

Politics of Climate Justice

Paralysis Above, Movement Below

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‘Climate justice’ (CJ) is the name of the new movement that best fuses a variety of progressive political-economic and political-ecological currents to combat the most serious threat humanity and most other species face in the 21st century. The time is opportune partly because of the ongoing fracturing of elite power – including acquiescence by large environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – in an era of extreme global state-failure and market-failure. As shown in prior pages, the inability of global elite actors to solve major environmental, geopolitical, social and economic problems puts added emphasis on the need for a CJ philosophy and ideology, principles, strategies and tactics.

One challenge along that route is to consider the emerging CJ narratives, and identify what gaps exist in potential CJ constituencies, and which alliances are moving CJ politics forward. CJ only arrived on the international scene as a coherent political approach in the wake of the failure of a more collaborative strategy between major environmental NGOs and the global capitalist managerial class. The first efforts to generate a climate advocacy movement in global civil society became the Climate Action Network (CAN). But from 1997, CAN adopted as a core strategy what proved to be a ‘false solution’, namely an emphasis on regular United Nations interstate negotiations aiming at minor, incremental emissions reductions augmented by carbon trading and related offsets. The cul-de-sac of CAN’s commitment to carbon trading was confirmed when Friends of the Earth International broke away in 2010, but already by the time of the December 2009 Copenhagen COP 15, CAN’s critics in the CJ community were able to make the case for an alternative strategy with sufficient force, that they gained half the space reserved for non-governmental delegations in Copenhagen’s Bella Centre.

CJ activists had entered this terrain with demands that the global establishment would simply not meet: a 50 percent greenhouse gas emissions cut by 2020 and 90 percent commitment for 2050; payment of

a rapidly rising 'climate debt' (in 2010, damages to Pakistan alone amounted to \$50 billion); the decommissioning of the carbon markets so favoured by elites; and massive investments in renewable energy, public transport and other transformative infrastructure.

As a result, it soon became evident that the next stage of the CJ struggle was necessarily to retreat from a naively overambitious global reform agenda (politely asking UNFCCC delegates to save the planet) and instead to pick up direct action inspirations from several sites across the world – Nigerian and Ecuadorian oilfields, Australia's main coal port, Britain's coal-fired power stations and main airport, Canada's tar sands, and US coalfields and corporate headquarters – where CJ was being seeded deep within the society.

Before exploring the demands, strategies, tactics and alliances, the first challenge is specifying the trajectory by which CJ politics emerged over the past two decades, in part to sort out justice from competing kinds of climate advocacy.

CJ Political Traditions

The CJ lineage includes a variety of traditions, in overlapping chronological order:

- 1990s anti-racist environmentalism which first conclusively linked social justice to ecological problems;
- 1990s advocacy by Accion Ecologica (Quito) leading up to the Kyoto Protocol negotiations;
- the late 1990s Jubilee movement against Northern financial domination of the South;
- the 2000s global justice movement (which came to the fore with the December 1999 Seattle World Trade Organisation protest);
- environmentalists and corporate critics who in 2004 started the Durban Group for Climate Justice;
- the 2007 founding of the Climate Justice Now! (CJN) network;
- the 2009 rise of the European left's Climate Justice Alliance in advance of the Copenhagen COP;
- the ongoing role of Malaysia-based Third World Network in amplifying the critique by both South states and radical civil society in COP and related negotiations;
- the renewed direct-action initiatives that from 30 November 2009 generated the Mobilization for Climate Justice in the US and

in 2010 drew in more mainstream groups like Greenpeace, Rainforest Action Network and 350.org; and,

- maybe most portentously, the Bolivian government-sponsored (but civil society-dominated) April 2010 ‘First Peoples’ World Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth’ in Cochabamba.

Shortly after the confirmation of a CJ identity in Cochabamba, the Detroit Social Forum began to consolidate US networking, featuring climate-related struggles led by people of colour. Reacting in part to the challenge of the more mainstream organizations – for example on October 10 (10/10/10) the 350.org network arranged an impressively broad ‘global work party’ which, while not invoking CJ politics, contributed to a sense of interlinkedness on the issue – the grassroots activists amplified their voices to claim more power than they were normally given credit for. Movement Generation in Oakland provided an impressive list of direct action events and resulting community organizing victories in the US over several prior months and years:

- Stopping King Coal with Community Organizing: The Navajo Nation, led by a *Dine’* (Navajo) and *Hopi* grassroots youth movement, forced the cancellation of a Life of Mine permit on Black Mesa, AZ, for the world’s largest coal company – Peabody Energy. Elsewhere in the U.S. community-based groups in Appalachia galvanized the youth climate movement in their campaigns to stop mountain-top removal coal mining, and similar groups in the Powder River Basin have united farmers and ranchers against the expansion of some of the world’s largest coal deposits.
- Derailing the Build-out of Coal Power: Nearly two thirds of the 151 new coal power plant proposals from the Bush Energy Plan have been cancelled, abandoned or stalled since 2007 – largely due to community-led opposition. A recent example of this success is the grassroots campaign of *Dine’* grassroots and local citizen groups in the Burnham area of eastern Navajo Nation, NM that have prevented the creation of the Desert Rock coal plant, which would have been the third such polluting monolith in this small, rural community. Community-based networks such as the Indigenous Environmental Network, the Energy Justice Network and the Western Mining Action Network have played a major role in supporting these efforts to keep the world’s most climate polluting industry at bay.

- Preventing the Proliferation of Incinerators: In the last 12 years, no new waste incinerators (which are more carbon-intensive than coal and one of the leading sources of cancer-causing dioxins) have been built in the US, and hundreds of proposals have been defeated by community organizing. In 2009 alone, members of the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives prevented dozens of municipal waste incinerators, toxic waste incinerators, tire incinerators and biomass incinerators from being built, and forced Massachusetts to adopt a moratorium on incineration.
- Defeating Big Oil In Our Own Backyards: A community-led coalition in Richmond, CA, has stopped the permitting of Chevron's refinery expansion in local courts. This expansion of the largest oil refinery on the west coast is part of a massive oil and gas sector expansion focused on importing heavy, high-carbon intensive crude oil from places like the Canada's Tar Sands. This victory demonstrates that with limited resources, community-led campaigns can prevail over multi-million dollar PR and lobby campaigns deployed by oil companies like Chevron, when these strategies are rooted in organizing resistance in our own backyards. REDOIL, (Resisting Environmental Destruction on Indigenous Lands) an Alaska Native grassroots network, has been effective at ensuring the Native community-based voice is in the forefront of protecting the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas. Together with allies, REDOIL has also prevented Shell from leasing the Alaska outer continental shelf for offshore oil exploration and drilling. Advancing recognition of culture, subsistence and food sovereignty rights of Alaska Natives within a diverse and threatened aquatic ecosystem has been at the heart of their strategy.
- Stopping False Solutions like Mega Hydro: Indigenous communities along the Klamath River forced Pacificorp Power company to agree to 'Undam the Klamath' by the year 2020, in order to restore the river's natural ecosystems, salmon runs and traditional land-use capacity. For decades, Indigenous communities have been calling out false solutions - pointing to the fact that energy technologies that compromise traditional land-use, public health and local economies cannot be considered climate solutions.
- Building Resilient Communities through Local Action: In communities all over the US, frontline communities are successfully winning campaigns linking climate justice to basic survival:
 - In San Antonio, Texas, the Southwest Workers Union led the fight to divert \$20billion dollars from nuclear energy into renewable energy and energy efficiency. In addition,

they launched a free weatherization program for low-income families and a community run organic farm.

- In Oakland, California, the Oakland Climate Action Coalition is leading the fight for an aggressive Climate Energy and Action Plan that both addresses climate disruption and local equity issues.¹

Across the Atlantic Ocean, on October 12, 2010 (to counteract what in the US is known as ‘Columbus Day’ but represents European invasion of the hemisphere), the European-based Climate Justice Action network coordinated direct-action protests against climate-related targets in two dozen locales. And in Cancún from 28 November-11 December 2010, at least two sets of CJ activists – in Klimaforum and Via Campesina – drew in international allies.

Fused as CJ, these inter-related and often overlapping (although sometimes conflicting) traditions are mainly aimed at building a mass-based popular movement bringing together ‘green’ and ‘red’ (or in the US, ‘blue-green’) politics. This entails articulating not only the urgency of reducing greenhouse gas emissions but also the need to transform our inherited systems of materials extraction, transport and distribution, energy-generation, production of goods and services, consumption, disposal and financing. While lacking 350.org’s mass activism (albeit in events that mainly refrain from challenging power directly) and consciousness-raising capacity, the CJ organizations and networks offer great potential to fuse issue-specific progressive environmental and social activists, many of which have strong roots in oppressed communities.

As considered in more detail below, some activists and visionaries (e.g. those associated with the journals *Capitalism Nature Socialism* and *Monthly Review*) anticipate that the linkage of red and green struggles under the CJ banner will require society moving from a fossil-fuel-dependent capitalism to eco-socialism. This will entail, as Joel Kovel and Michael Lowy explain:

a transformation of needs, and a profound shift toward the qualitative dimension and away from the quantitative... a withering away of the dependency upon fossil fuels integral to industrial capitalism. And this in turn can provide the material point of release of the lands subjugated by oil imperialism, while enabling the containment of global warming, along with other afflictions of the ecological crisis... The generalization of ecological production under socialist conditions can provide the ground for the overcoming of the present crises. A society of

freely associated producers does not stop at its own democratization. It must, rather, insist on the freeing of all beings as its ground and goal.²

Before such a vision can be properly articulated, several critical missing elements must be accounted for, including, amongst others:

- a stronger labour input, particularly given the potential for ‘Green Jobs’ to make up for existing shortfalls (British eco-socialists have taken the lead with demands for a million green jobs) (Campaign Against Climate Change, 2009);³
- a connection between climate justice and anti-war movements, given that military activity is not only disproportionately concerned with supplies of oil and gas (Iraq and Afghanistan) but also uses vast amounts of CO₂ in the prosecution of war (Smolker, 2010);⁴ and
- a stronger presence of both environmentalists and socialists in many high emissions sites not yet suffused with grassroots CJ movements, from China to the Arab oil world to petro-socialist Venezuela.

However, against eco-socialist orientations of the sort proposed by Kovel and Lowy, not only are CJ movement anarchists suspicious of central planning, but a bottom-up socialism would preferably generate manifesto statements from actual practice and from generalized movement sensibility and demands, as opposed to top-down pronouncements. The forging of unity in movements that address climate and social justice from below is especially important during times (such as at present) of apparently intractable conflict and division, which may even disrupt and distract the immediate future of CJ politics.

Climate Controversies and Wedge Issues

There are at least five ideological positions that have variously sought to claim CJ but that are not oriented (first and foremost) to movement-building:

- the ‘Greenhouse Development Rights’ technical calculation of per capita GHG emissions (by the NGO Ecoequity, with echoes in ‘Contraction & Convergence’ expansions/reductions and GHG

'budget-sharing') which, in the spirit of the late Harvard liberal philosopher John Rawls, aims to distribute the 'right to pollute' (and then let underpolluters sell their surplus rights via some form of carbon trading);⁵

- an emphasis on South-North justice primarily within interstate diplomatic negotiations over climate, as advanced especially by the South Centre and Third World Network, as well as the Bolivian government albeit with an awareness that the April 2010 Cochabamba meeting made demands on world elites far beyond their willingness to concede;⁶
- an orientation to the semi-periphery's right/need to industrialise, via the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs;⁷
- the use of CJ rhetoric by former UN Human Rights Commission director and Irish president Mary Robinson, whose agenda for a new Dublin foundation appears solely situated within the 'elite' circuitry of global governance and international NGOs, in which 'climate justice links human rights and development to achieve a human-centered approach, safeguarding the rights of the most vulnerable and sharing the burdens and benefits of climate change and its resolution equitably and fairly';⁸ and
- attempts to incorporate within CJ politics a commitment to carbon markets, especially through the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) projects.

It may be premature to judge, but these latter strands, drawing upon varying degrees of technicist-redistributionist, Third Worldist, Keynesian, or global-elitist experiences and aspirations, do not hold out much opportunity for success. There is a simple reason: the adverse balance of forces at the world scale. Most of these latter five CJ projects' ambitions play out at elite levels, primarily within UN negotiations. Nevertheless, for some eco-neoliberal specialists who carry out climate or development advocacy mainly within multilateral institutions or from international NGOs, especially in New York, Washington, London and Geneva, commitments to top-down approaches are held with an almost religious fervor. Unsurprisingly, the aforementioned five approaches to CJ are at times advanced directly at odds with grassroots forces which tired of the futility of global-scale reform.

In February 2010, for example, a controversy broke out in civil society regarding one civil society group whose initial desire for a negotiating stance in Geneva included a petition with several

controversial positions: promotion of the Kyoto Protocol (due to its common but differentiated responsibilities position) notwithstanding the treaty's very weak emissions cuts; a 2 degree (not 1 degree) centigrade temperature rise (considered unacceptable within the CJ movement); and an implicit endorsement of offsets and other private sector financing arrangements in spite of the failures of private offset arrangements and the broader emissions market. The petition was changed after an uproar within the Climate Justice Now! network.⁹

By April 2010, the demands of CJ activists had strengthened. The Cochabamba conference adopted several that were anathema to mainstream climate politics, and the Bolivian government struggled to put these (and a few others) into official United Nations texts:

- 50 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2017
- Stabilising temperature rises to 1C and 300 Parts Per Million
- Acknowledging the climate debt owed by developed countries
- Full respect for Human Rights and the inherent rights of indigenous people
- Universal declaration of rights of Mother Earth to ensure harmony with nature
- Establishment of an International Court of Climate Justice
- Rejection of carbon markets and commodification of nature and forests through the REDD programme
- Promotion of measures that change the consumption patterns of developed countries
- End of intellectual property rights for technologies useful for mitigating climate change
- Payment of 6 percent of developed countries' GDP to addressing climate change.¹⁰

REDD proved amongst the most important wedge issues within the CJ community, for late in 2010, sharp controversies emerged over forest preservation, as major US environmental foundations attempted to resurrect market strategies. The seeds of the controversy were sown in late 2009 and in the aftermath of Copenhagen, as discussed in Chapter 1. More such divisions could be anticipated in Durban, given that Wangari Maathai and her allies still strongly promoted carbon trading.

In the US, tensions between the CJ approach and the group of NGOs comprising the Climate Action Network and 1 Sky continue, over whether legislative lobbying, social marketing and top-down coordination of consciousness-raising activities without further strategic

substance (e.g. TckTckTck in 2009) are more appropriate advocacy methodologies than bottom-up linkage of organic climate activism. In a letter to 1 Sky in October 2010, a coalition self-described as ‘grassroots and allied organizations representing racial justice, indigenous rights, economic justice, immigrant rights, youth organizing and environmental justice communities’ criticized the vast expenditures on congressional lobbying, at the expense of movement building:

A decade of advocacy work, however well intentioned, migrated towards false solutions that hurt communities and compromised on key issues such as carbon markets and giveaways to polluters. These compromises sold out poor communities in exchange for weak targets and more smokestacks that actually prevent us from getting anywhere close to what the science – and common sense – tells us is required.¹¹

Such strategic controversies and divergent funding strategies are logical to expect at a time huge, intractable pressures are mounting. North-South and environment-development tensions are often extreme. Neoliberal financial forces continue to dominate the mainstream elite framework. And CJ movements across the world have not solidified a coherent set of tactics, much less strategy, principles, ideology and foundational philosophy. Suffice to say, that meantime the wedge between most of the movement-oriented CJ activities and those from the five other CJ approaches noted above, as well as with CAN, could continue to grow. This likelihood is greater at any given scale of struggle.

CJ Scale Politics

The particular sites of struggle illustrate the different strategies and tactics deployed within CJ, in comparison to other environmental traditions. We have already explored the terribly adverse balance of forces associated with global governance processes from Kyoto to Copenhagen to Cancún. The process of finding genuine solutions starts elsewhere, in unlikely places like Charleston, West Virginia, where the scale-challenge has taken groups like Coal River Mountain Watch and Climate Ground Zero from localized mountaintop removal protests – including tree-sit microsities – to the state capital, where they locked down at the WV Department of Environmental Protection in June 2009. Their demand was a handover of responsibility from local bureaucrats

captured by Big Coal, to the national Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

But simultaneously, the same agency became the subject of intense climate protest, especially in March 2010, because of the EPA's slovenly attitude towards West Virginia mountaintop removal. Activists blockaded the Washington headquarters entrance, and within days, the EPA issued such a tough ruling – based on water law – that it appears West Virginia mountaintop coal removal may become a practice of the past. Indeed the most decisive beheading of King Coal in West Virginia occurred nine days after the January 3, 2011 cancer death of heroic eco-warrior Judy Bonds. The EPA overturned the Army Corps of Engineers' prior approval of Spruce No. 1 mine, the world's largest-ever mountaintop removal operation, where in order to rip out a ton of fossil fuel, they dumped 16 tons of rubble into the adjoining valleys. After an avalanche of pressure by mountain communities and environmentalists, the EPA finally issued a ruling against the "unacceptable adverse effect on municipal water supplies, shellfish beds and fishery areas (including spawning and breeding areas), wildlife, or recreational areas." According to leading US climatologist James Hansen, quoted in Bonds' *New York Times* obituary, "There are many things we ought to do to deal with climate change, but stopping mountaintop-removal is the place to start. Coal contributes the most carbon dioxide of any energy source."

The EPA also took a stance in December 2010 to belatedly begin regulating greenhouse gas emissions. Yet the agency needs more direct action to reverse EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson's announcement that her agency would delay substantive implementation of its 2009 'endangerment finding' on coal until 2013 (curiously timed to avoid the Obama reelection campaign). Indeed it is in *national* state regulation (in the US and every other country) that climate accountability has been most obviously missing. Direct regulation of emissions sources – far beyond current EPA plans for imposition of better coal-burning technology – must be higher on the agenda in coming years.

In contrast to the Capitol Hill quicksand, California provides more radical grassroots insights into jumping space and scale, with Chevron headquarters a special target of the vibrant Movement for Climate Justice-West (the most active group of climate justice activists in the US), AmazonWatch, and Global Exchange. Californians and Alaskans who have previously fought to 'leave the oil in the soil' – halting offshore drilling and tundra destruction, respectively – will obviously need to remobilize against Obama. Amidst eco-catastrophe from Florida through Texas and beyond, British Petroleum's April 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill

was one potential consciousness-raising opportunity for the climate justice movement to address the utterly captive character of regulation.

Everywhere, organizers can find excellent local climate change targets to raise consciousness and effect emissions cuts, with direct action against major greenhouse gas sources or large-scale corporate fossil-fuel consumers. Two particularly good sites for climate activists are, first, the public utility commissions which control pricing and electricity generation techniques (and hence coal-fired and nuclear power plants); and second, the municipal or regional planning commissions which give the go-ahead to suburban sprawl and all manner of other climate-threatening projects.

This brings us to the global scale, where at a landmark conference in Cochabamba, Bolivia from April 19-22 2010 (Earth Day), more than 30,000 Bolivarians led by host Evo Morales and grassroots indigenous, community, feminist, and environmental movements were joined by genuinely solidaristic environmental, social, labor and NGO forces. This meeting set in motion a much more serious transnational climate justice approach, based not upon the illusion that the UN will address the climate crisis anytime soon, but instead upon more serious, pragmatic strategies. These can come only from a much richer merging of social and ecological rights discourses (for what such narratives are worth), and choices of unifying targets (such as fossil fuel companies, carbon traders, and the World Bank).

Meanwhile, a contradiction should be faced up to squarely: how to relate to the region's petro-socialists (e.g. Hugo Chavez) and petro-Keynesians (e.g. Rafael Correa). At issue is whether the latter can face up to contradictions in their own political ecologies, because in one of the world's most important sites of struggle, Ecuador's Yasuni National Park in the Amazon, an official presidential threat has been made that oil drilling would commence, unless countervailing pressure by the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador and Accion Ecologica is successful.

The situation elsewhere in Africa is similar, since so many of the extractive industries are the sole beneficiaries of electricity grid expansion. Red-green campaigns aim to 'leave the oil in the soil' and 'the coal in the hole,' exemplified in Nigeria where Delta activists have intimidated oil companies through both non-violent and armed struggle. In the former category, Environmental Rights Action in Port Harcourt insists on an end to extraction and exploration on grounds of the climate threat, and the descendants of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight of his Ogoni movement comrades won a precedent-setting out-of-court-settlement

with Shell in June 2009 that may scare off other oil firms. In the latter category, even after an amnesty in 2009 had a divide-and-conquer effect, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (Mend) continued to kidnap foreign oil workers, demanding they vacate the Delta for good.

After a combined struggle of this type, Shell was evicted from Ogoniland in June 2008, 13 years after the company arranged for Saro-Wiwa's execution, and a year later, Saro-Wiwa's family (and those of eight others executed at the same time) won \$15.5 million from Shell in an Alien Tort Claims Act case settled out of court, a large amount of which was recommitted to movement building. An estimated 1.5 million tonnes of oil have spilled since Delta drilling began in the late 1950s, the equivalent of an Exxon Valdez spill each year, costing more than \$5 billion in annual environmental damage. In his closing statement at the trial prior to his execution, Saro-Wiwa demanded that Shell vacate the area: "The military dictatorship holds down oil-producing areas such as Ogoni by military decrees and the threat or actual use of physical violence so that Shell can wage its ecological war without hindrance." At the time, Shell executives met with the Nigerian High Commission in London, stating that if the 'Ogoni virus' spreads to other areas in the Delta it would be the end of the oil business. In court, the plaintiffs had alleged that Shell hired Nigerian police for internal security; that Shell purchased vehicles and arms for the military; that Shell requested military support to build a pipeline through Ogoni land; that Shell assisted and financed the Nigerian military to repress the resistance of the Ogoni people; and that the firm participated in the arrest of Saro-Wiwa and others on fake murder charges and bribed witnesses to produce false testimony.¹² The exposure by WikiLeaks of Shell's ongoing influence in Lagos politics suggests that the Ogoni virus must spread far faster if Nigeria is to be free, and if both the Niger Delta's ecology and the climate are to be spared.¹³

Indeed, most remarkably, rather than letting such destruction rest at the scale of the local, the Port Harcourt NGO Environmental Rights Action (ERA) led the climate justice movement in Nigeria, West Africa and globally at Copenhagen to a much deeper critique of ecological responsibility. In opposition to the shifting, stalling and stealing that characterizes economic and environmental commodification in their own region, and in relation to world financial and oil markets, ERA and its visionary leader Nimmo Bassey jumped scale to demand that the oil be left in the soil and under the Gulf of Guinea water, given the threat to the planet.

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (Mend) is a variegated force, including some who are apparently opportunistically self-seeking in mere financial terms, with merely criminal backgrounds. But whatever their motives, they are effective, for in 1997, *Nigeria Business* estimated that 20 per cent of the Niger Delta's oil's extraction was disrupted the year before, just as Mend started operations.¹⁴ According to a US-based ezine, *TerroristPlanet.com*, by February 2010, even after an amnesty was implemented by the central government, Mend was a formidable insurgency:

Since it first emerged in early 2006 MEND, which says it is fighting for a larger share of southern Nigeria's oil revenue to go to local people, has cut Nigeria's oil production by more than one quarter. Swarm-based maneuvers: Guerrillas are using speed boats in the Niger Delta's swamps to quickly attack targets in succession. Multiple, highly maneuverable units have kept the government and Shell's defensive systems off-balance defending the sprawling network. Radically improved firepower and combat training: allowing guerrillas to overpower a combination of Shell's Western-trained private military guards and elite Nigerian units in several engagements. (One of Shell's private military operators was captured as a hostage.) Effective use of system disruption: Targets have been systematically and accurately selected to completely shut down production and delay and/or halt repairs, and the guerrillas are making effective use of Shell's hostages to coerce both the government and the company.¹⁵

Returning to the non-violent strategy of keeping fossil fuels in the ground and jumping to the global scale, the Climate Justice Now! network has shown a conceptual ability to confront world capitalism's shifting, stalling and stealing with demands for Northern accountability for emissions, for decommissioned carbon markets so as to avoid the stalling of emission cuts, and for climate debt payments to reimburse the stealing associated with the North's externalization of its emissions. Recall the five demands made in Bali, in December 2007:

- reduced consumption;
- huge financial transfers from North to South based on historical responsibility and ecological debt for adaptation and mitigation costs paid for by redirecting military budgets, innovative taxes and debt cancellation;
- leaving fossil fuels in the ground and investing in appropriate energy-efficiency and safe, clean and community-led renewable energy;

- rights-based resource conservation that enforces Indigenous land rights and promotes peoples' sovereignty over energy, forests, land and water; and
- sustainable family farming, fishing and peoples' food sovereignty.¹⁶

No matter that the CJN's component movements are disparate; so too are the forces that moved from sophisticated critique of carbon trading in South Africa to a broad-based campaign against the World Bank's largest project loan, that shook the energy establishment. These are the kinds of organizations and arguments that link spatio-temporal resistances amongst diverse eco-social forces during a period of austerity, civil society weakness, and repression. The agents of social and environmental change can take advantage of neoliberalism's still-discredited ideological status and demand from the next global and national negotiations a strategy for justice, not one based upon commodifying carbon.

But to do so the climate justice activists still need to generalize an innovative critique, one that emerged over time as the global emissions trading strategy rose from birth in 1997, peaked in 2008, and attempts a last-gasp resurrection after the economic crisis and climate negotiations breakdown. The frenzied failure of elite climate politics should make bottom-up alternatives much easier to advocate, including globally-coordinated actions against destructive projects (such as international credits for South African coal).

From the wider, deeper, and increasingly common critique of the Kyoto-Copenhagen-Cancún cul-de-sac, will come more confidence in the types of analyses, strategies, tactics and alliances associated with climate justice politics. The challenge is to aggregate experiences from the grassroots so as to move into alignment with the Cochabamba conference, and in turn, to generate a formidable red-green force uniting radical governments and the popular movements that will keep them accountable within global-left initiatives. In South Africa, the experiences of national interactions in global climate negotiations reinforce a sense of how politics of scale and space can be distorted, so that policies patently against the interests of a country's mass-popular constituencies are adopted. But likewise, South African climate justice politics from below suggest ways forward that, while not yet sufficiently strong to declare victory, really do offer the only hope for the way forward. But for the kinds of politics linking the fight against the Bissar Road CDM to the Medupi coal loan to Sowetans' struggle for free electricity to cohere nad

mature, a stronger ideological orientation is required. While racism has not been defeated in South Africa (as is abundantly clear from those three case studies), the core identity struggle of apartheid was addressed. What South Africa and the world must yet grapple with is the fusion of ecofeminist and ecosocialist ideological imperatives, within a revitalized climate justice politics.

Ecofeminist and Ecosocialist Directions

Once again drawing on South Africa for our source material, it is enlightening to contextualize ecofeminist insights into climate politics within a concrete case study in which class, race and environmental oppressions are inextricably intertwined with gender. During the 1960s to 1970s, it was common cause amongst radical South Africans that the apartheid system's systematic discrimination against black people was rooted in the corporations' need for migrant labour, fusing race-class oppression. Behind the typical black man who laboured in the mines throughout the first century of organized mining and plantation agriculture, prior to Nelson Mandela's election in 1994, was a woman. She provided three hidden and un-costed subsidies within the 'care economy', responsible for labour power's cheap reproduction.

First, in rural Bantustans – the ecologically-degraded apartheid “homelands” – women raised the migrant worker through childhood, as the state was non-existent or merely a religious mission station. Household reproduction was never subsidised, unlike urban residents who in many cases had access to state childcare and school systems. Second, rural women were compelled to look after sick workers who were tossed back home until they recovered, due to the lack of health insurance, as offered by states and companies in the West after workers battled long and hard. Finally, when the male worker was too old to work and returned to the Bantustans without adequate pension support, the women again took on the responsibility for care-giving.¹⁷

Of course, it's not just a matter of apartheid capitalism. The reproduction of global labour power has been universally subsidised by women's unpaid work. But these days, matters look more like the extreme South African system, with state and capital lowering the “social wage” and dismantling social policy gains that have been achieved through decades of struggle. This process extends as well into reproductive health and rights that feminist movements have consistently advocated.

Neoliberal policies and corporate power have resulted in labour outsourcing, casualisation and informalization. With life more precarious as a result, women are the safety net for household reproduction, in addition to being the most vulnerable and disposable of all labour sectors. But they have also been the driving force in resisting this process here, overcoming micropatriarchy within communities and leading most of South Africa's grassroots campaigns on issues such as water decommodification, access to AIDS medicines and other successful strategies to enlarge or defend the commons and sustain life.

As recession spreads, global capitalism is becoming much more like apartheid: predatory against women and the environment. Drawing on evidence from Southern Africa, Rosa Luxemburg demonstrated this tendency in her own analysis of imperialism back in 1913: "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." Increasingly, such non-capitalist life arrangements rely upon women and the communities that they guide. And yet on the other hand, Luxemburg continued, capitalism cannot "tolerate their continued existence side by side with itself. Only the continuous and progressive disintegration of non-capitalist organisations makes accumulation of capital possible."¹⁸

Luxemburg would not have been surprised at how the destructive force of capital drives men into migrancy, spreads HIV/AIDS and causes rising domestic violence. Such disintegration is always contested by women's personal strengths and mutual aid systems as well as other anti-/non-capitalist reactions, plus campaigns – successful in South Africa (unique on the continent) – to guarantee reproductive healthcare, including the right to a safe abortion. But increasingly, with climate-related migration, the challenge is more formidable because the progressive disintegration of the natural world by capitalist expansion and emissions is what makes the next round of accumulation possible, in the short term, but entirely dubious over the medium and long term.

Teresa Brennan made the link from the household scale to climate change, the biggest crisis women will face in the coming decades. She argued that, like the need to end Bantustan migrant labour systems, rearranging spatial and re/reproduction arrangements is crucial to ending the unfair role of women in subsidising capitalism's destructive irrationality. In her 2003 book, *Globalisation and Its Terrors: Daily Life in the West*, Brennan wrote, "The closer to home one's energy and raw material sources are, the more one's reproduction costs stay in line: paid and domestic labour will be less exploited, the environment less

depleted.”¹⁹ The need now to limit the “distance over which natural resources can be obtained” is obvious given how shipping, trucking and air transport contribute to carbon emissions.

This is one of the insights an ecofeminist political economy gives climate strategists such as Nicola Bullard of Focus on the Global South. A typical debate with neoliberals is over whether globalisation of industry has helped break up feudal-patriarchal relations, drawing women out of oppression into Mexican maquiladore or Bangkok sweatshops. Such export-led growth is now an increasingly untenable “development” strategy, and in any case always generated extreme uneven development, drawing on the women’s care economy for its hidden subsidies.

Bullard likens the climate negotiations to those of the World Trade Organisation (WTO): “By and large, countries are defending their narrow economic interests and the rich countries in particular are trying to grab the last slice of the atmospheric pie.”²⁰ Although the Kyoto Protocol is deeply flawed, especially the low targets and reliance on market mechanisms, Bullard asserted that attempts by the US to get rid of Kyoto are dangerous. “It is critical to retain the rich countries’ legally binding commitment in any future agreement and any alternative that could emerge at this stage would be much worse.”

Bullard breaks down the climate policy narrative into three discourses: business as usual, catastrophism, and climate justice. The first comes from business and most Northern governments while the second is advanced by some smaller and vulnerable countries as well as many NGOs. Catastrophism also “leads to dangerous last-gasp strategies such as geo-engineering, nuclear and carbon markets.” Third, climate justice is supported by a widespread civil society movement launched in 2007 at the Bali negotiations, but which subsequently came to include at least one Latin American government, Bolivia.

Feminists working on climate change are connecting the dots between these various oppressions, to warn how, in times of crisis, their opponents are emboldened. In a report, “Looking Both Ways”, the group Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice document Hurricane Katrina’s deeper political damage: “Following a disaster, women of colour – particularly African American women, low-income women and immigrant women – are routinely targeted as burdens of the state and the cause of over population, environmental degradation, poverty, crime and economic instability.”²¹ And more than for men, ending women’s economic instability is a vital component of the struggle for justice.

It has never been more important to draw together ecofeminist and ecosocialist insights to link issues, analyses, challenges and alliance-building efforts. Is ecosocialism on the agenda? The short answer is no, there's not a sufficient cadreship and network of organizations capable of connecting the dots, globally or in any national setting. But such a movement will have to emerge if we are to survive, so the following are some ways that this challenge might be viewed.

Red-green organisations are networking and expressing ecosocialist sentiments. The components of the ecosocialist movement are thousands of organizations in all parts of the world whose own assumptions about fighting environmental degradation are increasingly anti-capitalist. This is abundantly evident from the manifestos, analyses, press releases, demands, leaflets, slogans and other expressions of voice that they have generated in recent years. A few are included in the appendix.

The networks are typically single-issue and do not sufficiently link across subsectors of environmental justice. The biggest intellectual problem these movements face is linking their concerns across other sectors. This is often because the networks come together around specific targets, and because their funding sources or major in-house intellectual resources are extremely deep within the single issue they address, but unable to move beyond it.

The networks' analysis is sometimes delimited by the specific problem they are addressing. As single issue networks, the organisations generally view the attack by capitalism on nature as a problem that they may not be in a position to 'name', much less propose sweeping large-scale solutions to. That has generated a void, not only insofar as naming the problem (an environmentally-voracious capitalism), but also naming a global-scale socialist solution – with, of course, profound respect for difference and the uneven development of both capitalism and the movements against it. A further problem is that most such manifestos by these movements have not been particularly conscious of gender. And finally, the other kinds of interlocking and overlapping oppressions and resistances – along lines of race, indigenous heritage, different-abledness, sexual preference, generation and other divisions – are not sufficiently respected to generate a strong critique.

The networks hunger to continue building links. The obvious next step for groups like Climate Justice Now! is to make common cause with other movements addressing environmental issues where similar analysis, strategies, tactics, enemies and allies can be found. There is a huge gap, though, in information about each other, since with a few exceptions (e.g. the World Social Forum or protests at major world summits or meetings

of well-networked organisations such as Friends of the Earth International), these organisations have no opportunities to get together in a systematic way. And yet it is inexorable that these links will become ever stronger, and it seems inexorable, too, that to properly address the challenge we face, nothing less than planetary and species survival, we encounter the overarching power of patriarchal, racially-divisive uneven capitalist ‘development.’ Climate justice will require nothing less.

Notes

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16. See Appendix.
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Appendix