

« **Our lives are worth more than their profits !** » - **The Lima Ecosocialist Declaration**

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Declaration of the Ecosocialist International Network before COP20 in Lima, Peru (December 2014).

The imminent climate crisis that we confront today is a grave threat to the preservation of life on the planet. Many academic and political works have confirmed the fragility of life on earth to temperature change. Only a few degrees can cause – and are causing – an ecological catastrophe of incalculable consequences. Now we are experiencing the deadly effects of this situation. The melting ice, the contamination of the atmosphere, rising sea levels, desertification, and the increasing intensity of the weather, are all proof.

It is now fundamental to ask ourselves who and what is causing the climate to change like this. We urgently need to unmask all the abstract answers, which attempt to blame all of humanity. These abstract answers disconnect the current situation from the historical dynamics which have emerged from fossil fuel (coal, oil gas)-based industrialization, which causes global warming, and the logic of capitalism, which is sustained by the private appropriation of wealth, and the conquest of profit. Profit at the cost of social exploitation and ecological devastation : these are two faces of the same system, which is the culprit of climate catastrophe.

In this panorama, the Conference of the Parties (COP), organized by diverse governments and funded by large corporations, confirms the responsibility of capitalism for the the climate crisis, by putting on empty events without any effective resolutions capable of solving the problem. In fact, we are moving backwards, a retreat expressed in the ridiculous “green funds” which openly profit from pollution. Sadly, this dynamic is deepened through the attitudes sustained by multiple governments – facilitating pollution and putting the profits of corporations above the wellbeing of people. This can be seen most strongly in the countries of the South, and thus it is fundamental to comprehend that the dynamics of this system tend to dump the global ecological crisis upon the shoulders of the oppressed and exploited of the earth.

It is vital to emphasize the importance of the diverse social and ecological struggles all over the world, which propose to stop climate change and the ecological crisis through the logic of solidarity. It is important to note that many of these processes are launched and led by women. Without a doubt, the Latin American scenario today exemplifies the mix of resistance, self-management and processes of transformation, based on projects which can unite new proposals with ancestral cosmovisions. One example can be found in the brave struggles of the indigenous peoples and campesinos of Peru, in particular their resistance to the Conga mega-mining project. It is also useful to focus our attention on the experience of the Yasuni Park, which was the initiative of indigenous and ecological movements – to protect a large region of Amazon rain forest from oil drilling, in

exchange for payments from rich nations to the people of Ecuador. The government of Rafael Correa accepted the proposal for several years, but recently decided to open the park to multinational oil corporations, provoking important protests. Another case can be found in the development projects which the Brazilian government is attempting to carry out, which threaten a large part of Amazonia with destruction.

From this perspective, there is very little to hope for at COP20 this December in Lima, Peru. If there is any escape from climate change and the global ecological crisis, it will emerge from the power of struggle and the organization of the oppressed and exploited peoples of the world, with the understanding that the struggle for a world without ecological devastation must connect to the struggle for a society without oppression or exploitation. This change must begin now, bringing together unique struggles, daily efforts, processes of self-management, and reforms to slow the crisis, with a vision centered on a change of civilization ; a new society in harmony with nature. This is the central proposal of ecosocialism, an alternative to our current ecological catastrophe.

Change the system, not the climate !

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* <http://ecosocialisthorizons.com/2014/10/the-lima-ecosocialist-declaration/>

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