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Photo: Orin Langelle

Copenhagen Plan B: "protect the rich"

A leaked text of the political declaration that could conclude the Copenhagen conference reveals back-room dealings that offer little to the Majority World, writes ***Oscar Reyes****.*

So the rumours were true. For the past week, it was an open secret that the Danish government had already drafted a "political declaration" that could form the major outcome of the UN Climate Change Conference now that a full-blown international agreement is off the cards. The draft text has now been leaked, sparking outrage amongst Southern delegates and civil society organisations.

"The Copenhagen Agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change," as the draft is titled, would introduce percentage-based emissions targets for all except the Least Developed Countries, fatally undermining the Kyoto Protocol, which draws a line between industrialised Annex 1 states and the Majority World. The text also suggests that financial and technological support measures in non-Annex 1 countries, an underlying principle of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), should now be made conditional to their ability to meet complex emissions monitoring requirements.

The UNFCCC quickly attempted to limit the damage, putting out a statement from Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer that declared that the draft was a "decision paper put forward by Danish Prime Minister," while maintaining that it was not a "formal text" of the UN negotiating process.

But the leaked text met with an angry response from many Southern delegates. Lumumba Di-Aping, the Sudanese chairperson of the G77 plus China grouping of 132 developing countries, said that the Danish Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen had failed in his role as a neutral host and had instead "chosen to protect the rich countries." The emergence of the draft text was also met by an impromptu protest from members of the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance, who marched through the Bella Centre chanting "Two degrees is suicide, One Africa, one degree."

Democratic deficit

Concern stems not simply from the contents of the draft text, but also the secretive and biased way in which it came about. The COP Presidency, which is held by host country Denmark, is mandated to craft compromises based on painstakingly negotiated drafts. In this case, the Presidency stands accused not only of overstepping the mark, but of hopping, skipping and then jumping over it, pre-empting UN decisions with proposals lifted in part from text discussed at the Major Economies Forum, an initiative closely tied to the G20 grouping and chaired by US President Barack Obama.

> The leaked draft Copenhagen Agreement violates the democratic principles of the UN and threatens the Copenhagen negotiations.

As Meena Raman, Honorary Secretary of Friends of the Earth Malaysia, explains, "The leaked draft Copenhagen Agreement violates the democratic principles of the UN and threatens the Copenhagen negotiations. By discussing their text in secret back-room meetings with a few select countries, the Danes are doing the opposite of what the world expects the host country to do. The Danish government must stop colluding with other rich nations. Instead it must take as a starting point the positions of developing countries - which are the least responsible for climate change, but who are most affected by it."

Raman Mehta from Action Aid India decried a "betrayal of trust" on the part of the Danish government.

More "hot air" on reductions

The draft text is weak and vague in its overall ambitions. In reiterating the goal of holding global warming to no more than 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, the text sets a global reduction target of 50 per cent by 2050, of which 80 per cent should come from the industrialised world. These figures look distinctly unimpressive when tracked back to existing per capita emissions, however, with one estimate suggesting that they would allow Northern industrialised countries to continue outpolluting the Majority World by a factor of 3:5.

The short-term proposals are ostensibly more ambitious, with a suggestion that global emissions should peak by 2020. But the same passage of the text misleadingly claims that

>> p.3

OP-ED

Copenhagen: Where Africa Took On Obama

*Respected author **Naomi Klein** spoke at the opening of the KlimaForum on Monday night, where she also found time to interview Nnimmo Bassey, the much celebrated Nigerian human rights activist of Environmental Rights Action.*

The highlight of my first day at COP15 was a conversation with the extraordinary Nigerian poet and activist Nnimmo Bassey, chair of Friends of the Earth International. We talked about the fact that some of the toughest activists here still pull their punches when it comes to Obama, even as his climate team works tirelessly to do away with the Kyoto Protocol, replacing it with much weaker piecemeal targets.

If George W. Bush had pulled some of the things Obama has done here, he would have been burned in effigy on the steps of the convention centre. With Obama, however, even the most timid actions are greeted as historic breakthroughs, or at least a good start.

"Everyone says: 'give Obama time,'" Bassey told me. "But when it comes to climate change, there is no more time." The best analogy, he said, is a soccer game that has gone into overtime. "It's not even injury time, it's sudden death. It's the nick of time, but there is no more extra time."

The solution for Bassey is not carbon trading or sinks but "serious emissions cuts at the source. Leave the oil in the ground, leave the coal in the hole, leave the tar sands in the land." In Nigeria, where Bassey lives, Friends of the Earth is calling for no new oil development whatsoever, though it does accept more efficient use of existing fields. If Obama isn't willing to consider those types of solutions, Bassey says, "he may as well be coming [to Copenhagen] for vacation."

Those kinds of gloves off criticisms are scarce around here. Most groups don't seem to have figured out their Obama-era strategy yet: Tough love? Gentle encouragement? Blaming Congress? Bassey likened the political discombobulation to what his own country went through when democracy finally replaced dictatorship in 1999. Suddenly they didn't know how to fight anymore, and it was all about giving the politicians time—despite the fact that the oil companies were still ravaging the Delta and violence was (and still is) spiralling out of control. Sometimes hope can be dangerous.

Speaking of hope, the Scandinavian establishment is still clearly swooning over Obama, showering him with prizes for things he hasn't done yet and renaming this city "Hopenhagen" for the duration – a not too subtle homage to Mr. Hope himself.

In sharp contrast, one of the most interesting developments here is that Africa is clearly cooling off its Obama love affair. For months the African negotiating bloc has been the toughest and most united voice in the climate talks. At a pre-conference negotiation in Barcelona, the African team walked out en masse - a protest against the paltry emissions cuts proposed by the rich world, led by the U.S.

The African bloc has plenty of dodgy actors in it, of course, and standing up on this one issue does not turn a war criminal into a hero. That said, when it comes to climate change, Africa has emerged here as the conscience of the world– and its best hope of avoiding a disastrously weak deal.

Today, while big NGOs bit their tongues, Lumumba Di-Aping, the Sudanese chairman of the G77 group of developing nations, greeted the news that rich countries will spend a mere $10-billion helping poor states cope with climate change by saying that it was "not enough to buy us coffins." And when the Danish draft of the final agreement was leaked to The Guardian - incorporating much of Washington's destructive wish list - it was the Africans who were out protesting it first.

Obama, the son of a Kenyan man, still inspires a great deal of pride among African delegates here, and rightfully so. But the louder message we are hearing is that the continent has a great many sons and daughters and our collective failure to address the climate crisis is an immediate threat to their survival. As the African delegates chanted at the Bella Centre tonight: "Two degrees, suicide. We will not die quietly."

This article is posted on EnviroNation which Naomi Klein will be updating regularly with articles from her time in Copenhagen. www.thenation.com/blogs/copenhagen

What's hot and what's not?

By Edgar Alan Campbell

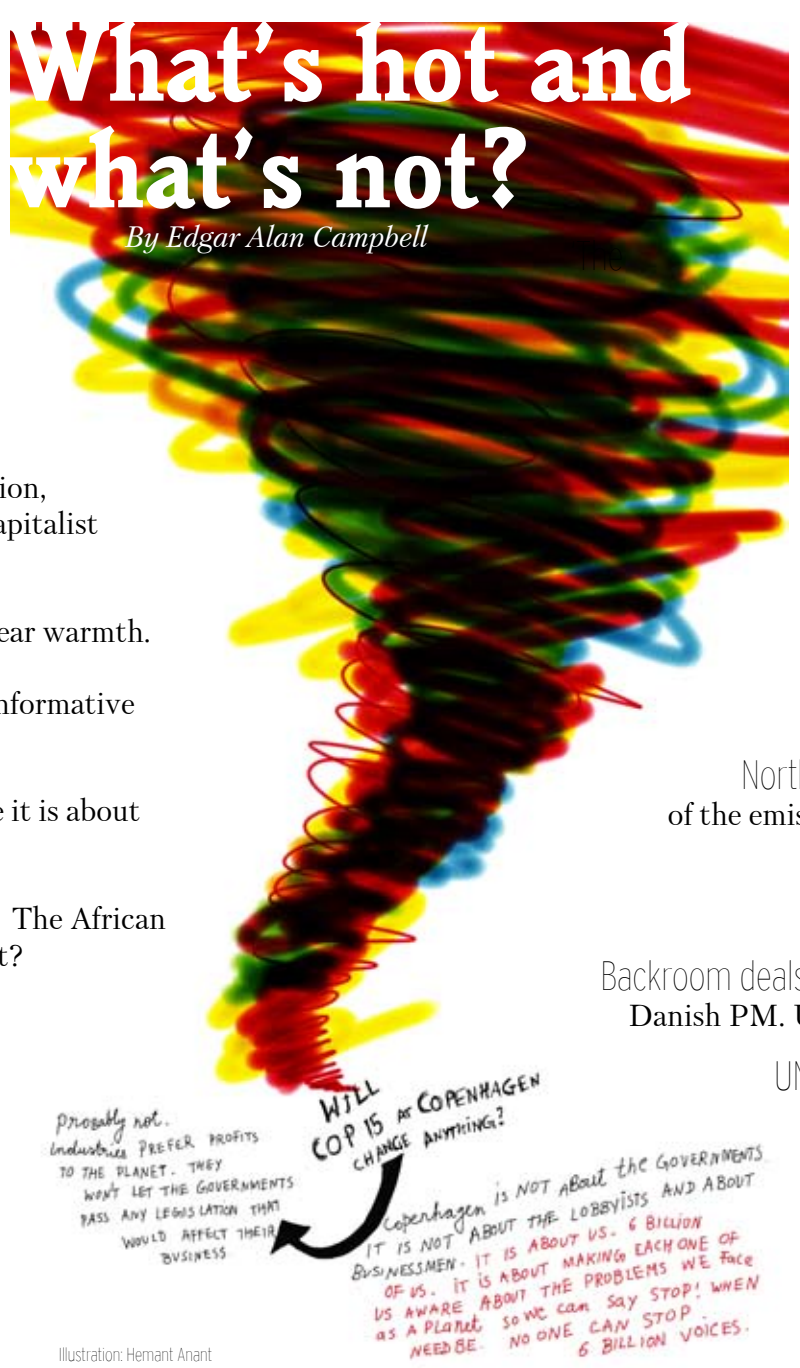

Illustration: Hemant Anant

hot

Reclaim Power Pushing for climate justice – according to CNN, 'the most hotly anticipated action' of the summit

The Bolivian position climate debt repayment, Indigenous Peoples representation, critiqueing carbon trading, call for end to capitalist overconsumption... what's not to love?

Furry flaps on hats Chic and much needed ear warmth.

The Story of Cap and Trade light hearted, informative and doing the viral spiral!

James Hansen having the guts to tell it like it is about carbon trading.

Speculating on who's going to walk out first The African delegates..... ALBA.... AOSIS... the whole lot? Who's started a sweepstake.....

Danish kids vigorously taking to the streets fresh faced and bad-assed in the climate justice struggle.

Corporate-haven let's get real about what's going on here.

not

'Danish Text' so when were they were planning on going public about that?

The Danish State restricting the sale of the over-the-counter antacid Malox, a vital ingredient for dealing with pepper spray and tear gas in the run up to the conference.

Canada according to a recent column, Canada are to climate what Japan is to whaling. The missed targets, the tar sands, screwing over Indigenous Peoples – so not hot.

Northern media honing in on deforestation 12% of the emissions, 90% of the air time. Why? Because it happens in the South....

Beer prices in Denmark !!!!

Backroom deals between Northern nations brokered by the Danish PM. Undemocratic, self-serving and way not hot.

UN-created youth movements.... love the fresh facedness and the energy, but how about a little intergenerational radicalisation? We'd love to have them in the other column by the end of the summit.

Hopenhagen just how brazen can greenwash get?

Copenhagen Plan B: "protect the rich" (CONTINUED FROM COVER)

this peak has already been reached in "developed countries collectively." This is based on the latest UNFCCC figures, which show that Annex 1 countries are now on track to meet their Kyoto Protocol commitments, but a closer look reveals that this is achieved on the basis of "hot air" emissions resulting from economic collapse in the former Soviet bloc in the early 1990s. Emissions elsewhere in the developed world have continued to rise. The projections for 2020 are further massaged by counting a large volume of "emissions savings" from carbon offsets made in the global South as part of Annex 1 emissions figures.

Strings attached

Whereas the Bali Action Plan emphasises that developing country actions will be "supported and enabled" by technology, financing and capacity building, the draft suggests that these measures would be "subject to robust measurement, reporting and verification." This inversion implies that the support measures could be withheld unless monitoring is externally approved. Instead of placing an obligation on industrialised countries to repay and restitute their climate debt, this makes any support measures conditional to a series of complex technical asssessments.

Just as significant is what the text does not include. There are no numbers on long-term financing, and there is no suggestion that these will be forthcoming in Copenhagen. The only figure offered is a projection of $10 billion per year of "fast start finance", a scaled-down version of a plan first presented by UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown in late November. But Lumamba Di-Aping was dismissive: "Ten billion dollars will not buy developing countries' citizens enough coffins," he said.

A growing market

The flip side of this lack of financial commitments is a commitment to scale up carbon markets as part of any agreement. The cap and trade proposals currently passing through the US would allow up to 1.5 billion tonnes of carbon offsets per year to displace the need for domestic emissions reductions, a demand that is over seven times larger than the existing supply of offsets through the UN's Clean Devopment Mechanism (CDM) and Joint Implementation scheme.

Although the language on carbon markets remains vague, talk of "an effective and orderly transition from project based to more comprehensive approaches" signals a framework that would introduce a broad range of new offsets, from "sectoral crediting" through to measures aimed at Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD).

"With developed countries offering so little by way of public finance, developing countries are being sent a message that support for offsetting mechanisms is their only real choice to access funds" says Payal Parekh, a climate scientist with International Rivers.

A coalition of the unwilling

What the "Copenhagen Agreement" leak signals, above all, is a lack of ambition on the part of industrialised countries to make emissions reductions at home or meet their financial and other obligations to the South. "Despite the hype, the talk of 'Hopenhagen', the supposed political will to 'get it done', this set of negotiations might be no different than anything that has come before" concludes Rhiya Trivedi, a member of the Canadian Youth Delegation to Copenhagen. "It could be just another round of the North-South divide and power struggle." Business as usual, in other words.

www.carbontradewatch.org

Photo: Tamra Gilbertson

FEATURE

Indian social movements demand justice and equity

Some 200 groups from India have urged their Prime Minister to bring justice and equity to the centre-stage of both the international climate talks and, more importantly, domestic policy making.

Medha Patkar representing the Narmada Bachao Andolan (Save Narmada Movement) and National Alliance of Peoples Movements (NAPM) stated that it is a sad irony that the Indian government is now on a renewed push for big hydropower dams to mitigate climate change, "The hundreds of hydropower dams being planned and constructed... are ecologically disastrous, undermine the will of the local communities, and deny decentralised micro energy projects that would be more appropriate." The statement slams other non-solutions being promoted such as nuclear power, agrofuels and genetically modified 'climate ready' seeds.

The groups urge the Indian Government to push for sharp and immediate cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, as India is already in the frontlines of climate vulnerability and climate change is adversely affecting the urban poor, fishing communities and small and marginal farmers.

"Unfortunately this urgency is not reflected in India's current policy on climate change," said Pushpa Toppo, Convenor of the National Forum of Forest Peoples and Forest Workers (NFFPFW). Toppo argues that instead of ensuring the rights of forest communities and protecting forests by implementing the Forest Rights Act, the Indian Government is pushing for false solutions such as Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) at the climate talks in Copenhagen.

The statement also rejects India's support of carbon offsetting through the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) – of which India has about 1 200 projects, arguing that "it prevents the physical and verifiable cuts in emissions by the developed countries that are so urgently needed."

On the question of historical and ecological debt, the groups endorse the Bolivian government's proposal that industrialised countries should pay for their enormous historical emission and adaptation debts to the developing world, including India. The statement comes with a caveat that "Any financial transfer mechanism and its ultimate use needs to be transparent, decentralised, democratic and decided by the people at all levels – through participation in consultation with national, state and local self-governments."

In a significant departure from the current rhetoric on climate change, the statement urges India to take the lead in building a consensus among key developing economies such as Brazil, China and South Africa to commit to mitigation targets that should be binding through national legislation.

The full statement and list of signatories can be read at www.durbanclimatejustice.org

CARBON MARKET CRIMES

A Photo Essay by Tamra Gilbertson

Carbon offsets are not emissions reductions. Each offset in the South allows pollution from fossil-fuelled power stations or heavy industry in the global North to continue over and above reduction limits while the same companies and industrialised countries claim compliance with insubstantial reduction targets on paper. Furthermore, the projects developed in the South are blind to on-going environmental justice struggles and often exacerbate existing conflicts on the ground.

To date, the UNFCCC's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) has not prevented in an increase of CO_2 emissions worldwide. Even renewable energy projects cannot automatically be assumed to be clean or sustainable.

Flooded
Nam Song, Thailand

Nam Song is a river-dependent community on the fertile floodplain of the Chao Phraya River. Agriculture that relies on seasonal flooding is the main livelihood. When the water is high in the rainy season, the rice paddies are flooded and aquaculture facilities are constructed on the river's edge. When the water subsides in the dry season, the fertile banks are planted with seasonal vegetables.

Rice husks have an important function in small-scale agriculture. It is used to absorb animal droppings, mostly from chickens and the product is a healthy balance of carbon and nitrogen that fertilises and binds soil.

In 2001 Nam Song residents learned of A.T. Biopower's plans to build five rice husk-burning biomass power plant that would produce electricity for the grid, with the objective of acquiring CDM financing. The Nam Song Conservation Club began gathering information and the campaign grew to include meetings, door-to-door organising and several rallies of over 700 people outside the provincial government headquarters.

In 2007, after six years of community struggle, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) recommended that the power plant should not be built on the grounds that it was inappropriate to build on the flood plain, and that it would violate human rights by polluting the river and damaging the villagers' livelihoods.

Instead, the 22 megawatt A.T. Biopower station was built in Pichit, 50 km away, next to the community of Sa Luang. It is accredited as a biomass energy project of the CDM, claiming to be replacing power generation that would otherwise require fossil fuels. Over 100,000 CERs have been issued already, and by 2020 it is projected that the project would generate over one million offset credits.

The plant's carcinogenic ash by-product is literally dumped on the doorsteps of local residents, who complain that they need to keep their doors and windows closed at all times. The human rights laws used to protect Nam Song residents are not applicable to Sa Luang, and many residents are afraid to speak out.

Since 2007, CDM wind power projects in India have more than tripled, with over 80 projects registered to date. Cheap land and infrastructure coupled with bulk subsidies at source made the energy financing easy, but the extra revenue from carbon credits brighten the profit margin.

The plant load factor (PLF) for wind turbines in India averages 20 per cent, which is low compared to global averages. But worse, Maharashtra's average has decreased over the years, suggesting that the subsidies and greenwash attached to the wind farms are what companies really seek out. Most of the projects approved for entry into the CDM existed prior to entering the scheme, managing to pass through the Executive Board despite providing little evidence that they would not have been built anyway.

Local communities near the high plateau do not receive electricity from the generators. In fact, these lands were once communal lands used mostly for grazing. In and around the village of Kadve Khurd, a CDM registered wind project built by Bharat Forge Ltd occupies largely *devottar* or temple properties and privately held farmland, which were forcibly acquired. Today, people from the local communities are not allowed onto the lands and are criminalised if found there.

Villagers view the wind turbines as harmful junk that supplies neither electricity nor employment, and destroyed the only common pasture of the village. They have never heard of the Clean Development Mechanism or carbon credits.

Blown Away
Maharashtra, India

Burned
Plantar SA, Brasil

Plantar SA is a pig-iron and plantation company whose CDM project in the state of Minas Gerais was one of the first to be supported by the World Bank Prototype Carbon Fund (PCF). It was anticipated that over 1.5 million CERs would be purchased by 2012.

The company has illegally dispossessed people of their land, destroyed jobs and livelihoods, dried up and polluted local water supplies, depleted soils and the biodiversity of the native *cerrado* savannah biome, threatened the health of local people, and exploited labour under appalling conditions. The proposed carbon-saving project helps sustain the environmentally-damaging model of monoculture plantations and iron production that is responsible for this.

Following several rejections by the CDM Executive Board, Plantar SA reworked its proposal and a reforestation project is now in the CDM pipeline at validation stage. It attempts to backdate its carbon credit to 2000, despite *prima facie* evidence that there is nothing 'additional' about it.

In the north of Espírito Santo Quilombola communities set fire to eucalyptus plantations as an act of resistance and to reclaim lands. But the Quilombola leadership are being criminalised, "This is a big national struggle. The companies infiltrated, took our space and ended peoples' cultures. We used to cultivate mandioca, coffee and biju here. The people had their own traditional like storytelling, Reis de Boi and Jongo. That is all over now. The people have been resisting the companies this for years. We continue because slavery never ended in Brazil. It never ended."

Carbon Trading: how it works and why it fails by Tamra Gilbertson and Oscar Reyes is free and downloadable at: www.carbontradewatch.org/carbon-trade-fails

Hardcopies are available at the Carbon Trade Watch stand at the KlimaForum and at various stands at the Bella Centre.

Carbon Trade Watch, a project of the Transnational Institute www.carbontradewatch.org

CLIMATE BUSINESS

Sasol & CDM: The Developed World Pays Sasol to Increase its Carbon Emissions

South African based multinational, Sasol, is nominated for the Angry Mermaid Award for its national and international lobbying campaign to promote Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) as a clean solution to the dirty business of producing liquid fuels from coal and gas. ***Tristen Taylor*** *of Earthlife Africa Johannesburg tells the story of its many attempts to benefit from carbon trading.*

If you wish to highlight the absurdity of the entire Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) process and the failure of current climate change mitigation measures, point no further than the fact that the South African petrochemical giant Sasol already receives CDM funding for nitrous oxide abatement at its Secunda and Sasolburg plants in South Africa. While this project will reduce Sasol's emissions by one million tonnes of CO_2e annually, Sasol's new coal-to-liquids (CTL) plant in South Africa will add approximately 30 times that per annum into the atmosphere.

In effect, Sasol is being paid to pollute. If the fate of the entire planet wasn't in the balance, the absurdity of this distortion of the Kyoto Protocol would make fine comedy.

Buoyed by this windfall from nitrous oxide, Sasol made a second attempt at the CDM kitty in December 2008. This project application dealt with a 645 km natural gas pipeline running from Mozambique to its Secunda CTL plant in South Africa, along with the requisite gas conversion and processing technology and the development of natural gas fields in Mozambique.

Sasol claimed that it needed to find a new source of fuel because the coal mine that previously fed its Secunda plant has reached the end of its lifespan. It had the option of either opening a new coal mine, or building a natural gas pipeline from Mozambique. The company chose the natural gas option. Using natural gas instead of coal will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, hence Sasol's argument for registering as a CDM project worth US$1.57bn in credits.

Earthlife Africa Johannesburg successfully opposed Sasol's application, on the ground that Sasol was planning this conversion even before CDM was written into the books. Not only did Sasol state in its 1999 Annual Report that it found high quality natural gas in Mozambique (a process that would have begun well before 1999), that it had a use for such gas in its Sasolburg and Secunda plants, that the gas from Mozambique was a "viable alternative" to locally mined coal, and that it had an external market for the gas, but also that it was planning to build the pipeline. In fact, Sasol had already costed the operation and did not find it prohibitive.

In other words, Sasol's plans to build the natural gas pipeline and use that gas in its CTL plants predates the adoption of the amendments to the Kyoto Protocol in Bonn in 2001, and misses the cut-off date of 1st January 2000.

In August 2009, South African civil society learned that Sasol was making another attempt at CDM funding, this time for an electricity co-generation project at its Secunda plant. The plant is increasing its own electricity generation capacity through the installation of gas turbines. Sasol's basic argument is that it will be purchasing less coal-fired electricity from the coal-fired grid and this will reduce carbon dioxide emissions. This application is still in the beginning stages, and is on the way to the National Designated Authority.

Once again, it seems that Sasol has violated the additionality component with this new application and is gambling on a favourable outcome. In a newsletter to Sasol investors in January 2009, Sasol CFO, Christine Ramon, stated, "The reason for the scope change is that some of the additional natural gas supply will be re-routed to increase electricity production through the installation of new gas-based co-generation technology. This will improve energy-efficiency and reduce Secunda's reliance on external energy supply from Eskom".

Sasol's own documentation clearly states that increasing co-generation has not only been part of its pre-existing business plans for some time, but that it is an economically attractive proposition when compared to purchasing from the state owned utility, Eskom.

So, what's going on here? A highly carbon intensive petrochemical giant, with a CTL plant that is the world's highest single point emitter of carbon dioxide, not only receives funding under CDM but is aiming to use the CDM mechanism to generate cash to be reinvested in more CTL plants.

Rotten to the core.

Earthlife Africa Johannesburg. www.earthlife.org.za
www.angrymermaid.org

Photo: groundWork

ACTION

Climate Justice Now! South Africa (CJN!SA) challenges Sasol

In Sasolburg, South Africa this morning, CJN!SA charged Sasol as the country's leading climate change criminal. The Vaal Environmental Justice Alliance (VEJA) hosted a die-in outside Sasol's main gate, preceded by a march. A memorandum was presented, calling on the company to recognise its 'dirty business' of making synthetic fuels from coal and exporting this dirty technology - with the consent of the South African leadership.

Sasol's dirty business:

- Its Secunda plant is the single biggest source of climate change pollution globally.
- It is one of the top three polluters in the Vaal Triangle in South Africa and the biggest source of cancerous volatile organic compounds.
- Pollution results in illness and loss of workdays, impacting on South Africa's economy
- It has its origins in Nazi Germany and it was given huge state subsidies by the apartheid state for its development.
- It still receives perverse state subsidies by not being required to reduce its pollution urgently.
- It is being expanded to Indonesia, the United States, China and India.

'Sasol's dirty business is a misplaced solution for an oil starved world,' says VEJA coordinator, Samson Mokoena.

For more information, call

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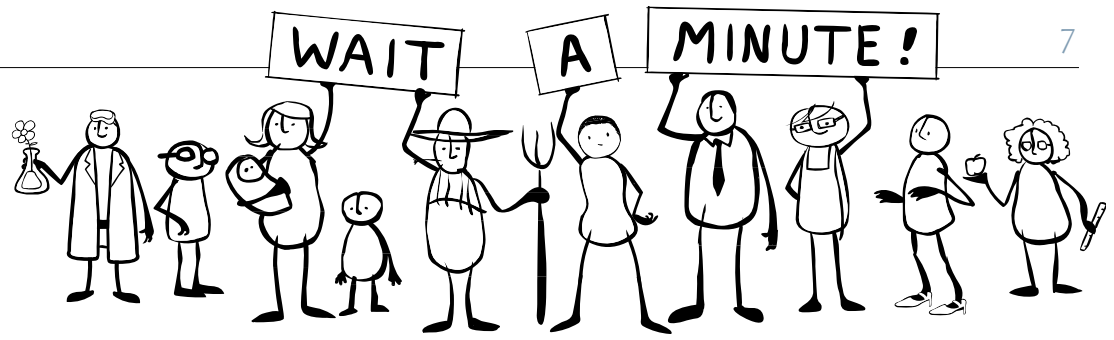
Tel +27 73 246 0081

Samson Mokoena, VEJA :
Tel +27 84 291 8510

CJN!SA is an alliance of organisations, communities and individuals in South Africa who are united in promoting just solutions to the impacts of climate change. Its mandate is set by its partners from social, environmental, labour and community-based movements and it works in close association with partner members in Climate Justice Now! international. It selected Sasol and state electricity supplier Eskom as the focus for collective campaigning to highlight South Africa's dangerous actions that fuel climate change and lead to the destruction of the planet.

INTERVIEW

Cap and trade in ten minutes: an interview with Annie Leonard



A brilliant new short film has hit the web, fostering a heated global public discussion around false solutions for the climate crisis. ***Ricardo Coelho*** *spoke to the filmmaker.*

Annie Leonard turned up on our monitors about two years ago when "The story of stuff", a provocative film about consumer culture, was first broadcast online. So far, over 10 million people around the world have watched it, and it is still shown widely at education centres and exhibitions. On December 1st, Free Range Studios, together with Climate Justice Now! and the Durban Group for Climate Justice, launched a sequel that addresses one of the most contested elements of the Kyoto Protocol: carbon trading. In "The story of cap and trade", activist filmmaker Annie Leonard uses the same friendly but inciting approach as in her first film as she translates complex concepts into accessible information.

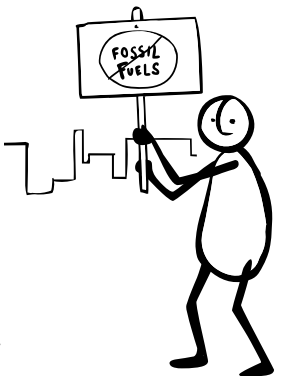
Leonard, who has witnessed first-hand the impacts of climate change in communities around the world, was convinced to take on this project by the total lack of will to fight for a real solution to climate change by political leaders, despite the increasing scientific evidence that we are suffering an unprecedented climate crisis, "They're stuck fighting for what they can get big business to agree with, rather than what the planet and its people need to survive".

"The story of cap and trade" has already been a huge success, with over 75,000 viewings in just three days. Many viewers have sent e-mails explaining that this is the first time they really understood offsets and that the film inspired them to learn more about ecological debt. The movie has also raised some ire, though. For Annie, the most discouraging line of criticism comes from her own colleagues within the environmental movement who argue that, despite all its flows, cap and trade bills "are the only game in town". But when the stakes are this high, she says, we really shouldn't be accepting the 'take it or lose it' blackmail.

While aiming to make the debate accessible to all, Leonard is aware that climate change is an enormously complex issue. And as such, small changes to business as usual won't bring us anywhere near the fundamental changes required in our current economic and industrial development model, "We need to fundamentally rethink and redesign how we run our economies".

The climate change debate should also be centered on the perspective of those bearing its immediate brunt, and who can contribute the knowledge of generations, "Too often the discussion is couched in such highly technical terms and is framed in a way to exclude the voices which are needed at the table to understand the issue and develop lasting solutions". The 'experts' are not only to be found at big NGOs, but amongst communities on the ground.

The director and presenter of "The story of cap and trade" is convinced that the combination of video and the internet is an extremely useful tool to present complex issues in short and engaging pieces. Having a film on a website further allows for the provision of additional information and links for those who want to go deeper. And all of this is based on the free sharing of work.



Free Range Studios is currently working, together with experienced groups, on two additional films dealing with specific consumer products: bottled water and electronics. These will be shorter and less complex, but will certainly hit the web with a kick.

www.thestoryofcapandtrade.org

FEATURE

Why it is time to stop ignoring the impact of tourism

Fun miles account for a significant proportion of greenhouse gases, argues ***Amélie Vignaud****.*

Working and living in Thailand means regularly bumping into crowds of tourists asking for the same thing: 'Where to go to avoid other tourists'? Well, I would not be there to hear their question in the first place if I could answer that. But that's not the point. The point is that our planet cannot provide enough favorite holiday destinations for the 922 million international tourist arrivals registered in 2008, and it won't get any bigger to welcome the 1.6 billion tourists expected to travel by 2020.

It's also fairly safe to say that the majority of tourists do not swim their way to Thailand or to Senegal. Almost a billion tourists flying to enjoy the sun each year..... That sounds like a lot of greenhouse gas emissions, no? Now do you still think that tourism is not a 'big deal' when it comes to climate change?

Well, if you still have doubts, then you should know that the global tourism industry is a significant player in the climate change issue, since it is estimated to contribute up to 12.5% to global warming (if non-CO_2 effects are taken into account). The aviation industry alone contributes 4.9% of this, and it is forecast that tourism emissions will more than double in the next 25 years. And yet, two striking facts should be noted: only 2% of the world's population actively takes part in air passenger transport; and the aviation sector, the main source of tourism emissions, is to this date exempt from mitigation-related regulation in the Kyoto Protocol.

The tourism industry would argue that tourism contributes to 'alleviating poverty' and that limiting shipping and aviation could have negative effects on tourism revenues. But how much of the income generated from tourism falls into the pockets of a few powerful companies? Or let's put it this way: how much actually ends up in the hands of those who really need it?

No, tourism does not always alleviate poverty, but it certainly creates environmental and social damages. And while the profits gained from tourism are repatriated to powerful investors, its damaging effects remain with local communities.

The tourism industry has been hiding in the past years behind false solutions: 'biofuels' for instance are not as sustainable as they are claimed to be. Massive quatities of land, resources and energy will be needed to use them on high commercial levels, and this certainly cannot contribute to reducing global warming.

This is the reason why a broad and urgent paradigm shift is called for for the tourism sector. The tourism industry must face its responsibility now! Bunker fuels must be included in the UNFCCC regulations, while market-based mechanisms and false climate solutions such as CDM, REDD, agrofuels, and carbon trading cannot be accepted anymore. It is now time for the tourism industry to take measures that will take into account the people without whom tourism would not be possible. A fair and just tourism model must be developed.

ECOT will be presenting a statement on climate change and tourism during a panel discussion addressing the challenges of the international tourism industry with regard to climate and development policy.

10 December 2009, 13h00-15h00
DGI-Byen Conference Center, Brown meeting room.

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OP-ED

Don't Beat the Climate War Drums

Misguided militarisation of climate policy distorts perceptions of who – or what – carries the real responsibility for climate-related instability, writes ***Betsy Hartmann.***

The beat is on. In September the CIA launched a new Center on Climate Change and National Security, reflecting growing concern in U.S. and European security circles that climate change could trigger violent conflict over scarce environmental resources in the global South, mass migrations of poor, unruly 'climate refugees' towards Western borders, and even wars between states. This linkage between climate and security threatens to militarise climate policy and subvert humanitarian and development aid.

While environmental changes due to global warming could exacerbate already existing economic and political tensions in many locations, the threat scenarios being bandied about in security circles are wildly speculative and based on racialised stereotypes of poor people. They ignore the ways many poorly resourced communities manage their affairs without recourse to violence. Violent conflict in the global South is generally more connected to resource abundance and foreign intervention than resource scarcity – for example competition over rich mineral reserves in the Congo or diamonds in Sierra Leone.

Unfortunately, evidence is not really the issue here. The beating of the climate conflict drums should be viewed in the context of larger orchestrations in U.S. and European national security and immigration policy. Take the notion of climate refugees. A 2003 Pentagon-sponsored Abrupt Climate Change Scenario warned of the need to strengthen our defences against "unwanted starving immigrants" from the Caribbean, Mexico and South America. Fomenting fear of climate refugees adds fuel to the fire of the anti-immigrant backlash in both the U.S. and Fortress Europe.

> We should be challenging militarism - after all, militaries themselves are top carbon guzzlers.

In recent years Western militaries have moved to exercise more control over humanitarian and development aid, including emergency aid during natural disasters. In 2005 the share of US foreign aid dispersed by the Pentagon was 22 percent, up from 6 percent three years before. The Obama administration's defense policy views aid as an essential component of stabilising restive populations, taming "ungoverned spaces" in Africa and Central Asia where terrorists may lurk, and building a "whole-of-government" approach toward security, shorthand for Pentagon dominance of most aspects of foreign policy. The new U.S. military command for Africa, AFRICOM, is an example of what may lie in store. AFRICOM seeks to integrate U.S. military objectives more firmly with development ones and its staff includes senior officials of the U.S. Agency for International Development. Supporters of AFRICOM are already deploying the threat of climate conflict as a justification for its existence.

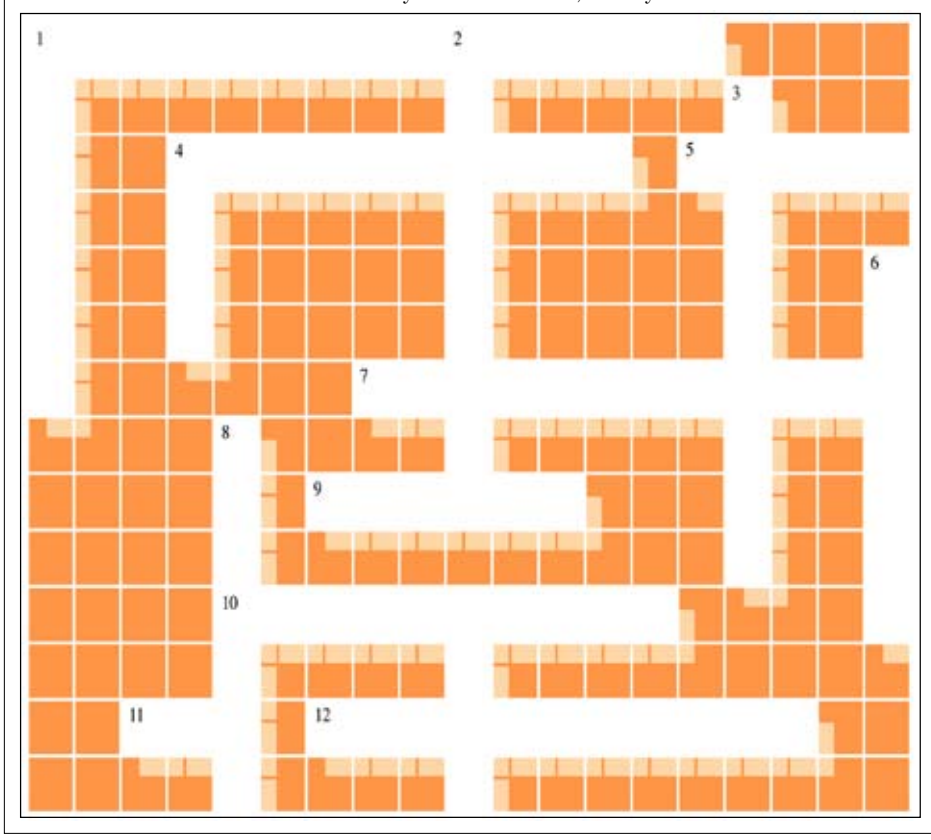
> Aid is viewed as an essential component of stabilising restive populations, and taming "ungoverned spaces" in Africa and Central Asia.

The climate change-national security linkage could also provide a rationale for investments in grandiose and risky schemes to control the weather. This March an official advisory group to the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) convened a meeting to discuss the possibility of geo-engineering as a response to global warming.

In the climate change arena, the appeal to the "high politics" of national security is low politics. It demonises the people who have the least responsibility for global warming, turning them into a dangerous threat. Instead of bolstering militarism we should be challenging it. After all, militaries themselves are top carbon guzzlers - the U.S. Department of Defence is the largest consumer of energy in the U.S., using as much as the entire nation of Sweden. Militarism also absorbs the economic resources and shrinks the democratic space we need to find real solutions to climate change. Rather than beating the climate war drums, we need to work together across borders, in peace.

Betsy Hartmann is the director of the Population and Development Program (http://popdev.hampshire.edu) and professor of development studies at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts. For more of her writings on climate change and security, see www.BetsyHartmann.com.

CLIMATE CROSSWORD by Tamra Gilbertson, Marley Kirton and Beatriz Martinez



ACROSS

1. Land degradation in arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors, including climatic variations and human activities.

4. Called a revolution but really a period of rapid growth with far-reaching social, economic and environmental consequences, starting in England during the second half of the eighteenth century.

5. Danish elf who lives in old farmhouses and enjoys playing tricks. He visits around this time of year.

7. One of the biggest social movements in the world which focuses on the critical importance of small-scale and sustainable agriculture and landless people.

9. Countries that have agreed to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions under the UNFCCC. Both OECD countries and economies in transition.

10. Actions to reduce or avoid greenhouse gas emissions.

11. A dangerous and unproved process of capturing and storing greenhouse gas pollution from coal or gas power plants instead of releasing it into the atmosphere.

12. The most abundant greenhouse gas in the atmosphere and an important part of the natural greenhouse effect. Humans are not significantly increasing its concentration.

DOWN

1. A period of abnormally dry weather, long enough to cause severe water shortages.

2. A nickname for the Danish capital city during the COP 15.

3. A vehicle of choice for delegates at COP15. Over 1200 are on the streets and an extra 40 were called in from France.

4. The international organisation founded by the United Nations that attempts to predict the impact of increases in greenhouse gases using data from a range of climate models and studies.

6. A surplus accumulation of snowfall on land in excess of annual snowmelt, resulting in a mass of ice at least 0.1 km^2 in area. Shows some evidence of movement in response to gravity.

8. Total dry weight of all living organisms that can be supported at each tropic level in a food chain. Also, materials that are biological in origin.

Answers from Monday, 07 December 2009 **ACROSS:** 3. Sink 6. Zone of Ablation 8. Baseline 9. REDD 10. Greenhouse gas 12. UNDRIP 13. Methane 15. Reclaim Power 16. Yvo de Boer 17. Lars Lцkke Rasmussen **DOWN**: 1. Biosphere 2. Ozone 4. Sulfur Hexaflouride 5. Cap and Trade 7. Carbon Dioxide 11. Soil Carbon 13. MAGICC 14. Tuvalu

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CARBON TRADE WATCH

Carbon Trade Watch promotes a critical analysis of the use of market-based mechanisms as a means of dealing with climate change. It is a project of the Transnational Institute.

The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) is a pan African policy-oriented research organisation that focuses on human security issues in Africa. The ISS Corruption and Governance Programme runs a project that focuses on the governance of climate change.

Earthlife Africa is a non-profit organisation in South Africa that seeks a better life for all people without exploiting other people or degrading their environment. Earthlife Africa seeks a just transition to renewable energy and a low-carbon economy.

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