

Grassroots Coalition News



A project of the 501(c)(3) Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice
We are a Global Family. News by and about Climate and Social Justice Activists.

Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

Our Slogan: The way forward: cycle back to basics.

Our Word: Invincible: Too powerful to be defeated or overcome.

A Celebration of Youth: www.gceej.org. Issue No. 84: February 2022

What if Every Child in the World Knew How to Grow Food? Youngest Certified Organic Farmer in Georgia, U.S. is Six Years Old!



Photo Courtesy agrowkulture.com

Note from Iona: *I always look for great front-page stories. My heart leaped with joy seeing Kendall's amazing project at age 6, when most U.S. children are in kindergarten or first grade. This is the direction we need to go in to alleviate poverty and hunger while simultaneously helping our climate heal.*

Cobbled together by Iona Conner
December 27, 2021

**Submitted by Joan Norris Daurio
New Jersey USA**

aGROWKulture is an Urban Farm located in the soul of Southwest Atlanta. It's owned by "The Youngest Certified Farmer in the State of Georgia" at the age of 6. She currently sells food basket subscriptions, donated food boxes, grow boxes, fun garden merchandise, and hosts classes.

Southern Living's December 9, 2021 article by Tara Massouleh McCay gives a little background:

While most kids her age are having nap time and playing make believe, 6-year-old Kendall Rae Johnson is busy planting seeds, watering crops, and harvesting the week's bounty. As the state of Georgia's youngest certified farmer, she has quite the job to

do running her very real farming business, aGROWKulture.

A resident of Atlanta, Kendall started farming when she was just 3 years old. Her great grandmother Laura "Kate" Williams taught her how to plant cucumber seeds, peppers, tomatoes, and broken collard green stems on her tiny patio garden. At 4, Kendall's parents built her a garden bed around the premise of their yard and her passion for growing took off. Soon, she was inviting kids from all over her neighborhood to come see what she had grown. Eventually, the daily tours turned into aGROWKulture, a business where she teaches other children about gardening and sells fruit and vegetable subscription boxes.

Grow Fresh Eat Fresh Kulture

Support the youngest (6 years old) USDA registered and certified farmer living out her dreams to help teach every kid how to

grow their own foods, one seed at a time.

Donate at https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=AB28THRHSQLF4

Sign Up For Kendall Rae's Garden 4H Club

Kendall and 4H are currently accepting registrations from little ones to high schoolers. Sign up with the University of Georgia Extension at https://ugeorgia.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aYwBW9s8K1RPdUW.

Kendall even has a YouTube show with a woman named Olivia called Farm to Kitchen. You can watch it @agrowkulture. She also has an online store with sweatshirts, masks, T-shirts, and fanny packs.

What if every child in the world (or even every adult) knew how to grow their own food? Just imagine....

Source: <https://www.agrowkulture.com/>

What is the Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice?

Coalition Founders: John and Iona Conner

Editor/Publisher: Iona Conner

Wire Editor: Allen Hengst

Established: September 1990

Web site: www.gceej.org

Board of Directors: Ngo Banfogha, Jeanette Bartelt, David Hunter Bishop, Bill Boteler, Iona Conner, Eric Kifampa, Jussa Nhari Kudherezera, Rituraj Phukan (<https://gceej.org/board-members/>)

Advisory Council: Dan Adams, Robert Burrowes, Fr. Ted Cassidy, Michael Mann, Mariam Nabukeera (<https://gceej.org/advisory-council/>)

Contact: Grassroots Coalition, c/o Iona Conner, P.O. Box 542, Point Pleasant Boro, NJ 08742-9996; grassrootscoalition@pa.net

Our Motto:

Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

Our Slogan:

The way forward:
cycle back to basics.

Our Word: INVINCIBLE: Too powerful to be defeated or overcome.

Mission of Our Journal

The mission of *Groundswell News* is to be a beautiful, inspiring, uplifting journal which educates and enlightens people about climate change through scientific articles and stories by and about activists who are working to protect life on Earth and preserve natural resources. We are a global family.

What is the Grassroots Coalition?

John and Iona Conner started this non-profit 501(c)(3) organization in 1990. The mission was and remains “dedicated to creating the critical mass of active participants needed to being ecological justice to this Earth by providing information and resources to individuals which encourage and assist them to make lifestyle changes beneficial to the environment and to effectively grapple with local and global environmental concerns.”

Who are we trying to attract?

We hope to reach people who are concerned about global warming and realize that they are part of the problem but don't know what to do. We invite them to sign up for our newspaper. Please tell your family and friends about us.

What are we trying to achieve?

We want to rapidly increase the number of serious climate activists in the world and inspire them through stories from other activists. Our goal is to keep their spirits up, their energy strong, their hearts open, and their eyes bright and alive.

Our Values

This journal is based on love for Earth, all people, all forms of life – plus air, clouds, rain, snow, weather, oceans, forests, etc. We love Nature. We respect everyone and are willing to share our experiences, both good and bad, with others who may profit from them.

Guidelines for Submissions

I do not get directly involved in fundraising. To submit a story, you need to write a regular article about your work and submit it in a Word document with 2 or 3 photos, including captions and photo credits and then email it to me (Iona) at grassrootscoalition@pa.net. If you need funding, mention that in your last paragraph and be sure to give your contact information.

Please email Iona at grassrootscoalition@pa.net for the full Guidelines. I'll be eager to see what you submit. Thanks so much.

Fair Use Law: <https://copyright.gov/fair-use/more-info.html>

Fair use is a legal doctrine that promotes freedom of expression by permitting the unlicensed use of copyright-protected works in certain circumstances. Section 107 of the Copyright Act provides the statutory framework for determining whether something is a fair use and identifies certain types of uses – such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research – as examples of activities that may qualify as fair use. Section 107 calls for consideration of the following four factors in evaluating a question of fair use:

(1) Purpose and character of the use, including whether the use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes.

(2) Nature of the copyrighted work.

(3) Amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole.

(4) Effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.



Fair Use Logo

Iona's Column: *From My Heart to Yours*

Dearest Global Family,

I am so excited that we have several amazing new members of our Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice! Some of their stories are in this issue by way of introduction. Some of them are from a series of emails instead of actual stories. You will also find several series of emails on our Messages pages.

Every once in a while I wonder what our newspaper would look like if it only contained stories by our members. I'm going to raise that question at our next Zoom meeting on February 20 because it's not a decision I wish to make on my own. I consider this very much a group project, so the group needs to weigh in.

As you will see, this is an extra long issue. Now that I've dropped from a monthly publishing schedule to bi-monthly, the amount of news, stories, and emails piles up. I'll let you know what happens as we move along month by month and year by year.

Since I had to get a paying job (this is all volunteer work), I had to reduce my schedule for both publishing and Zoom meetings. I'm gone 2-3 days a week and have trouble keeping up with everything, including Facebook. Please forgive me when I don't get back to you promptly. I'm doing my best to hold the ship together.

If you are a person who is working on the climate emergency or social justice and would like to be included in our Zoom meetings, please send me an email at grassrootscoalition@pa.net and tell me about yourself, your current work, and your dreams. I would love to hear from new people.

Thank you for subscribing. I hope our stories inspire you; they inspire me!

With Love,

Iona



Photos Courtesy SCOPE

The main goal of this gardening initiative is increased production and consumption of healthy, safe food for improved health and self reliance among 105 in Thika Children's Rescue Centre, through agroecology gardening practices.

Children's Rescue Centre Food Forest Garden in Kenya

Dear Iona and All,

In October 2021, my organization received an award from Lush Spring Prize Team (UK), in the category of "Youth in Permaculture." This is a win for all in this group, for our main goal and discussion has been around healing the planet, through regenerative land use practices.

I am looking forward to meeting with you in the next meeting.

Kind regards,

John Macharia, Schools and Colleges Permaculture Programme Kenya (SCOPE) Kenya

Campaign Leader: John Macharia

Garden Type: Youth Gardens

Garden Status: Existing Garden

Garden Size: 8,094 square feet

Number of People Reached: 250

Garden Primary Beneficiaries: Children

Garden Secondary Beneficiaries: Food Insecure People

Thika Children's Centre Food Forest Garden, a beacon of hope for vulnerable children.

Thika Children's Rescue Centre Food Forest Garden is located at the outskirts of Thika town. SCOPE Kenya, in collaboration with Centre management and well-wishers, has established the Food Forest garden mainly to address the food and nutrition requirements for the 105 vulnerable boys. This is by:

1. Providing training in sustainable gardening practices, for 105 boys, 7 teachers, and 5 support staff, to enable them to acquire the knowledge and skills in organic gardening through Bio-intensive/agroecology practices. This is to maximize land use, increase production of diversity of food crops, enhance health, self-reliance, and biodiversity conservation.

2. Equipping the boys with life coping skills, to enhance self-reliance and quality of life once they attain the age of 18 years and leave the Centre.

Normally, the boys, teachers, and support staff, are taken through the trainings in gardening activities like land preparation, soil fertility management through composting, water management, planting, and garden management. The boys and

entire community have taken gardening activities positively, and through this, they are able to learn and produce 40% of their vegetable requirements, e.g., spinach, kales, amaranth, and Black night shade.

The Centre has a total of 5 hectares (12.35 acres) of land that is currently underutilized. If put into good agricultural use, the garden can produce adequate quantities of food to enable the Centre to be 100% food and nutritional secure. However, lack of farming inputs (tools, seeds, organic manure, and adequate amounts of water for irrigating the gardens), limits the gardening activities.

In order to harvest enough water, SCOPE Kenya (www.scopekenya.net) is planning to raise funds (\$500) to facilitate installing a storage water tank with a capacity of 5,000 liters (1,321 gallons) to boost irrigation during the dry season. For a long-term solution, SCOPE Kenya will raise additional funds (\$10,000) to facilitate drilling a borehole in the garden to ensure that the Centre has enough water to carry out gardening in the entire land, that is cur-

Children's Garden *continued on next page*

Children's Garden *continued from previous page*



rently underutilized. The other intervention will be to support the Centre in putting up a seed-bank, to ensure that they have diversity of seeds, especially for local food crops, throughout the year, hence reduce the cost of gardening.

The lack of monetary resources needed to buy seeds and gardening tools, among other materials, remains a major challenge that is unaddressed at the moment. If this could be changed through your support in this campaign, the livelihood of the boys would improve dramatically.

We are currently looking at a situation where the worst-case scenario is the boys eating rice and beans twice a day, without other vegetables and certainly without fruit.

These boys should be eating diverse and nutritious food to ensure that they can grow up strong and healthy. If they are

unable to do so, their potential to live a happy and meaningful life will be irretrievably lost.

With more than enough space and a sustainable irrigation system in place, all they need is seeds.

The main goal of this gardening initiative is to increase production and consumption of healthy, safe food for improved health and self-reliance among 105 boys in Thika Children's Rescue Centre through agroecology gardening practices.

Thank you for your past support. Your continued generous contribution will touch and bring hope to the lives of the vulnerable children.

Donate today and be part of the team that is transforming lives and landscapes.

Source: <https://donate.seed-money.org/6664/thika-children-rescue-center-kenya>



Wild Nature, Wild Woman

By Susan Breen

Women's Liberation Now!: December 14, 2021

This talk was given in the Feminist Thinking Will Save the Planet session at #FiLiA2021.

Any of you who know me will be aware that I'm a recovering mainstream environmentalist and left wing political candidate, for any of you who are active in either sphere I'm sure you have shared many of the same frustrations and demoralizations as I have done. I became an activist in my teens but despite being involved in the movement since then I had been pretty much politically homeless for my entire life.

Then fortunately one day I happened upon this:

"Men as a class are waging a war against women – rape, battering, incest, prostitution, pornography, poverty, and gynocide are both the main weapons in this war and the conditions that create the sex class women. Gender is not natural, not a choice, and not a feeling. It is the structure of women's oppression. Attempts to create more 'choices' within the sex caste system only serve to reinforce the brutal realities of male power. As radicals, we intend to dismantle gender and the entire system of patriarchy which it embodies. The freedom of women as a class cannot be separated from the resistance to the dominant culture as a whole."

This is an excerpt from the Deep Green Resistance statement of principles, and reading this affirmed to me that it was the lack of this understanding that limited my alignment with the mainstream environmental and political groups in which I was immersed.

This recognition of the interrelation of the struggles of women and the living world is one of the aspects of our analysis that people often seem to find the hardest to understand, so I'm going to speak a little about that, share some thoughts regarding obstacles facing female activists, and the importance of sisterhood in the work that we do.

Firstly, as radicals, we seek out the root of the problems facing us. These "problems" consist of material institutions of oppression and ideologies which sustain the narrative of the powerful.

The corrupt and brutal power arrangement of patriarchy needs an ideology and we call it gender. The parallels between the ideology of racism, necessary for white supremacy, may seem obvious, yet there appears to be endless resistance to applying a class analysis to the struggle of women.



Photo Courtesy Women's Liberation Now

Our activists in the region are fighting this company, some are mothers, carrying young children on their hips while facing threats of violence and death.

Even in the most "progressive" circles, there is a silent understanding that when push comes to shove women can always be used as collateral damage. Women are viewed in the same way as the living world, simply a natural resource to be used by the ruling male class as he sees fit.

On the left we see this in the cheerleading for the full decriminalization of the sex trade, the cheerleading of gender recognition legislation stripping our sex-based protections, the minimization of the continuum of male violence which every woman and girl is forced to navigate, and the perpetual dismissal of the value of our domestic labor which enables the family and society to function at all.

Ecofeminism challenges this commodification of women's bodies, labor, and knowledge, while also challenging the patriarchal reconceptualization of nature as a machine, as a resource, and as an "other."

So why do we need to challenge this? Let's talk for a moment about where the capitalist patriarchy has brought us.

Current atmospheric CO₂ – 411.40ppm – for anyone who isn't aware of the figures, anything above 350ppm is considered unsafe.

According to the 6th climate assessment by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) we have already warmed the planet by 1.2 (Global temps Jan – Oct 2020) degrees above pre-industrial levels. In 2019 the concentration of carbon in the atmosphere was higher than at any period in the last two million years, concentrations of methane and nitrous oxide – both more potent than CO₂, were higher than at any period in the last 800,000 years.

On our current trajectory we are expected to achieve a 1.5 degree temperature rise within 20 years from now. The IPCC au-

Wild Women *continued on next page*

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thors worst case scenario emissions double by 2050 we would achieve a 2.4 degree rise by between 2041 and 2060. Then almost double by 2100

For anyone who's unsure what that means, its game over.

For every half degree of warming, the frequency and intensity of natural disasters increases. More wildfires, more flooding, more drought, more food scarcity, and increasingly violent resource wars

More than 90% of the heat trapped by humanity's greenhouse gas emissions has been absorbed by the seas. Anthropogenic global warming has heated the oceans by the equivalent of one atomic bomb explosion per second for the past 150 years.

This means:

- More acidification of our oceans, further devastation of marine life, and severe disruption of currents critical to seasonal weather patterns.

- The emergence of new strains of zoonotic disease, and the expansion of vector borne diseases due to habitat destruction and warming climate.

- Intensified neo-colonialism of global north companies, which continue pillaging communities in the global south.

Last October we formed a coalition called Shale Must Fall which targets the fracking industry, connecting communities at extraction points and communities at the point of consumption. We attempt to bridge these communities and incorporate the testimonies of front line activists into global actions, targeting the headquarters/operations of these climate criminals.

Our members in Chihuahua gave us a stark insight into the reality of water shortage. Last September National Guard troops clashed with hundreds of farmers protesting the government decision to ship scarce water supplies from their drought stricken region to Texas. Due to the 1944 Water Treaty the water was "owed" to the U.S.

One woman was shot dead during the standoff and others injured. It is strongly suspected that the Mexican water was bound for the fracking industry in Texas, while the people of Chihuahua were denied water to drink, wash, and farm.

Similar horrors are playing out in the Okavango Delta, where a Canadian company – ReconAfrica – plans to frack one of the great delta's of the world and the wealth of life that she sustains. Our activists in the region are fighting this company, some are mothers, carrying young children on their hips while facing threats of violence and death.

As resources dwindle, this is the future we face. The merciless destruction of non human and human communities as indus-

try, protected by government, continues to devour what's left in a desperate attempt to maintain their malignant infinite growth model on our finite and fragile home.

And what does all this mean for women?

Climate collapse compounds and magnifies existing inequalities, dangers, and the risk and occurrence of male violence, so let's talk a little about what women are facing currently:

UN figures indicate that 80% of people displaced by climate change are women. Roles as primary care givers and food providers making us more vulnerable.

As we all know women are more likely to experience poverty and to have less socioeconomic power than men making it more difficult to recover from disasters which affect infrastructure, jobs, and housing.

An example of this is after Hurricane Katrina more than half the poor families in New Orleans were single mothers dependent on community networks for resources and survival. The disaster eroded those support networks placing women and children at far greater risk.

An Oxfam report into the 2004 tsunami found that surviving men outnumbered women by almost 3:1 in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and India. It appears that women lost precious evacuation time trying to save children and other relatives.

Another study spanning 20 years noted that catastrophic events lowered women's life expectancy more than men; more women were being killed, or being killed younger. The difference reduced in countries where they had greater socioeconomic power.

As for Male Violence

According to UNIFEM:

- In South Africa a woman is killed every 6 hours by an intimate partner.

- A woman is reported beaten every 18 seconds in the U.S.

- A 2007 study found that 22 women in India were killed each day due to dowry related murders.

- In Guatemala, two women are murdered on average every day.

- In India a woman is reported raped every 20 minutes.

- More than 60 million girls worldwide are child brides.

- In Sao Paulo, Brazil a woman is assaulted every 5 seconds.

UNITE estimates that up to 70% of women experience violence in their lifetime

World Bank data indicates that amongst women ages 15 to 44, acts of male violence cause more death and disability than from

cancer, car accidents, war, and malaria combined.

The pathology of masculinity is ravaging women and life on this planet and its structures will not have a spontaneous change of heart. The capitalist patriarchy will continue to destroy until it is stopped by force, and we as women are the only ones who can lead this.

Patriarchy

Rosemary Radford Ruether said, "*Women must see that there can be no liberation for them and no solution to the ecological crisis within a society whose fundamental model of relationships continues to be one of domination.*"

In this age of science and development we are funneled into a productivist mode of interaction, rather than a relational mode of interaction, with nature, women, and children suffering most within this sterile framework. Capitalism, individualism, and masculinity have created a perfect storm, destroying the balance of organic communication and connection.

Central to masculinity is the male violation imperative,

Lierre Kieth writes: "*Masculinity requires what psychologists call a negative reference group, which is the group of people 'that an individual ... uses as a standard representing opinions, attitudes, or behavioral patterns to avoid.' Boys in patriarchal cultures create negative reference groups as a matter of course. Boys' first despised other is, of course, girls. No insult is worse than some version of 'girl,' usually a part of the female anatomy warped into hate speech. But once the psychological process is in place, the category 'female' can easily be filled with any group that a hierarchical society needs dominated or eradicated.*"

"*A personality with an endless drive to prove itself against another, any other, combined with the entitlement that power brings, creates a violation imperative. Men become 'real men' by breaking boundaries, whether it's the sexual boundaries of women, the cultural boundaries of other peoples, the political boundaries of other nations, the genetic boundaries of species, the biological boundaries of living communities, or the physical boundaries of the atom itself.*"

"*The real brilliance of patriarchy is that it doesn't just naturalize oppression. It sexualizes acts of oppression. It eroticizes domination and subordination, and then it takes that eroticized domination and subordination, and institutionalizes that into masculinity and femininity. So it naturalizes, it eroticizes, and then it institutionalizes.*"

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“The brilliance of feminism is that we figured that out.”

We are living within overlapping systems of oppression, he would like us to think that it's inevitable, that it's human nature, but it's not.

According to indigenous wisdom, the world is made up of live, sentient beings to be in relationship with, individual obligations to fulfill to allow the entire web of life to function.

To the mind of the dominant culture the world is made up of dead resources, objects to sell, and orifices to fuck. Neoliberalism and identity politics have ensured a myopic culture of individualism. The aim is to disconnect us from the land, from each other, and even from our own bodies, which this culture teaches us to despise and contort from early childhood.

This lie of disconnection is embedded into our religions, laws, and economics. These systems have all been designed to maintain an unnatural social order for his benefit, and here he has brought us to the brink of extinction, bloodied, brutalized but still resisting, because as women we know it doesn't have to be this way, in our bones we can remember another world, and every one of us still carries it with us.

The Matriarchy

Renowned matriarchal historian Heide Göttner-Abendroth writes;

“Therefore, from the political point of view, I call matriarchies egalitarian societies of consensus. These political patterns do not allow the accumulation of political power. In exactly this sense, they are free of domination: They have no class of rulers and no class of suppressed people, and they need no 'enforcement bodies' such as warriors, police, or controlling and punishing institutions that are necessary to establish domination of a majority of people.”

We know this was a reality for thousands of years, and if there is to be any hope for women or for the Earth it must become reality again.

Taking Power Back – Organizing as Women

To organize effectively as women we need, above all else, true sisterhood and solidarity. How do we take the learnings from matriarchal organizing and apply them to our own organizations and campaigns?

As in any other area of life, there can be enormous pressure to replicate the dominant culture within our group dynamics. Like mothers we need ferocious gentleness, protectiveness, and loyalty. Sometimes it is difficult to maintain focus, but it's vital that we refuse to lose sight of our common cause

and that we employ a great deal of forgiveness and understanding for the women [with whom] we work alongside.

Moving through politics and activism as a working class single parent I've witnessed a stark lack of recognition of class privilege. The reality of working class women and mothers is unique, as is their perspective. To be inclusive of those voices, and other women facing constraints, the hierarchies of time, money, and education need to be taken into account and adapted for. If we want to be in solidarity with women who are often the most vulnerable in our communities we need to organize with them in mind. We need to practice what we preach so all women are empowered to become part of the movement.

Obstacles

Controlled opposition – as activists we need to constantly assess the efficacy of our actions, the possible repercussions and the impact on our targets. We need to be aware of how the media and the state will use our movements to suit their own ends. We need to be well educated and aware of how government forces infiltrate, co-opt, and neutralize activist networks.

False solutions – The false belief that technology can save us, that more extractivism, more industry, more destruction of habitat will somehow make our way of life sustainable. The environmental movements' role should be to protect the living world, not to protect our way of life or to reinforce the culture of empire.

The false belief that we can somehow negotiate with those in power – Electoral politics and NGO's have proven themselves untrustworthy time and time again, resistance must come from the **grassroots (added)**. There is a dangerous belief that within the dominant culture there is a willingness to change but power never ceded power voluntarily. We are at war, at war for the survival of the living world and at war for our right to exist as women.

Disconnection – From 'Demon Lover – On the Sexuality of Terrorism' by Robin Morgans:

“If I had to name one quality as the genius of patriarchy it would be compartmentalization, the capacity for institutionalizing disconnection. Intellect severed from emotion. Thought separated from action ... the personal isolated from the political, Sex divorced from love. The material ruptured from the spiritual.

“If I had to name one quality as the genius of feminist thought, culture, and action. It would be connectivity.”

This connection allows us to be fully aware of our sisters.

Awareness of our socialization, unpacking our need to always be kind and accommodate. Being fully aware of each other enables us to genuinely support other women when they are setting boundaries for themselves and for others.

Awareness of our persistence – in the face of poverty, oppression, responsibility, isolation ... persistence in the face of drudgery... behind every event, every action, every protest, there are a million emails, phone calls, conversations ... women in the background swimming in a sea of administrative boredom and stress. Recognition and gratitude couldn't be more important.

Despair – Despair can be debilitating – images that feel like a punch to your stomach – clear cuts, oceans of plastic, emaciated polar bears, orangutans clinging to burned and broken branches, their babies clinging to their dead mothers, scorched kangaroos hanging on barbed wire fences.

I think of the stealth of the silence all around me. Less birds, less bees, less insects.

I think of all the girls living under patriarchy, we all have some that haunt us, replay in our minds over and over.

I think of Ana Kriegel, a lonely 14-year-old girl. Lured from her home by the schoolboy she had a crush on. He took her and his friend to an abandoned building where he sexually assaulted her then beat her to death as the other looked on, ignoring her screams for help. They were 13 years old, reenacting his favorite porn scene.

I think of the little 5-year-old girl in India whose name I don't even know, she was taken from her sleeping mothers arms in a train station and murdered by two men.

Despair can be overwhelming, and that's exactly what he wants – for us to be overwhelmed and contracted in fear, and sometimes it's almost impossible to resist. But we do have an antidote to the despair, all we need is to look to the courageous examples of other women. Women who against all the odds are fighting back, resisting, creating beauty – I think of the women of Rojava, the women marching against the Taliban in the streets of Kabul, The Gulabi gang.

All the women who I know struggling on the frontlines of Earth defense.

I think of weeds creeping through concrete.

60% of our bodies are on loan from the seas and rivers, our menstrual cycles are intimately connected to the moons and the tides. We are so intertwined with each other that our bleeding can synchronize in time with our sisters. All of life moves through us, and all of life is fighting back and willing us to resist.

Rachel Carson wrote, *“Those who contem-*

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Rare Southern California Butterfly Protected as Threatened Under Endangered Species Act

Center for Biological Diversity
December 20, 2021

SAN DIEGO, California – After nearly 30 years of petitions and lawsuits by the Center for Biological Diversity, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today protected one of Southern California’s rarest butterflies, the Hermes copper butterfly, as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

The agency also designated 35,000 acres of protected critical habitat in San Diego County. The habitat consists of three units: Lopez Canyon, which includes acreage within Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve; Miramar/Santee; and Southern San Diego.

“Without Endangered Species Act protection, the Hermes copper butterfly would surely be pushed into extinction by Southern California’s rampant development, wildfires driven by climate change, and invasive plants,” said Ileene Anderson, a senior scientist at the Center. “I’m relieved to finally see this beautiful little butterfly and its habitat protected.”

The small, bright yellow-orange, spotted Hermes copper inhabits coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitats only in San Diego County and northern Baja. Its survival depends on dwindling patches of its host plant, the spiny redberry. Increasingly frequent and severe wildfires also ravage the butterfly’s primary source of nectar, the California buckwheat. Drought and development have also destroyed dozens of his-



Photo: John Martin, USFWS
Hermes copper butterfly.

toric populations.

The Hermes copper occupied many San Diego coastal areas prior to urbanization, and still persists in some foothill and mountain areas up to 45 miles from the ocean. The butterfly declined from at least 57 historical populations to only 26 populations in a survey this year.

Devastating wildfires have increasingly burned through key Hermes copper habitat, putting an end to the tenuous existence of many remaining butterfly populations. For example, 2020’s Valley Fire came within just 2.5 miles of a core population of the butterfly. In today’s listing the Service warned that a single large wildfire could wipe out

all remaining populations of the butterflies.

Background

Even by the time it was first described in the late 1920s, the Hermes copper was endangered by urban development. By 1980, staff at the San Diego Natural History Museum noted that San Diego’s rapid urban growth put the future of the butterfly in the hands of developers. The Fish and Wildlife Service first identified the butterfly as a potential candidate for Endangered Species Act protection in 1984.

The Center for Biological Diversity and San Diego Biodiversity Project filed formal petitions in 1991 and 2004 to protect the species. A lawsuit was required to force the Service to respond to the second petition, but the agency announced in 2006 that it would not protect the species, despite fires in 2003 that burned nearly 40% of the butterfly’s habitat.

The Center filed a second lawsuit in 2009, but the Service delayed protection by placing the butterfly back on the candidate list in 2011. So the Center sued a third time in May 2019, which finally forced the Service to propose a status of threatened in January 2020.

The Center for Biological Diversity is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 1.7 million members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places. Contact Ileene Anderson, (323) 490-0223, ianderson@biologicaldiversity.org.

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plate the beauty of the Earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature – the assurance that dawn comes after night, and Spring after Winter.”

And dawn will come, and Spring after, because we really can do this, but only if we are unified in our struggles. We have all experienced the feeling of genuine female solidarity, working together for a common purpose. The power and potential is undeniable. We know this in our bones and so do the patriarchs, that’s why they have spent the last 6,000 years trying to stamp it out.

To be female under patriarchy is to be brutalized, to be nature under capitalism is to be devoured, he demands our submission while making a hell-scape of our paradise and commodities of our sisters.

There are only two forces on this planet with the beauty and ferocity to stop him.

Wild nature and wild woman.

Sue Breen was raised by environmentalist parents. Sue took part in her first direct action aged 17. Since then activism has been a central passion in her life. Influenced by her radical feminist mother, she was a lead campaigner for the ‘Together for Yes’ abortion rights campaign and is currently a mem-

ber of The Irish Women’s Lobby. Sue spent a number of years working as an international coordinator for Extinction Rebellion and also ran as a left-wing political candidate. Finally finding her true political home, she is now an organizer with radical feminist environmental organization Deep Green Resistance. She is also a founding member of the Shale Must Fall coalition which focuses on targeting the fracking industry, unifying impacted communities, and highlighting the neocolonialism carried out by Western corporations. Sue is a single mother to three girls, a complimentary therapist, and is beginning an apprenticeship in herbal medicine.

Source: <https://filia.org.uk/latest->

Bongani Siziba

Kim Wall Memorial Fund grantee & Gender Justice Reporting Initiative
South Africa

"Growing up I remember my grandmother used to tell me about the importance of patience and knocking on every available door. When I applied for the Kim Wall grant, it was just another door that I needed to knock. I knocked and it opened. Being an IWMF Kim Wall 2021 and Gender Justice Reporting Initiative grantee has given me a voice in my journalism career. It gave me wings and equipped me with the funding to be able to do my project and report in-depth the way I always wanted."



Photos Courtesy IWMF

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Women Journalists Get Grants to Help Make Our World a Better, Safer Place

Note from Iona: *I have been trying to get more stories by women into our newspaper but it's been hard. I especially want to publicize the work our Grassroots Coalition women members are doing. So, if you're a woman reading this and you have a story which fits our style, please contact me at grassrootscoalition@pa.net. When I saw what these remarkable women in action have accomplished, I decided to share them with you.*

International Women's Media Foundation
December 22, 2021

2021 has been a remarkable year for the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF). Through 306 fellowships, 79 reporting grants, and 8 awards, global journalists received opportunities for training, mentorship, reporting, and recognition. Below, learn about some of the amazing women in our community whose stories you don't want to miss.

S. Mitra Kalita (U.S.) is shifting the media narrative as the co-founder of URL

Media. Having received seed funding from the IWMF's Howard G. Buffett Fund for Women Journalists in late 2020, URL Media is now a blossoming network of eight Black and Brown news outlets across the U.S. whose purpose is to "uplift, respect, and love the communities we serve."

Jasmine Ellis's (U.S.) experience in the Gwen Ifill Mentorship Program not only advanced her leadership skills, but brought her to a new path in her career. In 2021, Jasmine transitioned from political reporting to a position with Slate, where she produces podcasts on race, injustice, and revolution.

Indian journalist **Supriya Vohra's (India)** reporting is making real changes in the Goa community. Her Fund for Women Journalists-supported story from Mongabay about a previously water-rich village that was sucked dry by iron-ore mining led the public works department in Goa to fast track the construction of a water pipeline to the village.

¡Exprésate! grantee **Carmen Valeria Escobar (El Salvador)** is drawing attention to

issues impacting LGBTQI+ communities and women in El Salvador. Her story *La profetisa en su tierra Santo Tomás* – about Sonia Sánchez, a woman who led the fight against climate change in her hometown – was recognized as one of the 15 best works on climate change by The Thomson Foundation and was featured at The Foreign Press Association Media Awards.

As hosts of the podcast *Comadres Al Aire*, Fund for Women Journalists grantees **Maritza L. Félix and Valeria Fernández (Mexico)** are taking on conversations about women's health from a human perspective. Their conversations on wellness are changing the narrative for Latinx women, using humor, inclusivity, and vulnerability to share new perspectives. *Since we met while reporting immigration stories in Arizona and the border, we dreamed of having a space to talk about women's issues, without taboos, with our journalistic approach, but from a very real and human perspective.

Women Journalists *continued on next page*

Women Journalists *continued from previous page*

Supriya Vohra

Fund for Women Journalists grantee
India

"The grant gave me an opportunity to observe and document in granular detail, the perils of an extractive industry on communities that live close to it, and the impact of its abrupt shut-down on livelihoods and the economy of the state. These subjects are not covered in the mainstream media in an in-depth manner, so grants are literally the only way to make things happen."



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tive. The IWMF has been a foundation and a loudspeaker for our work. We are journalists #ConAcentoyConTalento."

Kim Wall Memorial Fund grantee and Gender Justice Reporting Initiative fellow **Bongani Siziba (South Africa)** has spent her career reporting on people whose stories rarely get told – like a woman artist in South Africa whose work has had an impact far outside her own small community. Bongani shares that the opportunities she's received from the IWMF, "gave me wings."

Fund for Women Journalists grantee **Ketzalli Rosas Cervantes (Mexico)** shed light on one of the Covid-19 pandemic's overlooked impacts: victims of domestic violence forced to quarantine with their abusers. Created by a team of dozens of journalists, *Violentas En Cuarentena* won a 2021 One World Media Digital Media Award.

As reproductive rights came under attack across the U.S, Central and Latin America, Mexican journalists, **Stephanía Corpi and Isabella Cota (Mexico)** shed light on the anti-abortion tactics used by the far-right

across the Americas. After their reporting, supported by the Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice in the Americas program, was published, two countries' national governments opened investigations into the alleged wrongdoers exposed in the story.

Adelante fellow **Deborah Bonello (Mexico)** brought her full identity and experience to the table to uncover the lives of Las Patronas – women crime bosses in Latin America. The five-part series conveyed the powerful positions women hold in crime families, a story that could only be accessed by a woman journalist with a deep understanding of the issue.

2021 Elizabeth Neuffer fellow and Polish journalist **Ada Petriczko (Poland and U.S.)** is finishing up a semester interning for *The Boston Globe* and auditing courses at MIT's Center for International Studies. For *The Globe*, Ada has written stories including parallels between Texas' and Poland's abortion bans and an interview with Nobel Peace Prize winner Maria Ressa. Next up, Ada will spend the spring writing with *The New York Times!*

Amy Westervelt (U.S.) is the host of *The Repair*, a Fund for Women Journalists-supported podcast which took a deep dive into the historical drivers of global climate change – including an episode about Indonesia's climate emergency supported by the IWMF's Round Earth Media program. Through this series, Amy not only brought attention to an overwhelming, imminent issue, but shared what it might take to repair this crisis.

The IWMF is the only organization that offers emergency support, safety training, global reporting opportunities, and funding for both staff reporters and freelancers, all specifically tailored for women. We are making more women's bylines possible, working tirelessly to ensure a greater diversity of voices represented in the news industry worldwide.

We need your help to continue supporting women journalists in 2022. Please consider a donation to the IWMF to make more women's bylines possible in the new year at <https://impact.iwmf.org/give/177175/#!/donation/checkout>.

Source: <https://www.iwmf.org/>

**Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out,
make it do, or do without.**



Chief Femi Otedola



Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

Story By and About Young Grassroots Coalition Member's Budding Career in Art

By Ogunsanya Temitope Prince, Nigeria

My name is Ogunsanya Temitope Prince. I am a 22-year old and I live in Nigeria.

Many don't believe my age because I have the face of a 16-year-old kid. I've always had the heart of a child I guess. Maybe because I was raised by a single Mom.

I have so many stories to tell but I'll start from my genesis.

I started playing with comic characters and drawings when I was a very little boy. We had just moved into a new neighborhood. Nobody knew us.

I would draw comic characters and cartoon figures and glue them to our front door. I DID THAT EVERYDAY TILL THERE WAS NO ROOM LEFT; THEN I MOVED TO THE WALLS.

I loved seeing my drawings first thing after school.

My mom tried to stop me because she felt that I was ruining the walls. A couple of times she said, "If you do not stop, I will throw away all these drawing!"

I continued, though, as I knew she did

not have the heart to do anything like that.

Meanwhile, every one of our neighbors and all outsiders would gawk at the drawings. The lot of them would stare in awe and wonder. One once told my mum that I had found a gift and congratulated us on discovering it early. That feedback totally changed my mother's point of view.

Art made it easy for me growing up. I wasn't shy to be around people and it helped me build character. I was always saying "Thank you" to folks who'd give comments on my drawings.

When I left school, I didn't go learn a trade. I gave myself to a tutor (Mr. Peter and Collins). Had a brief insight of the life of an artist through these people. To be honest, it isn't the lifestyle of a billionaire, the lifestyle everybody wants. But it was satisfying in itself.

Art gave me a direction, some sort of purpose and a story to tell. I started teaching art to students, I started talking about it. I talked about art then I talked about myself.

A lot of years passed. I started having mixed feelings about my gift. Is it that I

wasn't good enough or nobody was interested in what I had to offer? Because I wasn't getting any support or making a lot from it. But, I didn't let that stop me.

Sometimes I'd be broke, broken, and busted and all I could do was go back and just Draw.

I told myself, "You have to get better, you've got to practice a lot more if you want to get recognized."

Fast forward to 2018. I attended a Masterclass with Johnson Abbaly. Everything I learnt that day led to the creation of my own brand - "Artaac" which means Art, Aesthetics, and Creativity.

I started doing little projects. I remember that same year I made a portrait of Mr. Kennedy MçBryian and he got the art work published in an international newspaper. I started to see what I could do.

Last year 2021 I worked on a project (the Greenland Project) with The Successors Generation Community, Ikorodu. Identifying 60 Individuals in Nigeria who are Icons

Artist continued on next page



Sustainable Development Goals

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation.
- Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.*
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

*Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

Source: <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

Artist continued from previous page

and top Leaders in all sectors who are doing amazing, incredible things in the country in celebration of Nigeria's 60th anniversary – with my Pencil Art.

And that was a Big Success.

Why did I do the Greenland Project?

1. To celebrate Nigeria's 60 years of independence.

2. To remind of us of our heroes. Not everybody is up for any motivational speech these days but the lives of these people are enough to encourage and inspire, most especially the youths we now have.

Yeah, so it's to point out these people who have and are still doing incredible things. Now the world recognizes them as Icons, World Leaders, Award-Winning, Record-Holding Individuals.

My Hope is to meet every single one of them before this year runs out.

I have continued Penciling memories

ever since.

I believe, whether through projects or commissions, or whether someone patronizes or not, I am forever going to be an Artist, and I will continue drawing. As long as there are stories out there, I'll tell 'em with my pencils.

Two Icons who I look up to and who have inspired me a great deal are Mr. Femi Otedola and Mrs. Okonjo Iweala.

Chief Femi Otedola is considered one of Africa's Biggest Successful Business Men. Top 10 Richest Men in Nigeria according to *Forbes*. He's a man who understands what it's like to lose all and start from the very beginning again. I'd love to be mentored by him.

And Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is the Director General of the World Trade Organization (WTO). She is an economist and international development expert with over 30 years of experience, the first woman to hold the position, who spent a 25-year ca-

reer at the World Bank rising to the No. 2 position of Managing Director.

In 2020 Dr. Okonjo-Iweala was named *Forbes* African of the Year. She has been ranked by *Fortune* as one of the 50 Greatest World Leaders (2015) and by *Forbes* as one of the Top 100 Most Powerful Women in the World.

These Portraits are out for purchase. To reach out to me for more incredible Artwork stories please send an email to Artaac.ini@gmail.com or WhatsApp at 08113064914. Or use the search word Artaac on any social media platform including LinkedIn. You should also definitely check out my blog at artaaclink.blogspot.com. You won't regret that.

My special thanks goes to Iona Conner and the Grassroots Coalition newspaper. Thank you for all the push and this platform. God bless you all.

Keep making Memories 🌸



Photo Courtesy Forest People's Programme

On July 23, 2021, another attack was carried out on one of the communities in the Park, another joint operation of the army and eco-guards, resulting in the death of two men and the burning down of a number of homes.

Atrocities in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, DR Congo in the Name of “Security” and “Conservation”

Forest People's Programme: December 7, 2021

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – Over the weekend of 12th-14th November 2021, in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, at least two whole Batwa villages were burnt to the ground, a man was shot dead, two women were shot and injured, and at least one woman who was pregnant is still unaccounted for and feared burnt alive in her house. Villagers fled into the forest to hide.

These events took place during a joint operation by the Congolese army and armed eco-guards from Kahuzi-Biega National Park that specifically targeted Batwa communities living inside the boundaries of the Park. Since these attacks, we understand that a number of Batwa people have been taken prisoner and other community members are fearing the worst for them, having heard rumors of the prisoners experiencing torture and sexual assault.

Unfortunately, there is precedent for this fear: on 23rd July this year, another attack was carried out on one of the communities in the Park, another joint operation of the army and eco-guards, resulting in the death of two men and the burning down of a number of homes. During and following that attack, we also understand that further violence took place against women in the community in particular, resulting in the death of two women and a miscarriage by a third.

The exact justification for these latest

raids has been unclear: for example, the Park's Director suggested in an email sent last week that in relation to the November raid, the army was pursuing armed men who had carried out attacks in the city of Bukavu, some 40 kilometers (25 miles) away, three days before. This explanation is entirely unconvincing, since the attacks in Bukavu actually took place on 3rd November, 10 days before. No one suggested any Batwa played any part in the attacks in Bukavu and that incident 10 days earlier does not explain why Batwa communities were attacked by the army and eco-guards.

This is just the latest example of a campaign of terror being carried out against Batwa people who, since 2018, despairing of the failure of the Congolese conservation authorities to live up to promises made in a series of dialogues and meetings, have chosen to return to their ancestral homes within the boundaries of Kahuzi-Biega National Park.

The response of the Park authorities has been becoming increasingly harsh. In public communications with organizations outside DRC, the Park Director denies that there are any Batwa communities within the Park at all and that he has excellent relations with the Batwa. Meanwhile, in informal meetings with Batwa community leaders and with local civil society organizations he has demanded that they persuade the people living in the Park to leave and has

threatened that there will be further raids if they don't. Each raid has resulted in serious human rights abuses, and each seems to be worse than the last. None of the responses from the Park have ever addressed the fundamental injustice that the Batwa have experienced: being dispossessed of their ancestral home with no consultation, consent, or compensation.

Our perspective is that what is taking place, almost unnoticed, is a concerted campaign to terrorize the Batwa out of Kahuzi-Biega National Park, land which they had cared for for centuries. It is being carried out in the name of conservation, with unfounded accusations from some conservation actors that the Batwa are the ones damaging the area's incredibly precious ecosystem, and with unfounded suggestions that harassing the Batwa is somehow connected to preserving security.

The Batwa continue to choose to return to their ancestral lands, despite the threats to their lives, because they know that the land is theirs to care for. Surely it makes sense for the conservation authorities to turn their hostility on its head and commit instead to work with the landscape's traditional guardians, working together with the Batwa as allies, not enemies.

Source: <https://www.forestpeoples.org/en/press-release/2021/Fresh-atrocities-Kahuzi-Biega-National-Park>



Photos: David Cadeau

David Cadeau and his team are helping people in the refugee camp, especially the children. Here's what he wrote: "I am much loved by young kids since I am always closer and friendly to them. The greatest fact that makes them love me is that I do consider them as my own since they spend much time with me

Story and Photo Essay of Life in a Refugee Camp

By David Cadeau Shungusa, Kenya (shown in the green shirt teaching children on page 16)

[First email, December 27, 2021]

Hello Mrs. Iona. My name is Cadeau Shungusa, Congolese by nationality, married, aged of 26 years. Currently I am based in Kakuma refugee camp located in Kenya and I am a leader of a community group that aims at improving the standard of life for the community through the implementation of different activities that include:

- Syntropic Agro-forestry for climate change (this project is done due the fact that here in the camp where we are based, there is a drought observed regularly as there is always rain shortage in Kakuma refugee camp). Besides this, we do also have a children's permaculture project.
- Early children academy and women empowerment life skills.

We are still planning on running many activities as we get means. These activities include: Dressmaking, Hairdressing, Tailoring, Career Guidance and promoting of youth talents, caring for and protecting the rights of vulnerable people such as HIV-positive individuals and people with disabilities.

December 29, 2021

Hello once more again madam Iona, it's with a great pleasure that I have received your email and I am happy that you have appreciated the idea of inviting my colleagues to those Zoom meetings that will be held for better sharing of views and hearing from one other. We are a group of 12 people whereby there are 4 males and 8 females with a common aim of empowering the society and struggling against the effect of global warming that is currently observed everywhere in the entire world. Our group name is A.E.M.P.D.I.

January 1, 2022 (excerpt)

I really got impressed of your concern towards us and as you have noticed we are trying our level best to ensure a better safeguard of the society through running of different humanitarian and livelihood activities. I am much inspired in caring about everyone in this world and behold my team also has accepted to work with me in good collaboration and with the same goal.

With the point regarding the joining of Zoom meetings, we shall organize ourselves and see how we can buy bundles for a group

Zoom meeting participation as some of them don't know how to use smartphones.

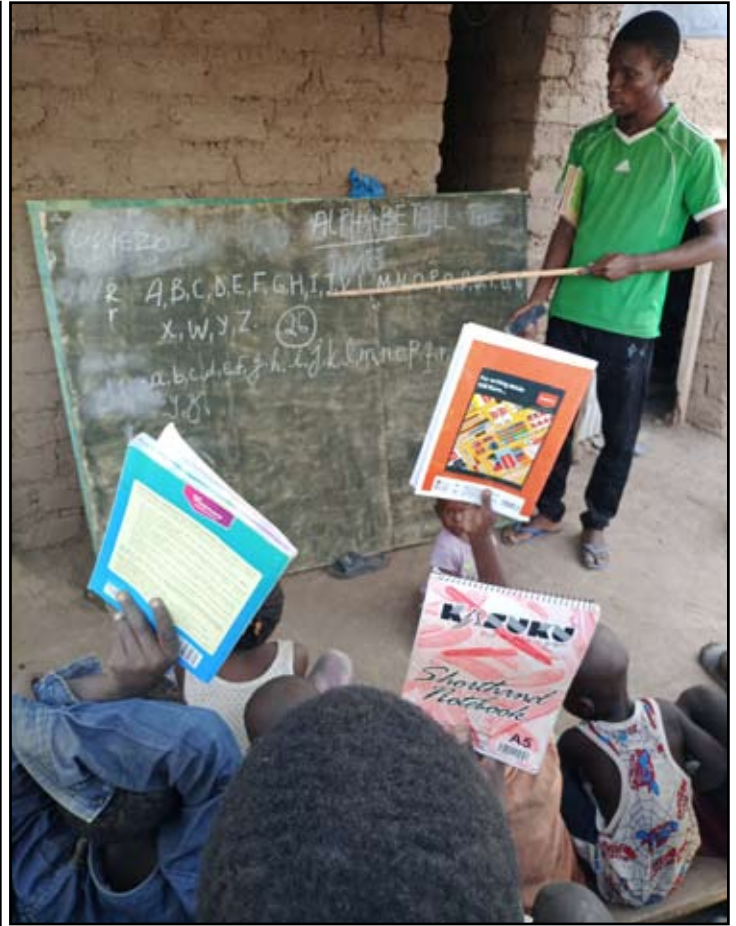
As you talked about using of the term "working," I think it would be much better using that because whatever we are doing indeed is the work aimed at the improvement of refugees standard of life for real. As you well know, life in refugee camp is quite hard, but meanwhile with God's protection we're gonna make it...!!! I am much delighted by hearing that there are also many other people from elsewhere in the world who are doing the relevant activities to this. As you have noticed, truly there is much violence in a refugee camp but all in all we just keep enduring with all the challenges because they are there to strengthen us.

January 3, 2022

It's with a great pleasure that we have received again your message, and truly as you can notice and do hear, life is quite hard within the camp, and hence despite of all those challenges being incurred we thought on how we can work hard to assist our community both by teaching them different skills related with livelihood and

Refugee Camp continued on next page

Refugee Camp *continued from previous page*



striving against the effects of global warming through running of projects such permaculture and Agro-forestry.

I think regarding the process of publishing of the emails sent to you on social media there is no problem, if you have got any Website you can even publish them in such a manner that everyone can be able to read and see it so that they can be also informed on the projects we are running for the improvement of the community lives!!! We even request if it pleases you that you link us with other worldwide organizations that are running the same projects that we told you we are running so that we can be partners and hence it can enable us to nicely work and prosper in whichever activities that we shall be doing.

Regarding pictures regarding life of troubles faced in the camp, I shall find as many as possible and I will be sending them to you. We shall be happy to meet you on Zoom meeting in February. My team and I really thank you in advance for your great concern to us and your caring about the improvement of the lives of the society especially for vulnerable people.

January 5, 2022

Hello once more madam Iona, it's really wonderful that I have received again your

message and I hope that by God's will we shall thrive different projects that we are doing. I really wish you a nice time as also I was communicating with my team yesterday informed them about the Zoom meeting we shall attend together in February, so they were much pleased as they wish to meet with you and many other persons on that scheduled day.

January 12, 2022

Hi once more again madam Iona, I am once more again impressed that you received the email and pictures I had sent you regarding the different challenges that us refugees are facing in the camp. Each of those pictures you saw illustrates a hardship, by the way there are many of them but I have tried to send you some of the most relevant ones, we still have some few others that we shall send you very soon when we get accessibility to enough bundles. I think you can now see with your own eyes how life is really terrible here even though we just keep on enduring as we don't have otherwise. All in all I hope with our project and as time goes by we shall curb some of the noticeable gaps by empowering our society through various skills and bettering the environment. Now we are still volunteering ourselves by contributing each per-

son a very little amount of money for any activities that we run.

January 14, 2022

Hi again madam. I hope you have had a wonderful daytime as well as mine has been too, and still I thank you for your time that you are sacrificing your time to communicate with me. With all the inquiries that you have shouted to me, I am ready to respond:

QUESTION 1: Why did I flee from my country?

ANSWER: Briefly I fled from my country due to political instabilities (please if you would like that I narrate the whole process from the raising of the problem to the end, you will notify).

QUESTION 2: Am I alone or I've got some other family members with whom I fled together during the running process?

ANSWER: My mother and dad had passed away since then, when we noticed that the situation was becoming worst and hence could lead to our loss of lives, we decided to run from our country of origin; my two young brothers, one little sister, and my wife whom I had married and by now I have two kids with her, but also I have a friend with whom we ran and he is the one also helping me in the volunteering of the ac-

Refugee Camp *continued on next page*

Refugee Camp continued from previous page



activities that we are doing for the betterment and change of refugee lives in Kakuma. That friend of mine is called Shukuru Mitima Emmanuel who is really brave and contributes much to the progress of our group.

(Under this answer there is much details if you wish that I may detail them you can still notify me during your response.)

With the Idea of creating a platform involving refugees in Africa with the differ-

ent challenges we are facing, I hope it's a nice idea and my team and I will be able to provide you with the accurate information because we are really part of the victims of

Refugee Camp *continued on next page*

Refugee Camp *continued from previous page*



such life and we hope one day God will rescue and deliver us from this life of the camp and be great people also who can contribute to the change of the nation wherever we shall find ourselves in this world.

We are wishing if we would have been getting also opportunities of studying and advance our little skills so that we can be able to establish peace even to our country as time goes by. Thanks again and welcome for your concern towards us.

The two buildings shown are places for food distribu-

tion where we do queue lines on a monthly basis to be provided with some food by the WFP (Food World Program) organization operating in every camp for the safeguard of people's lives despite the fact that that small provided ration is insufficient for even a half-month due to a huge number of refugees in need of it!!!

Refugees keep hustling to see how they can reduce the shortage of food in Kakuma refugee camp and save lives of people!!!!



Refugee Camp *continued from previous page*



Refugee Camp *continued on next page*

Refugee Camp *continued from previous page*



Refugee Camp *continued from previous page*





Photos by Moses Semwayo

There are holes dug everywhere and the traditional leaders and other administrative leadership have no control on what is going on. Rusitu is fast becoming a lawless jungle, and as the digging and scavenging for gold continues in earnest, the community and environment will be exposed to terror never known to them before.

NEWS FLASH January 28, 2022: Scientists have found alarming levels of mercury in the trees of an old-growth Amazon forest, a toxic byproduct of gold mining. Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/28/climate/amazon-forest-mercury-peru.html>

Environmental Disaster Brewing in Rusitu Valley: Gold Panning

By Jussa Kudherezera, Manica Youth Assembly, Zimbabwe

When one talks of Rusitu valley in Chimanimani, what likely comes into mind is the unforgettable disaster brought by Cyclone Idai in 2019 which left a trail of destruction and human suffering. The Cyclone left a huge toll on the environment which nobody knows how or when this will be reversed if it can be done at all.

As people focus on the effects of Cyclone Idai, however, there is another environmental disaster that is looming which is artisanal gold panning. This is not a new phenomenon at all as these activities have

been going on for a long time in Chimanimani District where thousands of prime timber plantations such as Tarka are under siege from gold panners. Popular panning zones were Kurwaisimba and the infamous Musanditeera, where it was claimed that it was so adorned with gold that it was a norm to pick up sizeable gold nuggets. Now, the problem has come to the community doorsteps, and it appears there is not much they can do to save themselves and the environment from the artisanal miners.

Thus, when Cyclone Idai wreaked havoc on Chimanimani, Rusitu Valley arguably received the worst blow. It is feared that there are hundreds of gold panners buried under

the Rusitu Valley whilst many more were swept away into Mozambique. There were thousands of gold panners around the area from far flung areas who were involved in artisanal mining when the Cyclone struck and it was expected that this will stop since people had learnt their lesson, but gold panning has bounced back with a bang.

A recent visit during the Christmas and New Year holidays proved that artisanal mining is becoming a bigger threat to the environment and humans more than Cyclone Idai itself. At least the Cyclone was once off but the artisanal gold panning may go on for decades if not centuries if left unchecked.

Gold Panning *continued on next page*



Photos by Tinashe Muzama

Grassroots Coalition Board of Directors member Jussa Kudherezera organized major tree planting activity in Dangamvura Mountain, where they are doing their best to restore the land and educate local citizens about the importance of saving trees.

Massive Tree Planting Activity by Youth in Zimbabwe

Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA) has kick-started the year 2022 by embarking on an afforestation program to respond to the massive deforestation crisis around Mutare. Today we planted 60 trees in Dangamvura Mountain. This is in line with SDG 13 which advocates for climate action. As

young people, we believe there is only one planet, which is Planet A and it is our mandate to protect it by all means necessary. In this Decade of Action, young people are the drivers of Global Goals. Climate impacts positively on all 17 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. (See p. 13.)

National Tree Planting Day Proposal

Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA) is a non-profit organization, a nonpartisan, solution-centered, youth and women's grassroots-based advocacy organization
Tree Planting *continued on next page*

Gold Panning *continued from previous page*

It has become a livelihoods issue and many young men are being socialized into it to the extent that it has been normalized as the easy way out of poverty and joblessness.

The social and environmental impact will be dire. As more and more people resort to gold panning, so will be the social impact. Arable land is being lost while homes and even schools such as Rusitu Mission are already feeling the effects as some panners are already digging in the Mission grounds. Several families have lost their fields and reserved land due to uncontrolled panning activities.

Many houses are standing on top of underground tunnels dug up by the panners and it is possible that during the rainy season, several houses will collapse because the ground has become unstable and shaky. It's like people have built on shifting sands.

Local leadership and community have no capacity to tame or stop these activities since the artisanal miners, who are mostly youths, are violent and are not from the area. Police seem not to have any capacity to tame the tide either as they have become aides to the crime through corruption as they are paid kickbacks by the panners.

During a visit to the area, it was observed

the artisanal miners were busy on their trade and operating underground without any precaution in case of a disaster. They use dangerous chemicals such as mercury to refine the gold, polluting existing water bodies and threatening the health of humans and animals. There are holes dug everywhere and the traditional leaders and other administrative leadership have no control on what is going on. Rusitu is fast becoming a lawless jungle, and as the digging and scavenging for gold continues in earnest, the community and environment will be exposed to terror never known to them before.

There are thousands of craters from the digging, some as deep as 80 meters (262 feet) and this means that even the water table in the area will further go down turning it into a dryer region and access to water will become a challenge. Because the artisanal miners don't reclaim or close up the holes after digging, these also become water reservoirs and will trap more water during rainy seasons and eventually cause flooding down-stream.

The work of Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA) and other stakeholders in the Environmental cluster has been cut out for

them and there is an urgent need to facilitate interventions right now to mitigate the problem. There is need to educate the communities about the dangers of the activities for now and future generations.

The Mines and Minerals Act currently held under review must empower communities and local leaders to protect their local areas from predators such as artisanal gold panners. There is also need to educate the panners themselves on responsible and safe mining practices as well so that both miners and the environment are saved.

As an organization, we wish to engage the community and the artisanal miners to address the crisis at hand and avoid a disaster. The community is still nursing the aftereffects of Cyclone Idai disaster in 2019. The mining activities are fast encroaching and are overtaking the efforts by environmentalists' combined efforts.

Jussa Kudherezera, Coordinator, Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA) for Environmental Protection.

Email: manicayouthassembly@gmail.com

Phone: +263772351138

Twitter: @ManicaYouth

Website: <https://manicayouth.org>

Tree Planting *continued from previous page*

that seeks to empower young people and women to actively participate in public affairs and proffer solutions.

MAYA was established in 2018 after realizing the exclusion of youths in public affairs, wanton destruction of the environment, and the effects of climate change upon the society, especially young people who will carry the burden on their shoulders for a long time. We exist to create a just society based on promotion of Peace, Gender Equality, Social, Environmental, and Climate Justice.

Our mission is to empower and engage young people to become holistic change agents and advocates for the achievement of social accountability in governance, gender, environmental and climate justice through the involvement and participation of local communities.

Our vision is a society that values, protects, promotes, and is in active service of the environment and the climate with young people taking the lead.

Context Analysis

MAYA embarked on an afforestation and re-afforestation program to respond to the deforestation crisis around Mutare and especially areas surrounding Dangamvura. Indeed, some reasons have resulted in the deforestation of Dangamvura Mountain, Murahwa, Shenj, Fern Valley, and even the game park at Christmas Pass Mountain has been plundered for firewood/energy purposes. This has resulted in environmental conflicts between human beings and animals.

For instance, monkeys and baboons have roamed and stole from nearby homes in Dangamvura, Chikanga, Hobhouse, and other areas since humans have destroyed their habitats. Temperatures in and around the city have markedly increased due to this plunder thus exposing people to various health risks.

Our ReGreening Mutare project is to be conducted in Zimbabwe, Manicaland at Dangamvura Mountain. The planting season will be all year round. It is against this background that MAYA has chosen to contribute during the National Tree Planting Day in Zimbabwe to plant 1,000 trees at Dangamvura Mountain. This project aims at planting trees to improve various types of trees and biodiversity as well as to curb the effects of natural disasters such as mud flows and cyclones. The main objective is to restore forests as well as enhance the protection of the environment and conservation of biodiversity.

We are going to use the riparian restoration approach. All plantings will be done by hand and plants will be potted trees. The labor involved with planting will be ranging



from light to heavy duty, and tasks can be found for volunteers from young to old.

Volunteers from MAYA will be organized to help plant trees and education will also be provided to communities involved. 1,000 trees were to be planted starting the first week in December to the end of December and the cost for procuring the seedling is US\$1.00 each. The project is ongoing as we target to plant 10,000 trees by 2025.

Activities

- Tree Planting
- Environmental Awareness Campaigns

Protection

To prevent these trees from cutting, we already have a partnership with City of Mutare to supervise the planting trees and in the rural areas we are in collaboration with traditional leaders working with Community Change Agents in raising awareness on the need to conserve trees. The Forest Commission, Zimbabwe Republic Police, and Environmental Management Agency launched "Operation Huni Dzabvepi" in a bid to stop illegal cutting down of trees. Community Monitoring Change Agents will get involved in community projects addressing the issues of social justice, environment, and peace and will promote the role of girls and young women in peace building.

Community Benefits

- Forest restoration can provide benefits that extend beyond just the forests.
- Forest restoration helps enhance food security, improve air and water quality, and most of all, increase resilience to climate change.
- Forests filter sediments and pollutants from rainwater runoff, protecting the quality of rivers and lakes, including drinking water sources.
- Trees also absorb carbon dioxide which is crucial if we are to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and global biodiversity targets.
- Moreover, the community can benefit

by having recreational scenic views.

- Reduction of future natural hazards, help women to be the leading stewards in climate change advocacy since they are caring by nature.

- Reduction of human and wildlife conflicts and wilderness therapy.

Monitoring

The survival rate for this planting is 80% and some of the risks are fire, theft, and pests and, as for the mitigation strategy, we intend to create fire guards so as to curb the fire risks. We have volunteer environmental monitoring agents who will patrol the area to monitor the trees so as to ameliorate theft and also spraying pesticides will eliminate the threat posed by pests. The survival rate of trees will be tracked by monitoring and evaluation which will be in full effect so as to have an optimum efficacy of the project and also the volunteer environmental monitors from our ward structures will help in the survival of these trees.

Requested Budget

- Seedlings 300 @UD\$1= US\$300
 - Transport = US\$60
 - Refreshments = US\$50
- Total for the national tree planting: US\$410.00

Once again, please consider donating \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$200USD to MAYA today. Donations will support planting trees in Dangamvura Mountain, transport to the field, and refreshments.

Jussa Kudherezera, Coordinator
Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA)
Email: manicayouthassembly@gmail.com
Phone: +263772351138

Twitter: @ManicaYouth
Website: <https://manicayouth.org>
Donate via moneygram or Western

Union to: Munyaradzi James
Machiwenyika
ID No: 75-2029367Z-50
Phone: +263775917864

Niger Delta Group Fights Black Soot, Infertility

[Note from Iona: I knew this issue of our newspaper would not come out in time to promote this event so I posted it on Facebook. I'm publishing this to share the idea with others who are concerned and able to pull of a similar event.]

Dear Iona Conner,

Lekeh Development Foundation writes to seek for your Partnership to implement a two-days Ogoni Youths Summit on Climate Change, Soot, and Renewable Energy coming up on the 27th to 28th of January, 2022 and a follow-up public awareness campaign.

The project is to be executed around this concept:

Ogoni community is mostly impoverished and endangered by constant pollution of the environment caused by fossil fuels extractive industries who spill gallons of oil on the environment, flaring gases uncontrollably.

As a means for resources control by the people, the youths have also engaged themselves in artisanal refineries in order for them to benefit also from the vast amount of wealth deposited on their land.

Research and citizen reports show that the carbon pollution in the air popularly called "Black Soot" in the region is caused by gas flares from fossil fuels extractive industries, illegal artisanal refineries, and the constant destruction of seized oil and its associated assets by the security agencies tasked with the prevention of crude oil theft.

This project will sensitize 100 Ogoni youths on the health implication of black soot, climate change, and the need for renewable energy. We will also demand a stop to investing and depending on fossil fuels as major sources of energy and embrace re-



newable energy.

<https://leadership.ng/soot-expert-raises-alarm-over-rising-infertility-in-riversmen/>

Find attached is the flyer; however, we trust to have your logo and support of re-


freshments and t-shirts for 100 participants as we look forward to hearing from you.

Gratefully,

Nbani Friday Barilule, Executive Director, Lekeh Development Foundation, Niger Delta, Nigeria

Soot: Expert Raises Alarm Over Rising Infertility in Rivers State Men

Submitted by **Nbani Friday Barilule**,
Niger Delta, Nigeria

By Anayo Onukwugha 
Leadership: December 3, 2021

A public health expert, Dr. Dienye Briggs, has raised the alarm over the rise in infertility in men residing in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, due to high concentration of soot in the city's atmosphere.

Briggs, who disclosed this while speaking at the 'Stop The Soot' Conference, organized by the Rotary Club of Port Harcourt Eco, said the alarm followed recent research carried out at the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital (UPTH).

He stated that the research showed that there was structural abnormality in the sperm cells of the majority of men living in Port Harcourt due to soot particles in the atmosphere.

The public health expert, who spoke on the topic "Port Harcourt Soot and Its Implications," confirmed that soot can cause infertility in men.

Briggs said, "A research done at the UPTH found out that the majority of males in Port Harcourt have structural abnormality, of course in their sperm cells. Of course, sperm is very much indicated in pregnancy. It is the sperm that will fertilize the egg in a woman to bring about pregnancy. If they

are structurally abnormal, it means they lack the capacity to fertilize an egg. That means they cannot procreate."

He stated that unborn children now suffer the consequences of the soot, calling for an end to the soot because of its implications on the health of residents of the Niger Delta region.

In her welcome address, Charter President of the Rotary Club of Port Harcourt Eco, Emem Okon, said the essence of the conference was for different organizations to strategize and engender holistic sustainable solutions to the soot challenge.

Okon said, "We are not looking at putting

Soot continued on next page

Soot continued from previous page



Photo Courtesy Leadership.ng

Plumes of pollution spread across the Niger Delta area. Unborn children now suffer the consequences of the soot, calling for an end to the soot because of its implications on the health of residents of the Niger Delta region.

the blame on anybody. We are looking at different people, developing interests, and finding their own solution to the challenge. We are looking at livelihood, economy, en-

vironment, and education. We believe that addressing this problem does not require just one solution.”

Source: <https://leadership.ng/soot-expert-raises-alarm-over-rising-infertility-in-rivers-men/>

THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL LAW IS TO RECOGNISE THAT WE SHARE THE PLANET WITH OTHER BEINGS, AND THAT WE HAVE A DUTY TO CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME.

- Vandana Shiva -

<https://quotefancy.com/quote/2439692/Vandana-Shiva-Being-a-planetary-citizen-does-not-need-space-travel-It-means-being>



Photo: Stakeholder Democracy via Flickr

Barge transporting oil drums in the Niger Delta.

Niger Delta Communities in ‘Great Danger’ as Month-old Oil Spill Continues

By Mongabay via Deep Green Resistance
December 6, 2021

•Oil has been spilling from a wellhead in Nigeria’s Bayelsa State for a month now, with the local company responsible unable to contain it.

•Experts say the scale and duration of the spill is so severe that it’s imperative that local communities be relocated for their safety.

•Oil spills and other forms of pollution caused by the industry are common in Bayelsa, the heart of the oil-rich Niger Delta.

•Companies, including foreign oil majors, are largely left to self-declare the spills that frequently occur, but face only token fines for failing to respond quickly.

Crude oil from a blowout has been pouring into creeks in the Niger Delta since November 5, with the well’s owner, Nigerian energy firm Aiteo, unable to contain the spill and specialists called in to help.

The blowout, at a non-producing well in the Santa Barbara field in Bayelsa state, has caused extensive pollution of rivers and farmland in the Nembe local government area, according to the state governor, Douye Diri. According to the News Agency of Nigeria, he said Aiteo should not think that “this criminal neglect of its facilities and disregard for human life and the envi-

ronment, as demonstrated by its conduct, will not be accounted for.”

In a statement released November 22, the company blamed the incident on sabotage. “Aiteo remains committed to ascertaining, immediately the well head is secure, the immediate and remote causes of the leak which will be driven by a [joint investigative visit] that will follow,” it said.

The oil industry in Nigeria attributes many oil spills to sabotage by people trying to steal crude. Nigeria’s National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA), which relies almost entirely on the industry itself for access to on- and offshore oil facilities, reports that around 75% of spills are caused by sabotage and theft.

The joint team initially dispatched to the Nembe spill was unable to determine the cause of the spill, as the wellhead could not be accessed “due to hydrocarbon fumes that saturated the atmosphere in the area.” A video of the spill site, captured November 29, showed a high-pressure stream of brownish liquid spraying through the creeks from a wellhead as technicians worked on the site.

The scale of the spill has overwhelmed local disaster response capabilities, and U.S.-headquartered oil-well control specialist Halliburton Boots and Coots has been drafted in to “kill the well,” a process that involves injecting cement into the well to plug it.

“Work is still ongoing at the site to stop

the spill,” NOSDRA director-general Id-ris Musa told Mongabay last week, but all activities around the well were temporarily suspended November 29 to allow the well-kill operation to proceed.

Decades of Destruction

The Niger Delta is rich in biological diversity and natural resources. Its creeks, swamps, and mangrove forests are home to fishing and farming communities as well as threatened species including manatees (*Trichechus senegalensis*), chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes ellioti*), and the Niger Delta red colobus (*Piliocolobus epieni*).

But decades of oil production have made the region one of the most polluted places on Earth. NOSDRA recorded 639 oil spills in just the past two years, resulting in 28,003 barrels spewed into the environment, according to the agency’s data.

Bayelsa is where oil was first discovered in Nigeria in 1956. In the decades since, oil spills from wells and pipelines have contaminated farmland and water bodies, and exposed residents to toxic chemicals. Flaring of gas has led to acid rain falling on the area, while contributing to making Nigeria the 17th largest producer of greenhouse gas emissions in the world.

This environmental destruction has been caused by oil majors including Shell, Chevron, and Eni. The Nembe well was bought

Niger Delta continued on next page

Niger Delta *continued from previous page*

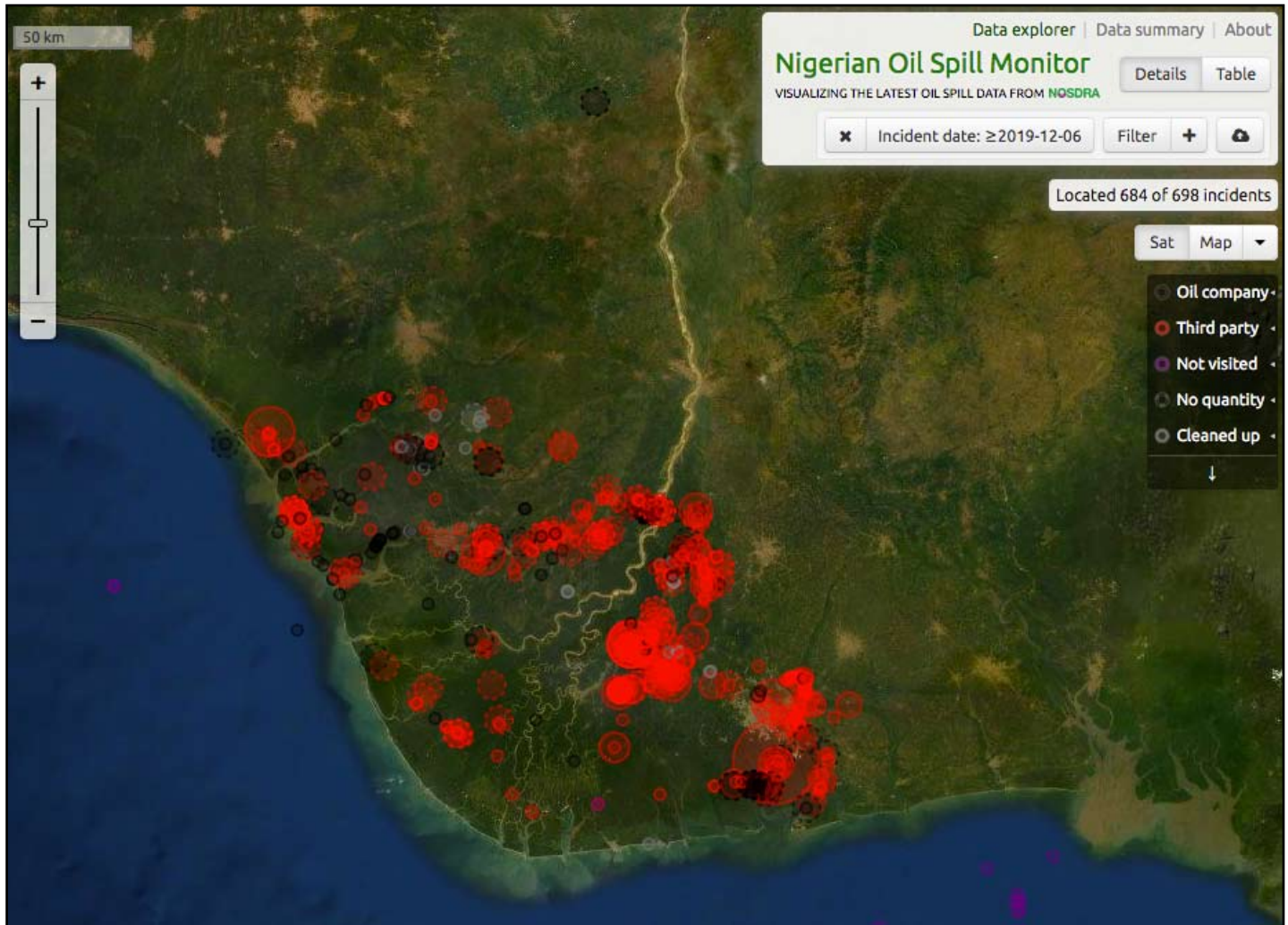


Image Courtesy NOSDRA

Map of incident reports in the Niger Delta since June 2019.

from Shell by Lagos-based Aiteo in 2015.

"It is extremely disturbing because the trend we are seeing now is that international oil companies know that their equipment are dilapidated, and to avoid responsibility, they move offshore and sell to gullible local companies who think they can make profit and are not ready or equipped to [deal with] this kind of emergencies," said Nnimmo Bassey, an environmentalist and founder of the Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF), a prominent green NGO in Nigeria.

Consequences – Just Not for Oil Companies

The impact of the Nembe spill on local communities and the environment is still to be determined, but Samuel Oburo, an environmental activist affiliated with Friends of the Earth, who lives about 50 kilometers (30 miles) from Nembe, says villagers in the area have been badly impacted. "I can tell

you that the people there face great danger. They have started crying out. They have started experiencing strange illnesses due to the unfriendly atmosphere this spill has exposed the community to," he told Mongabay over the phone.

But getting oil firms to clean up or pay for environmental crimes in Nigeria is difficult. Legal claims for compensation can take years, even decades, and companies are expected to pay relatively little in fines when they err.

NOSDRA's regulations say oil companies have 24 hours to respond to the discovery of a spill. A joint visit by government agencies, company officials, and community representatives should take place as soon as possible. But a 2018 study by Amnesty International found frequent delays, with some spills continuing for months after they were reported.

Shell, one of the largest operators in the country, visited spill sites within 24 hours on just 26% of occasions, Amnesty said. The

slowest response time recorded was when Eni took 430 days to respond to a spill in Bayelsa state. "These delays point to serious negligence. Shell and Eni are wealthy, powerful multinationals: why can't they act faster? Why can't they do more?" the report said.

But the penalties for noncompliance are negligible: 1 million naira (\$2,400) for an initial default, and an additional 500,000 naira (\$1,200) for every day after that.

"How much is N500,000 to an oil company?" NOSDRA's Idris Musa said. An amendment increasing the fines is in progress.

Speaking to the ongoing spill at Nembe, HOMEF's Bassey said that considering the apparent scale and duration of the latest spill, the safest option for residents of the area is to be relocated. "This area does not have pipe-borne water, and when the river is covered with crude oil, it means they have to depend on imported water," he said. "Some may drink from that river because these areas are permanently polluted and they have no option.



Image by Sosialistisk Ungdom (SU) via Flickr

Dead and dying trees near the site of a previous Niger Delta oil spill in 2020.

Children will swim in that river and people will drink from that river.”

“Crude oil contains very toxic heavy metals like lead; you know, lead affects a lot of things concerning people, the nervous system, causes cancer. You have mercury in oil, you have cadmium, you have arsenic and benzene and many others,” he told Mongabay. “So anybody eating fish from

that river is in trouble already. So the relief that they are giving, I believe they should actually evacuate people from that territory at this time.”

Oburo agreed. “So long as the spill continues, there is nothing that can be done to restore the air quality. The only solution is to evacuate those people from there because their lives are precious.”

Bayelsa government spokesperson Dan Alabrah said the state is providing relief materials to communities, but had no plans to relocate them.

Source: <https://news.mongabay.com/2021/12/niger-delta-communities-in-great-danger-as-month-old-oil-spill-continues/>

**THERE ARE MOMENTS WHEN I FEEL LIKE GIVING UP OR GIVING IN,
BUT I SOON RALLY AGAIN AND DO MY DUTY AS I SEE IT:
TO KEEP THE SPARK OF LIFE INSIDE ME ABLAZE.**

~ ETTY HILLESUM ~

<https://quotefancy.com/quote/1237974/Etty-Hillesum-There-are-moments-when-I-feel-like-giving-up-or-giving-in-but-I-soon-rally>



Photos: Niragira Antoine

ECOFITEXT protects the environment by using agro-waste to replace wood and plastic materials. Oscar is looking to use banana fibers for sanitary pad production to help females access affordable pads. This will help reduce the global climate change crisis. He needs machinery, extractors, and a sanitary-napkin producing machine.

New Grassroots Coalition Member Starts Eco Business Using Natural Fibers

(first email)

Dear Leader of Grassroots,

Many thanks for your good news.

It was long time without your news and I would like let you know that now I am focusing all my activities on the environment. I come to create a company called ECOFITEXT, with the aim to protect the environment by valorization of agro-waste in producing eco-friendly fibers that can help produce handicrafts, paper bags to replace wood and plastic materials.

I would like to discuss with you how we can engage in cooperation.

Looking for progress,

Oscar Ndayisenga, Burundi

(second email)

ASODECOM is Action Solidaire Pour le Développement Communautaire.

My country is Burundi, in Africa (east Africa region). I hope you understand also

that Ecofitext is the new company created for working in the environmental field.

And I'm very proud to work with you closely.

When you can plan a meeting, it would be helpful to my side to search a place with WiFi connection in order to follow the details.

Looking for progress,

Oscar Ndayisenga

(third email)

Dear Iona,

I am still trying to build a blog but I have a LinkedIn page and Facebook with information. I am looking for partners, seed funding to grow our organization and buy a machine extractor of fiber in order produce more fiber from stems of banana and later ananas. I can share with you some pictures of my work.

I am very excited to contribute to COP

26 vision and mission. I did not get there but learned more about. Together we can achieve it.

Find them in attached and any comment and suggestion would be good.

Kind regards,

Oscar Ndayisenga

(fourth email)

Dear Iona,

Hope you are doing well.

I was thinking we can start doing some small project and would love to know what will be the plan in 2022 and fundraising strategy.

Let me know of any updates. We have to start the new year with good plan.

Looking to hearing from you.

Oscar Ndayisenga, Gitega, Burundi

Ecofitext

ecofitextnaturalfiber@gmail.com

+25779755369



Photos Courtesy WUPPF-HOPE BURUNDI

"We are giving school materials to the children of Gihanga Hill in order to encourage them to reach the 2020-2021 school year which was about to begin."

New Grassroots Coalition Member Starts Burundi Group Working on Education, Sociology, Environment, Economy, and Culture

Hello Dear Madam!

My name is HATUNGIMANA. I'm youth Leader living in north-west Burundi countryside, Cibitoke Province, Buganda municipality. I am precisely in the village of Gasenyi.

Indeed, I am very happy to have been a part of your Facebook followers, so I would sincerely like to give my most sincere thanks to God for guiding me and finding you on social media platforms, so this is, for me, a great honor, because most of the young people use social media in a malicious way. But for me it's my best source of learning, it's an open space where I can learn from other subscribers how I can unfold my thoughts and gain a copy of my life by exploring the whole world in the shortest time.

Really to me you are my life inspirer and hope for a better world. I got to know you

through the various posts on your Facebook room and other powerful and uplifting work you do to young people in action or ready to carry out their projects in order to create a better future.

I am a graduate of modern letters (Literary). I also have skills in Google, computer. I have a bachelor's degree in law, the Diploma that I received at the University of Burundi. For now, I am the founder and one of the members of the Burundian youth organization named WUPPF-HOPE BURUNDI (We Up For the Present and Future Hope).

So, our activities are based on education, sociology, environment, economy, and culture.

In our different activities:

- We have an awareness program for human rights and those of the environment with the aim of continuing to promote respect for the law in order to achieve sus-

tainable development and climatic, social, and cultural stability.

- At the environmental level, we are going to verbalize legal information to young people and to any other beneficiary person to contribute to respect for environmental law.

- Since the climate crisis requires that we have to adapt to climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we have a great desire to be able to have the support of experts who can provide us with training sessions which can help us to find ways to respond to the climatic challenges of our time, in order to further improve knowledge on the systems for the protection of environmental spaces.

- We have an English club for students of different levels (at present we have two levels A and B).

Burundi continued on next page

Burundi continued from previous page



These pictures show WUFPF-HOPE activities in Rugombo commune. It was successful work. Many young people have been trained on how to be a good Leader, how to work out their Projects. More than 25 youth Leaders had been represented in the conference, a very beneficial conference presented by youths. Bottom left: students hard at work. Center right: John with students showing their workbooks.

•We have a program to teach illiterate young people, in order to support the government in its national education policy. Here, we encourage young boys and especially girls in order to make them believe that they have hope for a better future at school.

•We have a supervision program for children during the summer holidays, the children will be taught a lot about the model of life, in the socio-cultural field.

•At the start of the school year, we fund-raise according to the means of each member of the group to buy solar materials: notebooks, school bags, pens, pencils, slates, etc.

Here, we have a hope of being able to even lead to the financial supports to pay the school fees to encourage the young girls and the vulnerable to give them a hope for the big day, a good day, a better future.

So, as our professional hobby cares about the future and works on issues related to climate but also to social justice, please put us on the mailing list of your newspaper since our concern is to be able to go up the stairs that could lead us as young people to live our destiny, to live a better world in the Kingdom of very healthy environmental space, which is why we are asking to be

integrated into the Grassroots Coalition family.

May our Almighty Lord bless you for the powerful work you do in supporting the advocates of social justice and a better future.

Rugombo is one of 126 communities of Burundi which has a big percentage of youth who are getting ready to start their own business. It was within occasion that we spent 4 days training youth people who will teach others about Leadership and get ready to start making their business.

We had taught some youth leaders of others, on how to be a good leader by imitating the leadership of those who had been trained universally as good example.

In the photos, you will see where the candidates



gathered in groups to do an exchange-test on the program they had just learned in terms of the development of bankable projects, business management, etc.

John Hatungimana, Founder of WUFPF-HOPE BURUNDI, a non-profit organization

(After John HATUNGI-MANA accepted Iona's invitation to join the Grassroots Coalition.)

Thank you for this

wonderful email for joining me in the Grassroots Coalition family. So, I am ready to participate in your next Zoom meeting which you prepared in February.

Indeed, I would like to authorize you to publish our e-mail on your page.

In short, I can no longer refrain from thanking you in advance.

You are my inspire. For surely, together we can build a better future, a beautiful story, the story of hope!

Thanks for adding us. Thank you so much!

John HATUNGIMANA, Founder of WUFPF-HOPE BURUNDI, a non-profit organization

News Briefs

Two Climate Activists Halt Operations at World's Largest Coal Port

By Julia Conley, excerpt

Common Dreams: November 17, 2021

A two-person protest halted operations at the world's largest coal port early Wednesday morning, as two women scaled the Port of Newcastle in New South Wales, Australia to protest their government's refusal to take far-reaching climate action.

Hannah Doole and Zianna Faud – both members of the campaign group Blockade Australia – filmed themselves suspended on ropes attached to the port, where they forced the transport of coal to stop for several hours. . . .

Source: <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2021/11/17/two-climate-activists-halt-operations-worlds-largest-coal-port>

Temperature Records Set in U.S. for 2021

By Krishna Karra & Tim Wallace, excerpt
The New York Times: January 11, 2022

Temperatures in the United States last year set more all-time heat and cold records than any other year since 1994, according to a *New York Times* analysis of Global Historical Climatology Network data. Heat waves made up most of these records. All-time heat records were set last year at 8.3 percent of all weather stations across the nation, more than in any year since at least 1948, when weather observations were first digitally recorded by the U.S. government. The world has been warming by almost two-tenths of a degree per decade. Extreme-temperature events can often demonstrate the most visible effects of climate change.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/01/11/climate/record-temperatures-map-2021.html>

Fossil Fuel Production is Twice What the World Needs to Keep Warming Below 1.5°C

Submitted by Anders Eklof, Sweden with this note:

Hi, Iona. You are perhaps already aware of this, but I was so angry about it that I want to make sure that it can be widely read by those who are concerned about it. Your Journal is a good tool to spread this knowledge. Best regards and keep hope alive.

The news: Despite pledges to tackle



Photo: @BlockadeAus/Twitter

Hannah Doole and Zianna Faud halted operations at the world's largest coal port for several hours on November 17, 2021.

the climate crisis, many countries are still planning to dramatically ramp up their production of oil, gas, and coal in the coming decades, according to a UN-backed report. 15 major countries, including the U.S., India, and China, will produce twice as much oil, gas, and coal in the run-up to 2030 as would be needed to keep warming below 1.5°C, a widely accepted limit if the world is to avoid the worst impacts of climate change (the world has already warmed by 1.1°C since the Industrial Revolution.) . . .

Shell's 'Milestone' CCS Plant Emits More Carbon Than It Captures

By Mitchell Beer, excerpt
The Energy Mix: January 24, 2022

The federal government is looking into independent analysis claiming that carbon capture at a highly-touted Shell Canada demonstration project in Alberta is producing more greenhouse gas emissions than it prevents, *The Energy Mix* has learned.

The report issued late last week by London, UK-based human rights organization Global Witness acknowledges that Shell's Quest carbon capture and storage (CCS) facility near Edmonton captured five million tons of carbon dioxide between 2015 and 2019, in what the company celebrated as a major milestone in July 2020. . . .

But Global Witness came up with rather different numbers. "Our new research reveals that Quest is in fact emitting more than it is capturing," the organization states. Despite the five megatons captured, the facility "has emitted a further 7.5 million tons of climate-polluting gases during the same time," the equivalent of 1.2 million internal combustion cars per year. . . .

Source: <https://www.theenergymix.com/2022/01/24/shells-milestone-ccs-plant-emits-more-carbon-than-it-captures-independent-analysis-finds/>

Four Senior Nuclear Officials Say Nuclear Is Not A Climate Solution

By Ken Johnson, excerpt
Below2C: January 22, 2022

Nuclear is not a strategy that will help with the climate crisis. Renewables are a better alternative to nuclear small modular reactors for two main reasons: cost and speed of deployment. While the costs of renewables are plummeting, nuclear costs have steadily been on the rise. And during a climate emergency and Canada's dash to a 40-45% emissions reduction by 2030, renewables can be set up much faster and more reliably.

This post features a statement issued by former U.S., German and French experts in nuclear regulation and radiation protection. Dr. Gregory Jaczko, Professor

News Briefs *continued on next page*

News Briefs *continued from previous page*

Wolfgang Renneberg, Dr. Bernard Laponche and Dr. Paul Dorfman authored “Nuclear is not a practicable means to combat climate change”

Source: <https://below2c.org/2022/01/four-senior-officials-say-nuclear-is-not-a-climate-change-solution/>

‘Victory of Global Significance’: Modi Repeals Laws That Sparked Year-Long Farmers’ Revolt

By Kenny Stancil, excerpt
Common Dreams: November 19, 2021

Workers’ rights activists around the globe rejoiced on Friday after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that his government will repeal three corporate-friendly agricultural laws that the nation’s farmers have steadfastly resisted for more than a year.

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), a coalition of over 40 farmers’ unions that led the protests, called the development a “historic victory” for those “who struggled resolutely, unitedly, continuously, and peacefully for one year so far in the historic farmers’ struggle.” *India Today* reported, citing a statement from SKM. . . .

Source: <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2021/11/19/victory-global-significance-modi-repeal-laws-sparked-year-long-farmers-revolt>

The First Newly Identified Plant Species of 2022 Was Named After Leonardo DiCaprio

Submitted by C.B., Pennsylvania USA

By Rasha Aridi, excerpt
The Smithsonian Magazine: January 7, 2022

Leonardo DiCaprio has been a vocal environmental activist for years, and scientists honored his efforts by naming a critically endangered plant – and the first plant species described by science this year – after him. The plant, *Uvariopsis dicaprio*, is an evergreen tree found in Cameroon. It reaches about 13 feet tall and has glossy, yellow-green leaves growing in bunches along its trunk.

Researchers credit DiCaprio’s activism with helping save the tropical Ebo Forest, the plant’s home. Researchers from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in the United Kingdom led the study to describe *U. dicaprio*. “We very much appreciated the support Leo gave us in campaigning to protect Ebo last year so it seemed fitting to honor him in this way, naming a species unique only to this forest, after him.”



Photo: Lorna MacKinnon via Peer

Researchers counted fewer than 50 individual plants, which all grow in an unprotected area of the forest.

study author Martin Cheek, a researcher at RBG Kew, said. . . .

Source: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/the-first-newly-identified-plant-species-of-2022-was-named-after-leonardo-dicaprio-180979335/>

Big Business Defeated as Socialist Kshama Sawant’s Victory Certified in Seattle

By Brett Wilkins, excerpt
Common Dreams: December 17, 2021

Progressive cheers went up far and wide Friday after Seattle City Councilmember Kshama Sawant officially defeated a right-wing recall effort, which the Socialist Alternative lawmaker called “part of the nationwide backlash” by billionaires and Big Business targeting lawmakers and others fighting for social justice and working people.

Elections officials in King County, Washington certified the anti-recall effort, with a final tally of 20,656 ballots against recalling Sawant and 20,346 in favor – a victory margin of 310 votes. . . .

Source: <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2021/12/17/big-business-defeated-socialist-kshama-sawants-victory-certified-seattle>

Moratorium on Climate Change Research

Submitted by Allen Hengst, Wire Editor
(next 3 articles)

By Beth Daly, excerpt
The Conversation: January 17, 2022

Decades of scientific evidence demonstrate unequivocally that human activities jeopardize life on Earth. Dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system compounds many other drivers of global change. Governments concur: the

science is settled. But governments have failed to act at the scale and pace required. What should climate change scientists do? . . .

Source: <https://theconversation.com/scientists-call-for-a-moratorium-on-climate-change-research-until-governments-take-real-action-172690>

Nobody Listens to Climate Scientists: What if they went on strike?

By Shannon Osaka, excerpt
Grist: January 19, 2022

It’s been a wild start to 2022: Omicron cases are surging around the world, the oceans are hotter than ever, and a group of climate scientists are suggesting that the world’s leading global warming experts stop doing science. In an article published in the academic news outlet *The Conversation* last week. . . .

Source: <https://grist.org/science/nobody-is-listening-to-climate-scientists-what-if-they-went-on-strike/>

450+ Scientists Ask Advertisers to Ditch Fossil Fuel Clients

By Olivia Rosane, excerpt
EcoWatch: January 20, 2022

More than 450 scientists have signed a letter to PR and advertising agencies urging them to drop clients that profit from fossil fuels. The letter was released by Clean Creatives and the Union of Concerned Scientists on Wednesday, as *PR Week* reported, and emphasized the importance of spreading accurate information about the climate crisis. “If PR and advertising agencies want to be part of climate solutions instead of continuing to exacerbate the climate emergency, they should drop all fossil fuel clients that plan to expand their production of oil and gas, end work with all fossil fuel companies and trade groups that perpetuate climate deception, cease all work that hinders climate legislation, and instead focus on uplifting the true climate solutions that are already available and must be rapidly implemented at scale,” the letter writers said. . . .

“We climate scientists have been trying to raise the climate crisis alarm for decades, but we’ve been drowned out by these fossil fuel industry-funded PR campaigns,” climate scientist and letter signatory **Michael Mann** told Reuters. . . .

[**Note from Iona:** *Michael Mann is on our Grassroots Coalition Advisory Council.*]

Source: <https://www.ecowatch.com/scientists-pr-fossil-fuels.html>

Bright Green Lies: How the Environmental Movement Lost Its Way and What We Can Do About It

By Derrick Jensen, Lierre Keith, and Max Wilbert, excerpt from pages 129-132

We are long out of time to break through our cultural denial about this fact: **No technology is neutral.**

We have written this book because life has been broken and is now fast draining away through the cracks. The cultures that have done that breaking need to be abandoned and their ruling sociopaths dethroned. Make no mistake, this will require a serious and dedicated resistance movement. It will also require an unsentimental understanding of which human activities constitute that breaking,

For a 2011 *National Geographic* article called “Can China Go Green?” Bill McKibben visited Baotou. Not once in his article, which contains more than 3,000 words, did he mention that the devastating pollution in the area – toxified soil and groundwater, illness in every family, water where no fish or algae can survive, a complete absence of wildlife – was created in part to make wind turbines, solar panels, and hybrid and electric cars.⁴²

You know how we said demand for rare earths metals could exhaust them? Well, there’s “good” news. In an article entitled, “Renewables’ deep-sea mining conundrum,” we find that, “British scientists exploring an underwater mountain in the Atlantic Ocean have discovered a treasure trove of rare minerals.” One of the minerals, Tellurium, “is used in a type of advanced solar panel, so the discovery raises a difficult question about whether the push for renewable energy may encourage mining of the seabed. The rocks also contain what are called rare earth elements that are used in wind turbines and electronics.”

The article states that, “[I]f the entire deposit could be extracted and used to make solar panels, it could meet 65 percent of the U.K.’s electricity demand.”

The scientist who made the discovery said, “If we need green energy supplies, then we need the raw materials to make the devices that produce the energy so, yes, the raw materials have to come from somewhere. We either dig them up from the ground and make a very large hole or dig them from the seabed and make a comparatively smaller hole. It’s a dilemma for society – nothing we do comes without a cost.”

The cost of ocean mining would be “killing marine life wherever digging machines

are deployed and potentially devastating a far wider area. One major concern is the effect of plumes of dust, stirred up by excavation of the ocean floor, spreading for long distances and smothering all life wherever it settles.”⁴³ One biologist said that recovery from mining would take thousands or millions of years.⁴⁴

That’s worth it, though, right? Especially since the costs will be paid not by us, but by creatures at the bottom of the ocean, unknown and unnoticed, who will suffocate in silence while we carry on.

By the way, that’s not a dilemma. It’s only a dilemma when you have to choose between costs you have to pay. When you choose to inflict these costs on others, the word you’re looking for is exploitation.

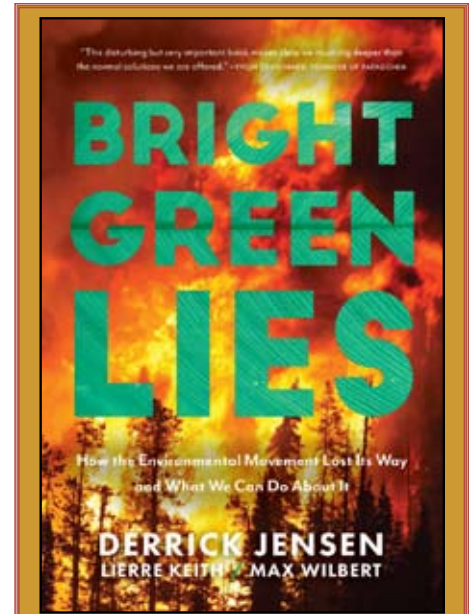
If the materials necessary for wind energy don’t stir your soul, perhaps the impacts of installation will. It might seem like each 5 MW wind turbine has a relatively small direct footprint in that perhaps two acres are required. But to make turbines efficient, the surrounding land is also cleared of trees that can “interfere” with the wind. To prevent regrowth, herbicide treatments are sprayed for as long as the facility is operating.⁴⁵

Industrial wind energy harvesting facilities also need wide, straight access roads. For example, the 84 MW Mount Lucas wind energy harvesting facility in Ireland required 12 miles of new access roads for its 28 turbines.

The lands near large wind-energy-harvesting facilities are usually closed to humans. This is particularly true for areas near the blades themselves. Sometimes the blades fly off and careen hundreds of yards. And as a visit to any industrial wind-energy harvesting facility will show you, the land around turbines can be considered wildlife habitat only in the most meaningless and degraded sense. When it’s not cultivated for monocrops or grazed for livestock, it’s a maze of compacted access roads, crumbling soils, and slash piles.

And it’s loud. Decibel levels of 33 to 43 have been recorded a mile away from turbines. That’s loud enough to interfere with not just animal communication but with their “health and survival.”⁴⁶

Spring will be silent except for the deafening drone of machines, and environmentalists are leading the charge.



We cannot continue to wallow in hedonistic consumption and industrial expansion and survive as a species. The environmental debate, Jensen argues, is, because of them, distorted by hubris and the childish desire by those in industrialized nations to sustain the unsustainable. All debates about environmental policy need to begin with honoring and protecting, not the desires of the human species, but the sanctity of the Earth itself. We refuse to ask the right questions because these questions expose a stark truth – we cannot continue to live as we are living. To do so is suicidal folly.

Purchase: \$26.95 via PayPal or \$25.95 check or money order at <https://derrickjensen.org/purchase/#bright-green-lies>, email derrick@derrickjensen.org.

Footnotes:

42 Bill McKibben, “Can China Go Green?” *National Geographic*, June 2011. Also: Cécile Bontron, “Rare-earth mining in China comes at a heavy cost for local villages,” *The Guardian*, August 7, 2012.

43 David Shukman, “Renewables deep-sea mining conundrum,” BBC News: Science and Environment, April 11, 2017.

44 Maddie Stone, “The Future of Technology Is Hiding on the Ocean Floor,” *Gizmodo*, April 5, 2016.

45 Linda Ewing, “Stop poisoning our community! Herbicide spraying is wind industry’s toxic secret,” *East County Magazine*, May 2013.

46 Mia Myklebust and Miriam Raftery, “Do wind turbines harm animals?” *East County Magazine*, May 10, 2012.

**How on Earth Did I Become
a Radical Environmentalist
Grandmother?**

By Iona

(a.k.a. Susan Wynne Norris Hnatt Topf Iona Conner)



Books for sale at www.gceej.org



**WHY CAN'T YOU SEE ME?
WHY CAN'T YOU HEAR ME?**

True Story of and by a Tree

By Iona and John's Norfolk Island Pine
(as told to me through time)



Consumer Liberation

Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

Our Slogan: The way forward - cycle back to basics.

Our Word: Invincible - too powerful to be defeated or overcome.

Email Iona at grassrootscoalition@pa.net and she will put you on our email list.

"Every new one makes us stronger," sings Pete Seeger.



Grassroots Coalition News

Our beautiful newspaper will inspire and encourage you. Learn more at www.gceej.org. Email grassrootscoalition@pa.net to be put on our e-list. \$30 per year if you can afford that. Pay with PayPal using groundswellnews@pa.net or mail to the address on page 2. A project of the 501(c)(3) Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice. Photo <https://www.google.com/search>

**THE WORK OF
PEOPLE IN
WEALTHY NATIONS IS
TO GET OUR FEET OFF
THE NECKS OF
PEOPLE IN POOR
COUNTRIES.**

~ Iona ~



Remember your dreams.



Messages from Our Friends

(For many, English is not their native language.)



Got a load of this paint! It finally arrived on my doorstep from Home Depot. <https://generalfinishes.com/wood-finishes-retail/water-based-paints-glazes/milk-paint>. I think you will like the environmental elements of this product and maybe want to recommend it. Clean up is with warm, soapy water and they say you can just throw the leftover paint right onto the ground with no harm. Maybe wait until I have painted my two front doors and report back on how well it worked for me.

I have read a lot about milk paint and others require a wax overcoat. I chose to buy this pre-mixed, self-sealed, interior/exterior paint over mixing my own from a powder.

C. B., Pennsylvania USA

(first email) Dear Iona and All,

Thank you for sharing the notice for the upcoming meeting. I am pleased that one of us was able to attend COP-26 and I am eager to learn more from him.

It has been quite some time since I last joined the meeting, but I have been following up the updates. A lot has happened to us, bad and good, but I am happy that all is well. In early this year, we lost our Board chairperson through Covid 19, a number of staff and close friends also infected, but personally I was not infected, though the loss was big.

In October 2021, my Organization received an award from Lush Spring Prize Team (UK), in the category of "Youth in Permaculture." This is a win for all in this group, for our main goal and discussion has been around healing the planet, through regenerative land use practices.

I am looking forward to meet with you in the next meeting.

John Macharia, SCOPE Kenya

(second email)

Thank you very much for your positive consideration in sharing the information in your Facebook. The more people we reach out to, the higher the chances of raising more funds. As an organization, we are very ready to share the story about the

impact in people's lives and healing of the planet that is already bleeding from pollution and unsustainable use.

Please feel free to share with as more people as possible.

John Macharia, SCOPE Kenya

(third email) Good Morning from SCOPE Kenya. I hope that you are well and safe. At SCOPE Kenya, we are progressing with strengthening our project work towards empowering young people, in regenerating the ecosystem, growing health food, and conserving biodiversity. For us to efficiently address the already identified gaps, we are seeking support from developing partners and well-wishers, to raise \$500 through the SeedMoney online campaign. <https://donate.seedmoney.org/6664/thika-children-rescue-center-kenya>

For more pictures of Thika Children Rescue Center and further information on SCOPE Kenya, please take a look at the following Dropbox link: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dudgi6gi5zoxkoj/AAB8bngt1mSrMyurvBAa2dQda?dl=0>.

In this regards, I am writing to find out, whether it is possible for you to share this link with friends/partners, as a way of supporting us to raise funds to support the project.

Your support is highly appreciated.

Kind regards

John Macharia, SCOPE Kenya (See pages 3 & 4.)

Excellent Black Caucus Green Party statement link herein, a few paras:

The coronavirus pandemic is one of our most dangerous wars in human history, because the most lethal attacks are the ones that catch us off guard. Being caught off guard has caused erroneous data reporting that is currently being exposed by Freedom of Information Act requests, because we are not only unsure about the numbers, but being certain that the numbers are incorrect, is the most difficult issue many are facing today.

In a pandemic world where verifying case numbers is becoming increas-

ingly difficult, inclusion is imperative and our Consumer Protection Plank of the Green Party of the United States must be honored. https://www.gp.org/social_justice#consumer

Lockdowns, mandates, and passports are the major issue of the day with millions of people protesting against them worldwide. In fact, what has become known as the Medical Freedom movement is arguably the biggest and most diverse international movement in world history.

Vaccine mandates and vaccine passports are among the most vile, unconstitutional, immoral, unscientific, discriminatory, and outright criminal policies ever enforced upon the population and goes against everything the Green Party stands for under Social Justice. These policies are coming from an out-of-control government at the behest of the pharmaceutical industry. The mainstream media and social media are also working in lock-step to censor any and all doctors, scientists, and investigative journalists who have an opposing view or who even question the current mainstream media orthodoxy.

We Say No To Mandates – National Black Caucus, (blackcaucusgreens.org)
Alanna Hartzok, Pennsylvania USA
[P.S. Friends – Data showing Africa with lowest tax rates also have lowest Covid incidence and deaths. I think the tax are dangerous and will never take it. We are seeing Medical Tyranny now in many countries. Find peace in this crazy world of ours! – Alanna]

(first email) This is great, thank you! I will keep in touch with you and would like you join #SukhodayaGlobalNetwork for #IntegratedSustainableDevelopment. Best regards, rest later, sincerely.

Dr. UN Nandakumar, India

(second email) Thank you very much. We are a new network. Very glad that you have joined the network. I am extremely happy to join in your *Grassroots Coalition News*.

I am a Scientist and after superannuation
Messages continued on next page

Messages *continued from previous page*

tion from Kerala Forest Research Institute, I started my own profit as well as nonprofit organizations to promote the cause of Integrated Sustainable Development everywhere. Automatically, both of us have same objectives and so we have to work together. Thank you once again, best regards,
Dr. UN Nandakumar (Nandan), India

(third email) Great. I have read the gist about your organization and the journal. I understand that you are based at New Jersey, USA and you started your organization in 1990. At that time I was a Scientist at KFRI and as I informed you earlier I superannuated in 30 Nov 2017 and we (myself, my wife a medical doctor started a consortium of profit as well as nonprofit organizations). Let us hope to work together.
Best regards, **Nandan**

(fourth email) That's a quite sad but his [John's] spirit and loving memories will remain and motivate you to move forward. Yes, now we have Greta and many youngsters to take the concept of Integrated sustainable development. Sukhodaya in Sanskrit is a thing that gives happiness, and our motto is development for lasting happiness.
Regards, **Nandan**

(fifth email) Thank you very much for the minutes of the meeting. It is quite impressive. You are doing an excellent job. Congrats and all the best.
Best regards, **Nandan**

(first email) Thanks so much for your quick response, however I'm much interested to join the Grassroots Coalition and feel free to publish the mail as you said. Looking forward for more collaboration with you.
Nbani Friday Barilule, Lekeh Development Foundation, Niger Delta, Nigeria (See pages 25-26.)

(second email) Dear Colleagues.
Happy New Year to you all.
Lekeh Development Foundation in partnership with grassroots led organizations is inviting you to the forthcoming 2022 Ogoni Youth Summit on Climate Change and Soot slated to hold on the 27th and 28th of January, 2022 @ BMGS hall, Bori.
Please find zoom link and poster in attached below:
Topic: Ogoni Youth Summit on Climate Change and Soot
Join Zoom Meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84672474684?pwd=MnozUjd3b>

WF6Nkd2K1RtWXV5ZFpYZz09
Looking forward to seeing you at the summit.
Nbani Friday Barilule, Nigeria

(first email)
Exciting news COP-26 – UN conference on Climate Change-starts at the end of the month! THIS MONTH!! It has been fully booked for months but – I will be there as part of the Welsh delegation. I NEED your photos of trees or other stuff you have planted NOW! together with your Climate comment if you want. Your effort can be included in the e-book. It would be such a shame if you were not included!!

I was 80 on 4th July could not have a big party but wanted to do 'something' special for my 80th. Climate change is such a big issue; people are not sure how they can help. I decided to ask YOU to Plant a Tree because it's a little thing that a lot of people can do!

Moses Wamanga (Uganda) volunteered to create an e-book, Here is First Draft https://trrhfz4n7rbysgltoru17q-on.drvtw/Plant_a_tree_for_Granny/index.html. It will go to all speakers at COP26 in November, who will also be asked to PLANT something in their country too. Governments around the world are not Honoring their commitments! We can show them that people want Action on Global Warming!

Valerie Wood-Gaigner, Wales (Learn with Grandma)

(second email)
Of course you can also use this network I would be so grateful if you would also share inspiring posts to Learn with Grandma. You are very welcome to share more. It's Your group! ALL members are welcome to share News, events, achievements. The more good news we can share the better! I cannot share for you; there are so many groups in the LwG Network + I don't always see posts in time.
Valerie Wood-Gaigner, Wales

(first email) All is well here and I'm glad to pretty much rest during this week between Christmas and New Year's. The idea is to recharge a bit before continuing some projects, namely trying to get some local governments to step up their GHG (Greenhouse Gas) reductions.

I was thinking, how can they "be on track" if they haven't even set up a track. There is much work to be done.

Thanks for the great work you do. Your newsletter is always so informational and inspiring. Your community of interna-

tional friends working on climate is truly awesome.

Tyla Matteson, Virginia USA

(second email) Sure, I'm fine to be on your list. I think I am already on it.

Just a few more days to relax and rest, then "back to work" on climate.

I watched two shows on climate on TV tonight, both excellent.

Here is the link to one of them, which explains the science, tipping points, in a way that people can understand. <https://www.pbs.org/show/earth-emergency/>

Lots about forests, methane, with good maps, visuals. You can watch the entire program, close to one hour in length.

Tyla Matteson, Virginia USA

(third email) You will be interested to know (unless you already do) about the new movie Don't Look Up, about a comet headed to Earth.

The main character astrology professor played by Leonardo DiCaprio was inspired by his friend Michael Mann, professor now at Penn State.

We met Michael Mann when he was being harassed at University of VA for his climate work, before he moved to Pennsylvania – we have some of his books and consider him a true climate hero. I noticed he is on your Grassroots Coalition Advisory Board. How very cool – how did you get him? [*Answer: He's an old friend.*]

We watched this movie – you can watch the trailers but the actual movie is dark comedy and quite good, if you can get it on Netflix.

The evil president is played by Meryl Streep, a cigarette-smoking, unsavory character, who "solves the problem" by telling the nation in a presidential address, just "Don't Look Up."

<https://www.newsweek.com/leonardodicaprio-sweet-guy-michael-mann-scientist-dont-look-role-1664590>

I found this online, from September 2016 – an excerpt below:

Charlottesville, Virginia – Sierra Club Virginia Chapter and Virginia Organizing are pleased to host former UVA professor and prominent climate scientist Michael Mann for a presentation about his new book, *The Madhouse Effect*. While a professor at the University of Virginia, Mann's research drew fire from then Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, who sued UVA in an attempt to discredit Mann's climate research.

Tyla Matteson, Virginia USA

Messages continued from previous page

Am interested in your network on climate change and environmental education.

Am from Kenya working on permaculture projects, focusing on insect farming and waste management.

Thanks,

Prince Maloba, Kenya

Aunt Iona,

Of course, you have my support.

I may not be 100% active, in fact I'm not but I will always support you.

Let me know what to do.

Prince Timmy, Nigeria (See pages 12-13.)

(first email) Thank you Iona.

Not just the Treasurer's Report but all of your efforts throughout the year.

And my sincere thanks to all of you for your own untiring efforts during the past year in very difficult circumstances.

No doubt 2022 will be equally tough but it is always great to work with fine people.

See you all in 2022!

Love from Australia,

Robert Burrowes & Anita McKone

I understand, Iona, it's good to focus on what you can do well and have the wisdom to know what you cannot. I applaud you and support your decision [to stop writing

and submitting grant proposals]. No one can do it all. But if one can do just some things well, it will have even greater significance. We will have a good year in 2022

Keep the faith, my friend!

David Hunter Bishop, USA

Hello mommy, hope all is well with you over there?

I am so sorry for not getting more time to respond to your email as soon as possible always. It was tough in 2021, we managed to impact 1,000 women and school girls in 2021 with so many challenges. So please don't worry for the story, whenever you're ready to get them, inform me before time to share it to you as soon as possible.

Rescue A Girl is growing with your support and everyone who is trying to support us to make a big difference.

Have a productive 2022 ahead, there's hope for progress to change the world.

Please stay safe and strong, I love you so much mommy Iona.

Your lovely son,

Idris Bilyaminu Ndasadu'Lau, Nigeria (ALMAJIRI Project and Youth Awareness and Peace Development)

No doubt, you will want to watch this video after you've caught up with the book

club [*Zen and the Art of Saving the Planet*]... This is the co-author of our book, Sister True Dedication (Hien Nghiem in Vietnamese) giving a dharma talk titled "Wake Up Earth: Engaged Action and Aspiration." I remember her always bright and cheery. There's a nice photo of her at <https://plumvillage.org/library/dharma-talks/wake-up-earth-engaged-action-aspiration-sister-true-dedication-2019-08-15/>

The video closes with this blessing from Irish poet, John O'Donahue, which you may be able to use.

C.B., Pennsylvania USA

May the nourishment of the Earth be yours

May the clarity of Light be yours

May the fluency of the Ocean be yours

May the protection of the Ancestors be yours

And may a slow wind work these words of love around you:

An invisible cloak to mind your life.

The Way It Is

There's a thread you follow. It goes among things that change. But it doesn't change.
People wonder about what you are pursuing.
You have to explain about the thread.
But it is hard for others to see.
While you hold it you can't get lost.
Tragedies happen; people get hurt or die; and you suffer and get old.
Nothing you do can stop time's unfolding.
You don't ever let go of the thread.

William Stafford

1914 - 1993