

WE CAN SOLVE THE CLIMATE CRISIS!



HOW CAPITALISM IS THE CAUSE

Climate change is unfolding at an increasingly rapid rate with more severe droughts, storms, wildfires and floods impacting the globe. Yet, the capitalists continue to plunder the planet and extract fossil fuels, destroying ecosystems and increasing warming. The 2018 UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report warned that we have 12 years to avert runaway catastrophe. That call to action becomes more urgent by the day while the majority of governments globally take limited actions that fail to meet the urgency of the crisis.

The very system of capitalism itself is the cause of climate change with the Global North holding the majority of responsibility due to earlier development and consumer lifestyles. Big Oil knew that fossil fuels were warming the planet as early

as the 1950s, but did nothing to change course. To the capitalists, the immense profits to be made in the short term outweighed the looming disaster to come.

Capitalism requires endless growth and the maximization of profits. This is inherent to the system itself and cannot be altered. Corporations can be taxed and regulated, but their ultimate goal of increasing value for shareholders cannot be changed; any impediment to profits is just passed onto the consumer through higher costs. In the end this does not alter the system of capitalist production that is based on what the billionaires can make a profit from rather than what is actually needed by society or what is sustainable for the planet. The incredibly wasteful system of capitalism is driving humanity and all life on the planet toward mass extinction.

We see today, in the United States and around the globe, transnationals continuing their plunder of the planet through resource extraction, oil and gas drilling and deforestation, despite all of science warning of the urgency to end these practices for our survival. Despite President Biden's pause on drilling on federal lands – which constitutes only one-quarter of lands where fossil fuel extraction takes place – Big Oil continues to expand drilling on non-federal lands. For instance, permits were approved in March for up to 43,000 new oil wells in Kern County, Calif. And this is in California which has the most aggressive greenhouse gas reduction goals and some of the most stringent industry regulations in the country!

We are far beyond piecemeal solutions and waiting for industry to “do the right thing.” The laws of capitalism promote and allow endless plundering of the planet regardless of the impacts on humanity or other life.

We must call out capitalism for what it is – the cause of the climate crisis – and build a new eco-socialist system that puts the needs of humanity and all life first and works to restore the damage done by centuries of environmental destruction.

HOW CAN WE SOLVE THE CRISIS?

The answer is two fold. We must immediately shift from fossil fuels to wind, water and solar energy production. The technology exists to make the switch today and still meet all of the world's energy needs. At the same time, we need to greatly reduce energy consumption and wasted energy by weatherizing buildings, providing the most energy-

efficient appliances, lighting and heating to all, eliminating food waste – which is as high as 40% in the United States – providing affordable housing near jobs, and building an expanded zero-emission transit system nationwide to greatly reduce the need for cars.

At the same time we must restore the damage done to the planet from centuries of plunder by reforesting previously-forested lands, and restoring oceans, wetlands, mangrove swamps and grasslands to increase biodiversity and the natural carbon capture mechanisms of the planet. Healthy biodiverse ecosystems benefit us all by producing more oxygen, retaining more water and increasing carbon capture mechanisms.

We must also shift away from industrial agriculture and factory farming methods to regenerative agriculture and managed grazing of livestock, which has proven to produce higher yields at lower costs to farmers while increasing biodiversity, water retention, soil health and carbon capture. Projects and continuing research around the globe demonstrate that restoring these degraded ecosystems can cool the climate in just decades.

So why are these scientifically-proven practices not being implemented immediately on a mass scale? Because they are not profitable. Once the renewable energy infrastructure is built, there are few profits to be made beyond maintenance and replacement after decades of use, unlike ongoing profits made by the fossil fuel industry. Planting trees and restoring natural lands is not profitable, but rather will be a one-time cost and then the living systems will for the most part do the rest. Restoring oceans means ending industrial overfishing and eliminating the petrochemical industry that produces plastics that are choking the oceans – meaning major profits lost by those industries.

A shift to regenerative agriculture means the end of the highly-profitable GMO, synthetic fertilizer and pesticide companies. It would also spell the demise of Big Ag with the shift away from monoculture crops for feedlots and an end to the overproduction of livestock – 70% of agricultural land in the United States is used to grow corn, soy and hay for feedlots. The Amazon rainforest is also



being cleared by transnationals for this same purpose as well as for crops for biofuel.

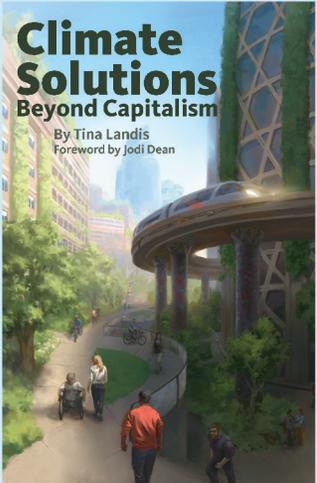
This is the reason for government inaction. It is not that they do not understand the problem. They are just unwilling and unable to make the shift due to the system itself that prioritizes profits above life itself. This is why only solutions that can make a profit along the way are even discussed by the Biden administration and the corporate-owned media, such as electric vehicles, carbon capture technologies (rather than biosequestration that uses plants to capture carbon), geoengineering schemes, and a heavy reliance on nuclear and biofuels as false forms of renewable energy.

HOW SOCIALISM CAN IMPLEMENT THE CHANGES NEEDED

Life on Earth is an interconnected web of species working together to optimize life for the whole. With the rise of class society, humanity strayed from our role of one intelligent species within an intelligent system to being a conqueror and exploiter of nature. Despite being only 5% of the world's population, Indigenous-managed lands hold 80% of the world's biodiversity. Indigenous communities worldwide hold ancestral knowledge of living in alignment with the entire ecosystem, holding a duty to protect the Earth and all its inhabitants as a priority. It is crucial that Indigenous communities be equal partners in the restoration of the planet and climate solutions. We must replace the capitalist consumer culture with one that reflects this alignment with regenerative practices for the continuity of all life.

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Socialism is that system. Under an eco-socialist planned economy – which is a truly participatory democracy – resources and human labor are pooled to meet the needs of society in an equitable way that aligns with the needs of all life for long term sustainability. Socialism is the opposite of capitalism. With socialism, everyone benefits equally from the labor and ingenuity of humanity, rather than a handful of people who do not do the work, profiting off everyone else's labor.

Through socialism, the changes that are needed to solve the climate crisis can be implemented in an efficient and comprehensive way in a relatively short time frame. Fossil fuel workers and those in other industries that are no longer needed can be retrained, while getting paid a living wage, in fields that benefit people and the planet, such as:

- building the renewable energy infrastructure
- ecological restoration work and clean up of polluted lands and waters
- shifting to regenerative agriculture
- retrofitting buildings and distributing energy efficient appliances
- “greening” cities to be integrated into the ecosystem
- building an expansive zero-emission public transit system including nationwide high speed rail

The implementation of what is needed in the pressing timeframe cannot occur under capitalism where changes that impede “business as usual” like the Green New Deal cannot even get a hearing in the halls of Congress. We must take

the power away from the billionaires and their lackeys in government for the survival of humanity.

Not only will systemic change allow humanity to stem the climate crisis and regenerate the biosphere, it will allow for humanity to prepare and protect people from the impacts we are already experiencing. We can see just this past year how the U.S. government has done nothing to help the population prepare or recover for these crises. Look at COVID-19 and the extreme winter storms in Texas that left people to freeze to death in their homes.

Scientists have warned that viruses like COVID-19 are becoming more prevalent as the world warms and human encroachment into wildlands increases. The extreme storms in Texas were the result of the weakening jet stream that brought the polar vortex south, a direct result of climate change, which scientists have warned will become more frequent and erratic.

The current U.S. death toll from COVID is over 550,000, the highest death rate in the world. This was completely preventable with early action, universal healthcare and a guaranteed wage for all those left without work so they could quarantine safely. Also, vaccine development in a socialist world would have been more efficient with knowledge sharing across borders rather than patent rights held by individual corporations developing their own vaccines with profits as the priority.

The climate crisis will continue to worsen without effective global action and the working class and poor of the world will be hardest hit. In a socialist world, international cooperation in adaptation and mitigation efforts could greatly curb warming and help the planet rebalance and help all of the world's people prepare for the near-future impacts.

Instead the U.S. empire continues with divisive imperialist policies and war that undermines countries' ability to adapt to climate change and develop on a sustainable path. Reparations must



be paid to oppressed communities and countries of the Global South for the centuries of plunder to bring about equity in the transition to a sustainable system. Through socialism, humanity can work collectively pooling resources and knowledge to overcome the greatest existential crisis we have ever faced.

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

There are sparks of change happening from front-line communities fighting big polluters to Native struggles against pipelines and extractive industries. There is hope in the global youth movement against climate change, as well as in the multinational movement for racial justice. But we need to build a more organized and powerful people's movement that impedes the profits of the ruling class, that forces major concessions, and in the end, overthrows capitalism.

We must unite together across borders and struggles to build a movement for systemic change — for socialism. All the problems faced by the poor and working class — from poverty to homelessness, unemployment, lack of health care, racism, police brutality, and environmental destruction — are caused by the system of capitalism that puts profits before all else, leaving more and more of us destitute each day while the billionaires get richer. We must build the people's movement and educate others on the issues showing that humanity does have the knowledge and tools to stem climate change. We must call out capitalism as the cause of the climate crisis and socialism as the solution and make an evolutionary leap forward to a world that benefits all life. Together we can win. Join us!

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