

ECO

NO CLIMATE JUSTICE WITHOUT HUMAN RIGHTS

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Editorial: Andres Fuentes

COP27: [A big] [El] Sheikh down

The first sign of COP27 logistics trouble came back before the Bonn sessions, when out of the blue, hotel contracts and bookings (some fully paid for) were summarily cancelled with no notice because a new minimum price had supposedly been set... at double the price. We should have asked more questions when in the first (pretty awful) logistics briefing in Bonn, COP27 hosts presented Sharm El-Sheikh as a wonderful tourist destination, with swimming, sea-adventures, great weather and good food. (P.S. we learned today that people are STILL being kicked out of their hotels even now unless they pay more money than the already highly inflated rates).

Since the first day of COP, the rosy picture presented in July did not materialise (a bit like the US\$100bn for climate mitigation and adaptation that was supposed to be delivered two years ago). It is evident that the organizers at COP have priorities, which is not to ensure that delegates (who have paid a fortune to attend COP, or to host a pavilion at COP) have their needs met in a timely manner. Flies infest the COP space, so today, ECO met an official fly smacker. Yes, literally, someone walking around smacking flies! So that just leaves a few other things to sort out.

Having affordable food for delegates must be up there. Well, at least having food at the very least! From anecdotal evidence, only one, maybe two Grab and Gos have been working since the start of COP, while most were still under construction well into week one. There is "good" news on that front too:

you can wait from an hour to up to 90 minutes in a queue for food, and there is a very good chance when you get to the front of the queue, there will be no food or drinks available. But at least the stands are built. If there is something available, you have to be prepared to pay an exorbitant amount for very little.

Those organizations lucky enough to have pavilions have their own troubles. First, it was an unbelievable lack of information and outrageous prices to navigate before even arriving in Sharm El-Sheikh. Three days after COP started, many pavilions were still building sites. Those who were lucky enough to have a complete structure waited days for water dispensers, lecterns, coffee machines, even branding. The problems with audiovisual equipment and service needs a whole negotiation work programme on its own. For those (lucky?) people unable to attend COP in person, the Virtual Platform has proved next to useless in providing live feeds of negotiations. This is particularly troubling for a COP where there is so much interest from so many who can't be here in person. The inability to listen and engage online with the events here in Egypt is a huge opportunity missed.

The catering service is totally inadequate, with shocking service, and ECO hears that many delegates are gearing up for the fight that may be getting their refunds for food and drinks not delivered.

The poor conference infrastructure and service extends to negotiating rooms, which are either too small, too cold, or too

noisy. Not only observers, even the negotiators are having a hard time securing seats and are often left queuing outside.

Some toilet containers were still being built when COP started, and some enterprising delegates even brought their own toilet paper - out of necessity. Soap is also in short supply.

This isn't trivial or frivolous. The tens of thousands of people who have come to Sharm El-Sheikh have done so often at great personal expense and understanding that it is not without impact. We're simple people who need decent internet, food, water, toilets, and plugs to charge our devices, in order to make this climate summit a success, and secure real and impactful climate action.

Finally, things came to a head and spilled over last night. Surprised delegates, leaving the conference centre, were faced with a running river of sewage. It ran from inside the conference centre all the way down the street and around the corner to where the COP buses are. This gives new meaning to "overflow areas". If the pictures and pleas of the delegates and observers don't get the attention of the COP27 Presidency, perhaps the smell will.



Colonizers, it's time to pay up in the NCQG

ECO reminds rich governments that climate finance is a matter of justice, and of paying the historical debt that they owe the Global South for centuries of extraction, colonialism, and climate injustice. Rich countries must listen to demands of the Global South and pay up! It's NOT climate finance if it creates more debt for countries who are not responsible for this crisis. ECO recognises the current reality, where, instead of getting reparations, Global South countries are the ones paying illegitimate debts to their colonizers who caused the crises they're in.

As part of the (super annoying technical terminology forthcoming) New Collective Quantified Goal (aka NCQG) process, for the first time, parties get to discuss the quality of finance! ECO believes the new goal should place climate justice at the center of the new goal, and go far beyond the unfulfilled promise of US\$100B, while being based on real needs of communities most affected in the South.

ECO celebrates the progressive

proposals coming from global south countries and our feminist decolonial heart was beating fast when these LAC regional leaders were brave enough speak the truth to the system. As such, ECO wants to shout-out & uplift the messages of some of our faves:

Prime Minister Mia Mottley (Barbados): Besides challenging the massive debt that comes with funding or strongly suggesting a need to reform multilateral development banks (ECO is rolling eyes at the World Bank and IMF), she went to the heart of power saying: "How do companies make \$200 bn in profits in the last 3 months and not expect to contribute at least 10 cents in every dollar of profit to a loss and damage fund?" ... That's a knockout.

President Gustavo Petro (Colombia): The new Colombian president questioned the premises of the entire financial logic of the UNFCCC, saying that the market is what produced the climate crisis, therefore, it will never be its remedy! He called out private and multilateral banks to stop financing hydrocarbons, and

proposed the IMF initiate a program to exchange debt for investment in adaptation & mitigation in all developing countries. To close, Petro always reminds the world of the need to divest from militaries, war and harm: "Peace negotiations must begin; war takes away vital time (and money!) humanity has to avoid its extinction"

We have a new wave of LAC leaders ready to challenge power and build a decolonial feminist world that divests from harm and extraction, and invests in human rights, care and justice. These leaders remind us of our dreams of a global economic transformation that expands beyond the UNFCCC, to tackle the entire economic and financial architecture aiming at sustainability of care and life in the planet, mainstreaming a just framing to degrow the rich and wealthy, to dismantle the logic of profit and to recover environmental integrity. ECO looks forward to see support from the rest of the world to these visionary proposals coming from LAC!

Taking the World's Biggest Problem to the World's Highest Court!

Colleagues in the Pacific have told ECO that in Pacific tradition, when the villagers encounter an incomprehensible problem, they often seek the guidance of a person who possesses extensive knowledge and experience for clarity and guidance: the village chief. As holders of custom, they play a vital part in maintaining the harmony of their communities. One important role that the chiefs have is their advisory services. Their advice is not binding but because chiefs are primary holders of custom, their advice carries great moral authority that is often respected.

The international community is currently facing a political and economic impasse in the climate change regime. Despite the creation of the hard-fought Paris Agreement, clear gaps in ambition, accountability, and equity and fairness still exist and have been proven to be stumbling blocks in global efforts to embrace the climate crisis. As a result, humanity is now about to enter an epoch where the adverse effects of the climate crisis will be irreparable and irreversible. This decade is our last chance to avert a climate catastrophe

that may end human society as we have known it, resulting in unprecedented suffering and decline for all economies, all peoples, and all societies. ECO thinks it is time to turn to our village chief to seek their advice for a way out of this impasse.

For Pacific societies, the climate crisis is now a human rights crisis, where people are unable to exercise and enjoy their basic human rights. In the Marshall Islands, the northern part of the country has a drier climate. The intensifying impacts has an effect on the people's rights to food and water. The multiplier effects of water shortage and salt-water intrusion in the ground water due to rising sea-levels leads to further hardships. Due to difficulties in growing food as a result of water shortages, people will be prone to nutritional deficiencies as a result of having to rely on imported food.

To prevent further suffering and violation of human rights, since 2019, Pacific governments, civil society organizations and youth have been spearheading a global campaign to bring together the international community and concerned citizens around

the world to seek guidance from the principal judicial organ of the United Nations – the International Court of Justice. They believe that like their chiefs, the ICJ possesses similar influence, can complement the Paris Agreement, and bring clarity and guidance to the obligations of the international community to safeguard the human rights of the current and future generations. The government of Vanuatu has been leading the process alongside a group of states to table a Resolution before the UN general assembly to request an advisory opinion on climate change.

However, in order for the Resolution to pass, there needs to be a simple majority vote in favour to get the matter to the ICJ. Therefore, ECO wishes to amplify the calls from the Pacific for the support of the international community to join the journey to safeguard the human rights of the present and future from the adverse effects of the climate crisis. Time is not on our side and we cannot delay any longer; we must leave no stone unturned and no legal avenue unpursued, we must take the world's biggest problem to the world's highest court.

Indigenous Peoples on Climate Finance: No More Investment in False Solutions

ECO is happy to share this part of our publication with the Indigenous Peoples Caucus (IPO) to help amplify their voice. This article reflects the views of the IPO.

There's a lot to be disappointed about when it comes to the climate finance negotiations taking place at COP 27. In particular, the narrow focus of heads of state and their preferred corporate partners defining and designing climate finance mechanisms. This means that they promote false solutions through carbon market schemes and supporting misplaced renewable energy development and misleading net-zero initiatives. These false solutions continue to impinge upon the rights of Indigenous Peoples and facilitate land theft and displacement of Indigenous Peoples. These realities are why the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change calls for access, transparency and accountability on climate finance in COP 27.

It's important to remember that the discussions that led to the concept of climate finance come from the need to deal with the real economic costs of the climate crisis arising from extreme weather events and the losses and damages experienced by Indigenous Peoples.

These issues range from the loss of

land, homes, and destruction to communities from extreme weather shifts, destruction of food systems, and loss of biodiversity just to name a few. Needs that have only continued to rise with the increasing challenges of adaptation and mitigation for our most vulnerable communities. However, a study commissioned by Rainforest Foundation Norway noted that less than 1% of funding actually reaches Indigenous Peoples to secure tenure rights and manage forests in tropical countries. Even with the US\$1.7 million commitment made at COP 26—specifically to fund Indigenous Peoples and local communities in forests management and biodiversity preservation—only 7% went directly to Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Because local communities remain an undefined constituency, there is really no telling how much funding actually went directly to Indigenous Peoples.

As COP 27 continues, we call for support for the position of Indigenous Peoples who are calling for direct access to and direct management of funding, to ensure that available resources effectively support their self-determined needs and solutions. Direct access means direct negotiation and discussions with donor countries or funders to determine level of

funding, parameters, and agreements on the funding mechanisms, so that we can go beyond limiting factors to include equal access for all Indigenous Peoples from all regions, ecosystems, and solutions. Direct Funding must respect and promote the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the ability of Indigenous Peoples to use and manage their lands, territories and resources. By ensuring that the right of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination is upheld and safeguarded, the twin issues of climate crisis and biodiversity loss will be better addressed.

This is important because this is the primary way we can avoid further investment in false solutions like carbon markets, or misguided responses to the climate crisis that do not respect our ecosystems as part of an interconnected whole. Towards this end, Indigenous peoples have their own unique needs across ecosystems, and unique challenges that extend throughout both so-called developed and developing nations. When climate finance mechanisms are guided by these principles, they will not only benefit Indigenous Peoples, but as the stewards of the world's remaining biodiversity, will effectively and efficiently benefit all peoples and planet.

So is it Finally the Right Time to Speak About Counting Military Emissions?

Throughout UNFCCC negotiations, ECO has exposed a number of "elephants in the room." Now, it's beyond time to acknowledge another one. It has been there waiting since negotiations began before 1992.

It might feel unsettling or even scary to address this particular elephant, because it is armed and dangerous. But ECO wants to speak out anyway, because the creature we are looking at could be emitting as much as 5% of global greenhouse gas emissions!

Yesterday ECO was present at an event where the governments of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova were sharing how

war could affect climate reporting. These presenters showed us some terrifying numbers. It is estimated that during seven months of Russian invasion of Ukraine, the conflict brought into the world around 33 million tons of climate pollution. Two thirds of those come from burning forests. And don't forget that entire cities would need to be rebuilt after the war, which could result in additional 50 million tons of emissions.

ECO has not forgotten that under the Paris Agreement, countries are not obliged to cut their military emissions. However, there is no automatic exemption for them either. So, it all becomes voluntary. And as we know – if countries can avoid

doing something while not being called out for it, this is what they will do.

So how do we even approach this elephant? It is not on the official agenda for this COP. The scientists say there is no clear methodology for counting military and conflict emissions. The issue has been in the drawer for years. Emissions monitoring is a worthwhile place to start.

ECO has watched while Ukraine has fought for years for UNFCCC not to accept Russia's greenhouse gas inventory, which included occupied Crimea and Donbas. It is equally important to hold the aggressors accountable under UNFCCC processes for war related emissions. So let's get to it.

EU: Time to Break the Habit - End Your Fossil Fueled Agriculture Addiction

In the midst of an existential crisis caused by hyper-addiction to fossil fuels, the EU yesterday launched its Communication on the availability and affordability of fertilisers, focusing on exactly the wrong issues. Here in the middle of COP27, in the face of developed countries' steadfast refusal to make the money available for urgently needed investments, the EU is proposing a strategy to *increase* public funding to ensure a steady supply of highly emitting fertilisers, with subsidies for producers and "continued and uninterrupted access to natural gas for fertiliser producers".

The financial costs are real. A report released on Tuesday by GRAIN and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy showed the EU will spend an estimated \$3 billion more on fertiliser imports than in 2020, assuming constant demand. But the environmental costs are also enormous.

You would think that we would have learnt by now... But no. There are no targets put in place to reduce GHG emissions from farming systems. Instead, the strategy focuses on gaining alternative markets for imports of fertiliser ingredients. Globally, the price of fertilisers has increased due to political instability and restrictions on imports. The fertiliser companies don't care. This year the world's largest fertiliser companies have enjoyed bumper profits while developing countries

and farmers within them, those who can least afford it, will have to pay much more for their fertilisers.

The EU could have used the recent drop in fertiliser use in Europe to double-down on their proposed frameworks to green agriculture by reducing the sector's greenhouse gas emissions, coupled with support for healthier diets and reduced consumption of animal-sourced foods. There are good alternatives to synthetic fertilisers, developed and tested by farmers in agroecological systems that have shown their effectiveness. These alternatives are also better for biodiversity.

Current nutrient flows in the EU surpass safe planetary boundaries by a factor of three. The Fertilisers Strategy has been fast-tracked and been developed without any form of public or expert consultation and many of the objectives contradict the EU's Farm2Fork strategy. The EU should instead have set targets for the reduction in fertiliser use and a transition to more humane and sustainable food systems. They should also be reducing subsidies for the unsustainable use of fertilisers, instead of proposing a possible increase.

The whole world needs to stop hyper-charging agriculture with fossil fuels. The EU has gone in exactly the wrong direction. It's time to wean itself off its fertiliser addiction.

Open Letter to Canada's Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault: Kick Polluters out of the Canada Pavilion

Dear Minister Guilbeault,

ECO is concerned about oil, gas and petrochemical companies being given event space at the first-ever Canada Pavilion at a COP. Expecting support from friends in civil society, ECO formally requests that the Canada Pavilion cancel the Pathways Alliance Event on 11 November, and all other events featuring participation by oil, gas or petrochemical companies.

Industries aligned with climate action would receive ECO's welcome in event programming, and there are many of these companies present at COP27. However, oil and gas companies, like those active within the Pathways Alliance, have been the biggest obstacle to climate action - both at COP and back in Canada, and for decades now have made their fortunes while millions around the world suffer the tragedies of climate impacts.

Oil and gas companies are touting themselves as climate leaders, while in fact their activities continue to erode the rights and negatively impact the health and culture of Indigenous communities, notably through trillions of litres of toxic waste stored in tailings "ponds." Companies keep pointing to carbon capture and storage — despite

the technology's decades-long track record of underperformance and failure. And even if the technology did work, carbon capture would do nothing about the environmental harm caused to Indigenous nations at the frontlines of oil and gas extraction. Carbon capture cannot address the 80%-90% of emissions that are emitted when the oil and gas they pump out of the ground gets burned. The industry isn't interested in carbon capture to reduce emissions — it's about greenwashing its plans to continue producing fossil fuels for decades to come.

Platforming these companies at the Canada Pavilion is harmful to Canada's global reputation. The net-zero recommendations from the UN expert body chaired by former Minister of the Environment Catherine McKenna were clear: "You cannot be a net-zero leader while continuing to build or invest in fossil fuel supply."

ECO and friends call on the government of Canada and those charged with managing the Canada Pavilion to heed this call, and remove any future events featuring oil, gas, and petrochemical companies from the official Pavilion schedule of events.

Sincerely,
ECO

COP27: First 'Fossil of the Day' goes to... Japan!

Today is Finance Day at COP27, which makes it the perfect time to reflect on the climate-related financial flows of the world's rich countries. And no country's finance is flowing more than Japan's - but in the completely wrong direction.

Japan is the world's largest public financier for oil, gas, and coal projects, contributing US \$10.6 billion per year on average between 2019 and 2021. Despite international recognition that meeting the 1.5°C goal means ending investment in fossil fuels, the Japanese government is making huge efforts to export false solutions to other countries such as using ammonia for coal fired power plants,

which just meant to extend the life of coal power beyond 2030.

As you may or may not have even noticed, PM Kishida didn't come to the Leaders Summit here in Sharm. Maybe he was too busy promoting false solutions in Japan?

In a year of unprecedented climate disasters, with vulnerable communities all over the world suffering from the impacts of climate change, Japan's public finances are flowing into the fossil fuel projects responsible for this destruction rather than going towards financing the loss and damage caused by its own greenhouse gas emissions.