

Climate Justice Now!

The Durban Declaration on Carbon Trading

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

Governments, export credit agencies, corporations and international financial institutions continue to support and finance fossil fuel exploration, extraction and other activities that worsen global warming, such as forest degradation and destruction on a massive scale, while dedicating only token sums to renewable energy. It is particularly disturbing that the World Bank has recently defied the recommendation of its own Extractive Industries Review which calls for the phasing out of World Bank financing for coal, oil and gas extraction.

We denounce the further delays in ending fossil fuel extraction that are being caused by corporate, government and United Nations' attempts to construct a "carbon market", including a market trading in "carbon sinks".

History has seen attempts to commodify land, food, labour, forests, water, genes and ideas. Carbon trading follows in the footsteps of this history and turns the earth's carbon-cycling capacity into property to be bought or sold in a global market. Through this process of creating a new commodity – carbon - the Earth's ability and capacity to support a climate conducive to life and human societies is now passing into the same corporate hands that are destroying the climate.

People around the world need to be made aware of this commodification and privatization and actively intervene to ensure the protection of the Earth's climate.

Carbon trading will not contribute to achieving this protection of the Earth's climate. It is a false solution which entrenches and magnifies social inequalities in many ways:

- The carbon market creates transferable rights to dump carbon in the air, oceans, soil and vegetation far in excess of the capacity of these systems to hold it. Billions of dollars worth of these rights are to be awarded free of charge to the biggest corporate emitters of greenhouse gases in the electric power, iron and steel, cement, pulp and paper, and other sectors in industrialised nations who have caused the climate crisis and already exploit these systems the most. Costs of future reductions in fossil fuel use are likely to fall disproportionately on the public sector, communities, indigenous peoples and individual taxpayers.
- The Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), as well as many private sector trading schemes, encourage industrialised countries and their corporations to finance or create cheap carbon dumps such as large-scale tree plantations in the South as a lucrative alternative to reducing emissions in the North.

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Other CDM projects, such as hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC)- reduction schemes, focus on end-of pipe technologies and thus do nothing to reduce the impact of fossil fuel industries' impacts on local communities. In addition, these projects dwarf the tiny volume of renewable energy projects which constitute the CDM's sustainable development window-dressing.

- Impacts from fossil-fuel industries and other greenhouse-gas producing industries such as displacement, pollution, or climate change, are already disproportionately felt by small island states, coastal peoples, indigenous peoples, local communities, fisherfolk, women, youth, poor people, elderly and marginalized communities. CDM projects intensify these impacts in several ways. First, they sanction continued exploration for, and extraction, refining and burning of fossil fuels. Second, by providing finance for private sector projects such as industrial tree plantations, they appropriate land, water and air already supporting the lives and livelihoods of local communities for new carbon dumps for Northern industries.
- The refusal to phase out the use of coal, oil and gas, which is further entrenched by carbon trading, is also causing more and more military conflicts around the world, magnifying social and environmental injustice. This in turn diverts vast resources to military budgets which could otherwise be utilized to support economies based on renewable energies and energy efficiency.

In addition to these injustices, the internal weaknesses and contradictions of carbon trading are in fact likely to make global warming worse rather than “mitigate” it. CDM projects, for instance, cannot be verified to be “neutralizing” any given quantity of fossil fuel extraction and burning. Their claim to be able to do so is increasingly dangerous because it creates the illusion that consumption and production patterns, particularly in the North, can be maintained without harming the climate.

In addition, because of the verification problem, as well as a lack of credible regulation, no one in the CDM market is likely to be sure what they are buying. Without a viable commodity to trade, the CDM market and similar private sector trading schemes are a total waste of time when the world has a critical climate crisis to address.

In an absurd contradiction the World Bank facilitates these false, market-based approaches to climate change through its Prototype Carbon Fund, the BioCarbon Fund and the Community Development Carbon Fund at the same time it is promoting, on a far greater scale, the continued exploration for, and extraction and burning of fossil fuels – many of which are to ensure increased emissions of the North.

In conclusion, 'giving carbon a price' will not prove to be any more effective, democratic, or conducive to human welfare, than giving genes, forests, biodiversity or clean rivers a price.

We reaffirm that drastic reductions in emissions from fossil fuel use are a pre-requisite if we are to avert the climate crisis. We affirm our responsibility to coming generations to seek real solutions that are viable and truly sustainable and that do not sacrifice marginalized communities. We therefore commit ourselves to help build a global grassroots movement for climate justice, mobilize communities around the world and pledge our solidarity with people opposing carbon trading on the ground.

Signed 10 October 2004
Glenmore Centre, Durban, South Africa

DURBAN MEETING SIGNATORIES

Carbon Trade Watch
Indigenous Environmental Network
Climate & Development Initiatives, Uganda
Coecoceiba-Amigos de la Tierra, Costa Rica
CORE Centre for Organisation Research & Education, Manipur, India
Delhi Forum, India
Earthlife Africa (ELA) eThekweni Branch, South Africa
FERN, EU
FASE-ES/Green Desert Network Brazil
Global Justice Ecology Project, USA

groundwork, South Africa
National Forum of Forest People And Forest Workers (NFFPFW), India
Patrick Bond, Professor, University of KwaZulu Natal School of Development Studies, South Africa
O le Siosiomaga Society, Samoa
South Durban Community Alliance (SDCEA), South Africa
Sustainable Energy & Economy Network, USA
The Corner House, UK
Timberwatch Coalition, South Africa 2
World Rainforest Movement, Uruguay

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONAL SIGNATORIES

- 50 Years Is Enough: U.S. Network for Global Economic Justice, USA
- The Akwantupa Travel Foundation/ M&J Travel and Tours Limited, Ghana
- Aficafiles, Canada
- Africa Groups of Sweden, Sweden
- Alianza Verde, Honduras
- Ambiente y Sociedad, Argentina
- Angkar Bangladesh Foundation, Bangladesh
- Anisa Colombia, Colombia
- Asociacion Alternativa Ambiental, Spain
- Asociacion Amigos Reserva Yaguaroundi, Argentina
- Asociacion de Guardaparques Argentinos, Argentina
- Asociación Ecologista Piuque, Argentina
- Asociacion para la Defensa del Medio Ambiente del Noreste Santafesino, Argentina
- Asociación San Francisco de Asís, Argentina
- Association France Amerique Latine, France
- Asociacion Lihue San Carlos de Barloche / Rio Negro, Argentina
- Association pour un contrat mondial de l'eau, Comité de Seine Saint Denis, France
- Associação Caeté - Cultura e Natureza, Brasil
- Athlone Park Residents Association, South Africa
- Austerville Clinic Committee, South Africa
- Australian Greens, Australia
- Aukland Rising Tide, New Zealand
- BanglaPraxis, Bangladesh
- Benjamin E. Mays Center, USA
- Bluff Ridge Conservancy (BRC), South Africa
- BOA, Venezuela
- Boulder Environmental Activists Resource, Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center, USA
- The Bread of Life Development Foundation, Nigeria
- Bündnis 90/ Die Grünen LAG Europa, Friedens und Außenpolitik Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
- Bürgerbewegung für Kryorecycling und Kreislaufwirtschaft, Germany
- CENSAT-Friends of the Earth Colombia, Colombia
- Center for Economic Justice, USA
- Centre for Environmental Justice, Sri Lanka
- Center for Environmental Law and Community Rights Inc./ Friends of the Earth (PNG), Papua New Guinea
- Center for Urban Transformation, USA
- Centro de Derecho Ambiental y Promoción para el Desarrollo (CEDAPRODE), Nicaragua
- Centro de Investigacion Científica de Yucatan A.C., Mexico
- Centro Internazionale per la Cultura e i Diritti dell'Uomo - CISEDU, Italy
- Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, USA
- Christ the King Church Group, South Africa
- Clairwood Ratepayers Association (CRA), South Africa
- Climate Crisis Coalition of the Twin Cities, USA
- Cold Mountain, Cold Rivers, USA
- Colectivo de Proyectos Alternativos de México (COPAL), Mexico
- Colectivo MadreSelva, Guatemala
- Comité de Análisis "Ana Silvia Olán" de Sonsonate - CANASO, El Salvador
- Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, USA
- Community Health Cell, Bangalore, India
- Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO), Netherlands
- C.P.E.M. N°29-Ciencias Ambientales, Argentina
- Del Consejo de Organizaciones de Médicos y Parteras Indígenas Tradicionales de Chiapas, Mexico
- Delhi Greens, India
- Enda América Latina, Colombia
- ECOGRAIN, Spain
- Ecoisla, Puerto Rico
- EarthLink e.V.-The People & Nature Network, Germany
- Ecological Society of the Philippines, Philippines
- Ecologistas en Acción, Spain
- Ecoportal.net, Argentina
- ECOTERRA International
- El Centro de Ecología y Excursionismo de la Universidad de Carabobo, Venezuela
- Els Verds - Alternativa Verda, Spain
- Environmental Resource Center, USA
- Environment Desk of Images Asia, Thailand
- Europe solidaire sans frontières (ESSF), France
- FASE Gurupá, Brasil

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67. Forest Peoples Programme, UK
68. Foundation for Grassroots Initiatives in Africa, Ghana
69. Friends of the Earth International
70. Friends of the Earth Australia, Australia
71. Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russia
72. FSC-Brasil, Brasil
73. Fundación Argentina de Etoecología (FAE), Argentina
74. Fundación Los de Tilquiza, proyecto AGUAVERDE, Argentina
75. Gaia Preservation Coalition, Canada
76. Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Energies Renouvelables et l'Environnement (GERERE), Morocco
77. Gruppo di Volontariato Civile (GVC-Italia), oficina de Nicaragua, Nicaragua
78. House of Worship, South Africa
79. Indigenous Peoples' Biodiversity Network, Peru
80. Indonesia Mining Advocacy Network (JATAM), Indonesia
81. InfoNature, Portugal
82. Infringement Festival, Canada
83. Iniciativa Arcolris de Ecología y Sociedad, Argentina
84. Iniciativa Radial, Argentina
85. Institute for Social Ecology Biotechnology Project, USA
86. Instituto Ecoar para Cidadania, Brasil
87. Instituto Igaré, Brasil
88. International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Belgium
89. International Indian Treaty Council
90. Isipingo Environmental Committee (IEC), South Africa
91. Isipingo Ratepayers Association, South Africa
92. Jeunesse Horizon, Camerun
93. JKPP /Indonesian Community Mapping Network, Indonesia
94. Joint Action Committee of Isipingo (JACI), South Africa
95. Kasela Palu Group, Papua New Guinea
96. KVV Translations, Spain
97. Labor Tribune, Marcus Strom, editor, Australia
98. LOKOJ, Bangladesh
99. London Rising Tide, UK
100. Malvarrosamedia, Spain
101. Mangrove Action Project (MAP), USA
102. Mano Verde, Colombia
103. Mercy International Justice Network, Kenya
104. Merebank Clinic Committee (MCC), South Africa
105. Movimiento por la Paz y el Ambiente, Argentina
106. Movimento por los Derechos y la Consulta Ciudadana, Chile
107. Nicaragua Center for Community Action, USA,
108. Nicaragua Network (US), USA
109. Nicaragua-US Friendship Office, USA
110. NOAH-Friends of the Earth Denmark, Denmark
111. Núcleo Amigos da Terra, Brasil
112. Ogoni Rescue Patriotic Fund, Nigeria
113. Oilwatch International, Ecuador
114. Oilwatch Africa, Nigeria
115. Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace (OMJP), USA
116. Organizacion Fraternal Negra Honduriense, Honduras
117. Parque Provincial Ernesto Tornquist, Argentina
118. Pacific Indigenous Peoples Environment Coalition (PIPEC), Aotearoa/New Zealand
119. Pesticides Action Network Latin America, Uruguay
120. Piedad Espinoza Trópico Verde, Guatemala
121. PovoAção, Brasil
122. Prideaux Consulting, USA
123. Projeto tudo Sobre Plantas - Jornal SOS Verde, Brasil
124. Public Citizen, USA
125. Rainforest Action Network, USA
126. Rainy River First Nations, Canada
127. Reclaim the Commons, USA
128. Red de Agricultura Orgánica de Misiones, Argentina
129. REDES-Amigos de la Tierra, Uruguay
130. Red Verde, Spain
131. Rettet den Regenwald, Germany
132. Rising Tide, UK
133. Sahabat Alam Malaysia /FOE-Malaysia, Malaysia
134. San Francisco Bay Area Jubilee Debt Cancellation Coalition, USA
135. Scottish Education and Action for Development, UK
136. S.G.Fiber, Pakistan
137. Silverglen Civic Association (SCA), South Africa
138. Sisters of the Holy Cross - Congregation Justice Committee, USA
139. Sobrevivencia, Friends of the Earth Paraguay, Paraguay
140. Sociedad Civil, Mexico
141. SOLJUSPAX, Philippines
142. Tebtebba Foundation, Philippines
143. The Sawmill River Watershed Alliance, USA
144. TRAPESE – Take Radical Action Through Popular Education and Sustainable Everything, UK / Spain
145. Treasure Beach Environmental Forum (TBEF), South Africa
146. Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development, Uganda
147. Ujamaa Community Resource Trust (UCRT), Tanzania
148. UNICA, Nicaragua
149. Union Chrétienne pour l'Education et Développement des Dëshérités (UCEDD), Burundi
150. Union Mexicana de Emprendedores Inios, A. C., Mexico
151. VALL DE CAN MASDEU, Spain
152. wallings nursery ltd, David Dunn, UK
153. Wentworth Development Forum (WDF), South Africa
154. Western Nebraska Resources Council, USA
155. World Bank Boycott/Center for Economic Justice, USA
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157. World Peace Prayer Society, USA
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