



Friends of the Earth Newsmagazine

Climate Colonialism



"Mozambique won't be able to face the threat posed by climate change if nothing changes."

"Pakistan faces its fourth consecutive year of heavy flooding"

*"In the last bad flood, the waters reached as high as our rooftops."
-Dominican Republic*

"Our very survival is absolutely threatened by the effects of climate change" - The Marshall Islands

"Climate change threatens to wash away all our gains." - Bangladesh

"America is producing more oil today than at any time in the last eight years... We have a record number of oil rigs operating right now — more working oil and gas rigs than the rest of the world combined."

- President Obama

Image credit: Project Survival Media



Erich Pica

FEELING HOPEFUL

Friends,

At times, it's difficult to be hopeful. Everyday, we are constantly bombarded by news of the latest man-made or natural disaster. We constantly have to remain vigilant and fight through, what comedian John Stewart accurately described as, the "bullshitocracy" of the media and political elite. And then there are the heart-wrenching reminders

that our failures to create a more healthy and just world have immediate impacts on people today, and on our children and grandchildren tomorrow. In this context, it's often difficult to recognize when real progress is being made.

Several significant events occurred this summer that I hope recharged you; as they provided me with inspiration and hope. In late June, the Supreme Court made a decisive ruling granting gay and lesbian couples the undeniable right to marry. With its decision, the court recognized that love is love, and that states have a constitutional obligation to recognize its expression through marriage. A decade ago this victory seemed impossible; today, many see the decision as fait accompli. Our country became a little more just with this decision.

The Supreme Court again ruled in favor of the president's key accomplishment, the Affordable Care Act. In my opinion, this law doesn't go nearly far enough, but this ruling preserved healthcare coverage required by the law to millions of individuals. Again, our country became a little more just and healthy.

In this short time, we witnessed a racially-motivated terrorist act meant to divide the community of Charleston, S.C., and the country, unite a state and country with the removal of the overtly racist Confederate flag. While removing the divisive symbol is not nearly enough to address structural racism, it is a start.

Finally, I was moved nearly to tears when reading Pope Francis's Encyclical Letter "Laudato Si'," or "Praise Be to You," which focused on the environment, sustainability and climate change. The eloquence and moral clarity in which Pope Francis describes our relationship to Mother Earth, the harms we have inflicted on her and ourselves and the need to reject economic activities (such as unfettered capitalism) that denigrate the environment and people is nothing short of inspiring. While his letter addresses the 1.2 billion Catholics in the world, millions more are heeding his call, which is reverberating in global discussions of climate change.

This progress is all related. I fundamentally believe that we cannot make the deep and lasting changes necessary to solve climate change and our other environmental issues, until we start solving the problems of how we treat ourselves. The structural reforms needed to make a more socially, racially and economically just society are the same needed to champion a healthier planet. We are trying to change political and economic systems predicated on devaluing life and the environment; and dividing us into haves and have not. Unless we find ways to champion change together, we will never win. I see hope in other peoples successes, now its time for us to make change.

Sincerely,

Erich Pica,
President, Friends of the Earth

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contents

2 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Feeling Hopeful

4 CLIMATE COLONIALISM

Confronting climate colonialism ahead of the Paris Summit

8 GROWING BEE-SAFE

Bee-toxic pesticides on their way out

11 KEEP IT IN THE GROUND

An illustration of fossil fuel leasing

12 ANATOMY OF A LAND GRAB

Seeking the truth among Nigeria's oil palms

16 GREEN CLIMATE FUND

The story of climate finance

18 WHO INSPIRES US?

Berta Cáceres, COPINH

19 ECO-BITES

Reports, headlines and Arctic drilling

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CONFRONTING CLIMATE COLONIALISM AHEAD OF THE PARIS SUMMIT

By Luisa Abbot Galvão, climate and energy campaigner

When the United Nations convenes the 2015 Climate Change Conference in Paris this December, stakes will be high. While it will be the 21st such meeting, country delegates at this Conference of Parties will seek to sign an agreement establishing a formal path for global action. Developed countries are undermining this tremendous opportunity by taking a deeply problematic climate mindset to the negotiating table, one that unfairly punishes poor countries for the acts of richer ones. The negotiating table is tilted, and the super storms, heat waves, drought and other climate disruptions will flow to the vulnerable developing world first.

Globally, people often think about climate change as if it were a societal accident, one big human error that we must now all come together to resolve. But this perspective erases the role that global power relations played in bringing about this crisis, a process fraught with inequities and

injustice. It also allows those most responsible for the problem to avoid their fair share of the changes that will be needed to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Since the Industrial Revolution, some countries have largely relied on fossil fuels to develop. But the exponential accumulation of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere has caused average global temperatures to rise, throwing the biosphere off-kilter.

Industrialized countries have prospered but have in the process created an unsustainable and polluting economic model built upon fossil fuel extraction. And this prosperity comes at a price: climate disruption, sea-level rise, extreme storms, drought and the associated strife from climate-driven migrations, food insecurity and increased natural disasters.

In order to prevent global temperatures from rising to catastrophic levels, scientists have determined that countries must rapidly reduce emissions to zero.

While the developed world is largely responsible for climate disruption, it is the developing world that primarily experiences the impacts, and most acutely.

This means that as a global society we must operate within the allowances of a limited global “carbon budget.” This budget is the cumulative amount of greenhouse gases that the world can emit between now and the end of the century in order to prevent the worst effects of climate change. Of the Earth’s known fossil fuel reserves, 80 percent must be kept in the ground if we are to stay within this budget. There is a strong historic correlation between wealth generation and fossil fuel usage, so how this carbon budget is fairly split among nations, in other words – how much each country is allowed to emit – is tremendously important.



GLOBALLY, WE'VE ALREADY BURNED **89** PERCENT OF THE TOTAL CARBON BUDGET SET FOR SECURING A GOOD CHANCE OF KEEPING GLOBAL WARMING BELOW **1.5 DEGREES CELSIUS**. AT CURRENT RATES OF GLOBAL EMISSIONS, WE WILL EXHAUST THE REMAINING BUDGET **IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS**.

WARMING OF **2 DEGREES** WILL HAVE HORRIFIC HUMAN IMPACTS, BUT TO AVOID EVEN THIS LEVEL OF WARMING, **80 PERCENT** OF THE WORLD'S REMAINING FOSSIL FUEL RESERVES NEED TO STAY IN THE GROUND.

The United States and other developed countries have already used a disproportionate share of the world's atmospheric carbon space through their emissions, leaving the developing world with very little to sustainably fuel their progress. As of 2011, the United States, which accounts for only 5 percent of the global population, was historically responsible for 27 percent of cumulative greenhouse gas emissions since measurements were first taken around 1850. China, which makes up around 20 percent of the global population, was historically responsible for only 11 percent of total global emissions, and India only three percent. All

countries have energy needs and a right to develop. However, the U.S. negotiating position is that countries must not follow our own model of development and must stop using fossil fuels in order to address the climate crisis. Yet, we are unwilling to help them with the resources necessary to develop very little to fuel their progress. That means that our position is to essentially condemn them to the impacts of climate change *and* poverty.

This appropriation of carbon space for the enrichment of some and the impoverishment of others is a new form of colonialism: climate colonialism.

How we as a global community can actually achieve a fair and ambitious agreement in Paris is a hugely contentious and protracted debate. Emissions reductions pledges are complex as negotiators try to reconcile historical responsibility – meaning stronger commitments from the United States – with current, proportional emissions.

In 2007, China overtook the United States as the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases. Stakeholders, such as the U.S. State Department, try to shift the onus of responsibility for climate action onto emerging polluters like China. However, while



TOP LEFT: Cars pack a freeway in L.A. Credit: Jeff Turner, Flickr, Creative Commons. **TOP RIGHT:** Flooding in the streets of Bangladesh, 2004. Credit: Dougsyme, Flickr, Creative Commons. **BOTTOM:** Wreckage from Typhoon Haiyan in Tacloban Philippines, 2013. Credit: Henry Donati/Department for International Development, Flickr, Creative Commons.

countries like China and India are significant recent polluters, it is important to acknowledge that they are lesser contributors historically, and this matters because carbon accumulates in the atmosphere for decades, it does not just dissipate over time. Additionally, the per capita emissions of China and India – with their large populations – are low when compared to those of developed countries. A disproportionate share of the population in developing countries live in utter destitution, and the capacity of their governments to address the climate crisis are much less than that of the United States and other developed countries.

The debate boils down to a United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change principle known as “common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.” In other words, the whole world has a stake in addressing climate change, but some nations are more responsible than others and thus must bear a larger responsibility for solving it.

The prior international climate negotiations have built up to the agreement sought in Paris, where an architecture of accountability will be established. Under this agreed-upon system, countries voluntarily submit climate commitments and the world holds them accountable to meeting them – most likely

through public shaming. Countries have already begun submitting their commitments ahead of the upcoming negotiations. Unfortunately, this structure will be insufficient if it does not contain rigorous and binding targets to hold countries accountable to, as well as adequate climate finance to help the developing world progress on a different pathway.

President Obama has committed the United States to reducing emissions by 26-28 percent below 2005 levels, by 2025. This is woefully low. Compared to 1990 emissions levels, the predominant international standard for comparison, it is a 14-17 percent reduction. A recent




ABOVE: Smoke stacks at Teco Big Bend Station, Florida, 2013. Credit: Bjorn Christian Finbraten, Flickr, Creative Commons.

calculation from the Stockholm Environment Institute for Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland and Jubilee South Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development found that a fair commitment from the United States would require the country to reduce its emissions by 55-65 percent below 1990 levels, by 2025 and – because the United States cannot possibly reduce enough within its borders to satisfy its fair share – to additionally contribute hundreds of billions of dollars to help other countries transition to clean energy and curb their own emissions.

Taken collectively, the voluntary country commitments already announced make it clear that

total pledges will not be rigorous enough to satisfy the goal of the climate convention: to limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius. They are certainly not close to a 1.5 C limit, a level which will already create devastating impacts. As greenhouse gases accumulate in the atmosphere with every passing day, rich country delegates have justified this shortfall by promising to return to the negotiating table to “ratchet up” commitments. This is immoral and scientifically unsound. As the world’s largest historic polluter, the United States’ commitment must be significantly improved by the time of the Paris negotiations, not years from now. This commitment must be binding, and premised on science and justice. It must show

leadership and signal to other countries that we are serious about doing our fair share. As it stands, it is based on only on political inertia.

This is climate colonialism in action. The unlevel negotiating table has led to only weak commitments, a promise of delayed action and a lack of support for less developed, more vulnerable countries. Instead of shirking its responsibility and exporting climate action, the United States must step up and lead the world to a meaningful agreement. 



FROM RETAILERS TO CITIES, BEE-TOXIC PESTICIDES ARE ON THEIR WAY OUT

By Tiffany Finck-Haynes, food futures campaigner

Informed consumers and smart businesses may soon help to make bee-toxic, neonicotinoid pesticides, also called neonics, a thing of the past, replaced with safer products and practices. Armed with strong science on the link between pollinator declines and the widespread use of pesticides, our BeeAction campaign and a growing movement of concerned gardeners, beekeepers, scientists and advocates, are moving some of the largest garden retailers to begin eliminating neonics from their shelves. Many cities, states and institutions such as universities are also stepping up to the plate to do their part to save bees from systemic pesticides.

This shift is happening at a critical time for bees, which are essential to our food system but are dying at alarming rates around the globe. Just last year, U.S. beekeepers reported losing nearly half of their hives – the second highest loss recorded to date. From apples to avocados to zucchinis, bees are responsible for one in three bites of food we eat. Without them, our healthiest crops would be in short supply and the overall health of the environment would suffer.

Strong science demonstrates neonicotinoids' harm to bees and broader ecosystems. They have been linked to widespread negative impacts on a host of other important species, from earthworms and soil microbes to aquatic insects, birds

and small mammals. Sadly, they are the world's most widely-used class of insecticides.

SHIFTING THE MARKET

Responding to growing demand for truly bee-safe products and mounting scientific evidence, businesses are stepping up to minimize, and in some cases eliminate completely, neonicotinoid usage. In the past year, due to a campaign by Friends of the Earth and allies, more than 30 wholesale nurseries, landscaping companies and retailers have taken steps to eliminate neonicotinoids from their stores. This list includes the two largest home improvement retailers, Home Depot and Lowe's, along with Whole Foods and BJ's Wholesale Club.

These are not small players: these stores grossed billions of dollars in 2014. And while their steps to transition away from neonicotinoid pesticides are important, the effects on the entire industry could be transformative. This is reinforced by a recent article in the magazine *Green House Grower*, which found a third of the 100 largest greenhouse growers in the industry have completely stopped using neonicotinoids, with another 38 growers showing reduced use.

In our “Growing bee-friendly garden plants: Profiles in innovation” report, Friends of the Earth and the Pesticide Research Institute highlight the strategies used by growers, retailers and major purchasers to make their plants truly bee-safe. Our report found large and small businesses setting strong no-neonicotinoid store policies, educating consumers — via classes and educational handouts—and utilizing natural pest prevention techniques, such as beneficial insects. For example, beneficial mites may be employed

instead of pesticides to feast on pests that would harm plants. While pests may build resistance to a pesticide, a representative of one leading neonic-free nursery noted, “There’s no resistance to being eaten.”

BUILDING A BUZZ, MAKING CHANGE

People power has been a driving force in this change. For example, in April 2015, Lowe’s committed to phase out consumer-use products and nursery plants that contain neonicotinoids by spring 2019, as suitable alternatives become available. Lowe’s also committed to encourage growers to use biological control programs (such as beneficial insects instead of pesticides), and to providing additional materials to educate customers about pollinator health. Our BeeAction campaign and our allies initially contacted Lowe’s in 2013, following our pilot study which

found that more than half of the pollinator-friendly plants tested at their stores and other garden centers across the U.S. contained levels of neonicotinoids that could harm or kill bees. We followed-up with a more detailed report, *Gardeners Beware 2014*, testing plants from 18 cities across the U.S. and Canada, which revealed the same results — Lowe’s was selling bee-friendly garden plants that could actually poison bees.

In response, more than one million people signed petitions to Lowe’s and thousands of activists delivered letters directly to Lowe’s stores in cities across the U.S. and Canada urging them to make this change. Investors engaged Lowe’s about the environmental health risks of neonics and submitted a shareholder resolution to stress the urgency of the issue. These multiple fronts helped push the company to publicly



Ways nurseries are going bee-safe

***Sourcing
neonic-free plants***

***Clearly labeling
treated plants***

***Trapping pests
with screening or
covers, instead of
using pesticides***

***Educating customers
on not over-applying
pesticides***



Front of a Lowe’s Garden Center in Lakewood, Colorado, 2009. Photo credit: Bradley Gordon, Flickr, Creative Commons.

release its plan to eliminate neonics in April 2015.

INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENTS STEPPING UP


The movement to protect bees is not only shifting the market, but also making change with institutions and governments at all levels. In the past year, more than 20 cities, counties, states, federal agencies and universities have taken steps to minimize or eliminate the use of neonicotinoids. States such as Oregon and Minnesota have passed measures to protect pollinators from pesticides, while some universities have acted to limit neonicotinoids on campus grounds. In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has restricted neonic use on wildlife refuges, and the Council on Environmental Quality has issued guidance for federal facilities and lands recommending that they source seeds and plants that are not treated with systemic pesticides.

EPA MUST TAKE ACTION

While purchasing decisions from garden companies and institutions show progress, we have yet to see meaningful actions by the Environmental Protection Agency to restrict bee-killing pesticides. President Obama issued a national strategy to address pollinator health in the spring, but it did little to address pesticide use. As part of the president's pollinator strategy, the EPA announced its intention to implement a moratorium on new and expanded uses of neonicotinoids. While a good first step, the agency must get to the root of the problem by expanding this moratorium to the more than 500 neonicotinoid products currently on the market, spanning more than 100 uses.

ARE ACE AND TRUE VALUE NEXT?

It's time for Ace Hardware and True Value, the nation's respective third and fourth largest home improvement retailers, to stop selling bee-killing pesticides. Thousands have already signed petitions and called upon them to make this change. In May, Ace Hardware announced its willingness to move away from products containing bee-toxic pesticides. However, the company has yet to make a full-fledged, public commitment to remove neonics from its stores. True Value has remained silent about its intentions. Ace, True Value and other retailers have the opportunity to be ahead of the curve by eliminating these toxic chemicals and serve as the go-to places for bee-friendly plants and products.

For a list of bee-safe retailers, go to www.foe.org/beeaction/retailers 



Help keep the shift going and protect pollinators by asking garden retailers in your community to stop selling neonicotinoids and plants treated with them.

Visit www.foe.org/beeaction for a sample letter to deliver to your local retailers and to sign a petition urging Ace Hardware and True Value to stop selling neonicotinoids.

The following states, municipalities and institutions have all passed measures protecting pollinators from pesticides in some way

Minnesota

Oregon

Skagway, Alaska

Palo Alto, Calif.

Sacramento, Calif.

San Francisco, Calif.

Boulder, Colo.

Ogunquit, Maine

Andover, Minn.

Lake Elmo, Minn.

Minneapolis, Minn.

Shorewood, Minn.

Stillwater, Minn.

St. Louis Park, Minn.

Warren County, N.C.

Canon Beach, Ore.

Eugene, Ore.

Portland, Ore.

Seattle, Wash.

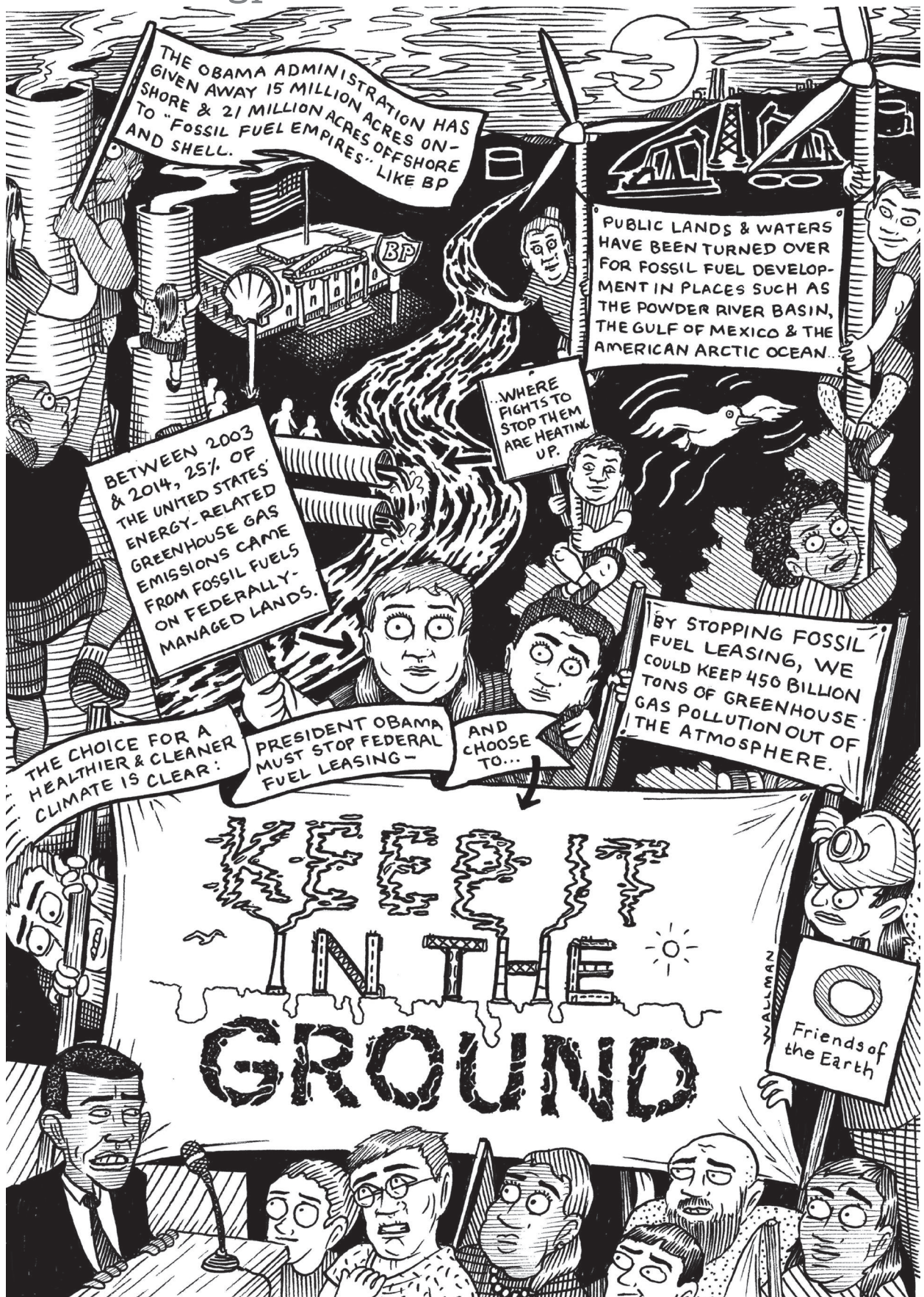
Spokane, Wash.

Thurston County, Wash.

Vermont Law School

Southern Oregon University

Emory University



Original artwork by Sam Wallman, www.penerasespaper.com

For more information and the latest news from Friends of the Earth's Keep it in the Ground campaign, visit www.foe.org/ground.

Anatomy of a land grab: Seeking the truth among Nigeria's oil palms

By Jeff Conant, senior international forests campaigner



All photos in this section courtesy of *Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria*

Mbarakom is a village in Cross River State, Nigeria, on the border of neighboring Cameroon – a small community in a rain forest area rich in tropical biodiversity, but poor in economic resources. The village is one of several in the region where industrial-scale palm oil plantations are disrupting local subsistence livelihoods, instigating conflicts and creating openings for the industry to expand deeper into nearby protected forest areas.

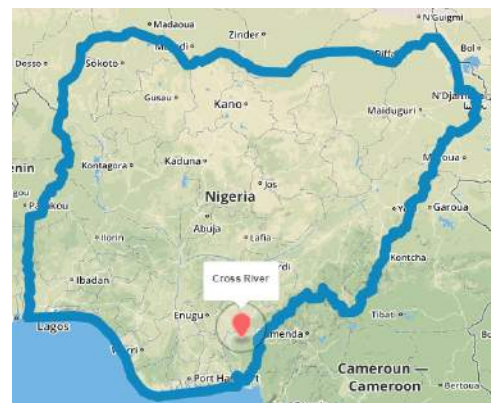
In 2011, Wilmar International – the world's largest palm oil company – bought about 50,000 acres of

land near Mbarakom; and another 25,000 acres further east on the edge of Cross River National Park. The company and the government say the land purchase was legitimate, and will benefit local people. But not all of the local people agree.

“The government is not supposed to give away the land before consulting with the community,” one community leader, Clanhead Atte Ivan Iborot Sunday Ivong, told a team from Friends of the Earth Europe and Friends of the Earth Nigeria in May of this year. “We want the land back.”

DIFFERING CLAIMS

Many other villagers echoed this sentiment to Friends of the Earth groups, but Wilmar has no plans to



Mbarakom is a village in Nigeria's Cross River State.

give back the land. Wilmar and the government of Nigeria see new palm oil plantations as beneficial to the region's economic development.

In a response to a recent Friends of the Earth report on the land purchases, the company told Friends of the Earth that it is committed to ensuring that local communities



Farmers protesting Wilmar's destruction of their lands in Cross River State, Nigeria.

“share in the fruits of development,” and it has made promises to the locals to provide resources for education and infrastructure. But two years into the plantations’ operations, the promises have yet to be fulfilled.

In the long-researched case against Wilmar’s exploitative palm oil practices, this is a familiar point where the facts diverge and there appear to be two different versions of the truth. At the core of the conflict lie two separate ideas of what constitutes real, thorough “social responsibility.”

Wilmar’s vast land purchase is part of an aggressive effort by the Nigerian government to revive its agricultural sector and increase its production of palm oil – a crop native to West Africa, but whose global expansion has centered on Southeast Asia.

Does Nigeria have the right to develop its agricultural economy? Of course it does. But should this development come at the expense of human rights and social justice, as it too often has in the past?

Three of Wilmar’s Nigerian plantations, the Biase, Ibiae and Calaro plantations (totaling about 50,000 acres) were former “palm oil estates,” slated for development as far back as 1963. But after some of the land was cleared and planted in oil palm trees, the project failed and the plans were abandoned. Following the brutal Biafran civil war in the late 1960s, local farmers settled the lands.

By the time Wilmar purchased the land in 2011, people had been living and farming on these former palm oil plantations for over 40 years.

In a 2012 report to the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, an industry certification body that claims to ensure the sustainability of the palm oil sector, Wilmar said there was “basically no local people’s land within the boundaries of the Estate, although local people have in the past been using parts of the abandoned Estate for farming.”

In fact, there were many local people still using the land – one academic study reported that up to one-third of the Calaro Concession land was used for subsistence farming. However, the Nigerian government does not formally recognize rights to such land use, and the awkward history of the local villagers – migrant communities who appear to have settled here during the early, troubled years of Nigeria’s independence – makes their claims to the land difficult to defend.



WHAT IS A LAND GRAB?

The most commonly accepted definition of land grabs describes them as land deals “that are one or more of the following:

1. **In violation of human rights**, particularly the equal rights of women;
2. **Not based on free, prior and informed consent** of the affected land-users;
3. Not based on a thorough assessment, or are in **disregard of social, economic and environmental impacts**, including the way they are gendered;
4. **Not based on transparent contracts** that specify clear and binding commitments about activities, employment and benefits sharing, and;
5. **Not based on effective democratic planning**, independent oversight and meaningful participation.”



Wilmar says it consulted with local people through their traditional chiefs, and there is no question that the company hired consultants who undertook surveys and focus group discussions with local community members. The company also reportedly paid about \$15,000 USD per village in consultation and “traditional rites fees,” saying, “This is the social license that is required for the company to operate.”

Yet, despite these apparent consultations, conflict persists.

“There is no other community but Mbarakom who owns this estate,” said one traditional authority in Mbarakom, located at the edge of the Calaro concession. “We were not consulted or compensated. There was no consultation with our elders or anyone.”

“Wilmar destroyed all our farmland,” another villager from Mbarakom told Friends of the Earth. “My family has been on this land for 37 years, since before I was born. There is over 300

hectares [about 750 acres] here for the community. We used to plant planteen, oil palm, coco yam, pepe, economic trees. The community is over 7000 people, and the land was over 300 hectares, and 200 of this has been taken now.”

Wilmar’s consultants did foresee the potential for such problems. In their report to the RSPO, they wrote that the “proposed project may have impact on agricultural lands for the production of food crops, which could jeopardize the food security potential of the area.”

But this concern was not enough to prevent the company from developing the land, including land on which the local farmers to feed their families.

Following the most common definition of land grabs, land deals that violate human rights and ignore socioeconomic and environmental impacts without full democratic participation are regarded as exploitative and potentially illegal.



LEFT: River impacted by Wilmar's land cleaning. **ABOVE:** A pastor whose village lost land to Wilmar's cleaning.

While the company and the government claim to have done things right, Wilmar's operations in Nigeria nevertheless have all the hallmarks of a land grab.

Among the key indicators of a land grab is the failure to apply the main policy criterion designed to prevent social conflicts: Free, Prior and Informed Consent, or FPIC. According to international convention, any company whose operations will significantly impact the land and lives of local people, and especially indigenous people, must undertake a thorough process to gain the full consent of those people, both prior to operating on their lands and while the operations are ongoing.

FPIC implies informed, noncoercive negotiations between investors, companies or governments and local communities, based on the idea that, once the community has a full and accurate understanding of its implications, they have the right to decide whether they will agree to the project or not. In practice,

compliance with FPIC is often extremely complicated: companies often engage in everything from offering incentives to threatening retaliation in order to gain community consent. Communities themselves are often divided: some want to hold onto their land, while others want employment; some crave short-term gain while others stand up for long-term security.

All of this appears to be in play in Cross River State, as reflected in numerous testimonies Friends of the Earth collected in May 2015:

"Wilmar came in 2011, they said there were many things they would do for us," one villager reported. "Community assistance program, accessible roads, build primary and secondary schools, health center, potable water, electricity, employment. But as a consequence of the project, our forest has been seriously degraded. Our timber has been destroyed and they have yet to compensate us. People who were farming in that area lost

their land and they have yet to be compensated. We do not have electricity, the road still needs to be constructed, and although Wilmar employs the young here in the village, these are unskilled jobs."

Like other testimonies we gathered in Cross River State, this one contains a jumble of perspectives: villagers want the benefits of development – roads, schools, potable water – and many have taken at face value promises the company made in 2012. But in 2015, with many of these promises yet to be fulfilled, people are losing faith.

"We told Wilmar not to continue until they compensate us," a villager named Elder Aning Oja told us. "If Wilmar can compensate us the way we want, we will accept it. If not, we want our land back."

He ended his testimony with one of the most powerful indictments of a land grab we have yet heard: "By taking our farms," he said, "Wilmar is declaring us dead." ○

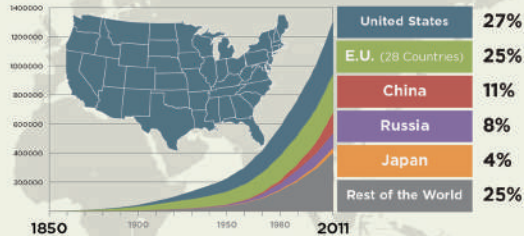
PAYING THE HIGH COST OF CLIMATE CHAOS



The Story of Climate Finance

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

THE UNITED STATES HAS CAUSED MORE CLIMATE POLLUTION THAN ANY OTHER NATION ON EARTH



Though the U.S. holds only 4.5% of the world's population, it has been responsible for 27% of ALL carbon dioxide emissions since 1850!¹

WHO GETS HURT THE MOST?

POOR COUNTRIES ARE HIT FIRST AND WORST

"Regular food shortages in Sub-Saharan Africa... shifting rain patterns in South Asia leaving some parts under water and others without enough water for power generation, irrigation, or drinking... these are but a few of the likely impacts of a possible global temperature rise of 2 degrees Celsius in the next few decades that threatens to trap millions of people in poverty."²

The deaths of an estimated 400,000, particularly children in developing countries, are linked to climate change, especially from hunger and infectious disease.³



Photo: FOE Togo



Typhoon Haiyan, Philippines
Photo: Gideon Mendel/Carbis/ActionAid

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

ADAPTATION

Adjusting to the unavoidable impacts of climate change



MITIGATION

Embarking upon clean development paths and cutting greenhouse gas emissions



Photo: Alamy

Projected Cost:

\$60 BILLION

At least \$60 billion extra needed annually by the 2050s for adaptation in sub-Saharan Africa if the global temperature rises within 2°C/3.6°F.⁴



Photo: Jane Harley, South Africa

Projected Cost:

\$1.1 TRILLION

About \$1.1 trillion needed annually for a low carbon transition in developing countries.⁵



WHO SHOULD PAY?

YOU BREAK IT, YOU FIX IT!

Based on its tremendous historical responsibility and capacity to act as the world's largest economy, the U.S. must provide its fair share of climate finance - funds to pay for these enormous costs.



WHERE'S THE MONEY?

THE RESOURCES ARE ALREADY THERE

Contrary to popular belief, paying for climate finance is not beyond our reach; we just need to redirect funds we already have. For example:



END FOSSIL FUEL SUBSIDIES

U.S. taxpayers subsidize the fossil fuel industry to the tune of \$37.5 billion⁶ annually. That money should be shifted to financing clean energy, including in developing countries.

\$38
BILLION/yr



2 ½ DAYS OF AN F-35 JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER

The amount U.S. taxpayers spend in 64 hours for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter⁷ is enough to cover sub-Saharan Africa's adaptation needs in the 2050s.⁸

\$60
BILLION



WALL STREET TAX

This tiny tax on trades of stocks, bonds and other financial instruments would generate hundreds of billions of dollars of new revenue, some of which could be used for climate finance.

\$300
BILLION/yr

WHERE SHOULD THE MONEY GO?



GREEN CLIMATE FUND

The world's premier multilateral fund to help developing countries confront the climate crisis.

The GCF is a new United Nations fund that "will promote the paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways by providing support to developing countries to limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the impacts of climate change."⁸

PAYING OUR SHARE

\$3 Billion
U.S. pledge to GCF.

\$635 Billion
Up to how much the U.S. *should* contribute in 2025 based upon its responsibility for the climate crisis and its capacity to act.⁹



Woman trains to be a solar engineer, India
Photo: UN Women Gallery, 2012



Solar disc demonstration, India
Photo: Kalash PRTI



Photo: Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities, Philippines

KEEPING THE GCF GREEN & JUST

The GCF must benefit ordinary folks in poor countries, not Wall Street banks or multinational corporations. It must not bankroll any dirty energy.

CLIMATE FINANCE MUST BE IN LINE WITH WHAT SCIENCE AND JUSTICE DEMAND

For more information and infographic endnotes, visit foe.org/info-gcf



Photo Credit: Goldman Environmental Prize

Berta Cáceres, the indigenous co-founder of the *Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras*, known as COPINH

For over two decades, Berta Cáceres has been leading the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras, which works to defend the lands and peoples of Honduras. The group's resistance to development megaprojects like dams, mines and forestry concessions has earned it countless popular victories, while drawing the ire of loggers, dam-builders and palm oil interests.


This year, Cáceres and COPINH won the Goldman Environmental Prize after a years-long fight to pressure the world's largest dam builder, the Chinese state-owned company Sinohydro, to pull out of construction of a complex of large dams known as Agua Zarca. If built, the 20 meter-tall dam project would destroy the natural resources on which the local indigenous population depends. Like so many other mega-projects, the communities and groups resisting Agua Zarca have faced violence, arrests, intimidation and even murder.

Since the early '90s, COPINH has forced the cancellation of dozens of logging operations; created several protected forest areas; developed municipal forest management plans; and secured over 100 collective land titles for indigenous

communities, in some cases encompassing entire municipalities. The Sinohydro victory in the Agua Zarca campaign is just the most recent in this long list of achievements.

Around the world, the frontlines of environmental defense are peopled by bold and visionary social movements like COPINH and by grassroots community organizers like Berta Cáceres.

"In order to fight the onslaught of dams, mines and the privatization of all of our natural resources, we need international solidarity," Berta told supporters in April. "When we receive your solidarity, we feel surrounded by your energy, your hope, your conviction, that together we can construct societies with dignity, with life, with rebellion, with justice and, above all, with joy."

In fighting the destructive environmental and social impacts that too often accompany economic development, we need to heed Berta's call, and do all we can to recognize and support the peasant farmers, indigenous peoples and social movements who put their lives on the line daily to turn the tide towards a model of development that prioritizes people over profits and dignity over destruction. 

NEW RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Friends of the Earth has continued to lead on our many campaign issues, releasing new research and investigations in the past months. In May, we released “Growing bee-friendly garden plants: Profiles in innovation,” which provides examples of how nurseries and retailers are phasing out neonicotinoids and educating consumers on best practices for protecting pollinators. Our latest Good Food, Healthy Planet report, “Spinning Food: How food industry front groups and covert communications are shaping the story of food,” investigates how Big Food deliberately is misleading the public regarding industrial agriculture and sustainable food production, spending hundreds of millions of dollars to push coordinated messaging attacks on organic food. Lastly, our report “Exploitation and Empty Promises: Wilmar’s Nigerian land grab” shifted things to the other side of the Atlantic, where Wilmar has cleared forests and community lands to make room for its Nigerian palm oil plantations. The report documents a lack of community engagement and consent that has left villages without access to water and threatens biodiverse forests.



IN THE HEADLINES

This summer brought a slew of new federal policy announcements and major environmental fights on Capitol Hill. As Fast Track trade legislation arrived in the House of Representatives, Friends of the Earth joined a broad coalition of labor, environmental and health groups opposing it. Senior trade analyst William Warren noted to Thinkprogress that the Trans Pacific Partnership deal “just contradicts the president’s climate policy. One hand takes away from the other.” In June, the FDA banned trans fats, a move that will create heightened demand for palm oil, a trans fat replacement. In an interview with Time magazine, senior international forests campaigner Jeff Conant drew the parallel between more demand and more deforestation, saying that the trans fat rule should be followed with better overall regulations to protect rain forests. That month, the Obama administration released its draft Pollinator Strategy, and NPR covered our call for better protections: “[The strategy] misses the mark by not adequately addressing the pesticides as a key driver of unsustainable losses of bees and other pollinators,” said Food and Technology program director Lisa Archer.

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION GIVES ALL-CLEAR TO DANGEROUS ARCTIC DRILLING

In a series of announcements in July and August, the Interior Department approved permits allowing Shell to drill and operate two oil and gas wells in the Arctic’s Chukchi Sea. The last permit, approved on August 17, granted Shell permission to drill thousands of feet below the Arctic Ocean, endangering the region’s vulnerable ecosystem and the people and wildlife that call it home. In a statement, climate campaigner Marissa Knodel called the move a sacrifice for Shell’s profits: “President Obama is willing to allow the pristine Chukchi Sea to become an energy sacrifice zone, and to worsen climate disruption.” The latest permit comes after an extended grassroots fight, as climate “kayaktivists” took to the Puget Sound and Columbia River in Seattle and Portland, respectively, to blockade ships in Shell’s fleet. But the fight to protect the American Arctic Ocean from oil and gas development is far from over, as Shell must reapply for new permits to continue drilling next year.



Kayakists blockade a shell rig in Seattle. Credit: Shellno Action Council, Flickr, Creative Commons.








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