

# **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

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or create cheap carbon dumps such as large-scale tree plantations in the South as a lucrative alternative to reducing emissions in the North.

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**

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**National Forum of Forest People And Forest Workers (NFFPFW), India**  
**Patrick Bond, Professor, University of KwaZulu Natal School of Development Studies, South Africa**  
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**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**

1. 50 Years Is Enough: U.S. Network for Global Economic Justice, USA
2. The Akwantupa Travel Foundation/ M&J Travel and Tours Limited, Ghana
3. AfiCAFiles, Canada
4. Africa Groups of Sweden, Sweden
5. Alianza Verde, Honduras
6. Ambiente y Sociedad, Argentina
7. Angikar Bangladesh Foundation, Bangladesh
8. Anisa Colombia, Colombia
9. Asociacion Alternativa Ambiental, Spain
10. Asociacion Amigos Reserva Yaguaroundi, Argentina
11. Asociacion de Guardaparques Argentinos, Argentina
12. Asociacion Ecologista Piuke, Argentina
13. Asociacion para la Defensa del Medio Ambiente del Noreste Santafesino, Argentina
14. Asociacion San Francisco de Asis, Argentina
15. Association France Amerique Latine, France
16. Asociacion Lihue San Carlos de Barloche / Rio Negro, Argentina
17. Association pour un contrat mondial de l'eau, Comité de Seine Saint Denis, France
18. Associação Caeté - Cultura e Natureza, Brasil
19. Athlone Park Residents Association, South Africa
20. Austerville Clinic Committee, South Africa
21. Australian Greens, Australia
22. Auckland Rising Tide, New Zealand
23. BanglaPraxis, Bangladesh
24. Benjamin E. Mays Center, USA
25. Bluff Ridge Conservancy (BRC), South Africa
26. BOA, Venezuela
27. Boulder Environmental Activists Resource, Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center, USA
28. The Bread of Life Development Foundation, Nigeria
29. Bündnis 90/ Die Grünen LAG Europa, Friedens und Außenpolitik Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
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31. CENSAT-Friends of the Earth Colombia, Colombia
32. Center for Economic Justice, USA
33. Centre for Environmental Justice, Sri Lanka
34. Center for Environmental Concerns, Philippines
35. Center for Environmental Law and Community Rights Inc./ Friends of the Earth (PNG), Papua New Guinea
36. Center for Urban Transformation, USA
37. Centro de Derecho Ambiental y Promoción para el Desarrollo (CEDAPRODE), Nicaragua
38. Centro de Investigacion Cientifica de Yucatan A.C., Mexico
39. Centro Internazionale per la Cultura e i Diritti dell'Uomo – CISEDU, Italy
40. Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, USA
41. Christ the King Church Group, South Africa
42. Clairwood Ratepayers Association (CRA), South Africa
43. Climate Crisis Coalition of the Twin Cities, USA
44. Cold Mountain, Cold Rivers, USA
45. Colectivo de Proyectos Alternativos de México (COPAL), Mexico
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48. Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, USA
49. Community Health Cell, Bangalore, India
50. Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO), Netherlands
51. C.P.E.M. Nº29-Ciencias Ambientales, Argentina
52. Del Consejo de Organizaciones de Médicos y Parteras Indígenas Tradicionales de Chiapas, Mexico
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56. Ecoisla, Puerto Rico
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58. Ecological Society of the Philippines, Philippines
59. Ecologistas en Acción, Spain
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61. ECOTERRA International

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65. Environmental Resource Center, USA
66. Environment Desk of Images Asia, Thailand
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68. FASE Gurupá, Brasil
69. Forest Peoples Programme, UK
70. Foundation for Grassroots Initiatives in Africa, Ghana
71. Friends of the Earth International
72. Friends of the Earth Australia, Australia
73. Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russia
74. FSC-Brasil, Brasil
75. Fundación Argentina de Etoecología (FAE), Argentina
76. Fundación Los de Tilquiza, proyecto AGUERVERDE, Argentina
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78. Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Energies Renouvelables et l'Environnement (GERERE), Morocco
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80. House of Worship, South Africa
81. Indigenous Peoples' Biodiversity Network, Peru
82. Indonesia Mining Advocacy Network (JATAM), Indonesia
83. InfoNature, Portugal
84. Information for Action, Australia
85. Infringement Festival, Canada
86. Iniciativa Arcolris de Ecología y Sociedad, Argentina
87. Iniciativa Radial, Argentina
88. Institute for Social Ecology Biotechnology Project, USA
89. Instituto Ecoar para Cidadania, Brasil
90. Instituto Igaré, Brasil
91. International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Belgium
92. International Indian Treaty Council
93. Isipingo Environmental Committee (IEC), South Africa
94. Isipingo Ratepayers Association, South Africa
95. Jeunesse Horizon, Camerun
96. JKPP /Indonesian Community Mapping Network, Indonesia
97. Joint Action Committee of Isipingo (JACI), South Africa
98. Kalikasan-People's Network for the Environment, Philippines
99. Kasela Palu Group, Papua New Guinea
100. KVV Translations, Spain
101. Labor Tribune, Marcus Strom, editor, Australia
102. LOKOJ, Bangladesh
103. London Rising Tide, UK
104. MADRE, USA
105. Malvarrosamedia, Spain
106. Mangrove Action Project (MAP), USA
107. Mano Verde, Colombia
108. Mercy International Justice Network, Kenya
109. Merbank Clinic Committee (MCC), South Africa
110. Movimiento por la Paz y el Ambiente, Argentina
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112. Nicaragua Center for Community Action, USA,
113. Nicaragua Network (US), USA
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117. Ogoni Rescue Patriotic Fund, Nigeria
118. Oilwatch International, Ecuador
119. Oilwatch Africa, Nigeria
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121. Organizacion Fraternal Negra Hondureña, Honduras
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147. Tebtebba Foundation, Philippines
148. The Sawmill River Watershed Alliance, USA
149. TRAPESE – Take Radical Action Through Popular Education and Sustainable Everything, UK / Spain
150. Treasure Beach Environmental Forum (TBEP), South Africa
151. Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development, Uganda
152. Ujamaa Community Resource Trust (UCRT), Tanzania
153. UNICA, Nicaragua
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155. Union Mexicana de Emprendedores Inios, A. C., Mexico
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