

DEFEND BIODIVERSITY

BLOCK COP15

FALL 22

ANTICAPITALIST
AND ECOLOGIST
COALITION
AGAINST COP 15
NEWSPAPER

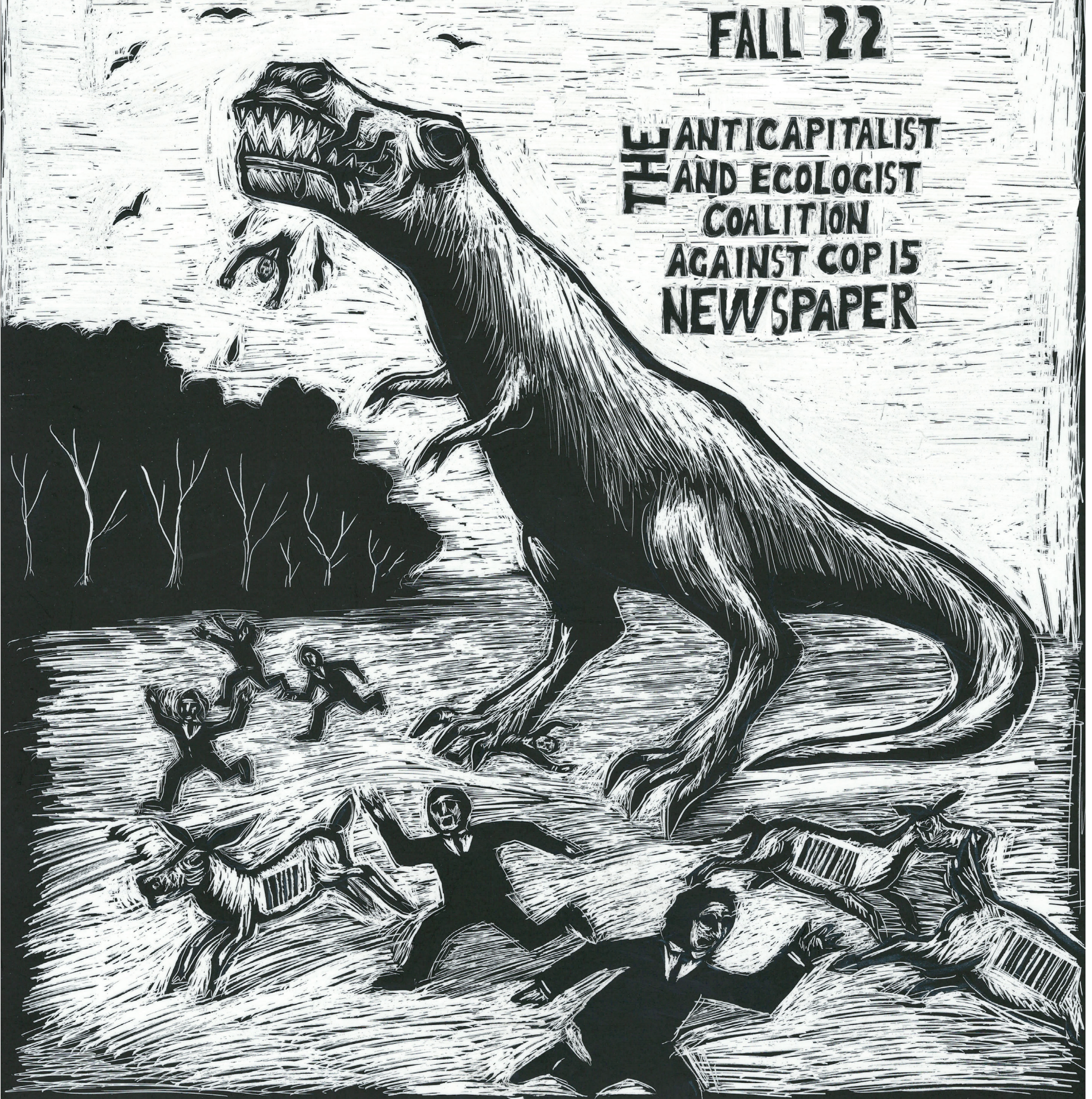
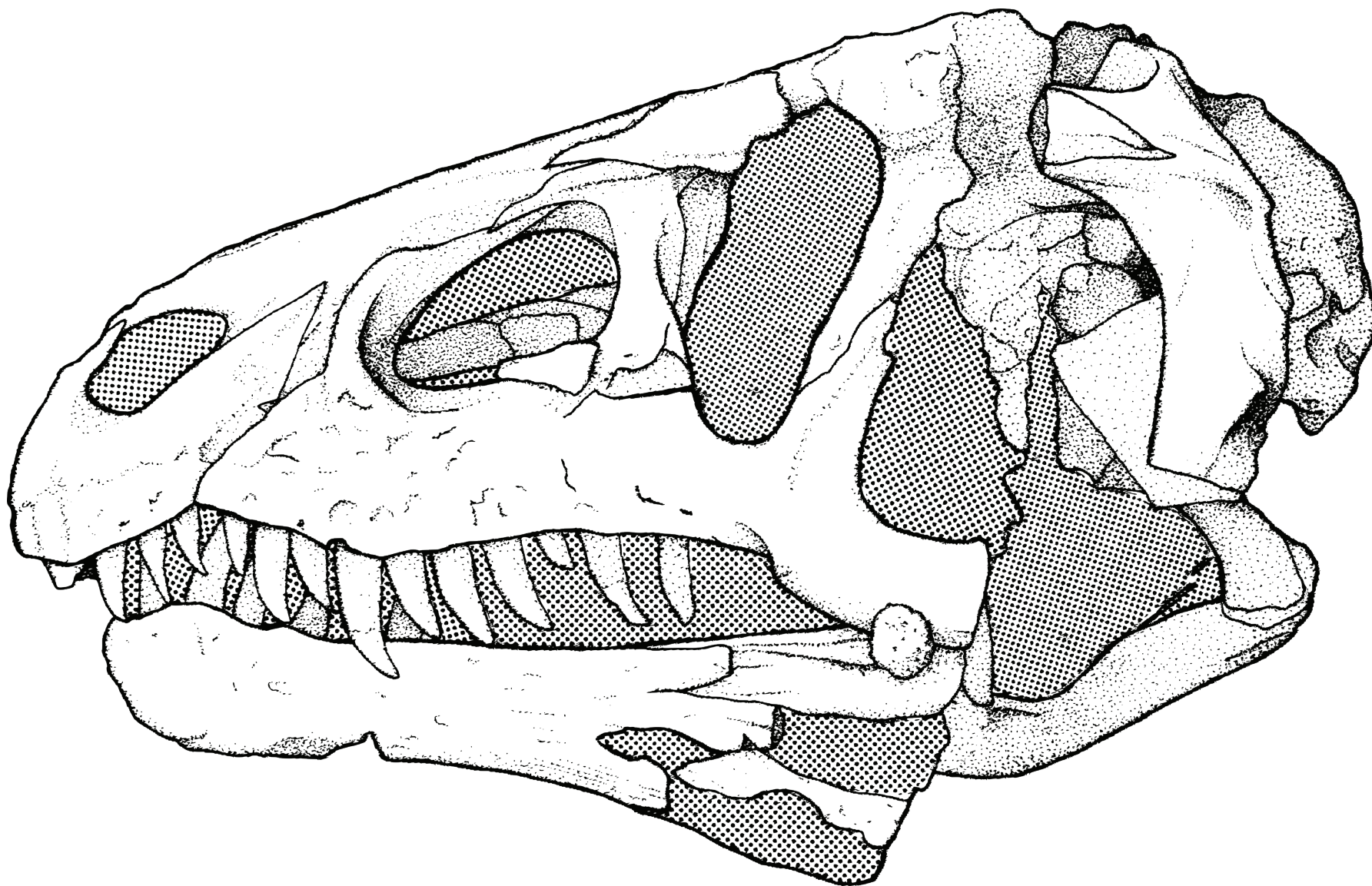


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FACING THE 6TH MASS EXTINCTION

For nearly thirty years, scientific reports have been piling up alarming evidence about the increasing erosion of biodiversity. One of the greatest threats to biodiversity is habitat loss due to the ecological crisis. But more broadly, what causes biodiversity loss and climate disruption is an economic system based on infinite growth and governments that depend on that growth to get re-elected. There is no reason why governments should suddenly become effective on these issues. Moreover, with the rise of the right wing today, some reactionary parties, politicians and governments are choosing to ignore this issue altogether. They propose that we remain silent and disappear like the dinosaurs did, while the rich take every last penny they can squeeze from our misery



It is important to make us believe that food chains will not be dramatically disrupted by the disappearance of bees, by rising sea levels or by climate change. Confidence in the future must be maintained so that people do not stop consuming and so that growth continues. The COP15 summit will, at best, produce a new set of measures that can only pretend to adapt the planet to our ecocidal economic system.

Especially since we are individually responsible for only part of the problem: we never asked to enrich the bosses so that they could buy private jets with our hard work. We did not choose to live in the neighborhoods with the worst insulation, just to have a place to live. We didn't choose to eat food laden with pesticides, but that's often the only food we can afford. In short, we have nothing to gain from the current status quo. We don't have to let ourselves be exploited so that the rich can destroy the planet. Nor do we have any reason to believe that those who put us in this situation will get us out. Especially not on the issue of biodiversity, where almost all of the goals that governments have set for themselves are not even being met.

We must therefore alert the population to the great masquerade that will take place in downtown Tiohtià:ke (Montreal) from from December 7th to the 19th. The people who are protecting biodiversity right now will not be

at the convention center. They are in Yin-tah, in the northern part of so-called British Columbia, fighting against the construction of a new pipeline. They are setting up local seed banks. They are ripping out genetically modified soybeans in India and elsewhere. Let's not die out like the dinosaurs, let's resist while we still can!



ABOUT US

The **Anti-Capitalist and Ecologist Coalition against COP15** is a coalition bringing together multiple people from different backgrounds who unite in an anti-capitalist, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist mobilization aimed at blocking the COP15 meeting, an international conference of UN member countries. which will take place from December 7th to the 19th 2022, in Tiohtià:ke (Montreal).

Presented as a solution to the ecological crisis, this summit claims to propose a biodiversity conservation plan by 2030. COP15 is in no way a solution, on the contrary it accentuates the exploitation of the territories of Indigenous peoples as well as the destruction of ecosystems.

It is necessary to totally reject this kind of event. We must organize ourselves, make our voices heard, reflect and put in place concrete anti-capitalist, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist solutions. Faced with an emergency, eco-anxiety and fear are not the only responses.

Everyone is welcome to join the Coalition to stand up against COP15 in order to ensure the real protection of biodiversity.

LET'S MOBILIZE!

To reach us: fucklacop15@riseup.net

COP14: BEAUTIFUL SPEECHES...

SERVING GREEN CAPITALISM

In November 2018, the COP14 was held in Egypt. We believe it is important to revisit the outcomes that emerged from this last conference of the stakeholders of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to highlight why it's dangerous to rely on these conferences to prevent biodiversity losses. Our reading of the COP14 outcomes is based on the decision documents approved by the parties present at the convention.

One does not have to dig very far into the archives of the COP14 to realize how this international summit does not help the cause it claims to serve. In the very first document (14/1 Updated assessment of progress) approved by the convention, the participants of the COP14 clearly underline that none of their objectives have been achieved and that they are not on the way to be achieved. However, this does not prevent them from congratulating themselves candidly and repeatedly for having carried out assessments that have revealed the alarming state of the situation. The oscillation between the serious and celebratory tone of the COP14 shows that governments are acting like comedians. They go there to look good, knowing full well that biodiversity is way less a priority than economic growth.

The third document (14/3 Mainstreaming of biodiversity) of the convention is undoubtedly the most interesting since it addresses its relations with extractivist multinationals (oil, mining, etc.), central banks and governments; in short, with all the actors at the root of the biodiversity crisis. The clarity of this document is striking: it is not about criticizing those who are leading us to disaster, but about inviting them to integrate biodi-

versity considerations into their business model. This has two main consequences. On the one hand, the COP14 relies on the social responsibility of companies – which in fact have only economic interests – to solve the decline of biodiversity, which has largely proven to be ineffective.

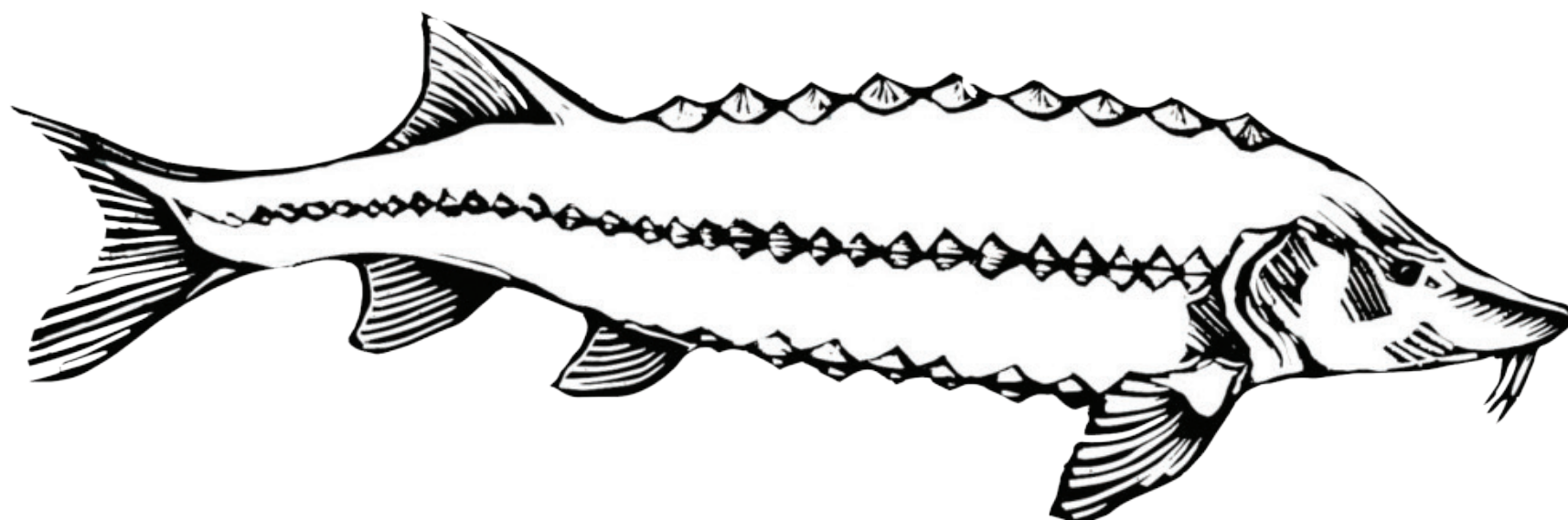
On the other hand, mainstreaming biodiversity to businesses is intended to highlight the economic potential of biodiversity use to businesses. For example, Article 16A calls on the organizations present to promote the implementation of biodiversity mainstreaming in the business and financial sectors by “enhancing the recognition by the business of the importance and value of biodiversity in these sectors. In other words, the COP14 sends a clear message to those with plenty of money: they can always make more if they compensate by investing in the exploitation of biodiversity. As explained in the text “The commercialization of nature” (on page 12 of this newspaper), these investments can only be counterproductive.

The COP14 documents also repeatedly mention the importance of consultation with Indigenous communities when it comes to the exploitation of biodiversity. We believe that this is a great hypocrisy. Many of the States present at the COP14, particularly in South America, have not consulted these communities at all since 2018 before brutally relocating them and then destroying their territory. In “Canada”, the State recognizes in its negotiations with the Indigenous communities only the political bodies that it has itself put in place, namely the Band Councils. Historically, the Indigenous communities, today under the authority of the Cana-

dian State, had hereditary chiefs who were chosen by the elders and who had no formal authority over the communities. These hereditary chiefs frequently oppose Canadian extractivist projects, such as the proposed pipeline through Wet'suwet'en territory, but are never listened to because they are not recognized by the Canadian state.

Finally, we want to highlight the hope that the COP14 puts in the development of a miraculous technology that could allow us to continue to lead shitty lives while having a small footprint on biodiversity. Has religious faith returned to the hearts of our proudly atheistic scientists? This vision of redemptive technology is reflected in Article 13.K, which encourages “the application of technology, research and development, and innovation that focus on integration in the energy and mining, infrastructure, and manufacturing and processing sectors. No technology can allow an oil company to be anything other than what it is: a company that generates tons of profit by massacring the land and allowing motorists to emit ever more CO₂.

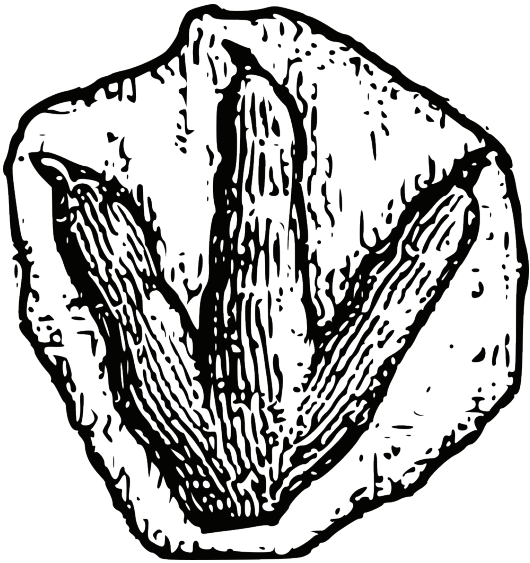
Basically, what the COP14 offered us was a nice speech praising a “green capitalism” where the big polluting companies would admit their share of responsibility and would decide to change their practices at the expense of their profits. We have never seen that happen. We will never see that happen. At the COP15, let's not let the same rotten people throw this absurd rhetoric in our faces and waste the little time we have left to act.



FROM ONE FAILURE TO ANOTHER

UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD

The last decade (2011-2020) was the UN's biodiversity decade, where countries worldwide "worked to address the many causes of biodiversity loss," according to the UN secretary-general. Countries had set 20 targets, also called "Aichi targets," none of which have been met. These targets were to be reviewed in 2020, but COP15 was postponed due to the pandemic. Therefore, this December, the different countries will meet to determine what went wrong and what to do afterward. Above all, the general idea of these objectives is simple: we should live in harmony with nature by 2050. This idea may seem self-evident, but with only minor adjustments, it would be possible to ignore the economic pressures at the root of today's ecological disruption. The perpetual growth demanded by capitalism is obviously central to the destruction of ecosystems but is never mentioned. In this article, we will first look at the principle of reducing harmful subsidies and sustainable consumption derived from the current proposals made by the CBD. Finally, we will show that these principles stem from a misinterpretation of the concept of nature, which detaches it from our way of life.



Less subsidies to the polluters

CBD Goal 17 proposes that countries partially reduce subsidies to companies they deem harmful to biodiversity. Thus, the vision shared in the statement is the lack of need to regulate and prohibit certain practices, such as dangerous forest management techniques or the use of pesticides over large

areas. The assumption is that companies will reduce their harmful and destructive practices without these subsidies. Similarly, Goal 14 proposes reducing biodiversity impacts by 50% by ensuring that production practices are sustainable. By avoiding asking governments to ban harmful practices, we remain under the illusion that companies are harming biodiversity out of recklessness. However, the basic principle of capitalist business is cost reduction and profit maximization. Cellular phones are a good example. In the last ten years, phones with user-replaceable batteries have entirely disappeared. This increases sales: products can be made more challenging to repair, forcing many people without the technical ability or patience to replace their entire device. The race for profit is at the expense of consumers and the environment. Companies make superficial adjustments like putting their phones in recyclable boxes, but they will never sell less.

Eliminate unsustainable consumption

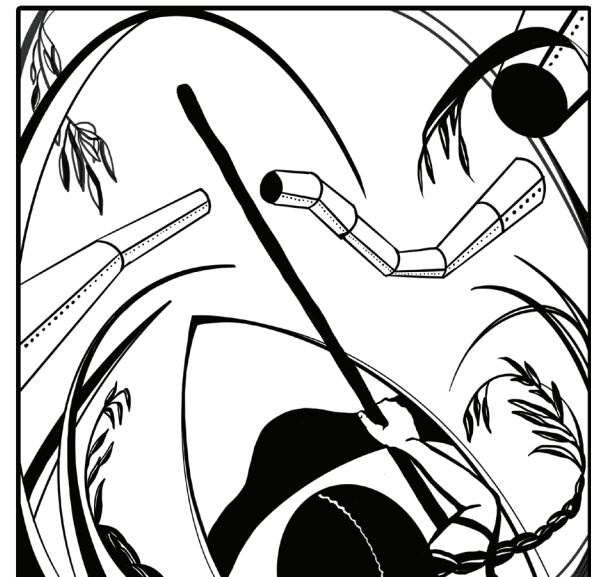
By making people believe in the goodwill of environment-destroying companies, we end up blaming consumers. People consume what they can afford – for the most part, food produced with environmentally harmful practices is the only food they can afford. Again: why aren't harmful agricultural and industrial productions banned? By preventing herbicide-using industrial monocultures, the land will become available for more environmentally friendly practices – allowing everyone to benefit from more sustainable and low-cost agriculture. This refusal to take direct and clear action shows that countries are willing to sacrifice effective measures for vague indicators that will allow them to avoid responsibility for destroying life. With Goals 17 and 14, even if the signed agreement was binding, companies are allowed to continue destroying biodiversity for another 10 years without repercussions.

Create protected areas of over 30% of the globe

The only target that came close to being achieved was the establishment of protected areas equivalent to 17% of the land area. Only 15% have been implemented. But why would

this target be achieved? Protected areas have long been based on a particular conception of nature where humans are absent. However, it is estimated that establishing protected areas could displace up to 100 million people worldwide as humans have moved into areas where biodiversity supports life. Indigenous peoples are and will be primarily affected as they are directly dependent on biological processes and live in lands deemed undeveloped. Although in some countries, protected areas are sometimes established in co-management with Indigenous communities, the fact remains that these areas are sources of many conflicts. How can we ensure, for example, that the communities will not be more closely monitored by the States that offer them these co-management agreements? In any case, these protected areas are a band-aid on a hemorrhage. Among other things, the plan is to open more than 250 mines to ensure the production of batteries for the transition to electric vehicles, as if it were easier to create additional protected areas around these mines than to put in place affordable public transit.

With such objectives, it seems clear that our governments will not tell companies to stop their polluting activities and will hold consumers responsible for their unsustainable purchases. Nothing can change as long as profit is king. By refusing to consider the economic system as it is, we simply believe in the fairy of goodwill, as we did with all the previous failed objectives. Even worse, we give more tools to perpetuate green colonialism by driving more and more Indigenous people to the cities and factories, to the mode of production that we refuse to question.



UN, COP15 AND COLONIALISM

In preparation for the upcoming COP15 meeting, the Canadian government has made itself a part of the “High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People”. According to the coalition’s website, it is “working towards a global agreement to protect at least 30% of the world’s land and oceans by 2030 at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15)”.

At first glance, the principles guiding this coalition seem laudable: “Indigenous peoples and local communities are the protectors of the world’s richest biodiversity sites. To effectively and equitably achieve this enhanced goal, they should be engaged as partners in the design and management of these conserved areas, ensuring free, prior and informed consent and respect for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”



This all sounds very nice. But we have every reason to doubt the good faith of the Canadian State, which, as we recall, blocked the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for a decade, with the support of other countries that are similarly products of white colonialism and occupation: the United States, Australia and New Zealand. And, since its adoption in 2007, not much has changed. Nearly 15 years later, as a result of significant mobilization and pressure from Indigenous communities, Canada finally passed legislation that incorporated the Declaration into the Canadian legal framework in June 2021.

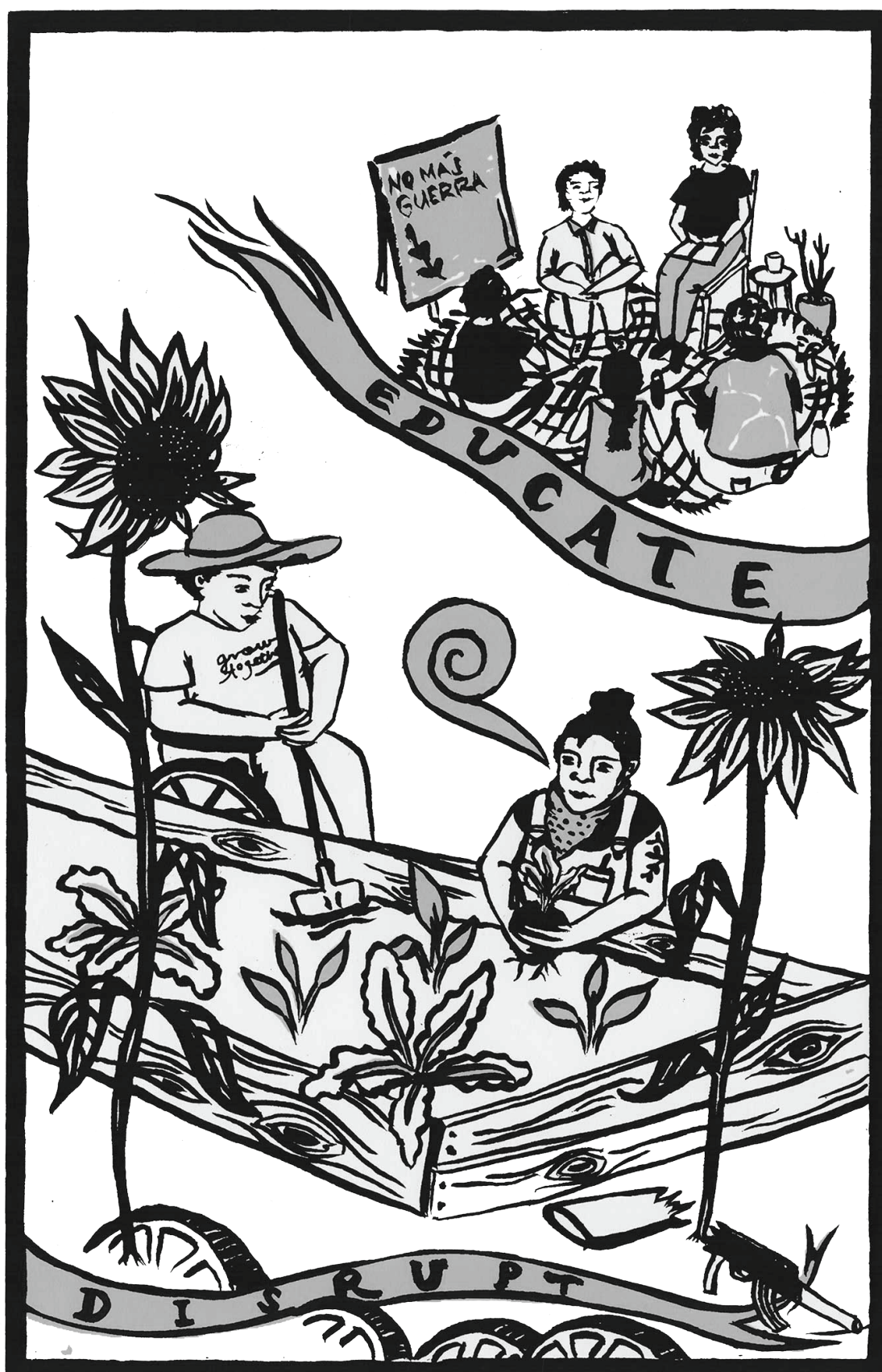
In spite of this, the legislation has not stopped the government from sending its colonial police, armed with assault rifles, to remove the Wet’suwet’en from their ancestral territory, in order to allow the construction of a gas pipeline under the Wedzin Kwa River a few months later. If the Canadian state were

truly committed to the protection of biodiversity, it would first and foremost stop the extractivist and colonial invasion of Indigenous land.

Nor has it stopped Canadian mining companies from continuing to exploit Africa and South America, with the support of Canadian embassies, while violently suppressing any attempt to oppose these ecocidal projects. Canadian mining companies are known throughout the world for the havoc they wreak on communities: the

destruction of ecosystems, sexual violence, kidnappings, political assassinations – no strategy seems to be off-limits when it comes to safeguarding the capitalist exploitation of these regions.

The hypocrisy of this government has no limits. Its laudable rhetoric before other heads of state will not distract us from the struggle we are waging: against capitalism, colonialism, imperialism and all other systems of power that ensure the comfort of some through the exploitation of others.



EXTRACTIVISM

UNDERSTANDING IT TO BETTER FIGHT IT

A word that is more and more frequently used in reflections on the unequal dynamics between the North and the global South is extractivism. To demystify it a little, here is a short article that will give a very brief presentation.

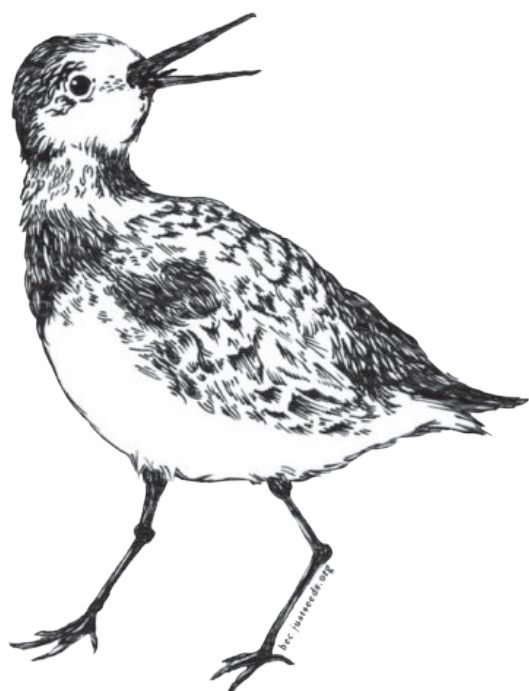
First, extractivism is the massive exploitation of the resources of nature or the biosphere. As a social, political and economic phenomenon, extractivism is not accidental or ancillary to capitalism. It has been an essential factor in the historical development of capitalism, fully integrated into Western colonialism and imperialism. The monopolization of raw materials in the countries of the global South by the states of the North is an essential part of economic growth. Even today, it is an indispensable part of its inner workings. Today, the configuration of global capitalism forces the global South countries, under the imperatives of large transnational corporations and organizations such as the IMF, to maintain an extractivist model in which economic activities are specialized almost exclusively in the exploitation and export of natural resources and raw materials.

The extractivist model, particularly in Latin America, has negative economic, human and ecological effects on the countries involved in this model. Economically, countries with an extractivist economic model are highly dependent on the import of finished products from abroad, which they have to pay more for. This situation is highly problematic and is one of the main causes of the systemic indebtedness of the South American economies.

At the human level, extractivism generates violence and direct harm to the global South populations, particularly to Indigenous peoples. Under the constant and growing imperatives of accumulation, extractive industries always require larger territories and a greater quantity of resources to exploit. This generates processes of dispossession and expropriation of the territories and livelihoods of the people, especially Indigenous communities. These expropriations are usually legalized, executed and legitimized by several states, partly due to the pressure of international agreements and institutions protecting the interests of multinationals.

At the ecological level, the treatment of the global South countries as a bottomless pit of resources to be plundered without any consideration for the ecological impacts is causing a fundamental imbalance of the ecosystems as well as the destruction of the multiple animal and plant species that live there.

This briefly describes the concept. No matter how it is claimed to be reformed, humanized, improved, no matter how it is presented by elites and governments in the North and the South, extractivism is always colonial in origin, always violent, always ecocidal and always intolerable. The COP15 does not recognize or propose any solution to this major problem. On the contrary, it proposes essentially capitalist solutions that protect the interests of extractive companies and reinforce the colonial dynamic of Western control over the countries of the South. Opposing the COP15 is to oppose this dynamic of exploitation and oppression that is extractivism.



ECOFEMINISM

Ecofeminism is a branch of feminism that focuses on the intersection of feminism and ecology. Ecofeminists argue that economic development and the destruction of ecosystems have profound and negative repercussions for women – especially global South women. Furthermore, they argue that capitalism is grounded in both the exploitation of women’s reproductive labor and the exploitation of nature. For example, when large corporations impose an agro-industrial model on communities in the global South, many women have the natural resources that they once harvested freely and locally taken away from them and privatized by large corporations. Moreover, the destructive effects that these companies have on biodiversity, as well as the waste they generate, have a dramatic impact on women’s bodies, as well as on their children, if they have any, if only by making their water sources undrinkable. Ecofeminists are generally highly critical of states (which they call “Father States” in order to emphasize their patriarchal aspect) because states support the capitalist appropriation of everything that Mother Earth has to offer. We believe that it is important to be careful when associating nature with women, because such associations risk essentializing women, or falsely reducing femininity to motherhood. However, we believe that the struggle to protect biodiversity is a feminist issue and that it is important to highlight the fact that women and children – for whom women are often responsible – bear the brunt of the burden of biodiversity decline. Ecofeminist perspectives allow us to remain critical of half-solutions that do not challenge the economic and political systems that allow Northern states to offload all of the ecological consequences of capitalism onto those in the South. For example, simply replacing oil with nuclear power would itself have major environmental consequences – all while failing to address the lifestyles of the rich, who generate monstrous amounts of waste compared to the rest of us.

REAL SOLUTIONS MEAN REAL RESISTANCE

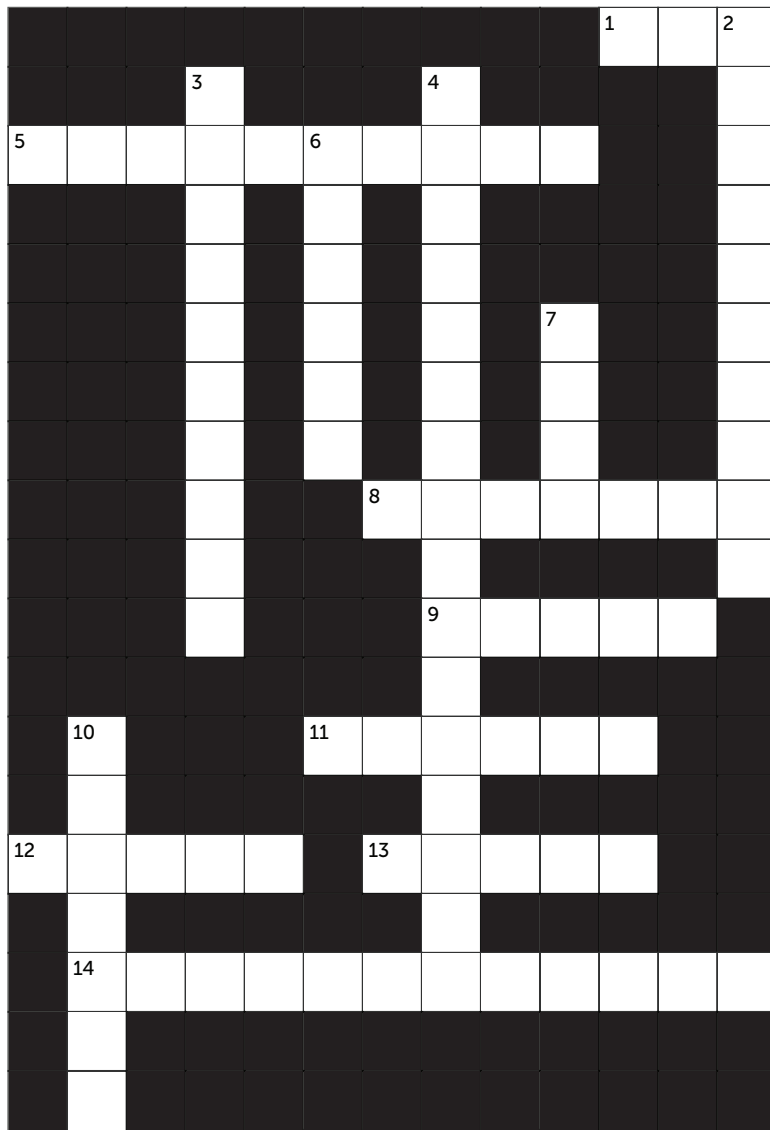
Many of the Green capitalist projects financed by COP15 initiatives (financing for green transport, policies that limit some development, etc.) seem genuinely worthwhile compared to the alternative of doing literally nothing in the face of unrestrained free-market capitalism— and in this way, capitalists and the governments that support them rebrand themselves as “wild-life saviours” at conferences like COP15. But we cannot lose sight of the fact that they are in fact using the extremely limited set of policy and regulatory tools that they have at their disposal to patch just a few of the holes that they themselves continue to pierce at an even faster rate.

The only way to achieve the COP15 goal of “living in harmony with nature” by 2050 is to completely rethink our system of social and ecological relations and to build durable anticapitalist alternatives. Fortunately, there are communities building real, lasting, anticapitalist solutions to biodiversity loss. For example, nearly every document published by the COP15 acknowledges the fact that the “full and effective participation” of Indigenous peoples is critical to conservation. But decolonization and “land back” are real, genuine methods for reversing biodiversity loss— they are not hollow metaphors. We cannot allow the COP15 to co-opt these solutions by emptying land acknowledgements of their meaning while the COP15’s host state continues to violently suppress land and water defenders. We don’t need token participation and inclusion— we need a full redistribution of both power and material wealth, and we need to dismantle the violent state machinery that prevents responsible land stewardship from taking place as soon as the interests of the people are at odds with the pursuit of profit. For example, Wet’suwet’en land defenders are engaged in a decade-long struggle over responsible stewardship of the land— they are more than capable of protecting the region’s biodiversity, if only the RCMP would let them!

STRATEGY	RELATIONSHIP TO BIODIVERSITY RESTORATION
Landback	An Indigenous-led strategy to re-establish Indigenous sovereignty throughout Turtle Island. Peasant farmers and Indigenous peoples are among those doing the most to preserve and restore biodiversity as responsible stewards of the land. Many of these communities actively maintain a dynamic ecological balance by responsibly harvesting, hunting, and fishing; much Indigenous-led restoration involves paying close attention to the ways that plant and animal populations change from year to year, and modifying their interactions with nature accordingly.
Wet’suwet’en re-occupation	The Wet’suwet’en community is fighting back against the construction of the CGL pipeline, which threatens salmon, caribou and many other wildlife species vital to the region. You can follow their campaign at https://www.yintahaccess.com/
Ada’itsx (Fairy Creek) land defense	Fairy Creek is one of the last remaining old growth forests in British Columbia. It comprises the remaining 2.7% of the province’s old-growth temperate rainforest and is home to a number of threatened species. Led by the Pacheedaht, Ditidaht and Huu-ay-aht First Nations, land advocates have been facing violent crackdowns by the RCMP in their efforts to defend this valuable ecosystem from logging and road building.
Reciprocal restoration	Compared to conservation frameworks that merely try to limit human harm through commercialization, reciprocal restoration means recognizing that the restoration of land and the restoration of culture are critically and reciprocally intertwined — “it is not just the land that is broken, but our relationship to it.” True ecosystem restoration requires overhauling the capitalist framework through which mainstream scientific institutions research, describe and interact with natural systems — to do this, we need to bring together Traditional Ecological Knowledge and western Science, both inside and outside of “formal” scientific institutions.
Rewilding lawns	Lawns are horrifyingly unnecessary as a status symbol for the rich — they are monocultures that do not support life. Rewilding lawns is crucial at a time when half of Canada’s honeybee colonies did not survive the winter in 2022 — the worst loss in 20 years due to the spread of a parasitic bug, facilitated by a warming climate. We can increase the numbers of songbirds, bees, and other arthropods and pollinators just by tearing up manicured grass and tending wildflowers, shrubs, so-called “weeds” instead.
Guerrilla Gardening / Seed-bombing	Seed-bombing and guerilla gardening in neglected public places, in a way that is responsible and respectful of native flora and fauna, can not only improve an area of land that is otherwise neglected, it can help also help temper the effects of urban heating and provide food for pollinators.

BLACK BLOCS ON WHITE SQUARES

A CROSSWORD AGAINST COP15

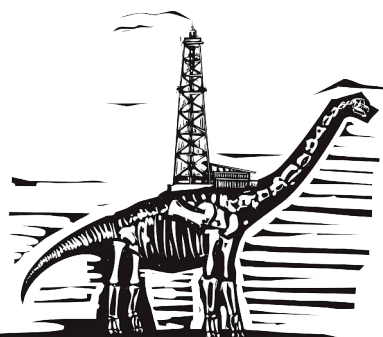


Horizontal

- 1 Canadian bank investing massively in extractivist projects.
- 5 Our organization will be present at conferences of the COP15. We claim to be environmentalists, but we accept to collaborate with those who massacre the environment.
- 8 False solutions to the ecological crisis and the decline of biodiversity.
- 9 A very good excuse to wear a mask during a demonstration.
- 11 75% of the mining companies' head offices are registered there because of tax advantages it offers them.
- 12 Where the COP14 was held in 2018.
- 13 Color representing what capitalism can never be.
- 14 One of only two states that have not ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Vertical

- 2 Economic system that no conference of the COP15 will ever question.
- 3 Name of the people living in "British-Columbia" protesting against extractivist projects defended by the Canadian State on their territory.
- 4 Main location of the COP15. (3 words)
- 6 There will be a lot of them to defend the COP15.
- 7 Number of targets met by the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- 10 I think it is possible to defend biodiversity while investing billions in urban sprawl by building more highways and tunnel links.



HOROSCOPE15

Aries (Ram): Your determination is steel. You won't let the doors of the convention center stop you. You'll have a front row seat to watch those in power bend!

Taurus: COP15 will make you see red, but you will triumph by driving through headlong. Don't hesitate to propose radical alternatives. *Health:* Beware of flank injuries!

Gemini: In December, you will be as fluid as water and as solid as ice. Never stop questioning authority, you will be rewarded!

Cancer: Sometimes a break is needed to regroup and regain strength. Also, don't be fooled by capitalist greenwashing. *Lucky numbers:* 1, 312.

Leo: Climate injustices make you roar. *Love:* Surround yourself with people who, like you, think that capitalism should be abolished!

Virgo: Your attachment to all things living will bring you to the defense of the land. *Travel:* it's a good time to come to Tiohtià:ke (Montreal) to participate in the COP15 protests!

Libra: Be mindful of your rhythm so as not to lose your balance. The *escalation of pressure tactics* is done one step at a time. You will have an important choice to make. *Career:* Don't be a cop!

Scorpio: Your energy levels are at their highest. You feel charged up to pick on careerist environmentalists. Be careful not to get burnt out on the job. Take care of yourself too!

Sagittarius: Pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will. Make sure you have strength in numbers before calling for a mass action!

Capricorn: The strike vote passed thanks to the efforts of your mobilization committee and you'll want to celebrate in a big way. Keep those feet on the ground, you'll need them to move forward together!

Aquarius: It's important to see both sides of the coin. It's all about the balance of power and only struggle pays off. *Family:* You will put a reactionary relative in their place once and for all!

Pisces: You are being lured into false solutions that will bring nothing good to your life. Don't be fooled, the COP15 will not solve anything – we must overthrow capitalism!

A SHORT HISTORY OF ANTI-CAPITALIST

COUNTER-SUMMITS

While there were counter-summits and demonstrations at international summits in the 1980s, for example in West Berlin, or against the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland in the 1990s, it was really the *World Trade Organization* (WTO) Summit in Seattle in November 1999 that launched the tradition of anti-globalization demonstrations. Of course, other phenomenons preceded the famous Battle of Seattle: the Zapatista uprising on January 1st, 1994 (the day the *North American Free Trade Agreement* – NAFTA – came into force), the civil disobedience campaigns against the *Multilateral Agreement on Investment* (MAI), the “street-parties” of the anti-capitalist environmentalists of *Reclaim the Streets* in London, the demonstrations against the *Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation* (APEC) in Vancouver, etc.

The Battle of Seattle was important because it offered the opportunity to launch the first branch of Indymedia, and because it brought together the various tendencies that would later mobilize at each major alterglobalist demonstration – the mass unions and non-governmental organizations (ATTAC, Greenpeace, Oxfam, etc.) that organized a People’s Summit and a large “unified” demonstration boxed in by a powerful security service, anti-capitalist groups that practice non-violent civil disobedience (sit-ins, banner unfurling, etc.), and anti-capitalist groups that destroy private property and confront police forces (street parties, Black Blocs, etc.).

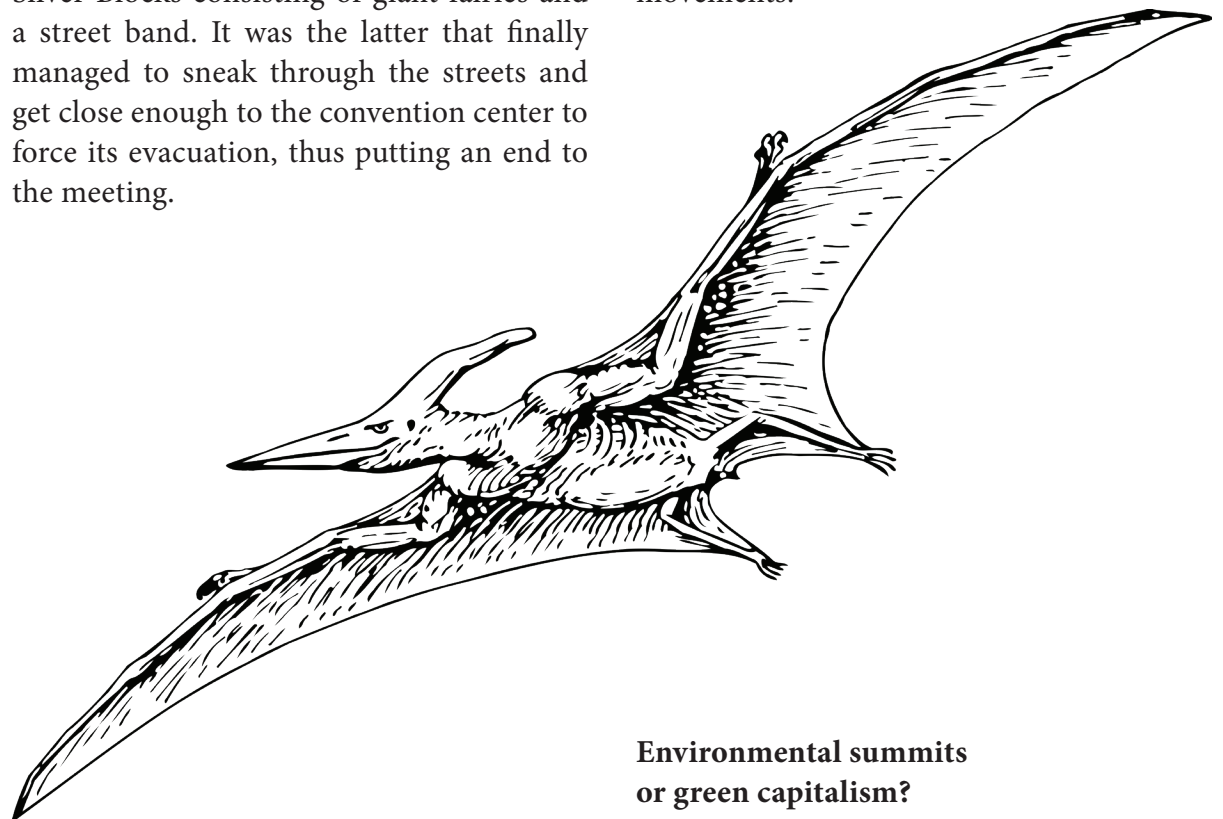
Other anti-globalization mobilizations followed in quick succession: in Washington and Prague in 2000 (*International Monetary Fund* and the *World Bank*), in Quebec City (*Free Trade Area of the Americas* – FTAA), in Gothenburg (*European Union*), and in

Genoa (G7) in 2001. While the attacks of September 11, 2001 came as a shock even to alterglobalists in the United States, mobilizations have continued, especially in Europe and outside the West.

Blocs and the diversity of tactics

The first experiment in dividing demonstrations into color zones seems to have been tried in Prague, in September 2000. One zone was reserved for the Black Bloc, another for the *Tute Bianche* (activists covered in thick layers of bubble wrap who tried to push the police around with the force of their bodies) and the last for the Pink & Silver Blocs consisting of giant fairies and a street band. It was the latter that finally managed to sneak through the streets and get close enough to the convention center to force its evacuation, thus putting an end to the meeting.

tactics”, which consists of accepting that an anti-capitalist mobilization can host various forms of demonstration at the same time. A red zone – open to confrontation with the police (high risk of arrest), a yellow zone – also very close to the security fence, open to non-violent civil disobedience actions (sit-ins, throwing toilet paper over a fence, etc.), and a green zone for resting and regrouping. In addition, the principle of respecting the diversity of tactics prevents various radical tendencies from criticizing and denouncing each other in public, which only played into the hands of the authorities and the police in the past. While the police did not always respect this division into zones (obviously), the strategy was a success for anti-capitalist movements.



Environmental summits or green capitalism?

A few months later, in anticipation of the demonstrations in Quebec City, the *Convergence des luttes anticapitalistes* (CLAC) and the *Comité d'accueil du Sommet des Amériques* (CASA) developed the principle of “respect for a diversity of

In 1992, the *Earth Summit* in Rio, Brazil, organized by the United Nations, welcomed political figures and about 650 non-governmental organizations. Here we are 30 years later, and all environmental indicators are in the red. This likely explains



the size of the youth climate movement, with school strikes and demonstrations of several hundred thousand people in some cities, including Montreal. At the 15th *Climate Change Conference* (COP) in Copenhagen, Denmark in 2009, there were demonstrations of 50,000 to 80,000 people in very cold weather. Of course, there were still tensions between reformists and radicals, and arrests by encirclement sent nearly 1,000 people into custody. Defending the planet comes at a cost. At the COP in Paris in November 2015, Black Blocks trained for the demonstration, after weeks of alarmist rhetoric from authorities. More recently, there were several groups still demonstrating in Glasgow and in Great Britain during the COP26 summit (26th conference of the UN member “parties”), in 2021. And in Montreal in December 2022 – how many of us will turn out in the streets?

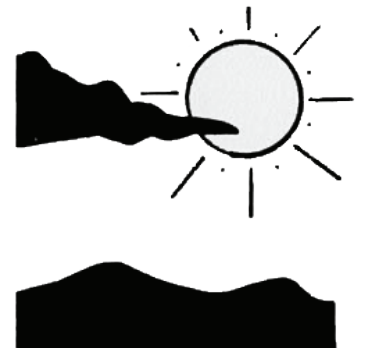
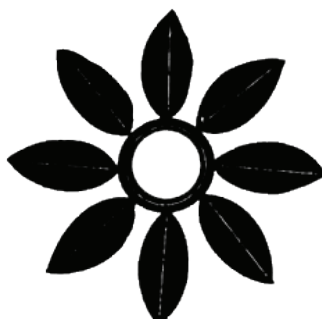
“We are an image of the future”

In 2000, the young alterglobalization movement predicted that neoliberal globalization, led by these big international summits, would lead to catastrophe. A generation later, the catastrophe has arrived: a series of imperialist wars in the name of the “war on terror”, the financial crisis of 2008, worsening inequality, corruption, and accelerating climate change. These large international summits for the climate and for the planet have, every time, mobilized thousands of people in hundreds of delegations, since 1992 – and where are we now? During anarchist riots in Greece, Black Bloc activists declared: “We are an image of the future”. The struggle will only end with either the end of the elites, or the end of the world.

BE LIKE WATER



BLOCK COP15



THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF NATURE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY COP15

We don't have time to promote ineffective solutions for reversing biodiversity loss when we have the ability to implement anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist alternatives that work.

Unfortunately, the COP15 is not merely ineffective at what it aims to do. In some cases, it is in fact highly effective at promoting an "asset management" approach to biodiversity that actually enables capitalists to accelerate and generate profit from ecological degradation, while forcing communities in the global South to provide greater access and control of their land to governments and powerful NGOs in the global North.



According to dominant neoclassical economists, nature is being destroyed because its real value has been overlooked by financial markets— so, to reverse biodiversity loss, they argue that we must put a price tag on rainforests, wetlands, and marine ecosystems. Under capitalism, commodifying the "services" that nature provides is the only way to render these natural systems "visible" to financial markets. This framework develops the false belief that slowing biodiversity loss is just a question of "getting the prices right."

What is wrong with commodifying nature in order to try to save it? Put simply, a commodity is a thing that is exchangeable for something else. The commodification of nature creates false equivalencies that completely eliminate all of the complexity essen-

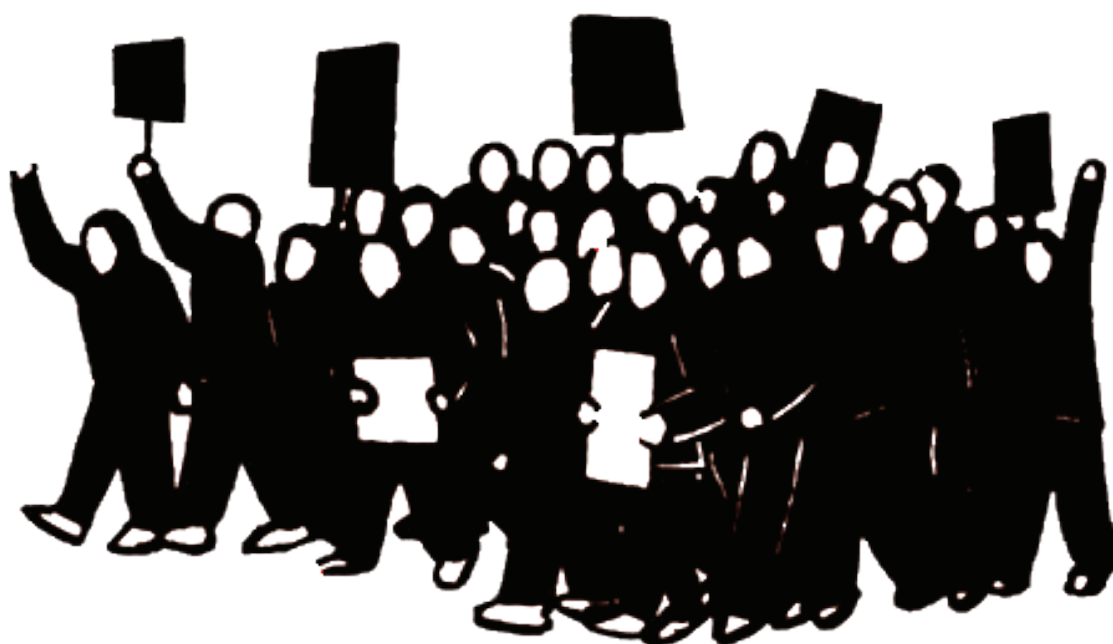
tial to ecology itself. Ecologically speaking, 50 pollinators are not exchangeable for 20 saplings, are not exchangeable for 2 endangered birds. The destruction of a forest in one part of the world is not exchangeable for the protection of a similarly sized forest somewhere else. And yet it is a testament to the thorough penetration of capitalist economics into mainstream science that communities and ecologists are increasingly forced to describe the habitats they steward in terms of exchangeable goods, services, and "natural capital" in their attempts to protect them from further degradation.

Take, for example, the idea of "payments for ecosystem services." In this approach, economists assign a monetary value to the services that natural ecosystems provide to human beings – climate change mitigation, watershed services, and biodiversity conservation are examples of so-called "natural services" provided by non-human entities like forests and wetlands. By framing things this way, landowners can in some cases charge people for continuing to access the "natural services" that they have long accessed for free. In many cases, producers and landowners have found a way to monetize the act of not doing harm, and distribute the costs to people and governments.

Describing nature in terms of "ecosystem service units" also crucially allows for the creation of "offset" markets. Offsets allow corporations to continue destroying nature and polluting for profit, even when there are legislative regulations in place that limit habitat destruction and pollution. In fact, offset markets allow capitalists to generate wealth

from a new, abstract, fictitious source: people can buy, sell, and engage in speculation over the abstract value that comes from the reduction in costs arising from corporations complying with environmental legislation. In other words, offset markets (of biodiversity and of carbon) allow capitalists to turn environmental legislation itself into a profit making enterprise.

According to many biodiversity offset schemes, a company can buy and destroy a habitat that houses a critically endangered species so long as it also buys a certain number of "compensation credits" from a certified biodiversity bank. The credits are meant to fund the purchase of conservation land for that species elsewhere in the world, on the erroneous belief that habitat protection or reforestation in one area of the world can simply "offset" the harm wrought by habitat destruction somewhere else. Ecologically, the richness of an acre of Amazonian rainforest may never be "offset" by reforesting a patch of land elsewhere— but offset markets allow companies to smooth over that fact by reducing the complexity of a habitat to simple numbers that can be made to seem equivalent to another piece of land through creative capitalist accounting. The concept of biodiversity bank becomes even more non-sensical when applied to abstract futures. According to some offset frameworks, you can destroy an actually existing wetlands so long as you put money in a "biodiversity bank" towards the creation of a theoretical, future wetlands— a habitat that literally does not even yet exist and that may be, in reality, impossible to bring into existence.



FIVE WAYS THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF NATURE HAPPENS

PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Producers have found a way to charge people for the service of not harming the natural habitats on which everyone depends. While this rarely results in rendering visible and compensating Indigenous stewards for their labour, it just as often results in cash handouts to landowners; and even when communities are compensated for their labour, they still lose in the sense that they are forced to adopt a framework in which nature is commodified and enclosed in the first place.

Example:

Coffee producers were polluting a river shared by villagers in Jesus de Otoro, Honduras. Households of villagers downstream of the coffee farms paid a fee every month to an administrative trust in order to get coffee producers to stop polluting the river.

DIRECT "BIODIVERSITY FEE"

Powerful environmental organizations from the global North buy land in the name of conservation— in many cases, affecting local livelihoods and dispossessing Indigenous communities of their land.

Example:

The Nature Conservancy is a powerful US-based NGO with an annual budget of over \$700 million that almost exclusively engages in land purchases and easements and over 3.1 million acres of US land— it has strong business relationships with oil producers, chemicals manufacturers, and right-wing Republicans who rotate through their board; they give tax breaks to wealthy donors looking to build homes on land otherwise closed to development. They often buy land in the global South, in countries like Belize and the Seychelles.

GREEN CAPITALISM

DEBT-FOR-NATURE SWAPS

In an interesting twist on conventional neo-colonialism, NGOs and rich countries form a "trust fund" that buys up the debt of poor countries in the global South at a discounted rate from their debtor countries— the "debtor" country pays this trust fund and the revenue goes towards local conservation projects that are directed by wealthy organizations, individuals, and governments. Like direct "biodiversity fees," this often serves to dispossess people of their land, while further privatizing resources previously thought to belong to the collective commons.

Example:

Seychelles is an archipelago of 115 islands with rich biodiversity. In 2016, the Nature Conservancy (TNC), a US environmental group, restructured Seychelles' debt of \$21.6 million owed to Paris Club members (eg UK, France, Belgium, Italy) at a discount. The government of Seychelles now repays loans to this new trust at a reduced interest on the agreement that it spends its debt savings on ocean conservation and protects 30% of its marine areas from fishing and drilling.

BIO-PROSPECTING (BIO-PIRACY)

Rich countries and companies exploit thousands of years of peoples' knowledge of plants and plant cultivation to find profitable new chemicals and organisms that can be developed into medicines or agricultural commodities, patented, and then sold back to the people at a profit. International intellectual property laws provide these companies with exclusive rights to sell "commercialized germplasm," giving free-market actors an incentive to preserve rainforests and other biodiverse habitats only insofar as they can be privatized and enclosed to give companies exclusive access to medicinal and agricultural product development that will generate profit in the future.

Example:

Indigenous Peoples in Chiapas, Mexico successfully stopped a US government-funded bioprospecting project that sought to appropriate Mayan knowledge and medicinal plants and seek exclusive monopoly control over these resources through patents and IP.

CARBON AND BIODIVERSITY OFFSET MARKETS

Companies are allowed to destroy rich, actually-existing habitats while claiming to offset their ecological harm by putting money in a bank towards the preservation or restoration of some theoretical habitat— often a fictional habitat that may not currently exist and that may never be able to be brought into existence.

Example:

The U.S. "Compensatory mitigation Program" enables wetlands to be destroyed so long as credits are purchased from a "mitigation bank" for some theoretical wetlands not immediately on or adjacent to the site of habitat destruction.

PLAGUE, CHOLERA OR BOTH?

FROM CARBON CREDITS TO BIODIVERSITY CREDITS

Banks and global NGOs are ready for the big leap towards biodiversity credits, as announced by a 40-page OECD document on biodiversity credits. However, the introduction of carbon credits since the Kyoto Protocol have not improved anything 15 years later. Let's see why it is imperative to refuse these kinds of solutions to the decline of biodiversity.

A carbon credit is equivalent to one ton of CO₂ or its equivalent in greenhouse gases. Carbon credits are based on the idea that global warming is a global problem, and therefore that we can reduce the emission of greenhouse gases that cause global warming anywhere in the world. one pound of CO₂ in Africa affects the climate the same as a pound of CO₂ in America. These credits can be the subject of exchanges and transactions, with the objective of putting a price on the emission of greenhouse gases. Does it make sense that countries can trade their right to pollute? For example, does it make sense that workers in certain countries that receive lower wages are forced to compensate for deforestation in countries with higher wages?

First, in the case of carbon credits, you have to open the Pandora's box of historical CO₂ emissions. Indeed, in the Treaty of Paris,

as in previous treaties, what is counted is the amount of greenhouse gases produced by each country. This does not take into account, for example, that Asia produces the vast majority of the electronic devices used in the West.. Wouldn't it be more reasonable, since not every country in the world has benefited equally from oil (and the automobile hell it led to) since the 1930s, to consider the historical emission of different countries to see who hasn't burned up their fossil fuel quota yet? Were it measured, it likely would appear to everyone that Canada, the United States and Europe, being the biggest historical polluters, have already exceeded their quotas. However, carbon credits are for those who can pay 10% more for their plane ticket to Cancun to see the greenhouse gas offset. Or to put it more directly: carbon credits are used to legitimize the consumption of rich people in the richest countries. But on the contrary, it should be the rich of the most affluent countries who stop the destruction of the planet as soon as possible.

Applying this logic to biodiversity will bring the same problems: we shovel the problems into the backyard of the poorest countries. It is a way of guaranteeing that we continue to eat GMOs cultivated in monoculture for a long time to come... but that these monocultures are compensated by the preservation of

the animal threatened with extinction which costs the least to save.

You don't really have to look any further to see how absurd the idea is, but it gets better. For a species to be deemed "capable of compensating", four conditions must be met: additionality, permanence, non-duplication and consideration of side effects. These are the principles that are applied to currently determine whether a carbon credit can be granted, and these principles make sense... for people who want to continue to pollute. Let's take a closer look to see the extent of the problem.

First, for a credit to be granted, it must be based on an estimated environmental damage. The more a company plans to pollute, the more it is eligible for large credits. So



GMOs, AGRICULTURE AND BIODIVERSITY

Our food production methods are part of the globalization of food production where our role is limited to particularly profitable production in the territory. Farms are now businesses: the average farm in Quebec is now worth \$3.1 million. In this context, 47% of agricultural land is devoted to soy and corn, 78% genetically modified. These genetic modifications mainly serve to immunize plants against a herbicide, Roundup, which prevents the growth of other plants that would compete with the crop. There is therefore no reason to pay for these GMOs if we do not use Roundup, so much so that it is 7200 square kilometers (16 times the area of the island of Montreal) of land that is sprayed with almost 2 million kilos of the product. If we add the other pesticides used, we can imagine both the accumulation in the soil, the flow into the rivers and the effects on biodiversity downstream. But since the majority of processed corn and soy is used to feed livestock which is then traded on the world market, banning Roundup means the price is no longer competitive, destroying a large agricultural production sector. However, this defeatism must be reversed: by chasing away these harmful food mega-productions, it becomes possible to produce more diversified products that will have local outlets. The consequences on the biodiversity of our food are enormous as we slowly poison ourselves.



companies have every advantage in presenting their projects more polluting than they really are, in order to obtain credits to make their projects “greener”. Obviously, the scandals pile up because the mechanisms require a lot of specialists, lawyers, accountants and financial investments. With biodiversity credits, corporations will literally hold animal species hostage in their planning: “If you don’t give us another \$4 million, we’ll use enough glyphosate to kill the last boreal chorus frogs in our plantation of corn”.

Second, the transformations must be permanent. That is to say that the trees that are planted, for example, remain planted in the ground. It is excessively complex in the context where ecosystems are moving. Unless, for example, the plants are turned into coal which is put back into the ground. Wouldn’t it be simpler not to extract fossil fuels and just keep them where they have been for millions of years? We imagine the same thing with the preservation of species: without ecosystem balances, it is impossible for an animal to survive for long.

Third, projects should not be counted twice. The disputes on this specific issue are interesting: Brazil asks to count the efforts it is making to slow down the destruction of the Amazon rainforest. At the same time, with global warming, the forests at the poles are spreading all the more towards the north and the south, because of the destruction of the permafrost. What should be counted then, the melting of the permafrost which releases CO₂ or the growth of trees? Think especially of international lawyers, actuaries, negotiators, diplomats who salivate over the contracts they will obtain to resolve these issues while eating caviar at international summits.

But the icing on the cake is the question of side effects. You can imagine the problem: in several countries, if we plant trees on land that was occupied by peasants, or even worse on land where nomadic communities came to pick plants seasonally, these people risk using adjacent lands. There is therefore a side effect: the protection of one area leads to the destruction or use of another. To avoid these side effects, if we “save a forest”, we must then protect it, monitor it, that’s obvious. In short, to ensure biodiversity, there must be “good governance”, or in other words, in order to avoid the deforestation of

land needed to preserve an endangered species, we displace and repress peasants and Indigenous communities. So it’s going to take more cops to enforce those decisions.

Biodiversity credits, like carbon credits, only serve to legitimize the continued consumption of the richest countries in the global North. Worse, they favor a tangle of politicking which maintains the poorest populations of the globe in a state of subjugation. Peasant and Indigenous populations are amongst the most marginalized and disadvantaged, but these populations are the ones who destroy

the planet the least through consumption, simply because they cannot afford to buy much. Indigenous communities often even have a beneficial effect on their territories. Indeed, they still have the most sustainable strategies for the planet, as several agronomists suggest. They will also be the most affected because they directly depend on ecosystems for their survival. Instead of taking their experiences into account, we are going to give money to people who spit on the poorest by trying to force them to save the planet. Let’s not give them this chance, let’s block COP15.

UNLIKE THE DINOSAURS



OUR METEORITES HAVE NAMES

STRIKING AGAINST COP15

We are all concerned about the protection of biodiversity. We are heading into a wall. The consequences of capitalism will soon be irreversible. The COP15 is a masquerade that only accelerates the destruction of habitats and wildlife populations. Opposing the COP15 allows us to make our voices heard in a way that is different from that of the oil companies, the corporations and the States. We must use this mobilization to regroup and act against the states and companies responsible for the decline of biodiversity.

In this context, going on strike is the essential collective tool that we have at our disposal to be able to free ourselves from the responsibilities of work and school. This method of action allows various community groups and student associations to mobilize and participate in workshops, discussions, street demonstrations and blockades during the COP15. Let's turn the tide: participating in this environmental movement gives us the opportunity to develop alternatives that can free us from the grip of states and private interests. States and corporations must understand that we will not be appeased, and we will not be silent – we will stand in their way during COP15 proceedings.

At a time when crises of all kinds are converging, we must organize and unite to support the struggles of marginalized people, Indigenous people, people living in the global South, racialized people, low-income people, and migrants – all of whom are most directly affected by the decline of biodiversity and the decisions made at COP15.

Climate justice movements have been gaining momentum in recent years, and we need to build on the momentum of the campaign against the COP15. At the first meeting of the Anti-Capitalist and Environmentalist Coalition Against COP15, a proposal was drafted urging student unions and groups to take an oppositional stance and to vote for a strike mandate from December 7-9. These dates correspond to the beginning of the summit taking place at the Palais des Congrès.

Strikes are grounded in historical success and bring about real social transformation. By



LET'S BLOCK COP15 AND CAPITALISM!

attacking those in charge, we will succeed in denouncing green capitalism and disrupting the activities of the COP15. It is imperative that student associations and groups encourage their members to become actively involved in the struggle and refer them to the coalition. If you are a member of a community or student group, bring this resolution to your general assembly, argue for the necessity of this strike, and be a part of the solution to the climate crisis. The full proposal can be found at fucklacop15.org.

Together, let's fight back, plan actions, and take over the convention center!

