

Draft Manifesto of Revolutionary Marxism in the Age of Capitalist Ecological and Social Destruction

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The leadership of the Fourth International has approved, as a first draft, an Ecosocialist Manifesto, which will be discussed at our next World Congress in February 2025 (see below).

This document is based in our belief that an ecosocialist society, liberated from class, gender, race or colonial domination is needed, and can be achieved only through a revolution. The Manifesto tries to assess the best ways and means towards this aim.

We would be interested to get comments, criticisms and arguments of relevant Scientists, Marxist thinkers and significant social and political movements. We do not pretend to have the monopoly of truth, and believe that dialogue with other radical and revolutionary forces is necessary, in fact indispensable, if we want to move forward in the struggle.

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Break with capitalist growth, for an ecosocialist alternative

Draft adopted by International Committee February 2024

Introduction

INTR.1.1. This Manifesto is a document of the Fourth International, founded in 1938 by Leon Trotsky and his comrades to save the legacy of the October Revolution from Stalinist disaster. Rejecting sterile dogmatism, The Fourth International has integrated the challenges of social movements and the ecological crisis into its thinking and practice. Its forces are limited, but they are present on

every continent and have actively contributed to the resistance to Nazism, May 68 in France, solidarity with anti-colonial struggles (Algeria, Vietnam), the growth of the anti-globalization movement and the development of ecosocialism.

The Fourth International does not see itself as the sole vanguard; it participates, to the extent of its strength, in broad anti-capitalist formations. Its objective is to contribute to the formation of a new International, of a mass character, of which it would be one of the components.



INTR.1.2. Our era is one of a double historic crisis: the crisis of the socialist alternative in the face of the multifaceted crisis of capitalist “civilization”.

INTR.1.3 If the Fourth International is publishing this Manifesto in 2025, it is because we are convinced that the process of ecosocialist revolution at different territorial levels, but with a planetary dimension, is more necessary than ever: it is now a question not only of putting an end to the social and democratic regressions that accompany global capitalist expansion, but also of saving humanity from an ecological catastrophe without precedent in human history. These two objectives are inextricably linked.

INTR.1.4. However, the socialist project which forms the basis of our proposals requires a broad re-foundation nourished by the pluralistic assessment of experiences and by the major movements fighting against all forms of domination and oppression (class, gender, dominated national communities, etc.). The socialism we propose is radically different from the models that dominated the last century or of any statist or dictatorial regime: it is a revolutionary project, radically democratic, nourished by the contribution of feminist, ecological, anti-racist, anti-colonialist, antimilitarist and LGBTQ+ struggles.

INTR. 1.5. We have been using the term ecosocialism for some decades now because we are convinced that the global threats and challenges posed by the ecological crisis must permeate all struggles within/against the existing globalized order and require a reformulation of the socialist project. The relationship with our planet, overcoming the “metabolic rift” (Marx) between human societies and their living environment, and the respect for the planet’s ecological equilibrium are not just chapters in our programme and strategy, but their common thread.

INTR.1.6. The need to update the analyses of revolutionary Marxism, has always inspired the action and thought of the Fourth International. We are continuing this approach in our work on writing this Ecosocialist Manifesto: we want to help to formulate a revolutionary perspective capable of confronting the challenges of the 21st century. A perspective that draws inspiration from social and ecological struggles, and from the genuinely anti-capitalist critical reflections that are developing around the world.

1. The objective necessity of an ecosocialist, antiracist, antimilitarist, anticolonialist and feminist revolution

1.1. Capital triumphs, but its triumph plunges it into the insurmountable contradictions highlighted by Marx. Faced with these, Rosa Luxembourg issued her warning in 1915: “Socialism or barbarism”. The timeliness of this warning is burning than ever, as the catastrophe growing around us is

unprecedented. To the plagues of war, colonialism, exploitation, racism, authoritarianism, oppressions of all kinds, there is in fact added a new scourge, which exacerbates all the others: the accelerated destruction by capital of the natural environment on which the survival of humankind depends.

1.2. Scientists identify eight global indicators of ecological sustainability. Danger limits are estimated for seven of them. Due to the capitalist logic of accumulation, seven at least have already been crossed: (climate, functional integrity of ecosystems, the nitrogen cycle, the phosphorus cycle, groundwater freshwater, surface freshwater and natural ecosystem area, six of which even exceed the “ceiling” (only the climate does not exceed this). The poor are the main victims, especially in poor countries.

1.3. Under the whiplash of competition, big industry and finance enhance their despotic hold on people and the Earth. The destruction continues, despite the warning cries of science. The craving for profit, like an automaton, demands always more markets and always more goods, hence more exploitation of labour force and plundering of natural resources.

1.4. Legal capital, so-called criminal capital and bourgeois politics are closely intertwined. The Earth is bought on credit by the banks, the multinationals and the rich. Governments increasingly strangle human and democratic rights through brutal repression and technological control. A new fascism offers its services to save the system through lies, racism, sexism, xenophobia and social demagoguery.

1.5. It is an understatement to say that the limits of sustainability are also crossed on the social level.

1.6. With their yachts, their jets, their swimming pools, their exclusive massive golf courses, their many SUVs, their space tourism, their jewellery, their *haute couture* and their luxurious homes in the four corners of the world, the richest 1% owns as much as 50% of the world's population. The “trickle down theory” is a myth. It is towards the rich that wealth “trickles”, not the opposite. Poverty is increasing even in “developed” countries. Labour incomes are squeezed ruthlessly, social protections – where they exist – are dismantled. The world capitalist economy floats on an ocean of debt, exploitation and inequalities.

1.7. The unfair distribution of resources generates environmental disasters among different ethnic-racial groups. For example, in developed and often in developing capitalist societies, poor and racialized people are the ones who usually inhabit the territories most affected by pollution, with higher concentration of rubbish, as well as risk areas lacking urban planning such as slopes and hills. Environmental racism is another face of the exclusion that capitalism imposes on racialized and poor people.

1.8. Inequalities and discrimination affect women in particular, who continue to provide most domestic and care work, whether it is free or paid. They receive only 35% of labour income. In some regions of the world (China, Russia, Central Asia), their share is declining, sometimes significantly. Beyond work, women are under attack on all fronts as women – from sexist and sexual violence to the right to food, the right to education, the right to be respected and the right to control their own bodies.

1.9. While old people of the working classes (and also some of the “middle class”) are discarded, the lives of future generations are generally mutilated in advance. Most parents of the working classes no longer believe that their children will live better than they do. A growing number of young people observe with dread, rage, sadness and grief, the organized destruction of their world, raped, gutted, drowned in concrete, engulfed in the cold waters of selfish calculation: the programmed destruction

of their future.

1.10. The scourges of famine, food insecurity and malnutrition had receded at the end of the 20th century; they are now burgeoning again as a result of a catastrophic convergence of neoliberalism, militarism and climate change: almost one in ten people are hungry, almost one in three suffer from food insecurity, more than three billion cannot afford a healthy diet. One hundred and fifty million children under the age of five are stunted by hunger.

1.11. The hope of a peaceful world in the short term evaporates. More than 30 countries in the world are or have recently been in wars of considerable dimensions, including Sudan, Iraq, Yemen, Palestine, Syria, Ukraine, Libya, Congo (RD) and Myanmar. The climate crisis itself, weather phenomena, and the resulting intense migratory flows are fuelling many conflicts around the globe. The suffering, displacement and death of populations is tremendous.

1.12. While imperialisms squabble, urgent measures for climate transition and a sustainable future are called into question. Wars, besides being calamitous in terms of human lives, attacking women's bodies, using rape as an instrument of terror and dehumanizing collective life, are harmful to the planet we live on. They destroy habitats, cause deforestation, poison the soils, the waters and the air, and are major sources of carbon emissions.

1.13. The brutal Russian war against Ukraine in 2022 and the new level of ethnic cleansing perpetrated in the Gaza-war 2023/24 against the Palestinian people are major crimes against humanity. Both cases confirm the barbarian nature of capitalism today. The Russian imperialist aggression against Ukraine in 2022 has fostered geopolitical tensions on a global scale. It confirms the entry in a new era of inter-imperialist competition for global hegemony, with the US and its allies on the one side, China and its allies on the other side. Land, energy and mineral resources are an important stake of this inter-imperialist competition.

1.14. Everyone could have a good life on Earth, but capitalism is an exploitative, macho, racist, warlike, authoritarian and deadly mode of predation. Productivism is destructivism. In two centuries, it has led humanity into a deep ecosocial impasse.

1.15. Climate change is the most dangerous aspect of ecological destruction, it is a threat to human life without precedent in history. The Earth is in danger of becoming a biological wasteland uninhabitable for billions of poor people who are not responsible for this disaster. To stop this catastrophe, we must halve global carbon dioxide and methane emissions before 2030, and cancel them before 2050. So, as a priority banish fossil fuels, agribusiness, the meat industry and hyper-mobility... that is to say produce less globally.

1.16. On the one hand, the madness of capitalist accumulation confronts humanity with the urgent need of a global degrowth in final energy consumption and, therefore, in material production and transportation. On the other hand, three billion people, mostly in the Global South