

So long as the economy is governed by the profit motive, the wide-scale destruction of the environment will continue through war, extraction of resources, and pollution. Any agreements among the capitalists are only short respites between periods of struggle, and whatever decisions the latest climate conferences reach, they are certainly only a means to strengthen the power of some capitalists over others to continue plundering the world.

What is needed is the formation of a stable organization of revolutionaries that can direct the environmental struggle against the imperialists. The starting point is to organize workers around the specific effects of the environmental crisis on their lives—along with other effects of imperialism—and link these demands with the question of power through the creation of stable organizations with a revolutionary perspective. Mobilizing and organizing working people against deteriorating environmental and climate conditions serves to broaden the struggles of the working class and unite it with broader sections of the people. The struggle is international and needs to be taken away from the leadership of the very people plundering the planet for their profits—the only force capable of leading the struggle is the international proletariat.

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The Environmental Crisis is the Crisis of Imperialism



A construction vehicle allegedly torched by Maoist guerrillas in Jharkhand, India, PTI

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by the Editorial Board

Climate Week NYC came to a close on September 24 this year, a week that began with an estimated 75,000-person march and over 100 arrests. The events, however, are geared toward a capitalist-friendly resolution of the environmental crisis and obscures the antagonistic class interests that lie at the heart of it.

The Capitalist Class and the Environmental Movement

Climate Week NYC is a week-long protest held in New York City since its inception in 2009 and coincides with the assembly of the United Nations. Its aim is to bring attention to global warming and the ongoing environmental crisis by organizing large protests and inviting important politicians, capitalists, and scientists to give speeches. This year's speakers included several Democratic politicians, including John Kerry, whom Biden sent from the White House. While posing as "climate-friendly," the Biden administration has outpaced previous administrations in approving federal oil and gas drilling and leasing despite his 2020 campaign promise to end the practice.

Climate Week NYC is organized by the non-profit Climate Group, which began in 2004 with the aim of getting monopolies to transition to renewable energy sources. It promotes imperialist projects such as the Green New Deal, which utilizes existing imperialist economics to transition to renewable energy sources. The group is funded by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, among other capitalist groups, and works closely with several banks and politicians around the world.

The modern environmental movement is a tool of capitalist competition. It does not challenge the private ownership of property, exploitation and oppression, or the continuation of war in the race to accumulate renewable resources, all of which drive the environmental crisis. Even the Democrat mouthpieces at Climate Week acknowledged that the US military is the world's number one polluter.

Conclusion

In the face of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois approaches to resolving the environmental crisis, a crisis most deeply felt by the oppressed people of the third world, a proletarian class standpoint is the only perspective that can successfully overcome this crisis. The people's war in India, among others, provides insight into directing the environmental struggle against imperialism.

Within the last few months alone, Maoist guerrillas attacked coal mines and construction equipment of various encroaching monopolies. Central to New Democratic revolution is the seizure of land concentrated in the hands of a few landlords and redistributing it to the peasants who till it, promoting environmentally sustainable practices to maintain the land instead of destroying it for the profits of the landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

Meanwhile, bourgeois environmental organizations like Climate Group actively work with the fascistic Indian government and top agribusiness monopolies that are actively plundering the land and waging campaigns of terror against the Maoists and the struggling people.

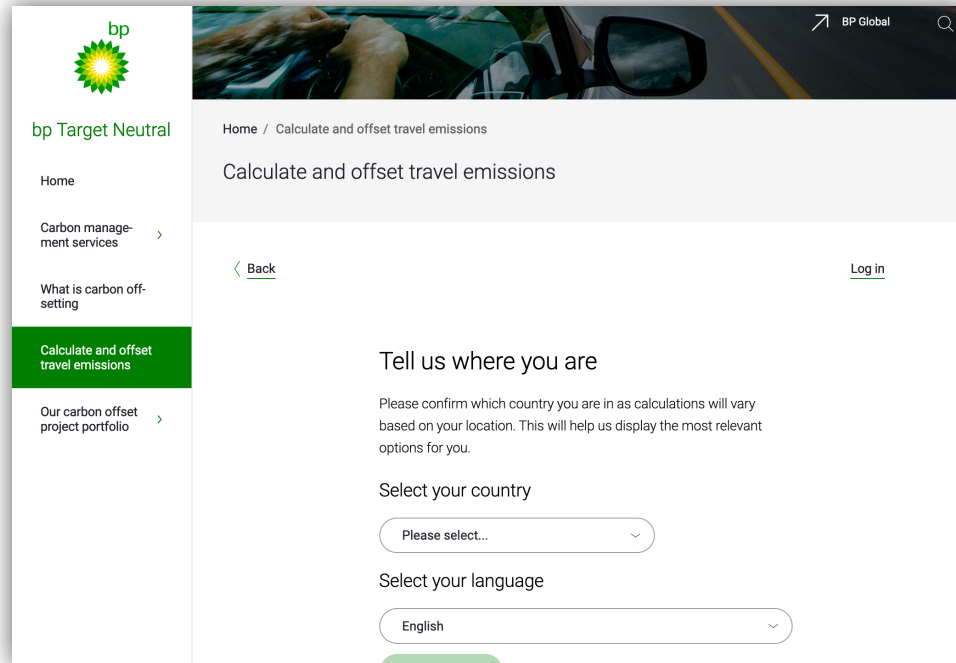
We must understand the environmental crisis as a crisis of imperialism. The working class will play a leading role in this struggle based on its role in production and ability to force concessions from the capitalists directly and ultimately seize power from them. The ongoing workers' struggles and summer of strikes provides an important perspective for the direction of the environmental movement.

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workers do, their tendency is to conflate the two and view all of the problems of imperialism as being on equal footing, viewing the working class as just another oppressed group rather than the last class in history and the only class capable of leading the overthrow of imperialism because of their role in production.

Petty-bourgeois activism takes action divorced from the struggles of the working class against the owning class and thus neglects the question of power.

One such major trend is the idea of individual choices being the main way out of the environmental crisis. It targets the symptoms such as cars and SUVs while the cause—imperialism—is ignored or even sided with as potential solutions, such as monopolies invested in renewable resources. The individualist approach finds popular traction particularly in conditions where the ideology of imperialism has manifested itself in postmodernism, an approach to understanding the world through interpersonal contradictions and individual narratives. In the most vulgar form, this manifests itself in an anti-human approach that views humans on par with animals and treats workers such as coal miners and loggers as the enemy.



British Petroleum's carbon offset calculator

The Guardian reports that only 100 monopolies are responsible for more than 70% of greenhouse gas emissions since 1988. This fact alone is enough to refute the individualist approach to undoing the damage to the environment or even slowing it down by focusing on consumption rather than production. This method, however it is intended, shifts the blame off of the worlds' largest monopolies and onto the average person. The anti-

masses character of this approach is exposed by the campaign launched in 2005 by British Petroleum, one of the largest polluting exploiters, in which the company hired a marketing and public relations agency to popularize the idea of a personal "carbon footprint" and promoted the consumerist idea of a "low carbon diet."

There is also an alarmist tendency which, instead of individualizing the problem, seeks to attract the masses on the basis of fear or guilt. In their view the entire planet and all life on it is doomed by imperialism and an environmental collapse is inevitable. This line of reasoning ignores the laws of capitalist development. Never in the history of capitalism was new machinery introduced or invented in the absence of crisis. The top 100 carbon emitting monopolies have made major investment in dead machinery and dead resources

and will use them until the crisis mounts to a point where they are forced to develop them so that they can remain competitive and profitable. Capitalism is anarchistic and chaotic but follows a logic and certain economic laws. While the imperialist monopolies will continue seeking short-term profits, conditions have outrun them, and the most enterprising imperialists have already begun devising methods to make emissions reduction profitable. The capitalists will organize and mobilize society to preserve their continued existence as the ruling class, and this includes in the face of environmental crisis.

Finally, another popular trend is the various stunts that aim to attract media attention that have so far been conducted largely in Europe. In its current form, a few individuals sabotage famous landmarks or events (often in broad daylight) with the goal of garnering widespread media attention in order to convey the urgency of the issue and mobilize people to take action.

Despite the boldness and personal sacrifice of the individuals, this tactic also falls short for the same reasons as the others. At best, it can push others to take similar actions or inspire people to get involved in the environmental movement; however, the fundamental issue remains that the current environmental movement is largely in the hands of the capitalist class, and so the recruitment effort is nullified. While actions such as sabotage are not to be neglected as legitimate forms of struggle in the mobilization and organization of the people, such actions have to be tied directly to the ongoing struggles of the people, mainly the proletariat, and contribute directly to its development by means of agitation and propaganda.

The ongoing race to secure these renewable resources has been behind several recent conflicts. On August 30, protests erupted in the Democratic Republic of Congo against a “stabilization mission” of the UN. The 16,000 soldiers that comprise the forces of this mission are concentrated around mineral-rich mines, including lithium and cobalt—both necessary minerals for the construction of electric batteries. The stabilization they are seeking is the steady extraction of these minerals by a semi-enslaved workforce that includes many child laborers. 100 protesters were killed and many more were injured or arrested.

Similarly, in Argentina, Chile, and the United States, the creation and expansion of lithium mines come at the expense of indigenous people, and state forces have committed numerous acts of violence against the people. In the process of the extraction of these resources, large amounts of groundwater used by the people of the region are being siphoned, and the mining process itself results in the poisoning of the air, land, water, and the workers involved in extraction.

Petty-Bourgeois Trends in Environmentalism

While organizations like *Climate Group* are pushing for green imperialism, other perspectives found in the environmental movement fall short of fundamentally challenging imperialism. This is because the heavy petty-bourgeois influence of the movement mistakes the various symptoms of imperialism for the root of imperialism—private property, or the private ownership of the means of production. Because the petty-bourgeoisie experiences oppression but not exploitation as