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# **For a just, ecosocialist degrowth**

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

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## **Introduction**

Our era is one of historic crisis for the socialist alternative. The proposition of a socialist society, as a response to the destructive barbarity of capitalism, has lost much of its credibility.

One of the main reasons for this crisis is the failure of the projects claiming to be socialist in the 20th century, whether in the social-democratic form - which never dared to question the capitalist system - or in the “real socialism” of the USSR, where the revolution of 1917 was betrayed by the dictatorship of a bureaucratic caste led by Joseph Stalin. What Stalinism and social democracy also have in common is their total neglect of the ecological question, in favor of a policy of “growth” at all costs, leading to considerable environmental disasters.

If the Fourth International is publishing this Manifesto in 2025, it is because we are convinced that a socialist revolution is more necessary than ever, not only to put an end to the power of exploitative parasites, but also to save humanity from an ecological catastrophe unprecedented in human history. These two objectives are inextricably linked.

However, the socialism we propose is radically different from the models that dominated the last century: it is revolutionary, democratic, feminist, anti-racist, anti-colonialist and ecological. We have been using the term ecosocialism for some decades now, because we are convinced that the challenges posed by the ecological crisis 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.

Without ever abandoning the achievements of revolutionary Marxism, which have always inspired the action and thought of the Fourth International, we are trying, in this Ecosocialist Manifesto, to help 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**

Capital triumphs, but its triumph plunges it into the insurmountable contradictions highlighted by Marx. Faced with these, Rosa Luxemburg issued her warning in 1915: “Socialism or barbarism”. The timeliness of this warning is hotter 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.

Scientists identify nine global indicators of ecological sustainability. Dangerousness boundaries are estimated for eight of them. Due to the capitalist logic of accumulation, six at least are already crossed: climate, biodiversity, land use, plastic waste, fresh water, nitrogen and phosphorus cycles. The global life-support system is trashed. The poor are the main victims, especially in poor countries.

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

Legal capital, criminal capital and bourgeois politics are increasingly 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 and social demagoguery.

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

With their yachts, their jets, their swimming pools, their SUVs, 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. Poverty is increasing even in “developed” countries. Labour incomes are squeezed ruthlessly, social protections – where they exist – are dismantled. The capitalist economy floats on an ocean of debt, exploitation and inequalities.

The unfair distribution of resources generates environmental disasters among different ethnic-racial groups. Black 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 portrait of the exclusion that capitalism imposes on racialized and poor people.

Inequalities and discrimination affect women in particular, who continue to provide most of the 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 attacked 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.

While old people are discarded, the lives of future generations are mutilated in advance. Most parents no longer believe that their children will live better than them. A growing number of young people observe with dread, rage or sadness the destruction of their world, raped, gutted, drowned in concrete, engulfed in the cold waters of selfish calculation.

The scourges of famine, food insecurity and malnutrition had receded by the end of the 20th century; they now burgeon 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.

The promise of a peaceful world evaporates. Regional conflicts are on the rise. Military spending continues to grow. In 2021, they crossed the 2 trillion dollar mark for the first time, including more than 800 billion for the US army. The exacerbation of the inter-imperialist rivalry between the USA and China is sharpening. A global nuclear confrontation between these powers and their respective allies would spell the end of human history. The dominant capitalist circles do not want it, but are less and less able to prevent it.

The Earth can provide everyone with a good life, but capitalism is a macho, racist, warlike, authoritarian and deadly mode of predation. Productivism is destructivism. In two centuries, it has led humanity into a deep ecosocial impasse.

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.

On the one hand, the madness of capitalist accumulation obliges humanity to organize urgently a global degrowth in final energy consumption and, therefore, in material production and transportation. On the other hand, three billion people, mostly in the South, live in appalling conditions, due to capitalism and imperialism. Justice demands that certain types of production grow to fulfill their huge unsatisfied needs: good health systems, decent houses, good food, good education, public transport, social security for all...

Is there a way out of this contradiction? Yes, there is. The climate impact of these types of production - especially when planned and assumed by the public sector - is much lower than that of the production aimed at satisfying the needs of the rich through blind market competition for profit. The richest 1% emits nearly twice as much CO<sub>2</sub> as the poorest 50%. The poor emits much less than 2-2,3t CO<sub>2</sub> per person and per year (the average volume to get in 2030 if we want to reach net zero emissions in 2050 with a 50% probability). To provide them what they need would barely multiply this figure by three. But then the climate constraint would oblige the 1% rich to divide their emissions by thirty in a few years. Yet they refuse to do the slightest effort! On the opposite: they want ever more privileges!

Governments have pledged to stay below +1.5°C, to maintain biodiversity, to achieve the seventeen (very insufficient!) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to respect the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities and capacities” in the ecological crisis, while producing ever more stuff, using ever more energy. It is excluded that these combined promises are held by the capital. The facts show it:

- Thirty-three years after the Earth Summit in Rio (1992), the global energy mix is still completely dominated by fossil fuels (84% in 2020). The total production of fossil fuel has increased by 62% passing from 83TWH in 1992 to 136TWH in 2021. Renewables do not replace fossil fuels, they add to them, offering a new market for capitalists.
- With the energy crisis unleashed after the pandemic and deepened by the Russian imperialist war on Ukraine, all capitalist powers revived coal, oil, natural gas (including shale gas), and nuclear.
- The main historical responsible for climatic shift, the US imperialism has enormous means to fight against the catastrophe, but its political representatives criminally subordinate this fight to the protection of their world hegemony, when they do not simply deny it.
- The measures governments in developed capitalist countries implement under the label “decarbonization” not only fail to address the magnitude of the climate crisis but also accelerate extractivism, mostly in the South, but also in the North and in the oceans, at the expense of the populations and the ecosystems.
- This so-called “decarbonization” exacerbates imperialist land grabbing and exploitation of labour in the South, with the complicity of the local bourgeoisies (as exemplified by different investment projects based on the use of solar and wind energy, especially in “free economic zones” of poor countries, in order to produce “green hydrogen” aimed at supplying industries in developed countries).
- “Carbon markets”, “carbon compensation”, “biodiversity compensations” and “market mechanisms” weigh on the least responsible, the poor, in particular the indigenous people and the peoples of the South in general.

“Circular economy”, “resilience”, “energy transition”, “biomimicry” are hollow formulas in the hands of neoliberal green capitalism that generates ever more inequalities.

In the face of the climate crisis, the capitalist fetishism of accumulation will ultimately leave only two options: deploy sorcerer’s apprentice technologies (nuclear, carbon capture-sequestration, geoengineering...)... or let “nature” eliminate a few billion poor people in poor countries.

Politically, the impotence and injustice of green capitalism play into the hands of a fossil, conspiratorial, colonialist, racist, violently macho and LGBTphobic neo-fascism, which this second possibility does not put off. A fraction of the wealthy is marching towards catastrophe, cynically betting that their wealth will protect them, that they will settle on floating islands, or on another planet, letting the poor die, because such is the divine will.

To dismiss neoliberal green capitalism and fossil neo-fascism back-to-back would be unconscious. But none of these regimes could prevent global warming from going on, with dire consequences. And if the victims are more numerous in poor countries, the rich ones will also suffer dramatic losses. World capitalism is not progressing gradually towards peace and sustainable development, it is advancing backwards and with great strides towards war, ecological disaster, genocide and neo-fascist barbarism.

Facing this challenge, it is not enough to question the neoliberal regime and to revalue the role of the State. It is not even enough to stop the capitalist dynamic of accumulation. The global final energy consumption must diminish radically, which means produce less and transport less globally.

To reconcile ecological-climatic constraints and the needs of the majority of humankind, a complete reorientation towards democratic determination of real human needs and the sustaining and

regeneration of the global ecosystem is indispensable. Social justice, climate justice, real democracy and another development are the only possible way to respect the ecological/energy constraint while satisfying the legitimate need of development of the poor. Just degrowth - ecosocialist degrowth - is a *sine qua non* of rescue.

Getting out of the productivist impasse is only possible under the following conditions:

- abandon the idea that the solution will come from new technologies (consuming energy and resources). Wisely decide to use the means we have, they suffice to meet the needs of all;
- drastically reduce the ecological footprint of the rich to permit the safe development of the poor;
- replacing the production of commodities with the production of use-values;
- determine democratically what needs these use values must satisfy, and how;
- include taking care of humans and ecosystems, careful respect for living things and for ecological boundaries, at the centre of this democratic deliberation;
- consequently suppress useless production and useless transport, refund all productive activity and consumption.

These conditions are necessary but not sufficient. Social and ecological crises are one. We must rebuild an emancipatory project for the exploited and the oppressed. A class project which, beyond basic needs, favors being over having. A project that profoundly changes behavior, consumption, the relationship with the rest of nature, the conception of happiness and the vision that humans have of the world. An anti-productivist project to live better by taking care of living things on the only habitable planet in the solar system.

Wry assertions that historical conditions are not ripe for revolution miss the point. The decadence of bourgeois society is leading humankind towards an abyss. An extremely profound ecosocialist, antiracist, antimilitarist, anticolonialist and ecofeminist revolution - a real change of civilization - is objectively necessary and urgent. Without revolutionary upheaval, and that in the coming period, the whole of human civilization is threatened with being swept away.

Capitalism has plunged humanity into such a dark situation before, especially on the eve of the first world conflict. Nationalist hysteria gripped the masses and social democracy, betraying its pledge to respond to war with revolution, gave the green light to slaughter. Nevertheless, Lenin defined the situation as “objectively revolutionary”: only revolution could stop the slaughter, he said. History proved him right: the revolution in Russia and its tendency to spread forced the bourgeoisies to put an end to the massacre. The comparison obviously has its limits. It is one thing to heroically brave death so as not to risk one’s life by killing other human beings for the profit of the gun merchants, the imperialist division of the world and the glories of the generals. Another thing is to rise up against capital because, by incorporating the labour power that produces surplus value, it dehumanizes proletarians to the point of making them alienated instruments of the destruction of the rest of Nature, their “inorganic body”, thus endangering future generations. The mediations towards revolutionary action are infinitely more complex here. But the same awakening of consciousness is necessary. Yet in the face of the ecological crisis, an anti-capitalist revolution is even more objectively necessary. It is this fundamental judgment that must serve as a sub-base for the elaboration of a programme, a strategy and a tactic, because there is no other way.

Everything depends on the struggles and their vanguards. No matter how deep the disaster, at every stage, the struggles will make the difference. Within the struggles, everything depends on the ability of ecosocialist activists to organize in order to orient themselves in practice on the compass of objective historical necessity.

## **2. The madness of militarism and imperialism on a planet in crisis**

War is the closest thing we know to genocidal extermination on Earth. Its logic proliferates, its effects are destructive like a tsunami that swallows up everything in its path. Unfortunately, we know it all too well: its history largely crosses that of humankind. Not of who was right, but of who was left to the confrontation to tell it.

Especially in the last 200 years, western imperialism organized invasions, attacks, coups, wars, murders, all over the world, in order to maintain its hegemony.

More than 30 countries of the world are or have recently been in wars of considerable dimensions, including Sudan, Iraq, Yemen, Palestine, Syria, Congo and Myanmar. The climate crisis itself, weather phenomena, and the resulting intense migratory flows are fuelling many other conflicts around the globe, such as in Chad, Syria, and others. Governments respond by an accentuation of state authoritarianism, militarization and the criminalization of migration. Europe and North America are no longer just continents, they are now also fortresses.

The Russian imperialist aggression against Ukraine in 2022 has fostered geopolitical tensions on a global scale. This war of plunder has been launched in the name of reconstituting the Tsarist empire: an entire people is being denied the right to existence, self-determination and dignity. As a result, NATO, which was in crisis, has been reactivated and reinforced, expanding to new countries (Finland, Sweden) and putting Europe increasingly under US imperialist hegemony. Security at the global level has been further threatened. Nuclear panic has returned to the forefront and we are again reminded how the whole world can disappear in a flash, in the blink of our eyes.

This war 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. Energy and mineral resources are at the centre of this inter-imperialist competition. With the war in Ukraine, the European Union and the US vowed to accelerate the so-called energy transition towards a system based on renewables. But the reality of the market quickly deflated this so called “ambition”. Capitalists continue to invest massively in coal, oil and gas, and governments continue building dangerous nuclear plants and subsidizing the fossil fuels oligarchies. The climate consensus has receded, the class war is accentuated, and as Warren Buffet said, it is still the rich who are winning it with these civilizational setbacks and the threats they carry.

A new arms race has begun. While imperialisms squabble, urgent measures for climate transition and a sustainable future are called into question. We know that 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. The wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan have been disastrous for the ecosystems of these countries. The same is true of the war in Ukraine. Military vehicles consume oil-based fuels with great intensity, and the vehicles used in the war zones have produced many hundreds of thousands of tons of carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons, and sulfur dioxide, in addition to CO<sub>2</sub>. Air pollution from military vehicles and weaponry has always negatively affected public health among civilians in war zones.

The United States military industry, the largest in the world, is pointed out as the largest hydrocarbon consuming institution on the planet. However, all reports on the planetary costs of war are always insufficient, given the lack of transparency of this data, which is not even included in the counting of national carbon emissions.

As ecosocialists, we refuse to choose between the superpowers fighting for global hegemony. We mobilize against imperialist wars and support the people fighting for self-determination and peace.

Build an anti-imperialism from below. We defend an internationalist programme of social justice, of transition led by liberating and collective forces, confronting oppressive policies.

- No to NATO and other military alliances;
- No to the increase in military budgets;
- Dismantling of all nuclear, chemical and bacteriological armament;
- Dismantling of all private military companies;
- Hands off the right to self-determination of the peoples; stop the occupation of lands, ethnical cleaning;....

### **3. The world we fight for**

Our project for a future society articulates social and political emancipation with the imperative to stop the destruction of life and to repair as much as possible the damage already done.

We want to (try to) imagine what a good life would be for everyone everywhere while reducing the consumption of matter and energy, and therefore reducing material production. It is not a question of giving a ready-made model, but of daring to think of another world, a world that makes us want to fight to build it by breaking with capitalism and productivism.

*“Yes, it is bread we fight for, but we fight for roses too.”*

A good life for all requires that basic human needs - healthy food, health, shelter, clean air and water - are met.

A good life is also a chosen life, fulfilling and creative, engaged in rich and equal human relationships, surrounded by the beauty of the world and human achievements.

Our planet (still) has enough arable land, drinking water, sun and wind, biodiversity and resources of all kinds to meet legitimate human needs by renouncing climate-damaging fossil fuels and nuclear power. However, some of these resources are limited and therefore exhaustible, while others, although they are inexhaustible, require materials that are exhaustible or even rare and whose extraction is destructive. In any case, as their use cannot be unlimited, we use them carefully and sparingly.

Essential to our lives they are excluded from private appropriation, considered as common because they must benefit humanity as a whole today and in the long term. In order to guarantee this commonality over time, collective rules defining the uses but also the limits of these uses, the obligations to take care of or repair, are drawn up.

Because a mangrove is not cared for in the same way as an icecap, a wetland in the same way as a sandy beach, a tropical forest in the same way as a river, because solar energy does not obey the same rules, does not impose the same material constraints as wind or water power, the elaboration of rules can only be the fruit of a democratic process involving the first people concerned, workers and inhabitants.

Our common is also all the services that allow us to respond in an egalitarian way, and therefore free of charge, to the needs of education, health, culture, access to water, energy, communication, transport, etc. They, too, are managed and organized democratically by the whole of society.

Services that deal with people and the care they need at the different stages of life break down the separation of public and private, the assignment of women to these tasks by socialising them, i.e. by making them the business of the whole of society. These services for social reproduction are essential tools to fight patriarchal oppression.

All these decentralized, participatory, community-based “public services” form the basis of a non-authoritarian social organization.

On the scale of society as a whole, democratic ecological planning allows people to reappropriate the major social choices relating to production, to decide, as citizens and users, on what to produce and how to produce it, on the services that must be provided, but also on the acceptable limits for the use of material resources such as water, energy, transport, land, etc. These choices are prepared and enlightened by collective deliberation processes that rely on the appropriation of knowledge, whether scientific or derived from the experience of populations, on the self-organization of the oppressed (women’s liberation movements, racialized peoples, people with disabilities, etc.) to push back the barriers to development.) to reduce discrimination and oppression.

This global economic and political democracy is articulated with multiple decentralized collectives/committees: those that allow decisions to be taken at the local level, in the commune or neighbourhood, on the organization of public life and those that allow workers and producers to control the management and organization of their work unit, to decide on the way to produce and therefore to work. It is the combination of these different levels of democracy that allows cooperation and not competition, a management that is effectively rational from an ecological and social point of view, fulfilling from a human point of view, at the level of the workshop, the company, the branch... but also of the commune, the region, the country and even the planet!

All decisions on production and distribution, on how we want to live are guided by the principle: decentralize as much as possible, coordinate as much as necessary.

Taking charge of one’s life requires time, energy, and collective intelligence. Fortunately, the work of production and social reproduction only takes up a few hours a day.

Production is exclusively devoted to the satisfaction of democratically determined needs. Production and distribution are organized in such a way as to minimise the consumption of resources and to eliminate waste, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, it permanently aims at sobriety and “programmed sustainability” (as opposed to the programmed obsolescence of capitalism whether planned or simply due to the logic of the race for profit). Producing as close as possible to the needs to be met allows for a reduction in transport and a better understanding of the work, materials and energy required.

Thus, agriculture is ecological, peasant and local in order to ensure food sovereignty and the protection of biodiversity. Processing workshops and distribution channels ensure that most of the food is produced in short circuits.

The energy sector based on renewable sources is as decentralized as possible to reduce losses and optimise sources. Activities related to social reproduction (health, education, care of the elderly or dependent persons, childcare, etc.) are developed and enhanced, taking care not to reproduce gender stereotypes.

Although work occupies less time, it occupies an essential place because, together with nature and by taking care of it, it produces what is necessary for life.

Self-management of production units combined with democratic planification allows workers to control their activity, to decide on the organization of work and to question the division between manual and intellectual work. The deliberation extends to the choice of technologies according to whether or not they allow the work collective to master the production process. By giving pride of place to concrete, practical and real knowledge of the work process, to collective and individual know-how, and to creativity, it makes it possible to design and produce robust objects that can be dismantled and repaired, that can be reused and, if necessary, recycled, and to reduce the consumption of materials and energy from manufacture to use.

In all areas, the conviction of doing something useful and the satisfaction of doing it well are combined. As for tedious tasks such as collecting rubbish, everyone takes care to reduce their

heaviness and hardship. However, there remains an essential part which is performed by everyone in turn.

A large part of material production, because the volume is greatly reduced, can be deindustrialized (all or part of clothing or food)

Liberating labour from alienation allows us to abolish the boundary between art and life in a kind of 'luxury communism'. We can keep or share tools, furniture, a bicycle, clothes... all our lives because they are ingeniously designed and beautiful.

*Being rather than having.*

*"Only that which is good for all is worthy of you. Only that is worthy of being produced which neither privileges nor demeans anyone."* (A. Gorz).

Freedom does not lie in unlimited consumption, but in a chosen self-limitation, conquered against consumerist alienation. Collective deliberation makes it possible to deconstruct artificial needs, to define 'universalizable' needs, i.e. not reserved for certain people or certain parts of the world, which must be satisfied.

True wealth does not lie in the infinite increase of goods -having- but in the increase of free time -being. Free time opens up the possibility of fulfilment in play, study, civic activity, artistic creation, interpersonal relationships and with the rest of nature.

So we are opening up a lot of work because we have time to think about it and because we can do it with care for people and the rest of nature at the centre.

The places where we live, each space in which we socialize, belong to us in order to build other interpersonal social relationships. Freed from land speculation and the car, we can rethink the use of public spaces, bridge the separation between the centre and the periphery, multiply recreational, meeting and sharing spaces, de-artificializing cities with urban agriculture and community market gardening, restoring biotopes embedded in the urban fabric... And beyond that, to implement a long-term policy aimed at rebalancing urban and rural populations and overcoming the opposition between town and country in order to reconstitute liveable, sustainable human communities on a scale that allows for real democracy.

Our desires and emotions are no longer things to be bought and sold, the range of choices is greatly enlarged for everyone, everyone can develop new ways of having sex, of living, working and raising children together, of building life projects in a free and diverse way, respecting each person's personal decisions, with the idea that there is no one option possible, or one option better than the others. The family can stop being the space for the reproduction of domination, and stop being the only possible form of collective life. We can thus rethink the form of parenthood in a more collective way, politicize our personal decisions about motherhood and parenthood, reflect on how we consider childhood and the role of the elderly or disabled, the social relations we establish with them, and how we are able to break the logics of domination that we have internalized.

We are building a new culture, the opposite of rape culture, a culture that recognizes the bodies of all cis and trans women, and their desires, that recognizes them as subjects capable of deciding about their bodies, their lives and their sexualities, that makes it visible that there are a thousand ways of being a person and of living and expressing our gender and sexuality.

Sexual activity that is freely consented to and enjoyable for all who take part in it is its own sufficient justification.

By radically reducing our consumption of meat and animal products, we have put an end to the abject treatment of animals in the meat industry and industrial fishing. Beyond this we must learn to think about the interdependence of living beings and develop a conception of the relationship between humanity and nature that will probably resemble in some respects that of indigenous peoples, but will nevertheless be different. A conception in which the ethical notions of precaution,

respect and responsibility, as well as wonder at the beauty of the world, will constantly interfere with a scientific understanding that is both ever more refined and ever more clearly incomplete.

## 4. Our transitional method

From our analysis of capitalism and specifically the policies of the ruling class in relation to ecological dangers and climate change, it follows:

First, that there is a need for an overall alternative and a social plan based on use-value production. Turning this or that screw within the system and without changing the mode of production will not be able to avert or even significantly mitigate the current crises and the catastrophes we are facing. One of the important tasks of revolutionary politics is to convey this insight.

The understanding of the need for global revolutionary change is a task that cannot be solved directly and without difficulty in practice. That is why, secondly, it is important to combine the presentation of the overall context with the propagation of immediate demands for which mobilizations can actually be developed or promoted.

Thirdly, it must be emphasized: Convincing people cannot be solved by argumentation alone. In order to win people over to turning away from the capitalist mode of production and to encourage them to resist, successful struggles are needed that give courage and demonstrate that partial victories are possible.

And fourthly, successful struggles require better organization. This is always true in principle, but today - in times when the trade unions have (in many parts of the world) largely disappeared politically and the left is fragmented - it is important to promote practical cooperation in a non-sectarian way, especially among the anti-capitalist left, and at the same time to support the workers in their self-organization.

On the one hand, time is pressing if we do not want to see crucial tipping points crossed and global warming accelerate beyond control. On the other hand, the vast majority of people are not ready to take up the fight for a different system, i.e. to overthrow capitalism. This is partly due to a lack of knowledge of the overall situation, but even more to a lack of perspective on what the alternative could or should look like. In addition, the social and political relationship of forces between the classes does not exactly encourage confrontation with the rulers and the profiteers of the capitalist social order. Thus, a so-called "maximum program", which wants to pose the question of power with an immediate confrontation, has even less chance of success than it already had in the past.

On the other hand, a reform programme that wants to reform capitalism or overcome it piecemeal (moreover, with a policy from above) also has no chance of success. Reforms that accept the rules of the capitalist system are unable to confront the challenges of the ecological crisis. And gradual changes in the economy and state never led to a change of system. The owners and profiteers of capitalism will not peacefully watch as their wealth is confiscated and their way for enrichment is deprived of its basis piece by piece.

Time is short, and there is the need for urgent measures. Some opponents of ecosocialism argue for mild reforms "because we cannot wait for world revolution". Well, partisans of ecosocialism do not propose to wait! Our strategy is to begin NOW, with concrete transitional demands. It is the beginning of a process towards global change. These are not separate historical stages, but dialectical moments in the same process. Each partial or local victory is a step in this movement, which reinforces self-organization and encourages the fight for new victories.

In the upcoming class struggles - they are the elementary prerequisite for the systematic enlightenment and argumentation in broader layers of the working class, the youth, the indigenous etc. - it must become clear that ultimately there is no way around a real change of system and the question of power. The ruling class must be expropriated and its political power overthrown.

### *For an anticapitalist transitional programme*

The transitional method was already suggested by Marx and Engels in the last section of the Communist Manifesto (1848). But it is the Fourth International that gave it its modern signification, in The Transitional Programme from 1938. Its basic assumption is the need, for the revolutionaries to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist programme of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of transitional demands, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class; the aim is to lead the social struggles towards the conquest of power by the proletariat.

Of course, revolutionaries do not discard the programme of the traditional old "minimal" demands: they obviously defend the democratic rights and social conquests of the workers. However, they propose a system of transitional demands, which can be appropriately understood by the exploited and the oppressed, but at the same time is directed against the very bases of the bourgeois regime.

Most of the transitional demands mentioned in the Programme of 1938 are still relevant today: sliding scale of wages and sliding scale of hours; worker's control of the factories, opening of the business "secret" accounts; expropriation of private banks; expropriations of separate groups of capitalists; among others. The interest of such proposals is to unite in struggle the largest possible popular masses, around concrete demands that are in objective contradiction with the rules of the capitalist system.

But we need to update our programme of transitional demands, in order to take into account the new conditions of the 21st Century, and in particular the new situation created by the ecological crisis and the imminent danger of catastrophic climate change. Today these demands must have a socio-ecological and, potentially, an ecosocialist nature.

The aim of the ecosocialist transitional demands is strategic: to be able to mobilize large sections of the urban and rural workers, women, youth, victims of racism or national oppression, as well as unions, social movements, and leftist parties in a struggle that challenges the capitalist system and bourgeois rule. These demands, which combine social and ecological interests, must be considered as necessary, legitimate and relevant by the exploited and the oppressed, according to their given level of social and political consciousness. In the struggle, people become conscious of the need to organize, to unite and to fight; they also begin to understand who is the enemy: not only local forces, but the system itself. The aim of the transitional eco-social demands is to enhance, thanks to the struggle, the class consciousness of the oppressed, their anti-capitalist understanding, and, hopefully, an ecosocialist revolutionary perspective.

Some of these demands have a universal character: for instance, free public transportation. It is both an ecological and a social demand, and it contains seeds of the ecosocialist future: public services vs market, and gratuity vs capitalist profit. However, their strategic significance is not the same according to the societies and the economies. The ecosocialist transitional demands must take into account the needs and aspirations of the masses in the different parts of the world capitalist system.

## **5. Main lines of a global, just ecosocialist degrowth programme**

Satisfying real social needs while respecting ecological constraints is only possible by breaking with the productivist and consumerist logic of capitalism, which widens inequalities, objectifies the living and "ruins the only two sources of all wealth - the Earth and the workers" (Marx). At the global level, breaking this logic implies fighting in priority for the following lines of force. They form a coherent whole, to be completed and broken down according to national and regional specificities. In this respect, two extreme cases arise: the so-called "developed" countries and the

so-called “least advanced” countries. The former are by far the main culprits for the disruption of ecological balances and have in particular very largely exhausted their carbon budget; the decrease in their energy consumption is therefore an immediate imperative, inseparable from their obligation of reparation and solidarity with regard to the latter. These, for their part, cannot help but still consume a certain quantity of fossil energy and other resources to satisfy the enormous mass of elementary social needs of which their popular classes are massively deprived. At the same time, they have to invent a mode of development alternative to the fossil mode which has been followed historically by the first ones: failure to do so would most certainly expose the poor countries to an aggravation of the catastrophe which is already hitting them the hardest. The ecosocialist programme responds to this situation by advancing on the one hand global anti-capitalist demands (which draw the framework of the necessary reduction of production and consumption on a planetary level), and on the other hand specific anti-capitalist demands, respectively for the so-called “developed” countries and for poor or middle-income countries.

### *5.1. Share the wealth to take care of humans and our living environment, free of charge*

Quality health care, good education, good care for young children, a dignified retirement and care that respects dependency, accessible, permanent and comfortable housing, efficient public transport, renewable energy, healthy food, a clean water, internet access and a natural environment in good condition: these are the real needs that a civilization worthy of its name should soberly satisfy for all humans, regardless of their skin colour, gender, ethnicity, convictions. This is possible, without significantly increasing the strain in our environment. Why don't we have it? Because the economy is tuned to the delusional needs of the capitalists. They consume and invest ever more for profit, appropriate all resources, and transform everything into commodities. Their selfish logic sows misfortune and death. A 180° turn is required. Natural resources and knowledge constitute a common good to be managed prudently and collectively. The satisfaction of real needs and the restoration of ecosystems must be planned democratically and supported by the public sector, under the active control of the populations, and by extending free access as much as possible. Scientific research must be placed at the service of this collective project. The necessary first step is therefore to fight inequalities and oppression, to refinance the public sector by taking the money where it is: progressive taxation, globalization of income, lifting of banking secrecy, taxation of wealth, capital gains and financial transactions, abolition of public debts, abolition of tax havens, fight against corruption...

### *5.2. Expand commons and public services against privatization and commodification*

This is one of the key aspects of the fight for a social and ecological transition, in many areas of life. For instance:

- Health: the results of the COVID-19 pandemic are crystal clear: privatization and cuts in the care sector weaken the popular classes - in particular the children, the women and the elderly - and weigh heavy threats to public health in general. This sector must be refinanced massively and put integrally in the hands of the collectivity. Investments must go in priority to the first-line medicine. The pharma industry must be socialized.
- Transports: Individual transport in capitalism privileges private cars, with dire health and ecological consequences. The alternative is a large and efficient system of free public transportation, as well as a great extension of pedestrian and cyclable areas. Commodities are transported in great distances by trucks or container ships, with enormous gas emissions; relocalization of production and transports of goods by the train are immediate necessary measures. Aerial transport should be significantly reduced, and suppressed for distances than can be covered by train. Private jets and helicopters should be confiscated.
- Housing: The basic right of all people to decent, permanent and ecologically sustainable housing cannot be guaranteed under capitalism. The law of profit entails evictions, demolitions and

criminalization of those who resist. It also entails high energy bills for the poor and subsidized renewables for the rich. Public control on the real estate market, lowering and freezing of the interest and profits of the banks, a radical increase of good, public, social and cooperative housing, a public process of climate insulation of houses and a massive programme of building energetically autonomous houses, are first steps of an alternative politics. But there is a need to rethink the whole urban system, according to social and ecological criteria, beyond the present unsustainable cities, surrounded by miserable shantytowns.

- Water: the present privatization, wasteful consumption and pollution of water – rivers, lakes and subterranean - is a social and ecological disaster. Water scarcity and floodings due to climate change are major threats for billion people. Water is a common good, and should be managed and distributed by public services, under the control of the consumers.

### *5.3. Eliminate unnecessary or harmful economic activities*

Stopping the climate catastrophe and the decline of biodiversity absolutely requires a very rapid and significant reduction in final energy consumption at the global level. This constraint is unavoidable. First steps include to drastically reduce the purchasing power of the rich, to abandon fast fashion, advertisement and luxury production/consumption (cruises, yachts and private jets or helicopters, space tourism, etc.), to scale down mass-produced meat and dairy and to end the accelerated obsolescence of products, extending their lifespan and facilitating their repair. Air and maritime transportation of goods should be reduced drastically by relocation of the production, and replaced by train transportation whenever it is possible. Air travel should be made more expensive and submitted to individual quotas. More structurally, the energy constraint can only be respected by reducing as quickly as possible the economic activities which are useless or harmful. The main productive sectors to consider are: arms production, fossil energy and petrochemicals, extractive industry, non-sustainable manufacturing, wood and pulp industry, personal car construction, planes and shipbuilding. Concrete transition plans are necessary in order to respect the ecological constraint while satisfying the social needs (including the need to defend ecosocialist alternatives against the imperialist reaction).

### *5.4. Get out of agribusiness, industrial fishing and the meat industry*

These three sectors pose serious threats to the climate, human health and biodiversity. Their dismantling requires measures at the level of production but also significant changes at the level of consumption (in developed countries and among the rich in all countries) and the relationship with living things. Proactive policies are needed to stop deforestation and replace agribusiness, industrial tree plantations and large-scale fishing with peasant agroecology, ecoforestry and small-scale fishing respectively. These alternatives consume less energy, employ more labour and are much more respectful of biodiversity. Farmers and fishermen must be properly compensated by the community, not only for their contribution to human food but also for their ecological contribution. The rights of the first peoples over the forest and other ecosystems must be protected. The global meat consumption must be reduced drastically. The meat and dairy industry must be dismantled and promotion must be made of a diet based mainly on local vegetable production.

### *5.5. To get out of fossil fuels and nuclear power as quickly as possible, socialize energy and finance without compensation or redemption*

The energy multinationals and the banks that finance them want to exploit every last ton of coal, every last liter of oil, every last cubic meter of gas. They initially hid and denied the impact of CO<sub>2</sub> on climate change. Now, in order to continue to exploit their resources despite everything, and while soaring prices ensure them gigantic surplus profits, they promise all kinds of phony techniques (greenwashing, exchange of “polluting rights”, “emissions offsetting”, “Carbon capture, sequestration and Utilization”) and promote nuclear energy as “low carbon”. No doubt is possible: these profit-hungry groups are taking the planet from climate catastrophe to cataclysm. At the same

time, they are at the forefront of capitalist attacks on the working classes. They must be socialized by expropriation, without compensation or redemption. To stop the social and ecological destruction, to determine our future collectively, nothing is more urgent than to constitute public services of energy and credit, decentralized and interconnected, under the democratic control of the populations.

### *5.6. Guarantee employment for all, ensure the necessary retraining in ecologically sustainable and socially useful activities*

Workers engaged in wasteful and harmful fossil fuel activities, in agribusiness, big fishing and the meat industry do not have to pay the price of capitalist mismanagement. A green job guarantee must be instituted to ensure their collective retraining, without loss of income, in the activities of the public plan to meet real needs and restore ecosystems. This green jobs guarantee will overcome the legitimate fears of the workers concerned. Thus, there will be an end to the cynical instrumentalization of these fears by the capitalists, in the service of their productivist/consumerist interests. On the contrary, the green job guarantee will encourage and motivate workers in condemned sectors to train and mobilize to actively take charge of carrying out the plan, in dialogue with the beneficiary public, by investing their knowledge, their skills and their experience in an activity rich in meaning, emancipatory, truly human because concerned with the lives of future generations.

### *5.7. Work less, live and work better, live a good life*

Radically reducing the final energy consumption by eliminating useless and harmful production/consumption logically has the effect of radically reducing the time of salaried social work. This reduction must be collective. Capitalist waste is of such magnitude that its suppression will undoubtedly open up the concrete possibility of a very significant reduction in weekly working time (towards a half-day's work) and a significant lowering of the working age retirement. This trend towards reduction will be partly offset by the necessary reduction in work rhythms as well as by the increase in the social and ecological reproduction work necessary to take care of people (including by socializing part of the domestic work carried out for free in majority by women) and ecosystems. Democratic planning will be essential for the articulation over time of these movements in various directions. What is certain, in any case, is that the programme of ecosocialist degrowth implies a double transformation of work. Quantitatively, we will work much less. Qualitatively, it will create the conditions for making work an activity of the good life - a conscious mediation between humans (therefore also between men and women), and between humans and the rest of nature.

### *5.8. Guarantee the right of women over their own bodies*

Humanity will not be able to consciously manage its relationship to the rest of nature without consciously managing its relationship to itself, that is to say its own biological reproduction, which passes through the body of women. It is not by chance that patriarchal attacks on women's rights are intensifying everywhere: these attacks are an integral part of political projects that seek to establish strong powers at the service of the rich and the capitalists. They are most often carried out in the name of a reactionary "pro-life" ideology, which incidentally denies anthropogenic climate change. But, alongside these dark forces, there are also technocratic currents that blame the ecological crisis on "overpopulation" and thereby attempt to impose authoritarian policies of birth control. Faced with these two types of threats, we maintain that no morality, no higher reason, even ecological, can be invoked to deny women their elementary right to control their own fertility. The denial of this right is consubstantial with all other mechanisms of domination, including "human domination" over the rest of nature, for the benefit of patriarchy and its current capitalist form. Human emancipation presupposes the emancipation of women. This implies in priority that women must have free access to contraception, abortion, and reproductive care in general.

### *5.9. Internationalism: against imperialisms and nationalisms, impose climate justice*

The meager carbon budget still available must be shared according to historical responsibilities and capacities. Mineral resources and the wealth of biodiversity must be harvested carefully, according to the real needs of all. There will be no national solution, these challenges require a consistent anti-imperialist and internationalist response. The debts of poor and middle-income countries must be abolished. The assets of dictators must be seized and returned to the people. Funding pledged in the climate negotiations (Green Fund, Adaptation Fund, Loss and Damage Fund) must be honored. We must put an end to unequal exchange and the construction of walls. Freedom of movement and settlement must be guaranteed to migrants. The abolition of patents must allow the peoples of the South to freely access technologies that can meet real needs without using even more fossil energy. These are essential conditions to stop the climate catastrophe and avoid plunging into barbarism.

### *5.10. Foster a cultural revolution based on careful respect for the living and “love for Mother Earth”*

A radical break with the ideology of human domination of nature is essential to the development of both an ecological and a feminist culture of “caring” for people and the environment. Ecofeminism. The defence of biodiversity, in particular, cannot be based solely on reason (the human interest properly understood): it requires just as much empathy, respect, prudence and the kind of global conception that the first peoples sum up by the phrase “love of Mother Earth”. Maintaining this global conception or reacquiring it - through struggles, artistic creation, education and production/consumption alternatives, in particular - is a major ideological challenge in the ecosocialist struggle. Western modernity has systematized the idea that human beings are divine creatures whose mission is to dominate nature and instrumentalize other animals, reduced to the rank of machines. Already contested by Darwin, who highlighted the filiation of *Homo sapiens*, this non-materialist conception, intimately linked to colonial and patriarchal dominations, is completely disqualified today by scientific knowledge. A lot of human characteristics exist potentially or in embryonic form in other animals. Scientists today believe that the exceptional skills of *Homo sapiens* are the product of a fairly limited number of “leaps” in evolution. We are part of the living Earth, we are also animals and human life would be impossible in absence of the plants, of the other animals, of the network of life on this planet.

This programme has general relevance, but one should add that the industrialized countries of the “North” - US, Europe, North America, Australia, Japan - are to make the greatest efforts in terms of a rapid degrowth in useless and/or harmful productions. They are also responsible for helping the less developed countries of the “South” to find alternative technologies, as well as provide funding for an ecological transition.

The capitalists of the imperialist countries are responsible for the ecological crisis, and must pay for the consequences. The great mass of the working people, of women, of youth, of the ethnic minorities, in the “North” are also victims of climate change. They are to take into their hands the process of social and ecological transition and impose it by a common struggle against the ruling elite.

Of course, in each continent, and in each country, there are specific measures to be proposed in a transitional perspective.

## **6. The ecosocialist programme in dominated countries**

After centuries of slavery and colonial plunder, the populations of so-called “developing” countries are victims of a new monstrous injustice. While the responsibility of the less developed countries for greenhouse gas emissions is marginal, almost nil in the poorest countries, the climatic shift

caused by two hundred years of imperialist capitalist growth places them in the front line of catastrophes that are hitting them harder and harder.

Africa, Latin America, South and South-East Asia and the Pacific are home to the vast majority of the 3.5 billion women, men and children whose living conditions, even existence itself, are already cruelly affected by the consequences of global warming. The urgency is here and grows very quickly. The more temperatures rise, the less societies can adapt to the effects of global warming. Droughts, floods, typhoons, deadly heat waves and damage to ecosystems increasingly threaten the survival of millions of human beings, their ability to work and their basic rights in the short and medium term.

### *6.1. Public plans to protect the popular classes against the effects of climate change*

In the peripheral countries of global capitalism, it is of huge importance that the ecosocialist transition agenda immediately advances public plans aimed at protecting popular classes against the now inevitable effects of climate change. These plans are not a substitute for an alternative, anticapitalist development policy aiming at phasing out the fossil fuels as quickly as possible. The truth is the two dimensions are interlinked because, beyond a certain level of warming, adaptation is no longer possible. These public plans must embrace all sectors, in particular agriculture, forestry, housing, water management, energy production, industry, labour legislation, health and education. Of course, such public plans are also necessary in “developed” countries, but the scale of the threats in the countries of the South makes this question a major issue there. Its importance increases inversely with the level of development.

There is “adaptation” and adaptation. For imperialism and its local accomplices, “adaptation” is a diversion from tackling the causes. Especially in the Global South, their “adaptation” aims at giving new markets to the multinationals (infrastructure, transport, carbon offsetting, etc.). It also aims at maintaining conditions conducive to imperial domination in order to prolong and even deepen neocolonial plunder (under the pretext of “green development”)... without paying their “ecological debt”. This capitalist “adaptation” is actually a “maladaptation” (in IPCC terminology). It can only aggravate the disasters for the mass of the population and for the ecosystems.

The urgency of an adaptation policy worthy of the name and the scale of the task to be carried out to repair the damage and protect the populations sheds light on the impasse of the current “development model” and the need for a systemic alternative.

Imperialist governments, international institutions and the governments of the Global South themselves claim that capitalist growth will enable people in the South to “catch up” with the standard of living of the developed capitalist countries. All it takes is “good governance” to “adjust” societies to the needs of the global market. This is a dead end, as shown by the fact that the Sustainable Development Goals - grossly insufficient and not equivalent to “catching up”! - are far from being achieved. Inequalities continue to grow (including between rich and poor within societies of the South), while the “carbon budget” compatible with 1.5°C is vanishing rapidly.

### *6.2. The need for an alternative development model*

Majority on the planet, the populations of the countries of the periphery have the basic right to access to dignified living conditions. Their social needs are more than legitimate. To satisfy them, they need a development model radically opposed to the imperialist and productivist model. A model that prioritizes public services (health, education, housing, transport, sewage, electricity, drinking water) for the mass of the population, and not the production of goods for the world market. An anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist model, which nationalizes the monopolies in the sectors of finance, mining, energy, agribusiness.

Based on the satisfaction of the needs of the peoples of the South while respecting ecological balances, this alternative development model is in no way antagonistic to the need for global ecosocialist degrowth: on the contrary, it is fully part of it. Though, one of its key challenges is the

fight against the ecocidal megaprojects inspired by neoliberal capitalist policies, such as giant pipelines, new airports, offshore oil wells, large hydroelectric dams and huge touristic infrastructures appropriating the beaches for the benefit of the rich.

This alternative development model cannot serve as a pretext for policies restricting the right of movement and settlement, in particular imperialist policies paying therefore regimes in the South to play the role of border police.

### *6.3. The multinationals, the imperialist states and the local “elites” must pay the bill*

A transition strategy worthy of the name must be a public and democratically planned strategy developed in the short, medium and long term according to ecological balances and social needs such as the popular classes themselves formulate them. The bill for implementation must be paid by those responsible for the disaster: the multinationals, the imperialist states and the corrupt so-called local “elites” who serve as their accomplices.

These so-called “elites” carry a major responsibility. Instead of promoting an alternative development, based on alternative social values, they have come to serve imperialism. In words, they demand “climate justice” in the international negotiations. In practice, they only aspire to copy the lifestyle of the super-rich in the North, with their yachts, private jets, luxury cars, etc

“Climate justice” implies not only that sufficient sums be paid into the various funds created during international negotiations (Green Climate Fund, adaptation fund, loss and damage fund), but also the abolition of external debt, the abolition of the public debt held by the financial oligarchy (without compensation, except for the small holders) and compensation by the North for the countries of the South which give up exploiting their fossil resources (Yasuni Park project).

### *6.4. Self-organization of popular struggles and fight for democratization*

In the countries of the periphery, in particular the poorest, it is of decisive importance for the ecosocialist alternative to closely link the fight for a policy respectful of natural resources to the fights for the satisfaction of social needs and for the democratic rights of the populations, in an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist dynamic. It involves the self-organization of popular struggles, in particular that of peasants and the “landless” against agribusiness, of indigenous peoples against mining and forestry, of women against sexist violence and discrimination, of inhabitants from the slums for the right to housing and workers against employer exploitation.

Democratization is central to this strategy: overthrow of dictatorships, military regimes, religious regimes and monarchies. Establishment of the popular initiative referendum. Fight against corruption. Abolition of undemocratic institutions (Senate, Autonomous Central Bank). Dissolution of the paramilitary militias serving the rulers. Respect for the rights and territories of indigenous communities and other oppressed peoples. Independent unions and freedom of association.

### *6.5. Public control and protection of natural resources. Zero deforestation. Respect indigenous people*

The ecosocialist programme for dominated countries demands the protection and public control of natural resources under the control of the popular classes. Municipalization of water ownership and management, under the control of the inhabitants, in order to ensure clean drinking water for all. Zero deforestation. No to the destruction of biomes by cattle ranchers, palm oil planters, agribusiness in general and the mining industry; no to the neocolonial appropriation of “carbon sinks” to offset emissions from the North (REDD and REDD+ projects). Protection of the tropical forests of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the indigenous communities that inhabit them. Demarcation of their territories. No to “fisheries agreements” that offer fish resources to multinational industrial fishing companies.

### *6.6. No to agribusiness. Food sovereignty and agrarian reform*

Food sovereignty, in line with the proposals of Via Campesina, the great planetary network of peasant movements, is a key objective. It goes through a radical agrarian reform: the land to those who work it, especially women. Expropriation of big landowners and capitalist agribusiness who produce goods for the world market. Distribution of land to peasants and landless peasants (families or cooperatives) for agro-biological production. Abolition of GMO crops in the open field and elimination of toxic pesticides (starting with those whose use the countries of the North prohibit but whose export they authorize in the countries of the South!).

### *6.7. Social housing construction programme and popular urban reform*

The South has some of the largest megacities on the planet (Jakarta, Manila, New Delhi, Bombay, Sao Paulo, and others), a growing number of homeless people and f slums where millions of human beings (around Karachi, Nairobi, Baghdad ,...) survive and work informally in undignified conditions. It is one of the most hideous wounds left by imperialist domination. In addition to violence, heat waves make survival there increasingly difficult, especially in humid climates. The ecosocialist alternative claims the launch of a vast social housing construction programme accompanied by a popular urban reform that changes the organization of large cities, designed in cooperation with homeless associations. It has to be articulated on a labour legislation that protects workers, on the one hand, and on the attractiveness of agrarian reform, in order to initiate a movement of rural counter-emigration, on the other hand.

### *6.8. Decolonization of the knowledge, reform of the education system*

The implementation of the ecosocialist emergency programme for the countries of the South has a crying need for knowledge and decolonized knowledge, embodied by numerous and competent teachers and researchers in all disciplines. Reform of the education system, expansion of public schools and universities, end to discrimination in education, of which girls are particularly victims in certain countries.

Numerous scientific studies show that the satisfaction of the basic needs of the people in the dominated countries would only have a modest carbon footprint. The radical reduction of the carbon footprint of the rich, and especially of the richest 1% - in the North and in the South! - would be enough to compensate for it. A dollar spent serving the needs of the richest 1% generates thirty times more CO2 emissions than a dollar invested in meeting the social needs of the poorest 50% of the world's population. (figure to check!!!)

The discourse of the “catching up” of the North by the South is only a chimera, a smokescreen to conceal the continuation of capitalist and imperialist exploitation, which widens inequalities. With the rise of ecological disasters, this discourse is objectively losing all credibility. Now is not the time for “catching up” but for planetary sharing: the rich less rich, the poor less poor. Through their struggles, the popular classes of the South can contribute in a decisive way to engage the exploited of the whole world in this path, the only one compatible both with human rights and with terrestrial limits.

## **7. Against the tide, make the struggles converge to break with capitalist productivism. Seize the government, initiate the ecosocialist rupture based on self-activity, self-organization, control from below, the broadest democracy**

The economy, the state, the politics of the bourgeoisie and its international relations are deeply affected by the eco-social impasse in which capitalist accumulation and imperialist plunder have plunged society. Around the world, the exploited and the oppressed are gripped by deep anguish.

Movements of resistance are developing against the tide. Even in extremely difficult contexts, people stand up for their social, democratic, anti-imperialist, ecological, feminist, LGBTQI, anti-racist, indigenous, peasant rights. Some remarkable victories have been won: victory of the Indian peasants against the Modi government, victory of the zadists in France against the airport of Notre-Dame-des-Landes, victory of women in the fight for abortion in Argentina, victory of the Sioux in the US against the XXL pipeline... But the enemy is on the offensive and a lot of struggles are defeated. Our task, as activists of the Fourth International, is to help organize and extend the struggles, bringing our ecosocialist and internationalist perspective to bear.

The productivism of the hegemonic forces of the left, parties and trade unions, is a serious obstacle on the way to an ecosocialist response commensurate with the objective situation. Most of the leaderships have abandoned any anti-capitalist perspective. Social-democracy and all other variants of reformism have become social-liberal as they only ambitions to bring some social corrections to the market within the limits of the neoliberal framework. Most leaderships of the big trade union organizations limit themselves to accompanying neoliberal policies with the illusion that capitalist growth will improve employment, wages and social protection. Instead of organizing an awareness of the ecosocial impasse, these policies of class collaboration deepen it and conceal its gravity.

Fortunately, some political forces and trade union currents - notably in Europe, the US, and Latin America - are beginning to distance themselves from productivism and neoliberalism. In the trade unions, activists aware of the ecological challenge have advanced the concept of a “just transition”. Social democracy and ITUC trade union leaders have hijacked it in the direction of supporting productivism and business competitiveness. The dominant class is expert in manipulation. This is how “just transition” has joined “sustainable development” in the discourses of governments that trample on justice and organize unsustainability.

In the “developed” capitalist countries, the ranks of the traditional forces have been reinforced by the green parties. It took four decades for the vast majority of these parties to join the layer of the political managers of capitalism. Their pragmatism based on the individual responsibility of consumers is extended in civil society by numerous environmental associations. It allowed social democracy and traditional labour leaderships to disguise their class collaboration in defence of the “lesser social evil” in the face of ecotaxes and other so-called “realistic” solutions of “neither left nor right” ecology.

In other parts of the world, although still a minority, ecosocialism is beginning to gain an influence on social movements and the radical left. Some important local experiences - in Mindanao, Rojava, and Chiapas, among others - have affinities with the ecosocialist perspective. However, capitalist growth still falsely appears to most as the only way to improve social conditions.

The Arab revolutions created a potentially favourable situation for taking ecological challenges into account, because the peoples of this region are confronted with them harshly. Unfortunately, most of these revolutions were ruthlessly crushed by reactionary forces in the region, with the support of their respective imperialist allies.

In Latin America, despite rhetoric inspired by the worldview of indigenous peoples, progressive governments have failed to lay down meaningful milestones toward alternative development—without deforestation, extractivism, and fossil fuels. The courageous resistance of indigenous peoples has not stopped fascist Bolsonaro’s government from taking the destruction of the Amazon to unprecedented levels, as demanded by agribusiness.

Beyond the abominable crimes against the Ukrainian people and their right to existence, Putin’s war against Ukraine aimed to consolidate a brutal imperialism, based on the unfettered exploitation of natural resources. Russian oligarchs, oil monarchies, other states and powerful interests in the energy and crime industry constitute a reactionary, macho, homophobic and anti-science alliance that seeks to influence public opinion to prolong the exploitation of fossil fuels as much as possible.

The Chinese Communist party claims to show the countries of the South that they can escape the domination and develop by entering the New Silk Roads. Actually, in the name of cheap anti-imperialism, its project of global capitalist hegemony is one of the main drivers of ecological destruction. Its record as the world's leading emitter of greenhouse gases shows the need for the countries of the South to an alternative mode of development. The planetary generalization of Chinese-style "progress" would deal a mortal blow to democratic rights and ecological balances, on the backs of the people.

Given the depth of the crisis and disarray, there is a real risk of seeing a growing tendency in the working classes to sacrifice ecological objectives on the altar of development, job creation and increased income. This trend would only accelerate the catastrophe of which these same classes are already the first victims and would deepen the loss of legitimacy of the unions. It would also create fertile ground for neo-fascist attempts to greenwash racist, colonialist and genocidal projects. The migrants fleeing their devastated lands are the main targets of these hate campaigns.

The socialist project is deeply discredited by the records of Stalinism and social democracy. It is from struggles that we must reinvent an alternative, not from dogmas.

Who is today on the front lines of the real movement? Indigenous peoples, youth, peasants, racialized people who pay a heavy price for the social and ecological destruction. In these four groups, women play a decisive role, in connection with their specific, ecofeminist demands, for which they fight and organize themselves autonomously.

The peasant organization Via Campesina demonstrates that it is possible to combine the defence of the rights of poor peasants and indigenous peoples, the fight against extractivism and agro-industry, the fight for food sovereignty and the preservation of ecosystems with feminism.

The vast majority of employees are absent or withdrawn from anti-productivist struggles. Some infer that the class struggle is outdated, or must be waged by an "ecological class" that exists only in their imagination. But stopping the catastrophe is only possible by replacing the production of commodities with the production of use-values, democratically determined. How would this revolution in the mode of production of social existence be possible without the active and conscious participation of producers? Furthermore they are the majority....

Others, on the contrary, deduce that it is necessary to wait for the moment when the mass of workers in struggle for their immediate socio-economic demands will have reached the level of consciousness allowing them to participate in the ecological struggle on a "class line". However, how would the level of consciousness of the mass of employees integrate ecological issues in time if no major social struggle comes to shake up the productivist framework within which the mass of employees, increasingly on the defensive, spontaneously raises its immediate socio-economic demands?

The class struggle is not a cold abstraction. "The real movement that abolishes the current state of things" defines it and designates its actors. The struggles of women, LGBTQI people, oppressed peoples, racialized peoples, migrants, peasants and indigenous peoples for their rights are not placed next to the struggles of workers against the exploitation of labour by the bosses. They are part of the living class struggle.

They are part of it because capitalism needs the patriarchal oppression of women to maximize surplus value and ensure social reproduction at a lower cost; needs the discrimination of LGBTQI people to validate patriarchy; needs structural racism to justify the looting of the periphery by the centre; needs inhuman "asylum policies" to regulate the industrial reserve army; needs to submit the peasantry to the dictates of junk food-producing agribusiness to compress the price of labour power; and needs to eliminate the respectful relationship that human communities still maintain within themselves and with nature, to replace it with its individualistic ideology of domination, which transforms the collective into an automaton and the living into dead things.

All these struggles and those of workers against capitalist exploitation are part of the same fight for human emancipation, and this emancipation is only really possible and worthy of humanity in the awareness of the fact that our species belongs to nature while having, because of its specific intelligence, the responsibility, now unavoidable and vital, of taking careful care of it. Such is for us, indeed, the strategic implication arising from the fact that the destructive force of capitalism has ushered the planet into a new geological era.

This analysis is the basis of our strategy of convergence of social and ecological struggles.

This convergence of struggles should not limit itself to the search, between social movements, or between apparatuses of social movements, for the greatest common denominator in terms of demands. This conception can imply the disregard of certain demands of certain groups - to the detriment of the weakest among them - that is to say... the opposite of convergence.

The convergence of social and ecological struggles includes all the struggles of all social actors, from the most seasoned to the most hesitant. It is a process of dynamic articulation, which raises the level of consciousness through action and debate, in mutual respect. Its goal is not the determination of a fixed platform but the constitution of the combat unity of the exploited and the oppressed around concrete demands opening a dynamic aiming at the conquest of political power and the overthrow of capitalism in the whole world.

In practice, the ecosocial convergence of struggles implies above all, today, that the sectors most aware of ecological threats address themselves to the sectors most aware of social threats, and vice versa, in order to overcome together the false capitalist opposition between the social and ecological.

In this approach, the defence of an eco-unionism that is both class struggle and anti-productivist plays an essential role, based on the concrete concerns of workers for the preservation of their health and safety at work and on the role of warning about the damage to ecosystems and the danger of production that they are best placed to play.

As ecosocialist activists, we encourage resistance in the workplace through strikes and all initiatives that promote the organization and control of workers. We work to strengthen mobilizations by combining the extension of the strike, the massification of demonstrations, by promoting all forms of self-organization and self-protection of the struggle against repression, as well as its popularization to counter the lies of the dominant media and the government apparatus.

We are also inspired by forms of civil disobedience, from blocking sites to boycotting rent payments, which have also proven their effectiveness.

Experiences from struggles help to feed the strategic debate.

Anti-productivist struggles are diverse, but generally their starting point is very concrete, often local, in opposition to a new transport infrastructure (motorway, airport, etc.), commercial or logistical infrastructure, extractivist infrastructure (mines, pipelines, mega-dams, etc.), the grabbing of land or water, the destruction of a forest or a river, etc. It is firstly the threat to daily life, to livelihoods and health that mobilizes people, not the general discourse. By confronting political decision-makers, capitalist groups and the institutions that protect them, by forging alliances between actors with different histories and commitments, the struggle becomes more and more global and political.

These combinations of struggles anchored in a specific territory with a precise objective and general combat exist throughout the world and form a new political reality called "Blockadia".

In France, against the airport project at Notre-Dame-des-Landes, the convergence of farmers, young radical activists and local residents won the support of the people and trade unionists, including those of the concessionaire, and led to victory. the strategy of the Soulèvement de la Terre. It has thus allowed, starting with the question of megabassins (huge water reservoirs for the irrigation of

industrial crops), to raise the question of water as a common good to be preserved against its monopolization by agribusiness.

In the United States, against the Dakota Access Pipeline which threatens to pollute the Missouri and the Mississippi and crosses the sacred lands of the Sioux natives, the latter have established a camp at Standing Rock, joined by thousands of people, young people, environmentalists... The camp resisted fierce repression and forced an investigation into the dangers of the DAPL to the environment. The legal and political battle continues.

The formation of an ecosocialist class consciousness implies a convergence in the struggles in which (young) scientists can contribute by using and sharing their knowledge (agronomic, climatic, naturalist...).

Strike committees, community health centres, company takeovers, land occupations, self-managed living spaces, repair workshops, canteens, seed libraries, etc., allow the experimentation of a social organization free of capitalism. They allow those who are deprived of political and economic power to experiment their collective power and intelligence. Contradicting the illusions about a possible bypass or adjustment of the system, they sooner or later come up against the state and the capitalist market, showing that it is impossible to do without political power and the necessary overthrow of the system. However, by establishing, even temporarily, another legitimacy, popular, solidary and democratic, the concrete alternatives allow the dominated to become aware of their own strengths and to work towards the construction of a new hegemony.

More globally, the construction of self-organized organs of popular power is at the heart of our strategy.

The systemic crisis of "late capitalism" dominated by transnational finance nurtures both a disgust in the face of the phenomena of the decay of the bourgeois regime and a feeling of helplessness in the face of the profound deterioration, both quantitative and qualitative, of the balance of power between classes. In this context, the question of government takes on increased importance. Seizing political power is a prerequisite for the implementation of a plan initiating a policy of rupture, but recent years has shown the deadly illusions of political projects which exploit popular aspirations, channel mobilizations, even stifle them in the name of realpolitik, and thus strengthen the far right.

There is no shortcut. An ecosocialist strategy of rupture involves the struggle for the formation of a government on the basis of the transition plan and the systematic promotion of self-activity, control and direct intervention by the exploited and oppressed at all levels because no consistent measure against exploitation, oppression and the destruction of ecosystems will be imposed without a balance of power based on this self-organization.

Self-emancipation is not only our goal, but also a strategy for overthrowing the established order. New institutions must be built to deliberate, to decide democratically, to organize production and the whole of society... These new powers will have to confront the capitalist state machine, which must be broken. The overthrow of the social order, the expropriation of the capitalists, will inevitably come up against the violent, armed response of the ruling classes. Faced with this violence, the exploited and the oppressed will have no choice but to defend themselves, it will be a question of democratically self-organising legitimate violence while refusing virilism and substitutism.

Reflecting and acting, building struggles and tools of struggle, comparing experiences and learning from them: the international implementation of this immense task requires a political tool, a new International of the exploited and oppressed. Through this Manifesto, the Fourth International expresses its will to help meet this challenge.