introduction of the grants.

- **Poverty rates declined** from 86% to 68% (97% to 43% when controlled for migration).

- **Unemployment dropped** as well, from 60% to 45%, and there was a 29% increase in average earned income, excluding the BIG.

Carnegie Council: 
http://www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/briefings/data/000163

**Basic Income Grant (BIG) pilot in Otjivero, Namibia** (funded by German-Namibian Evangelical Lutheran church)

Council of Churches of Namibia (CCN), the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), the umbrella body of the NGOs (NANGOF), the umbrella body of the AIDS organisations (NANASO), the National Youth Service (NYC), the Church Alliance for Orphans (CAFO), the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) and the Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI)
optimal strategy:

• ensure that the GreenHouseGas ‘polluters pay’ in a manner that first, compensates their climate change victims (BIG) thus promoting ‘adaptation’;

• second, permits transformation of African energy, transport, extraction, production, distribution, consumption and disposal systems; and

• third, in the process assures the ‘right to development’ for Africa in a future world economy constrained by emissions caps.