

Groundswell News Journal

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.

A Celebration of Youth. www.groundswellnews.org. Issue No. 75: May 26, 2021



Screenshots Courtesy Rituraj Phukan

Rituraj Phukan, Vice President of our Grassroots Coalition and National Coordinator for Biodiversity, The Climate Reality Project India, is seen in the top right Zoom photo with others who are working against climate chaos in formulating action plans to restore critical glaciers.

Webinar on Restoration of Greenland and Himalayan Glaciers Co-Convended by Grassroots Coalition VP

Dear Iona,

I had a week full of engagements for Earth Day, and I would love to share one special event. Please feel free to use/share the information in any way that you might deem fit.

I was Co-Convener for a pre-symposium webinar 'Restoration of Greenland and Himalayan Glaciers' addressed by former Iceland President, Sir David King, Dr. Peter Wadhams, and Dr. M. R. Bhutiayani and other eminent speakers. I have appended a write-up along with screenshots of the webinar and a link to the broadcast is here: https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=533158901373690&ref=watch_permalink. Publication in the Sanctuary Nature Foundation will give us the momentum to take the discussions forward on this critical intervention. Thank you.

Raj

His Excellency Ólafur Ragnar Grímson, (Chairman, Arctic Circle and former President of the Republic of Iceland), climate scientists Sir David King, Dr. Peter Wadhams, Dr. M R Bhutiayani, Dr. Leslie Field, and Healthy Climate Initiative (HCI) President Dr. Soumitra Das were among

the speakers at a webinar on 'Restoration of Greenland and Himalayan Glaciers' organized by the Healthy Climate Initiative, Arctic Ice Project, and The Climate Reality Project India yesterday.

It is well established that the Arctic and Himalayan glaciers are melting at an alarming rate. Unless checked, the melting would have profound implications for life forms around the world. The organizers envisage the hosting of a symposium to communicate the realities and urgency of slowing the melt of the Hindu Kush Himala-
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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 2013

Web site: www.groundswellnews.org

Board of Directors: Ngo Banfogha, Jeanette Bartelt, David Hunter Bishop, Bill Boteler, Iona Conner, Eric Kifampa, Jussa Nhari Kudherezera, Rituraj Phukan

Advisory Board: Dan Adams, Robert Burrowes, Fr. Ted Cassidy, Michael Mann, Mar-iam Nabukeera

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

Contributors: Herbert Bagyenyi, Julia Barnes, Uche Isieke, Derrick Jensen, Jussa Kudherezera, Stephen Leahy, Nic Pavick, Rituraj Phukan, Willy Ssenindde, Tansi Godwill Tansi, Morgan Zo-Callahan

Our Motto:

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

Our Slogan:

The way forward:
cycle back to basics.

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 at groundswellnews@pa.net. If you need funding, mention that in your last paragraph and be sure to give your contact information.

Please email Iona at groundswellnews@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: *Role Model for You*

Dearest Global Family,

I was so thrilled to read about Grassroots Coalition member Uche Isieke's work with his NGO, Rural Watch Africa Initiative in Nigeria, that I devoted six pages to his story (pages 13-18). Here is a sample of the interview Deborah Ohamara of Resilience.org did with him.

Why do you share and bare the burden of your community with so much passion? Do you intend to join politics?

Uche's answer: My resolve to share this story is to inspire actions, especially among the youth anywhere in the world to get involved by volunteering their skills and getting full participation in community service.

With the social media tool in our hands, we can transform, build resilience, and achieve sustainable development for our various communities. Our creative ability to use social media the right way can cause our leaders and authorities sleepless nights with irresistible pressures to deliver on their mandate with the people.

I have published many wonderful stories about other people doing great work but for those of you who need inspiration, I hope you'll take time to read what this man has accomplished in his community.

Also, our Grassroots Coalition membership is growing. It costs nothing to join; if you're interested, please send me an email at groundswellnews@pa.net. I'll sign you up and send you some materials. We meet monthly on Zoom and it works best when everyone has strong Internet connections. I hope you'll join us!

With love and hope for all the places and people we cherish,

Iona

Climate Emergency

Glaciers continued from page 1



The organizers of the webinar envisage the hosting of a symposium to communicate the realities and urgency of slowing the melt of the HKH and Greenland glaciers and to avert catastrophic impacts on the life and livelihood of billions of people, later this year.

ya (Mountain range, HKH) and Greenland glaciers and to avert catastrophic impacts on the life and livelihood of billions of people, later this year. This interactive webinar was organized as a prelude to the symposium, which will be scheduled later this year.

His Excellency President Grimsson gave an overview of the glacial loss in the Arctic and HKH regions, the challenges faced by people living in these regions, and a road-map for collaborative action, following the introductory speech delivered by HCI President and one of the Co-Conveners, Dr. Soumitra Das.

Sir David King, Emeritus Professor at Cambridge University and former Special Representative for Climate Change to the Foreign Secretary, UK, in his presentation spoke about the implications of loss of sea ice across the Arctic, methane leakage from the ocean floor and across the Russian Arctic.

Dr. Peter Wadhams, Emeritus Professor, Ocean Physics, and Head, Polar Ocean Physics Group of Cambridge University, spoke about the need for interim solutions to restore the Arctic and Himalayan ice sheets.

Dr. Mahendra R. Bhutiyani, Director (Ret'd.), Defence Terrain Research Labora-

tory, shared his vast research on the subject in a presentation entitled 'Climate Change, its implications and mitigation strategies – A Himalayan Perspective.'

Dr. Leslie Field, Founder and CTO (Chief Technology Officer) of Arctic Ice Project and Co-Convener of the event elaborated on the Arctic Ice Project's solution to restore the Arctic ice sheet and the potential of extending it to slow the melting of Himalayan and Greenland glaciers.

After an interactive Q & A and discussions on the way forward, Co-Convener Rituraj Phukan delivered the Vote of Thanks on behalf of The Climate Reality Project India.

Rituraj Phukan is:
• National Coordinator for Biodiversity, The Climate Reality Project India

• COO (Chief Operating Officer), Walk For Water
Secretary General, Green Guard Nature Organization
• Member, IUCN Wilderness Specialist Group; Commission Member – IUCN WCPA Climate Change, IUCN WCPA Connectiv-

ity Conservation, IUCN WCPA Indigenous People and Protected Areas Specialist Groups, IUCN WCPA South Asia Region and IUCN WCPA-SSC Invasive Alien Species Task Force

- National Coordinator, CCL India
- Assam Coordinator, Kids For Tigers, the Sanctuary Tiger Programme
- Associate Editor, Igniting Minds
- Member, International Antarctic Expedition 2013; Climate Force Arctic 2019
- Ambassador, Marine Arctic Peace Sanctuary



The home page for the Arctic Ice Project is at <https://www.arcticiceproject.org/>

Climate Emergency



Photo: Emily Withers

Snowdonia, in the mountains of north-west Wales: New forests are taking root. Wales has pledged to reach zero carbon emissions by 2050. So it plans a Welsh national forest with thousands more trees.

Only Intact Forests Can Stave Off Climate Change

By Tim Radford
Climate News Network: May 3, 2021

The world's forests are supposed to stave off climate change. Left alone, perhaps they could. But they're not being left alone.

LONDON, UK – In the last decade, the Amazon forests of Brazil released more carbon into the atmosphere than they absorbed, thanks largely to human activities that cleared or degraded the canopy. Those activities make it impossible for affected forests to stave off climate change.

And a survey of the cooler forests of North America has revealed that these, too, could be surrendering more carbon than they soak up from the atmosphere, thanks to human-triggered climate change

and the ever greater hazard of wildfire.

The world's forests are a key part of the great carbon conundrum: what happens to all the greenhouse gases emitted from power stations, vehicle exhausts, and factory chimneys? The assumption is that approaching one third of all the carbon dioxide emissions are absorbed by the forests, and the conservation of the planet's forests has become part of the proposed arsenal of global defense against catastrophic climate change.

Researchers have repeatedly confirmed that, undisturbed, the world's great natural forests are important reservoirs of atmospheric carbon. They have also confirmed that, even without taking carbon sequestration into account, the forests represent precious natural capital: they are worth more to humankind undisturbed than they could ever be as sawn timber or ranchland.

But the world's forests are not being left alone: one study found that even many of those ecosystems set aside by national

law for protection are being destroyed or damaged.

And the simple equation that an area of tree canopy represents so much carbon drawn down from the atmosphere turns out not to be so simple. A warming climate – and the planet as a whole is more than 1°C on average warmer than it was a century ago – can disturb the calculations.

As the thermometer notches up, trees grow faster and die younger; they also grow shorter and the extra fertility conferred by an atmosphere richer in carbon could result in a richer spring growth that is not sustained over a longer summer season. As the temperature rises, so the character of the forests could change: some species may one day find it too hot to reproduce.


And then there is the direct effect of climate change driven by rising temperatures: with heat comes drought, and the greater risk of fire. Forests that had once been res-

Forests continued on next page

Climate Emergency

The Moms Who Are Battling Climate Change

Submitted by C.B.
Pennsylvania USA

By Lizzie Widdicombe, excerpt 
The New Yorker: April 12, 2021

Three years ago, I had a baby. I won't go into the details, but suffice it to say that she is extremely cute, and I enjoy being her mother. A few months after her birth, I was scrolling on my phone, and I came across news of a report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It described a future world that will have experienced 1.5 degrees Celsius of global warming. In this world, the oceans are acidifying, and most coral reefs have been bleached to death; hundreds of millions of people face severe drought, and even more face deadly heat waves.

The kicker? This planet – the 1.5-degree-warmer one – was the best-case scenario. Scientists were using the report to argue that we should try to shoot for that. The Paris climate accord aims to limit the global-temperature increase to “below 2 degrees Celsius.” At present, both goals seem like a stretch. According to the U.N., all of the world's current pledges would



Photograph courtesy Dr. Emily Fischer

“You really can't escape climate change when you're a professor of atmospheric science,” Emily Fischer, a participant in the Science Moms project, says.

only cut carbon emissions by one per cent – a far cry from the nearly 50 per cent needed this decade in order to meet our goals. So, 1.5 degrees is coming. According to some researchers, we could get there around 2030, when my daughter will be entering middle school. . . .

Not long ago, I had a Zoom call with some of the Science Moms: Dr. Melissa Burt and Dr. Emily Fischer, both atmo-

spheric scientists at Colorado State University, and Dr. Joellen Russell, an oceanographer at the University of Arizona. I wasn't aware that I'd been carrying a “climate scientist” stereotype around in my head. But I must have been, because it was thrilling to see three very normal-seeming women on my computer screen. Fischer's blond hair was in a messy bun, and Burt, who is African-American, kept ducking out of sight to attend to her four-year-old daughter.

They said that the stress I'd felt upon learning about that I.P.C.C. report was, for them, a daily occurrence. “You really can't escape climate change when you're a professor of atmospheric science,” Fischer said. “Every single grant

proposal you write starts with, ‘The world is changing. . . .’ Every time you go to a NASA Web site, you see a headline like ‘2020 Tied for Warmest Year on Record. . . .’”

Source: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-moms-who-are-battling-climate-change>

Science Moms: <https://sciencemoms.com/>

Forests *continued from previous page*

ervoirs of carbon could start to surrender it to accelerate climate change even more. The marvel that is the Amazon rainforest could, one researcher has warned, collapse altogether and change irrevocably in one human lifetime.

Degradation Costs More

Both of the latest studies deliver evidence that, over time, this could already be on the cards. Scientists from the U.S., France, Denmark, the UK, and China report in the journal *Nature Climate Change* that they worked through a vast collection of satellite data to calculate the levels of what they call “above ground carbon” – the mass of the element incorporated in timber and foliage – in the Brazilian Amazon between the years 2010 and 2019.

They worked out that in that decade, the growing forest gained 3.79 billion tons of carbon, but degradation or destruction of the forest resulted in a gross loss of 4.45 billion tons. And degradation – basically disturbance by humans in the shape of roads, or plantations, or mining or quar-

rying – was three times more costly in carbon terms than actual forest clearance.

“Forest degradation has become the largest process driving forest loss and should become a higher policy priority,” the authors say.

A second study in the same journal confirms a parallel finding over 2.82 million square kilometres (1.75 million square miles) of Alaska and western Canada. Researchers from the U.S. looked at three decades of satellite data, from 1984 to 2014, to calculate that over those 30 years this area of boreal forest gained 434 billion tons of mass in the form of timber and foliage above ground. But forest fires also surrendered 789 billion tons of mass over those years.

Intact Forests Vital

The forests recovered – that is, new growth replaced the lost – but in that time only by 642 billion tons. Timber millers took 74 billion tons, and new growth added 32 billion tons in return. Above-ground mass is not the same thing as above-ground carbon, but it doesn't

change the big picture.

And the big picture is that any disturbance alters the value of forests to the atmospheric traffic in carbon. Within that is a warning to those scientists who have to calculate the global carbon budget: humans may have been over-estimating the capacities of the forests.

“It's not enough for a forest to absorb and store carbon in its wood and soils. For that to be a real benefit, the forest has to remain intact,” said Jonathan Wang, of the University of California at Irvine, who led the study. “The far north is home to vast, dense stores of carbon that are very sensitive to climate change, and it will take a lot of monitoring and effort to make sure these forests and their carbon stores remain intact.”

Tim Radford, a founding editor of Climate News Network, worked for The Guardian for 32 years, for most of that time as science editor. He has been covering climate change since 1988.

Source: <https://climatenetwork.net/only-intact-forests-can-stave-off-climate-change/>

Climate Emergency




Photo: Simon Charland/APTN

"Hummingbirds represent good luck, and represent what is to come and I think in this situation what is to come is ultimately the defeat of the Trans Mountain Pipeline," says Kaya George.

Hummingbird Nesting Ground Briefly Stops a Construction Site of Trans Mountain Pipeline

Submitted by Fran Stare
Pennsylvania USA

By Tina House
APTN: April 30, 2021 

Kaya George from the Tsleil – Waututh Nation is the great granddaughter of Chief Dan George. She grew up along the Burrard Inlet looking at the industrial development just across the water – including Kinder Morgan's Westridge Dock.

That's where a million barrels of bitumen from the Alberta tar sands will be loaded onto supertankers daily once the Trans Mountain Pipeline twinning project is complete.

George, along with others from her nation, have opposed the Trans Mountain Pipeline since the beginning with the belief that a spill in those waters is inevitable. "I was taught that this inlet is our grandmother our oldest grandmother and we must do anything and everything we can to protect it," explains George.

But now they have help from an unlikely source. Hummingbirds are stopping

part of the massive project – temporarily.

Sara Ross and Donna Clark are part of the Nest Finders Network and saw that construction crews were clearing an area where hummingbirds were nesting so they brought in two wildlife officers to see what was happening.

"I knew where she was nesting and as we got close I could hear the chainsaws and we saw the tree fall and all of us saw it and that was when the wildlife officer said 'stop the work' and they did, the guy got on his walkie-talkie and stopped the work," says Sara Ross. "The cutter came out, we walked right in there and I was able to locate the broken branch on the ground with the nest still attached. It was destroyed."

The company has been ordered to stop work in the area until after the hummingbird nesting season is over in late August.

In a statement – the company said, "The order applies to the specific work package, which is an area covering approximately 1,000 meters (3,281 feet) of private land between the Trans-Canada highway and a rail corridor and restricts certain construction activities. "Trans Mountain will pro-

ceed with any work within the 1,000-meter (3,280-foot) area not subject to restrictions of the order."

Donna Clark is happy they were able to utilize a federal government law to give a temporary reprieve from the project – "a federal law (the Migratory Bird Convention Act) which makes it against the law to destroy or disturb nests including eggs during nesting season," said Clark.

Eugene Kung has represented numerous Indigenous nations in fighting the project in the courts. "Any delays are going to cause some form of increase in costs and of course with every cost the project falls further outside of the public interest," he said.

Kaya George added, "Hummingbirds represent good luck and represent what is to come and I think in this situation what is to come is ultimately the defeat of the Trans Mountain Pipeline."

Source: <https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/hummingbird-nesting-ground-briefly-stops-a-construction-site-of-trans-mountain-pipeline/>

Climate Emergency

NEED TO KNOW



SCIENCE and INSIGHT

New Rules for Our Climate Emergency

An avalanche of climate bullshit is underway.

By Stephen Leahy

Need to Know: May 14, 2021

As a species we are inherently altruistic and cooperative. That was the conclusion from a series of revolutionary game theory experiments by Manfred Milinski, the Director of the Max Planck Institute Evolutionary Biology in Germany. (There's a recent documentary on this: *The Altruism Revolution*.)

However when Milinski used similar experiments to see if people would sacrifice a little to protect the climate and their own future, and he was surprised to find only about half would do so. "People do not act rationally, even to protect their own interest," he told me way back in 2008.

Based on this, Milinski predicted that the **Copenhagen climate talks** to be held the next year would fail. Why? **Free Riders**. Countries like Canada and the U.S. would say acting on climate was important but would make no firm commitments, effectively do nothing. Other countries would follow or also delay action until they saw others acting.

What should have been an **easy win-win** became a **lose-lose**.

Some important lessons came from those experiments:

- Cooperation by a large group with widely different backgrounds takes a lot of practice. It took **21 years of meetings** to get the Paris climate agreement.

- If no one is acting as if climate change is a **serious problem**, then how can it be one?

- People need to truly understand **how high the risks** of climate are. Few people did in 2009.

"People have to realize that **the river of CO2** is rising fast and is putting them and their children in grave danger," said Milinski in 2008 as part of a series I did on

the **psychological and behavioral changes** needed to deal with climate change.

Based on the overall conclusion of that series:

New Rules for our Climate Emergency

1. **Reward climate-safe behavior.**

2. **Punish climate transgressors.**

3. **Publicly praise those who are trying to protect the environment.**

A more controversial 4th Rule: Naming and shaming. For example to discourage the purchase of an SUV they could carry a sticker saying, "This car is highly inefficient; its emissions contribute to lung cancer and hazardous climate change." I'm sure you could think of other possibilities.

I bring this up because it seems everyone is now saying they are working towards **net zero carbon emissions** – including all the big oil-producing companies and countries. Everyone's on board it would seem. But recall Milinski's research on free riders.

Reality check on where we are right now

Need-to-Know #1: We already have too much fossil-fuel burning infrastructure in place to stay below 2C according to the latest science.

Need-to-Know #2: Companies continue to build more and countries are counting on **increased production of coal, oil, and gas.**

Need-to-Know #3: Climate impacts are already hitting hard. Around the world more damaging downpours that wipe out farmers' crops and storms like hurricanes are stronger. Hotter temperatures are fueling wildfires and causing crippling heat waves, where our kids can't play outside. Sea levels are rising, which will flood tens of millions of homes.

Need-to-Know #4: There's an avalanche of climate bullshit roaring towards us:

- **Tar sands** executive was just named a "climate champion" for a UN climate conference, COP 26 in Glasgow; as was vice president from Royal Bank of Canada, the **fifth largest funder of coal in the world.**

- **Shell CEO:** "You need our help on climate change" – meanwhile continuing to fund **anti-climate lobbying.**

- Ongoing lucrative **pay and share options** have created an incentive for oil company executives to **resist climate action.**

- **Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau** continues to say climate is an "existential threat" but invested in billions to build the **Trans Mountain tar sands pipeline.**

- **Offsets** – Countries and Companies say they will **offset their emissions** by planting trees: Nestlé's goal of offsetting 13 million tons of CO2 a year would require 4.4 million hectares (10.87 million acres) of land a year. Need another planet at that rate.

- Countries continue to **subsidize fossil fuels** despite a decade of promising to eliminate these.

Damian Carrington, *The Guardian's* environmental editor, has also noticed this **avalanche of climate bullshitting** and suggests a simple metric I'll call **Need-to-Know #5:** If a government and corporate decision **does not really cut carbon NOW** then we are failing to treat the climate crisis like the emergency it is.

Here's some of the **language tricks and propaganda** being used by those who want to delay meaningful action while claiming otherwise – also known as predatory delay:

- "We are all to blame for climate change."

→ Both fossil fuel industry and governments use this while blocking or failing to provide us with actual alternatives. But sure, **blame the victims.**

- We need responsible oil and gas development to create jobs and wealth to pay for the transition to a sustainable future."

→ Can't solve a problem by making it worse. As we have seen with the pandemic, there is **plenty of money** when governments' decide its necessary.

Need to Know continued on next page

Climate Emergency

Gov. Whitmer Orders Shutdown of Line 5 Pipeline

Submitted by Allen Hengst, Wire Editor

By Amanda Coletta, excerpt 
Washington Post: May 2, 2021

For Michigan's governor, the 645-mile pipeline jeopardizes the Great Lakes. For Canada's natural resources minister, its continued operation is "nonnegotiable." The clash over Calgary-based Enbridge's Line 5, which carries up to 540,000 barrels of crude oil and natural gas liquids across Michigan and under the Great Lakes each day, is placing stress on U.S.-Canada ties – and raising questions about how the close allies, which have expressed a desire to work together to fight climate change, can balance energy security with the transition to a clean-energy economy.

In a move applauded by environmentalists and Indigenous groups on both sides of the border, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer (D) in November ordered the firm to shut down the nearly 70-year-old lines by May 12. Canadian officials, including Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, have appealed to their American counterparts, including President Biden, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, and Energy Secre-



Photo: Michigan Dept. of Environment/AP

Television image shows damage to anchor support on east leg of Line 5 in Straits of Mackinac last June.

tary Jennifer Granholm for help. Joe Comartin, Canada's consul general in Detroit, said a shutdown would have "significant" impacts on both sides of the border. He predicted effects ranging from months-long propane shortages to higher costs for consumers to fuels being carried by rail, truck or boat – methods that he said are

less emissions-friendly and more dangerous than a pipeline. "It certainly strains our relationship," he said. . . .

Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/05/02/canada-enbridge-line-5-whitmer-michigan/>

Need to Know *continued from previous page*

- "We can have a healthy environment and a healthy economy."

→ Sounds good right? Except a healthy environment is **essential for human survival**, it is not a nice-to-have bonus.

- Framing climate change as a **risk somewhere in the far future** when it is our reality today.

- Framing oil and gas industry as vital to the 'national interest' or fate of the nation when the industry's primary purpose is to **enrich shareholders regardless of their nationality**.

- Invoking the **sanctity of the rule of law** when people oppose further expansion of fossil fuel production and are **labeled terrorists**.

- Framing **environmentalism as a political ideology** rather than a universal desire for self-preservation and to protect our one and only home.

There is growing **acceptance that we're in a climate emergency** but less awareness of the urgency. And even less understanding of **sweeping changes** that are needed

Even political and corporate leaders who truly understand the nature of our emergency are failing to act appropriately.

I suspect they believe taking the required climate action to stay around 1.5C would lead to **considerable public backlash**. They're probably right. However that backlash could be muted through smart, **equitable transition planning and honest leadership**.

We have turned the corner on climate change. Governments and companies have started to set emission reduction targets for 2030. Those targets aren't yet good enough, nor are we acting on those weak targets with the required speed. Emissions in 2021 are very likely to be close to the highest ever and that's with much less air travel.

Meanwhile scientists and others **increasingly warn we are facing a ghastly future** sooner than later unless we make those sweeping changes.

We need to **call out climate BS** whenever we see it. And help others to see it too. Here's an updated New Rules.

New Rules for our Climate Emergency

1. **Reward climate-safe behavior.**
2. **Punish climate transgressors.**
3. **Publicly praise those who are trying to protect the environment.**
4. **Name and shame climate transgressors.**
5. **If a decision to take action does not really cut carbon NOW then it's Climate BS.**

Do share this wherever you can. Here it is as a shareable pdf file of the New Rules: <https://drive.google.com/file/1QhX2xzMRV5y6a8rBNdcgWW17h4em4-dj/view>

Source: <https://leahy.substack.com/p/new-rules-for-our-climate-emergency>

Earth Regeneration



Photos Courtesy ECoDAs

(above) These farmers are in one of nurseries of improved cocoa established in communities. These nurseries supply farmers and other forests with improved cocoa seedlings for free. And in return they take commitments to support Wildlife Conservation and not to engage in illegal activities in protected areas. The sign reads "Implemented by ECoDAs." (below) The child is holding apples from one of the fruit trees planted by ECoDAs to improve food and income security of rural households. We have established 50 such fruit orchards with peasant farmers.

Group Promotes Trust, Respect, and Understanding

By Tansi Godwill Tansi, ECoDAs-Cameroon

We spend time to build mutual trust, respect, and understanding within/between communities and any organization working with us toward our goals. This encourages knowledge and skills sharing within and between communities and organizations. We, therefore, build the confidence of local people, give them the tools and opportunities to move their communities forward, we ignite them to understand that they determine their own bright future.

ECoDAs' rights-based approach addresses the root causes of biodiversity loss such as rural poverty, gender inequality, and food insecurity. We believe community-led conservation is a solution to climate change, rural poverty, and species loss.

#ECoDAs
One Tree Planted
Trees for the Future,
Trillion Trees Campaign
TreeSisters: women seeding change
Sandy B's Knack for Nature
Nature Mauritanie
Greenpeace Africa
Greenpeace UK
PPI - Programmes de Petites Initiatives, Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture and Ecological Restoration

Source: https://www.facebook.com/groups/team54project/?multi_per_malinks=136759666361566



Earth Regeneration



Photos: Tinashe Muzama

(left to right) Manic Youth Assembly (MAYA) volunteers Melissa Mbaka, Rutendo Nyanbando, and Mildred Muzanechita participated with other volunteers and members to plant 600 trees in the past months during the peak of Covid-19 on Dangamvura mountain along Natvest Road. We continue with our Earth Day activities. Let's protect our environment.

Dangamvura Mountain Tree Project

MAYA posits that it is better to build a child than to repair a man.

By Jussa Kudherezera, Coordinator
Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA), Zimbabwe

Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA), a youth-based grassroots organization operating in Manicaland would like to congratulate its volunteers and members who were able to plant 600 trees in the past months during the peak of Covid-19 on Dangamvura mountain along Natvest Road. Of late, electric bills have been unaffordable and most residents are resorting to cutting down trees without replacing them. Despite the catastrophic effects of the Covid-19 crisis, MAYA would have planted more than 600 trees to maximize on the rainy season that was experienced during the January and February period.

Furthermore, Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA) approached Mutare City Council for a partnership to help restore the trees on the mountain. MAYA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with

the City Council to adopt the Dangamvura Mountain. Trees are signed for and adopted by Mutare residents. Through the Mutare City Council and MAYA Tree Agreement, we commit to weeding, watering, mulching, and protecting the mountain in our lifetime because we are the voice for environmental and climate justice.

MAYA erected a signage opposite the Golden Peacock Villa hotel to help raise awareness on the need to prevent deforestation and combating climate change that has become a global pandemic.

There has been a sharp increase in deforestation, and this is contributing to climate change. This area was chosen by MAYA due to the fact that trees were harvested for domestic use by residents usually at night for fear of being persecuted and also that the public would raise an alarm once they are found harvesting trees. Mutare used to be a very glorious city with beautiful mountains endowed with trees that would help with fresh air and also for beautification.

The types of trees that were planted are mahogany, pine, and baobab. Most of these trees are strong and will help the mountain

regain its aesthetic value and help holding the soil from erosion. These trees were planted to respond to the growing number of landslides and mud flow cases on the mountains and also to the lack of wind brakes to the equipment that is mounted at the mountaintop by network service providers. These trees will act as wind breaks. There has been an increase in the number of residents cultivating in the mountains and this has increased the vulnerability of the mountain to erosion and siltation.

At this juncture, MAYA would like to thank the Housing Directors for their support and Municipal Police Ranger Department for working with us to try and prevent people from cultivating and cutting down trees for domestic use without planting any for future generations. If trees are left unattended, they will eventually become extinct and hence there is paramount need for groups like MAYA and others to combine efforts to restore the trees through massive afforestation and reforestation projects.

This is a process we hope to continue

Mountain continued on next page

Earth Regeneration

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This sign on Dangamvura Mountain is part of the ongoing hard work by the Manica Youth Assembly in Zimbabwe to protect and restore the mountain. The sign reads "This mountain is protected by MANICA YOUTH ASSEMBLY in partnership with MUTARE CITY COUNCIL. **STOP Deforestation STOP Cultivation NGATICHENGETEDZE MITI NEMAKOMO** followed by the phone number +263713369180 and manicayouthassembly@gmail.com.

from where we left and help re-green the mountain and restore vegetation. MAYA would like the tree planting exercise to be a perennial occasion and moreover we invite other organizations and individuals to participate in the re-greening of Dangamvura Mountain in Mutare.

Lastly, schools ought to be drivers of the ideals that we would like to see in the

world. In a world where there is encouragement of pro-social and pro-environmental behaviors, some of our biggest concerns are that our contemporary schools should provide environments where values and habits must be mirrored in our communities and the world at large. It is crystal clear that the earlier a child is exposed to certain habits and ways of being, that child

is more likely to carry those behaviors into adulthood. MAYA therefore posits that it is better to build a child than to repair a man.

Contact Jussa Kudherezera and MAYA

Email: manicayouthassembly@gmail.com

Phone: +263772351138

Twitter: @ManicaYouth

Website: <https://manicayouth.org/>

#MAYA for Environmental Protection

MAYA
The Voice For Environmental And Climate Justice

MANICA YOUTH ASSEMBLY
MAYA

DEMANDING
ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE JUSTICE IN OUR LIFETIME.

Earth Regeneration



Photos: Tinashe Muzama

Manic Youth Assembly (MAYA) volunteers participated in the last clean up for the month of April at Sakubva bus terminus rank in partnership with EMA. (Environmental Management Authority). We continue with our Earth Day activities. Let's protect our environment.

Earth Day Cleanup in Zimbabwe

By Jussa Kudherezera, Coordinator
Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA), Zimbabwe

Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA) in Zimbabwe joins the rest of the world to celebrate Earth Day (April 22).

This day is meant to raise awareness because climate change is one of the environmental threats that needs urgent attention. There is a need to raise awareness of the importance of preserving and conserving the environment.

The theme for Earth Day 2021 is to Restore our Earth. Unlike any other year, this year's theme is very effective as it comes during a time where Covid-19 is destroying our livelihoods, so there is a paramount need as a youth to restore our Earth.

In a way to commemorate the day, MAYA staff and volunteers conducted a clean-up exercise at the Old Rank bus terminus. Some had brooms and litter-pickers and this was done under the supervi-

sion of the City Council's anti-litter monitor.

At this juncture, MAYA urges communities and citizens to keep the environment clean.

Tell a friend about MAYA and bring a

friend to MAYA.

Contact Jussa Kudherezera and MAYA
Email: manicayouthassembly@gmail.com
Phone: +263772351138
Twitter: @ManicaYouth
Website: <https://manicayouth.org/>



Ending Inequality

Young Activist Organizes Community, Fights Poverty and Horrible Conditions through Rural Watch Africa Initiative

By Uche Isieke, Rural Watch Africa Initiative, Nigeria
Resilience.org: January 22, 2021

Oka community has a population of about 5,000 inhabitants according to the 2006 census. Out of the number, women constitute 56% of the population. It is a culturally endowed community in Imo state, southeast of Nigeria.

The major occupation of the Oka people is farming and they concentrate on cultivation of cassava, cocoyam, yams, and vegetables amongst other staple crops.

The men and youth are involved in the cultivation of the tuber crops, while the women and girls farm vegetables and also engage in processing of cassava into fufu, garri, palm oil extraction, etc.

Income from the sale of this farm produce accounts for about 91% of the income of the people, particularly the women.

Oka rural community are experiencing the effects of climate change but are unaware of the remote causes of this experience, as it is consequential and manifest in the reduction of income generated from farming, water resources, and other source of livelihoods as a result of land degradation.

In 2011, the community witnessed a flood disaster which affected over 200 hectares (almost 500 acres) of farmland and livelihoods: destroying their crops, economic trees, and aquatic lives worth millions of naira.

Prior to this time, the community had no access roads, which are very needed considering the fact that the area is erosion-prone. The encroachment of gully erosion on various land areas has become a source of worry for the people.

The community could not boast of any functional primary health-care infrastructure or improved basic education facility. Access to potable drinking water remains an unrealistic expectation in the land. The neighboring towns and villages rarely hear



Photos Courtesy Rural Watch Africa Initiative

Before and After photos. Rural peasants require key and critical amenities to enable them to fend for themselves and transport their farm produce to the nearby Amaraku central market where people can buy their goods. This is the new, improved Douglas Road.

about Oka as there is almost nothing that could attract them to the community.

Addressing problems of poverty in a livelihood and rural development context requires a robust networking platform to facilitate information sharing, co-ordination of interventions, and forming partnerships. It is strategic to use digital means to identify the real needs and concerns of rural communities. These needs can be made known to the relevant service providers, both public and private, for intervention.

The vision for what I call the "Digitize My Community Initiative" aims at making the community known using the various available digital tools to register its presence on the global digital map. It is a smart and efficient way to market my community's needs to the world, and to the concerned partners committed to enhancing rural development. I see this as a profitable/productive advocacy tool for my community and other rural communities going through hard times due to negligence and

climate change impacts. This in turn could attract goodwill from philanthropists.

EXCEPTS FROM INTERVIEW WITH UCHE ISIEKE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BY DEBORAH OHAMARA OF RESILIENCE.ORG

What gave rise to your zeal and efforts towards using social media as an efficient tool for community development?

Many issues facing most rural communities in Africa, especially land/ environmental injustice and infrastructural challenges, are not adequately reported by the mainstream media. A given example was during the 2011 Oka flood disaster which lasted for two years and was never mentioned in any media platform despite the efforts made by the community to get the attention of the government for assistance.

Up to date, the affected farmers and farmland have not received any form of compensation or assistance from relevant government and non-governmental organizations to help restore the community's degraded biodiversity.

The cause of the flood was as a result of an overflow from the federal government abandoned Inyishi Dam project, which is a project embarked upon by the federal ministry of water resources.

The impact of the flood was so severe that the only rural bridge that connected the Oka people and her neighbors were submerged by the flood, thereby cutting them off from their neighbors for more than two years.

Oka is not a very popular community due to lack of necessary infrastructures that could attract other neighboring towns to the area. Such basic amenities as roads,

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Ending Inequality

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Dilapidated Oka Primary School, Isiala Mbano, Imo state. Sadly in 2018, a primary 4 pupil was bitten by a snake while defecating in the bush. Children from disadvantaged homes trek three hours or more to get to a neighboring community (government-funded) secondary school, on a daily basis. The government-funded secondary schools are a bit more affordable by the poor and average income earners since the cost is being subsidized by the government and partners.



schools, a functional market, primary health-care, sport facilities, police outpost, communication mast, and others are lacking in the community. On the other hand, many indigenes of neighboring towns grew up not having much to bring them to the area, while others perhaps didn't know or get to hear about the existence of such a community. Each time the community was mentioned, people often asked, "Where is Oka located?" Hmm.

Independent research revealed that the

community was poorly ranked by various online search engines. So setting up a multi-digital media platform in the name of the community was one thing I had embarked upon while using it to tell stories about challenges facing the people and also advocating for the community's development and social inclusion.

Has there been any positive outcome since you began?

The community became the first indig-

enous rural community in Africa using digital media to engage her citizens for participatory community development.

Having the name and community registered and recognized by online research tools was another innovative strategy to enable anyone to locate the community from any part of the world, for possible developmental assistance.

Another task accomplished was developing a media blog and website where issues concerning the community and other rural communities are discussed and members of the community around the world are connected to these platforms.

Addressing ecological degradation and climate change impacts using the digital media is one innovation rural communities can adopt to create, own, and market their stories to the world, in order to accelerate indigenous and global actions for rural climate action.

What major challenges need urgent attention in the Oka community?

Road infrastructure is critical for rural integration and climate change adaptation. Rural dwellers, especially the small scale farmers, need a good rural road network for various economic uses.

The maternal mortality rate in Oka community is quite alarming as there is no functional primary health-care infrastructure in the area. Water and sanitation are in a poor state, as evidenced by the dilapi-

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dition of the two merely existing primary schools, which lack functional toilet facilities and water for the hygiene health of the pupils. Sadly in 2018, a primary 4 pupil was bitten by a snake while defecating in the bush.

Apart from government intervention, has there been any measure put in place by citizens or philanthroists to alleviate these problems?

Prior to 2016, I was invited by one of the concerned indigenes of the community to deliberate on environmental issues affecting the people and to suggest a few (palliative) measures to be taken, to tackle the menace of gully erosion and land degradation in the area. As a young environmental resource manager, I made quite a few recommendations which would require the participation of the people, especially the youth, to achieve. I was also briefed on several efforts the indigenes of the community residents in Abuja were making to develop the area.

One such was the “Stand Up To Be Counted” initiative, which promotes voluntary participation of indigenous people in community service through the implementation of people-oriented projects for the social and economic development of the area.

So I looked at the project concept and suggested a few things that needed to be captured, especially regarding the SDGs.

I saw the initiative as one that truly aligned with my rural community develop-

ment initiative to promote climate-resilient infrastructures for sustainable adaptation.

It also came at the time I had started implementing a rural digital transformation project – the “Digitize My Community Initiative” – a concept which was designed out of a perceived need for my community to be included on the global digital map and to enhance my advocacy program while engaging members of the community for better actions.

For the first time, the community was going to be integrated on a global digital scale to measure and mobilize the people’s interests for accelerated sustainable development.

I have created five various social platforms with a purpose to advocate for rural inclusion and engage indigenes of the area to join hands to develop the community – using their skills, talent, network, energy, and resources.

What informs the urgency or peculiarity of the problem of Oka people?

It is sad to note that no meaningful government presence has been felt by the community since its existence. Oka is the only Imo state government-created “indigenous (autonomous) community” without a government (public) owned secondary school, which is one of the basic requirements for such creation. Children from disadvantaged homes trek three hours or more to get to a neighboring community (government-funded) secondary school,

on a daily basis. The government-funded secondary schools are a bit more affordable by the poor and average-income earners since the cost is being subsidized by the government and partners.

The first ever rural digital awareness campaign organized by the Uche Isiekelled publicity and strategy team, in August 26/27, 2016 in Oka and transmitted across over 10 digital platforms with over 50, 000 engagement

Should we then say that these problems are a trigger to your social media campaign for your community?

Through my newly-created platforms, I consistently preached the message of volunteerism as a sustainable alternative the people could leverage upon to make a change in their own little way for the community.

The people received the message with great excitement as consciousness was being awakened, and passion for community service instilled in the minds of the people. That’s exactly the target – a situation where the people do not feel it is “one man’s responsibility to develop the community but rather everyone’s responsibility”.

As the people continued to express their excitement, having not experienced such a community engagement concept in past, this was a momentum- and data-gathering period for me and for the next level of action. So I went on to recruit those who formed my team. These were the community engagement person, community media correspondents, and social influencers.

The most interesting thing was that I never visited the community during these periods, but I was in tune with situations at home through the various digital means put in place for this purpose.

I was constantly training, briefing, and giving directives to my team members, especially those resident in the community, on what to do at every point in time.

The community media correspondents would go as instructed and take photos showing the poor state of infrastructure in the community and transmit same to a dedicated central digital platform, for instant action. This enhanced my social media campaign for Oka and awareness for lack of basic infrastructure which supports rural lives and livelihoods. The images were properly annotated and used on various online engagements.

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A digital project project briefing which took place at the newly built Oka civic hall. The presentation was the brainchild of Uche Isieke, digitally connecting indigenous Oka community members in diaspora with the rural community.

Ending Inequality

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The maternal mortality rate in Oka community is quite alarming as there is no functional primary health-care infrastructure in the area. An NGO founded by some members of the community has embarked on medical outreach with a team of over 100 medical personnel on three different occasions. Drugs and material items are usually given to not just Oka but over six rural communities in Ugiri clan.

Lack of basic infrastructure such as roads, health-care, low natural resources management capacity, and water are some of the key issues exacerbating poverty, social crisis, and climate change impact.

The rural peasants require these key and critical amenities to enable them to fend for themselves and transport their farm produce to the nearby Amaraku central market where people can buy their goods. As these were lacking in the area their farm produce perished, income dwindled, and hunger, disease, and poverty thrived. All these issues led to further degradation of land-based natural resources.

Moving forward, I made sure I strategically communicated their challenges to both public and private institutions (including non-profit organizations) through digital campaigns. At some point, I decided to make direct contact with a few government agencies, including the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and others, expressing my worry over the state of roads in my community which have frustrated economic activities.

Many federal government projects designed to be implemented in rural areas rarely get to the people. In some cases the people are perhaps not aware of such projects to be executed in their community. In this situation, contractors may decide not

to visit project sites, possibly due to corrupt practices.

This was one of the reasons I took up the social media advocacy for rural engagement and development, given the fact that many issues affecting many grassroots communities are not adequately reported or mentioned by the mainline media. This could be due to the high cost of publicity and difficulty in accessing the terrain.

So far what impact has your initiative/project made on your community?

On the third month of my project came a report from the community about the grading of one of the community's roads by a construction firm – the very road I was consulted on to suggest some palliative measures. The entire community went into jubilation as it is the first time they're witnessing such a sudden transformative move.

We inquired to ascertain the source from which the road construction project was coming, and it was revealed that its being sponsored by the NDDC. The same NDDC whom I had consistently engaged and mentioned on various social media platforms with images showing the poor state of the community road infrastructure.

Further investigation confirmed that the contract was awarded since 2013, without

the knowledge of the people, until the time we started the campaign on the non-existence of road and other basic infrastructures in the community.

Why do you share and bare the burden of your community with so much passion? Do you intend to join politics?

My resolve to share this story is to inspire actions, especially among the youth anywhere in the world to get involved by volunteering their skills and getting full participation in community service.

With the social media tool in our hands, we can transform, build resilience, and achieve sustainable development for our various communities. Our creative ability to use social media the right way can cause our leaders and authorities sleepless nights with irresistible pressures to deliver on their mandate with the people.

What informs the urgency or peculiarity of the problem of the Oka people?

Again, as the road project progressed, a complaint came, this time it was on the project not being implemented according to specifications. This was taken up through the same channel of engagement.

Before long, the implementing government agency visited the site and queried the contractor and instructed that drainage be included.

What major resources can the Oka people boast of and utilize if basic amenities are provided them?

The Umudim – Oka road – though still not completed due to some discrepancies in the contract, is the only road the indigenous people of the community are making use of while hoping that government and interested development partners can come to join hands to open up the area for better economic activities.

The people are resilient in palm oil production, cassava cultivation, and a unique specie of cocoyam with zero sugar called the "Indian cocoyam." The community is very loving, hospitable, and peaceful, with a few skilled men who carry out some honey harvesting and palm wine tapping activities on a small scale. The historic Mbaa River, when dredged, can help create jobs for the teeming unemployed youths, some of whom may choose to go into large-scale fishing. The local farmers lack

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Ending Inequality

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knowledge of smart and sustainable agricultural technology which enhances soil production capacity and food security; this is driving low agricultural production and soil degradation in the area.

The serenity of the surrounding hills of Oka and Umudim, and the aesthetic vegetative views of the river valley along the river banks can turn the river into a mega tourist center for those seeking such a peaceful place to invest.

Apart from the road which came through my advocacy campaign, other outcomes are:

- Establishment of non-profit initiatives by indigenes of the community to drive developmental projects;
- Youths are now being engaged through sports competitions sponsored by some of these NGOs;
- One group of indigenes came together and paid matched funding of the community civic hall with support from an international donor organization;
- Another NGO founded by some members of the community has embarked on medical outreach with a team of over 100 medical personnel on three different occasions;
- The youth are gradually getting involved through healthy competitions leading to development and social service re-orientation; and
- During the pandemic a group of community members resident in North America, for which I was a part of the formation, offered relief items that served over 2,000 population and 500 households. This gesture was done in two tranches.

Through the various platforms which I created for the progress of the community, we have raised both in kind and materially over 5,000,000 naira (\$12,040 million), to support some physically challenged in the community to help them afford medical care and set up small businesses for sustainable income.

These among many others are the positive outcomes from the campaigns, both from Stand Up To Be Counted where I was made the Director of Media Publicity and Strategy, and that of my personal initiative for citizens engagement to understand the role of volunteerism in community development. Gradually, members are now actively involved in community development.

That is exactly the aim of the initiative – where everyone has a responsibility to contribute to move the community forward.



The Mbaa Oka River before the flood. The river with no adjoining source to its (Nkwo Mbaa) origin which flows over five communities and 20 villages. The serenity of the surrounding hills of Oka and Umudim, and the aesthetic vegetative views of the river valley along the river banks can turn the river into a mega tourist center for those seeking such a peaceful place to invest.

The community is now a fertile ground for government, development partners, and nonprofits to invest, owing to the fact that the community is now ready and willing to partner with any development initiative. One such was the building of the community civic hall where the community contributed money as matched funding to complete the project.

A community medical outreach organized by an Oka indigene through his NGO, where drugs and material items are usually given to not just Oka but over six rural communities in Ugiri clan.

Through the Rural Watch Africa Initia-

ive, we have reached over 5,000 rural population facing poverty and climate change impacts in Nigeria since 2016; educating and empowering the marginalized communities with knowledge and resilient skill capacities, to become good managers of their own natural resources and wealth creators. We are making sure that the disparity between the poor and the rich is eliminated through our advocacy campaign and the resilient message; thereby helping the marginalized to stand on their feet again.

Presently, we are engaging community

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Ending Inequality

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The first ever rural digital awareness campaign organized by the Uche Isieke-led publicity and strategy team, in August 26/27, 2016 in Oka and transmitted across over 10 digital platforms with over 50,000 engagements.

heads and educating them on how they could develop their areas themselves through collaborative means, and also helping them know about innovative means to attract partnerships for their projects. We are mobilizing for support to renovate and provide toilet and water facilities to Oka Primary School (where a primary 4 pupil was bitten by a snake in the bush due to lack of toilet facility) and equipped with necessary learning tools.

We are also making sure the right message of love for one's community is preached because people tend to care and give back more to someone or a community/cause they care about. Without trust and love nothing works. People should understand that it is possible and sustainable to transform and achieve something big when they come together, identify a problem in their community and proffer solutions to that problem.

What an innovative way to show how much you love your departed mother, father, wife, husband, sister, brother, or a friend, by immortalizing his or her name through implementing a project in your community and have their names engraved on it.

What an extraordinary way to say happy birthday to your loved ones by unveiling a newly built or refurbished classroom or library, skill acquisition centre, health care equipment, solar dryer, borehole, drainage system, etc., to commemorate their birthday. This way we will have so much self-initiated and accomplished projects scattered across our rural landscapes, so many that there will be little or no projects left for the government to implement.

You were a member of Nigeria's National Technical Working Group for the United Nations Land Degradation Neutrality Targets Setting; tell us more about it and the outcome.

It was a voluntary national assignment towards ensuring that Nigeria does not lose her entire landmass to degradation. Nigeria is losing about 350,000 hectares (almost a million acres) of its landmass to desert conditions annually, and such conditions are estimated to be advancing southwards at the rate of 0.6 kilometers (.37 miles) per year. The last time such a major concern was shown to desertification and land degradation issues was in 1930, remarkably, 1937 when the Anglo-

French Commission investigated the report in the northern parts of Nigeria and gave directives to the emirates to invest in massive tree planting to stop the encroachment, thousands of seedlings were raised and distributed at subsidized rates.

So, Nigeria joined the over 120 countries committed to set national Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN, or Targets Setting Program) with an expression of interest, through a letter dated 26th January, 2016 by then Minister of Environment, Mrs. Amina Mohamed. This led to the commencement of the LDN-TSP process on 9th March, 2017 with a national inception workshop and inauguration of the Working Group.

I served as assistant country consultant during the program. The target summary is to achieve at least 20 percent improvement on land to compare to 2015 net loss, across the initial selected LD hotspots in the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. Rural Watch Africa Initiative was among the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) represented, from the inception to the final report review. It will bring opportunities to rural communities and create massive employment along the LDN investment value chain.

Uche can be reached here:

ucheisieke@ruralwatchafrica.org

Uche Isieke is an advocate for rural resilience and inclusion. He is quite passionate about the rural people, their environment, and social and economic well-being. He is a young development professional with over five years experience and has impacted many rural communities through his various initiatives targeted at the poor and marginalized groups.

Resilience is a program of Post Carbon Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping the world transition away from fossil fuels and build sustainable, resilient communities.

Source: <https://www.resilience.org/stories/2021-01-22/telling-the-story-of-the-digitalize-my-community-initiative/>

HOW WE TREAT ONE ANOTHER IS THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS.

~ Samite Mulondo ~

<https://gratefulness.org/word-for-the-day/how-we-treat-one-another-is-the-only-thing-that-matters/>

Human Interest

Three Important Days for Earth

International Day for Biological Diversity: May 22

The United Nations has proclaimed May 22 The International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. When first created by the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly in late 1993, December 29 (the date of the Convention of Biological Diversity), was designated The International Day for Biological Diversity.

In December 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted May 22 as IDB, to commemorate the adoption of the text of the Convention on May 22, 1992 by the Nairobi Final Act of the Conference for the Adoption of the Agreed Text of the Convention on Biological Diversity. This was partly done because it was difficult for many countries to plan and carry out suitable celebrations for the date of December 29, given the number of holidays that coincide around that time of year.

The Biodiversity Day 2021 slogan is: "We're part of the solution". The slogan was chosen to be a continuation of the momentum generated last year under the over-arching theme, "Our solutions are in nature," which served as a reminder that biodiversity remains the answer to several sustainable development challenges. From nature-based solutions to climate, health issues, food and water security, and sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity is the foundation upon which we can build back better.

Biodiversity Day 2021 was commemorated through an online-only campaign. You are in the best position to know what awareness-raising campaigns and calls to action are feasible at your national level.

Read about Biodiversity Day at <https://www.cbd.int/idb/image/2021/idb-2021-notification.pdf>

Source: <https://www.cbd.int/biodiversity-day>

World Environment Day: June 5 *REIMAGINE. RECREATE. RESTORE*

For too long, we have been exploiting and destroying our planet's ecosystems. Every three seconds, the world loses enough forest to cover a football pitch and over the last century we have destroyed half of our wetlands. As much as 50 per cent of our coral reefs have already been lost and up to 90 per cent of coral reefs could be lost by 2050, even if global warming is limited to an increase of 1.5°C.

Ecosystem loss is depriving the world of carbon sinks, like forests and peatlands, at a time humanity can least afford it. Global greenhouse gas emissions have grown for three consecutive years and the planet is on pace for potentially catastrophic climate change.

The emergence of Covid-19 has also shown just how disastrous the consequences of ecosystem loss can be. By shrinking the area of natural habitat for animals, we have created ideal conditions for pathogens – including coronaviruses – to spread.

With this big and challenging picture, the World Environment Day is focus in the ecosystem restoration and its theme is "Reimagine. Recreate. Restore."

Ecosystem restoration means preventing, halting, and reversing this damage – to go from exploiting nature to healing it. This World Environment Day will kick off the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), a global mission to revive billions of hectares, from forests to farmlands, from the top of mountains to the depth of the sea.

Only with healthy ecosystems can we enhance people's livelihoods, counteract climate change, and stop the collapse of biodiversity.

Source: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/environment-day>

World Oceans Day: June 8 Youth-a-Thon Livestream June 5 & 6

The World Ocean Day Youth Advisory Council engages with youth and others around the world. Together, youth can create a healthier ocean that sustains us all, no matter where we live.

"Youth-a-thon" is a 24-hour livestream that provides a digital community for young people to:

- Learn more about the ocean and conservation efforts around the globe;
- Connect with a global community of young change makers ; and
- Join the movement and take action to protect our shared ocean, climate, and blue planet.

This livestream ensures everyone (in every major time zone) can continue to collaborate, create, and take action for a sustainable future.

When? Saturday & Sunday June 5th & 6th (12 p.m. noon EST-12 p.m. noon EST), the weekend before World Ocean Day.

During presenters preferred/local time zone, programs will be hosted on Zoom and simultaneously livestreamed to Facebook LIVE and YouTube LIVE

Structure of Broadcast: Each hour of the 24 hours is treated like a "segment" with a different topic and host from around the globe.

There will be 24 different segments with 24 different (but interrelated) topics on conservation, art, creative writing, exploration, storytelling, environmental science, activism, and more!

Viewers will be asked to take part in one action challenge every hour that helps our blue planet and matches with the conservation theme of that hour.

Social Media Handle: @youth_a_thon

Source: <https://worldoceanday.org/youth-a-thon-2021/>



Human Interest

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 pages 16-19

We are long out of time to break through our cultural denial about this fact: No technology is neutral. “An industrial society,” writes social critic Kirkpatrick Sale, “has its own inevitable logic, simply because its needs and values are determined by its technology...[T]he artifacts are not something added on, like a coat of paint or a ca-boose; they are basic, central, the revelation of its heart and mind.” Industrial technics produce speed, efficiency, ease, uniformity, fungibility, and centralization. The word for that is machine.” Having declared the cosmos lifeless, industrial humans are now transforming the biosphere into the technosphere, a dead world of our own artifacts that life as a whole may not survive.

“To maximize energy, speed, or automation,” writes Mumford, “without reference to the complex conditions that sustain organic life, have become ends in themselves.” Mumford named this drive and its social processes the “megamachine.” Sale calls it “the industrial regime.” Its existence as a system is barely acknowledged, despite its near total domination of both human affairs and the planet. As Sale points out, “The industrial regime hardly cares which cadres run the state as long as they understand the kind of duties expected of them. It is remarkably protean in that way, for it can accommodate itself to almost any national system – Marxist Russia, capitalist Japan, China under a vicious dictator, Singapore under a benevolent one, messy and riven India, tidy and cohesive Norway, Jewish Israel, Moslem Egypt – and in return asks only that its priorities dominate, its markets rule, its values penetrate, and its interests be defended.”

Once, we defended the land. Every last one of us descends from a line of people who fought, as civilization is universally resisted. Agriculture takes the forests, the grasslands, the wetlands, everything that it can. The trees go to build the cities and the giant navies needed to take more. The first written story of this culture and the second-oldest religious text is The Epic of Gilgamesh, which mythologizes the destruction of the cedar forests of the Middle East and the murder of its spiritual guardian. “We have reduced the forest to a wasteland,” says the eponymous hero: “How shall we answer our gods?”

Four thousand years later, here we are. Ninety-eight percent of the world’s old-growth forests are gone. And almost none of us remember what we all once knew: We – the human race – belong to one tiny species that’s utterly dependent on a million others, and the relationships between all these species – what Gunn Allen called “circular, circular, circulars” – are more complex than we could ever know.

Wolves restore rivers. Salmon feed forests. Prairie dogs bring the rain. They are, all of them, our kin. This is our last chance. Facts must be faced, and our loyalties, finally, declared.

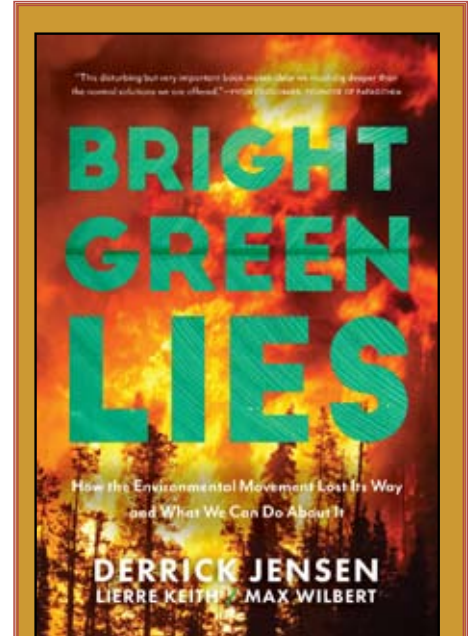
Here are the facts as they stand, according to Sale: “The record of the last five thousand years of history clearly suggests that every single preceding civilization has perished ... as a result of its sustained assault on its environment, usually ending in soil loss, flooding, and starvation.... Industrial civilization is different only in that it is now much larger and more powerful than any known before, by geometric differences in all dimensions, and its collapse will be far more extensive and thoroughgoing, far more calamitous.” And there is also this fact: The only people who want a nuclear power plant, or a solar panel, or a wind turbine, are people who demand industrial levels of energy. Those levels are needed for a single purpose: the wholesale conversion of the living to the dead, the longest war ever. And our choice is now very stark: Stand with the living or go down with the dead.

* * *

This way of living cannot last. And when it is over it would be far better that there be more of the world left rather than less. This is why our actions now are so important. What we do now determines what life is like – or, indeed, whether it exists at all – for those humans and nonhumans who come after us.

* * *

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,

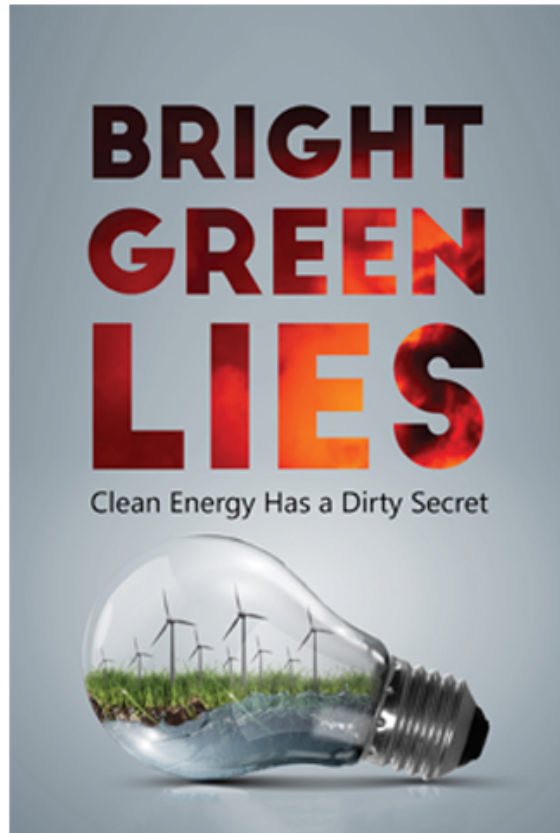


From *Bright Green Lies* cover:

“Bright Green Lies exposes the hypocrisy and bankruptcy of leading environmental groups and their most prominent cheerleaders. The best known environmentalists, he illustrates, are not in the business of speaking truth, or even holding up rational solutions to blunt the impending ecocide, but a mendacious and self-serving illusion that provides comfort at the expense of reality. They fail to state the obvious. 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 at derrick@derrickjensen.org.

Human Interest



NEW DOCUMENTARY



“No matter how big or impassioned a movement is, if it’s pushing for the wrong solutions, it isn’t going to work”

- Julia Barnes,
Director of Bright Green Lies

Bright Green Lies investigates the change in focus of the mainstream environmental movement, from its original concern with protecting nature, to its current obsession with powering an unsustainable way of life.

The film exposes the lies and fantastical thinking behind the notion that solar, wind, hydro, biomass, or green consumerism will save the planet.



Film available now at: **BRIGHTGREENLIES.COM**

Human Interest



**BROTHERS
AND SISTERS
IN
SHARED VALUES**

**BUILDING
HUMAN
SOLIDARITY IN
THE LIGHT OF
POPE FRANCIS'
ENCYCLICAL
LETTER,
"FRATELLI TUTTI"**

**AUGUST
19, 20, 21, 2021**
Zoom and YouTube

Join an international
interfaith conference
bringing humanity together!

Virtual International, Interfaith Conference: Bringing Humanity Together

OUR VISION

Our conference will draw upon the experience of people from diverse religious, cultural, and economic backgrounds who are developing new ways to transcend many of the divisions that are afflicting the human community and our common home on planet Earth. We plan to engage global citizens to build transformative models of community development that bridge economic, political, religious, and cultural divisions in the world.

OUR MISSION

We will examine the types of community-building activities that have successfully translated the hopeful message of *Fratelli Tutti* into actualizing educational strategies that build communities promoting

new bonds among diverse social, cultural, and religious groups in various parts of the world. We plan to use the latest technological platforms to publish the outcomes and recommendations of this conference.

The central hub of the conference will be located at Tangaza University in Nairobi, Kenya with other hubs in Rome, Indonesia, and California. There will be no charge to participate but donations are welcome.

HERE ARE THE HUBS

- The Institute for Interreligious Dialogue and Islamic Studies
- Global Ministries University
- UIN (State Islamic University) Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

OUR PARTNERS

- Umma University
- The Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns
- The Harmony Institute
- The Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI)

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

The Honorable Jerry Brown, Former Governor of California



Human Interest

Grassroots Coalition Member Publishes Book

“Intimate Meanderings...is an inspiring array of insight and bears witness to human life and our innate movement towards wholeness.”

– Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao, Abbot ZCLA, Buddha Essence Temple

Daniel Berrigan, S.J. (may he enjoy eternal peace), our great friend and contributor, says: “This book is an amazing potpourri of wisdom. I am so grateful to you, Morgan and the friends. *Intimate Meanderings: Conversations Close to Our Hearts* should be required reading in every Jesuit tent.”

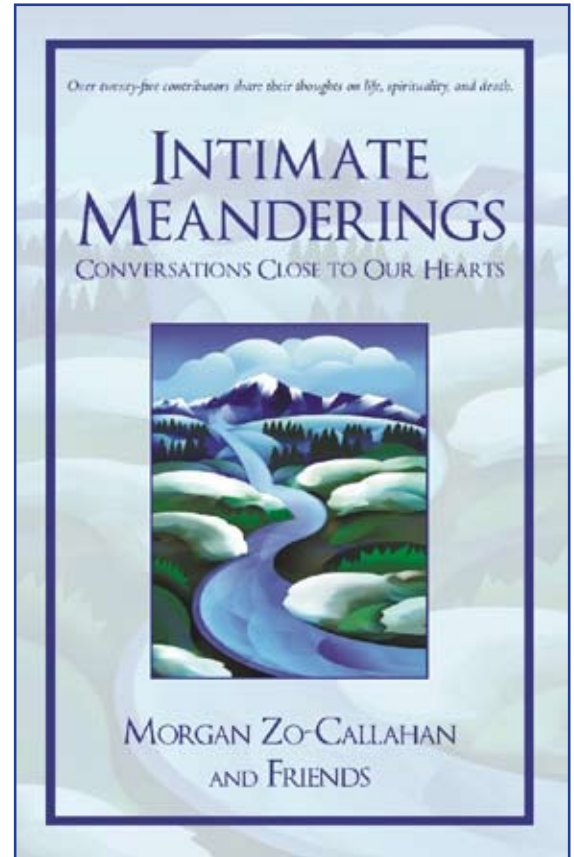
“What appeals to me intellectually and emotionally about your book is that reading these pieces together creates a very new context to hold the experience of life. Spirituality, what you call meditation, is the glue that holds all the parts together. I feel that all your contributors are committed to integrate the fragments of what knowledge and methods we have acquired. . . with real life experience.” – John Lounibos, PhD

Twenty-six contributors offer interviews, reflections, stories, and poetry on meditation, religion, community involvement, hospice, eulogies, human journeys, living and dying well...piquing spiritual and literary curiosity in interested readers.

Among the friends who shared their perspectives in *Meanderings* are several former Jesuits and one Jesuit, Buddhists, Christians with strong Buddhist leanings, Hindus, women, activists, academics and teachers. We are: Rufina Amaya, Dan Berrigan, Gene Bianchi, Bob Brophy, Morgan Zo-Callahan, “Ed,” Don Foran, Sam Haycraft, Ken Ireland, Jiyu-Kennet, Bob Kaiser, John Lounibos, Don Maloney, Doug McFerran, Joe Mitchell, Eng Moy, Robert Rahl, Elizabeth Russell, Gary Schouborg, Rebecca Sheppard, Joyce Sin, Dilip Trasi, Nitin Trasi, Dave W. Van Etten, and Harry Wu.

Available: Barnes & Noble (Paperback \$35.95, Nook Book \$6.49), Amazon and iUniverse (Paperback \$35.95, Kindle \$6.99).

<https://sites.google.com/site/intimatemeanderings/>



Popular Opposition Halts Bridge Project in Philippine Coral Haven

By Keith Anthony Fabro, *excerpt*
Mongabay/Deep Green Resistance News
May 5, 2021

- The Philippine government has suspended work on a bridge that would connect the islands of Coron and Culion in the coral rich region of Palawan.
- Activists, Indigenous groups, and ma-

riner experts say the project would threaten the rich coral biodiversity in the area as well as the historical shipwrecks that have made the area a prime dive site.

- The Indigenous Tagbanua community, who successfully fought against an earlier project to build a theme park, say they were not consulted about the bridge project.
- Preliminary construction began in No-

vember 2020 despite a lack of government-required consultations and permits, and was ordered suspended in April this year following the public outcry.

PALAWAN, Philippines – Nicole Tayag, 30, learned to snorkel at 5 when her father took her to the teeming waters of Coron to scout for potential tourist destinations back in 1995. One particularly biodiverse site they found was the Lusong coral garden, southwest of this island town in the Philippines’ Palawan province.

“Even just at the surface, I saw how lively the place was,” Tayag told Mongabay. “We drove our boat for so many times that I remember the passage as one of the places I see dolphins jumping and rays flying up the water. It has inspired me to see more underwater, which led me to my career as a scuba diver instructor now.” . . .

Source: <https://news.mongabay.com/2021/05/popular-opposition-halts-a-bridge-project-in-a-philippine-coral-haven/>



Photo: Anne Jimenez via Wikimedia Commons (CC BY 2.0)

The Indigenous Tagbanua community of Culion has slammed the project for failing to obtain their permission that’s required under Philippine law.



Fundraising With Mary Kay Business

I have been using many Mary Kay products and am very happy with them. I especially like the face, feet, and hand creams and the perfumes are nice, too! The e-catalogue is at <https://www.marykay.com/ecatalog>. Any purchases you make will help sustain this newspaper. My personal website is www.marykay.com/IonaConner. Thank you for your support.

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.

Email Iona at groundswellnews@pa.net and she will put you on our email list. "Every new one makes us stronger," sings Pete Seeger.



Groundswell News

Our beautiful journal will inspire and encourage you. Learn more at www.groundswellnews.org. Email groundswellnews@pa.net to be put on our e-list. It's free but donations are gladly accepted. A project of the 501(c)(3) Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice. Photo <https://www.google.com/search>

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Please consider placing your ad with us. Send me your material at groundswellnews@pa.net and pay what you feel is reasonable, depending on how much space your ad needs. If your ad requires some of my time to create it for you, there will be an extra charge. If you can afford \$50 for half a page and \$100 for a full page, that will be wonderful.

Thank you.



Remember your dreams.



Messages from Our Friends

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



Photo: Willy Ssenindde

Email 5/21: I never found any donations to feed my Orphanage please I really don't know how am going to get them food because even yesterday never eaten anything, today only water. Please, thank you so much for the good soul. God bless you and your family.

Wow it's so amazing to see you writing this good newspaper, greetings from God's support Orphanage Ministry Uganda.

Please am requesting you to some help to feed these orphans. Please they are starving. Please help us. Please. This is the information and the certificate. Please help us, please.

Yes mummy Iona am the one in the black shirt please for these children they need some help thank you so much, mummy Iona.

Please this is the gofundme page <https://gofund.me/c9031e80>

Please may you help me to share it to your friends so that they can be able to help please.

Willy Ssenindde, Uganda

I was thoroughly entertained by Bill's two-page column on taking control of technology (pgs. 19 – 20 in last month's Groundswell). Hopefully in the future, he can contribute more like that one.

Allen Hengst, Washington, DC

Thanks Iona! A lot of great material here. Will be sharing.

Keep up the good work!!

Jay Sweeney, Pennsylvania USA

Dear Iona,

I really am astounded at what you 'put together' in every issue of *Groundswell*. I know it is a work of LOVE in the fullest and deepest sense of what that word could mean in trunks of insight, inclusivity, and commitment.

I am loving and 'devouring' every paragraph. It is absolutely wonderful. I am sending it personally to people in the movement.

I think I will also put it on my Facebook with the statement, "If the only thing you do this week is to read this journal with curiosity and an open heart, HOPE will accompany your sorrows."

May God sustain you, and may you know the abundance of gratitude I feel for you,

Marita Grudzen, California USA

Good morning Aunt Iona,

I hope your night was as calm and peaceful and refreshing as the night on the ocean floor staring at the moon in its full glory as the light spreads all through the sky, lighting up every nook and cranny, revealing the stars and its Amazingness.

My exams have been postponed till July, sooo no exams for this boy till then. I will be doing some other things like drawing more and working and concentrating on this new fashion brand I partnered up with in making designs and cool art works for their T-shirts and stuff. Yeah I wanted to also tell you about that. Wow!!! An idea just came to mind.. I can also use my designs to spread an awareness about climate change and spread the concept out there. It'll be so epic!

I miss you, and I apologize for missing out on two meetings already...

Your nephew,

Prince Timmy, Nigeria

Thanks for the wonderful newsletters Grandma. I am truly amazed with the

stories. How are you doing? I hope you're doing wonderful.

Regards,

Amb Hanson G. Blayon, Liberia

Awesome! Thank you so much for including it. We really, really appreciate it.

Melissa Marshall, Mountain Watershed Association (last issue of *Groundswell*)

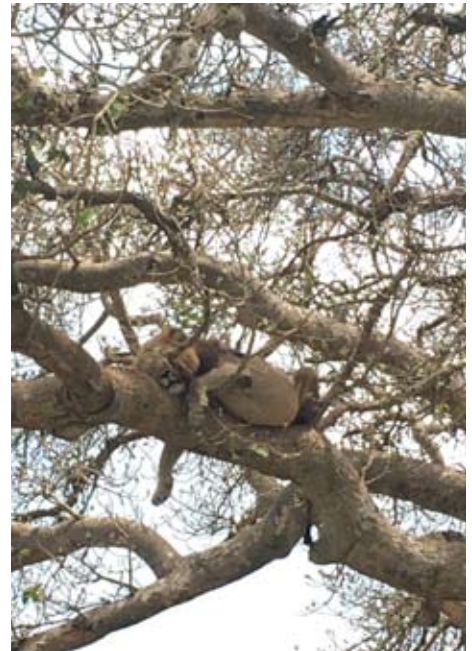


Photo: Herbert Bagenyi

This is an example of wildlife seen through Herbert's One Village Tours Uganda.

It's a lovely, sunny, and beautiful morning here in Uganda. The sky is blue, scenery is amazing, and nature is awesome. You really feel life is all you treasure and being in a such environment gives you a memorable adventure of a lifetime. Our climate is not winter or spring. We have a very beautiful equatorial climate. Where we experience two rainy seasons in a year. March-May and Sept-December. June-August is our summer season and always very beautiful to travel much as Uganda is all year travel destination. In the months of Jan-Feb, it's summer but lovely. In this summer season,

Messages continued on next page

Messages *continued from previous page*

we can experience sunshine but not hot.

While with us, you will meet the Equator because Uganda is divided into two parts of the world, northern and southern hemispheres.

Bagyenyi, Herbert, One Village Tours Uganda

Hi Iona.

Many thanks for the latest edition of *Groundswell*.

As usual, my sincere appreciation of the combination of sobering news to remind us of the extraordinary challenges we face as a species and the wonderful work of our friends in Africa, India, and elsewhere.

I am always inspired by the work of the superb grassroots activists who make up the Grassroots Coalition.

Love to you all,

Robert Burrowes, Australia

Thanks please I want you to help me in getting Faith Orphanage Home Liberia in the *Groundswell News Journal* I am Lawrence P. Bomah, Volunteer Coordinator Faith Orphanage Home Liberia.

Lawrence Bomah, Liberia
lbomah73@gmail.com

Dear Iona,

Thank you for the wonderful work you do, I credit your efforts in helping the world to live together in a peaceful manner, but bring them all issues from all over the world to their doorsteps.

Happy that in spite of all the challenges incurred, you are still able to have the news journal paper exist.

Our music classes started producing songs, I wish I can get a way I can send it to you.

I pray that God bless your contributions to keeping his nature alive, informed, and connected.

Been hard for me to continue meetings, the problem has been and is still an issue of Internet.

Bob Maahe, Uganda, Executive Director UYSTO, www.skillsforyouths.org

Dear Iona,

This is an absolutely marvelous article! Thank you so much for writing about the International Ocean-Climate School (IOCS).

My team and I are really pleased.

I read some of the GNJ previous issues. They are all excellent reads! You write so well about those complex issues and that makes them easy to read and to learn.

We will mention your org and share the Journal in our social media. David

made a post about The Grassroots Coalition. It is on the IOCS LinkedIn https://www.linkedin.com/posts/ioocs-ocean-climate_groundswell-news-journal-activity-6789291972289929216-AiQu.

I put *Groundswell* on our webpage "support." You will find it here in section D: <https://oceansclimate.wixsite.com/oceansclimate/support>. If you would like to change or modify anything, please let me know.

Thank you for the last edition. I read through it quickly, and it looks absolutely wonderful and enriching! We will also mention your Journal on our social media!

Thanks so much again, Iona. We are so grateful.

Warmest & please stay safe,
Pariphat Promduangsri, International Ocean-Climate School, France



Logo courtesy of Dr. Nic Choren. Follow her on Instagram @Bodies_of_the_Earth

Campus Liberia International, Inc. is the name of my Institution, grandma.

I am currently Co-Founder of my NGO. I just graduated from a Technical College with a Diploma in Electrical Engineering hoping to continue to University soon.

The institution's current project is offering capacity building to the High School Press Club and helping the team with logistics to facilitate their activities on campus but due to the lack of funding we are just offering training and workshops to the team and the public attaching little fees to help run our school's project.

My dream is to continue my education in Electrical Engineering but I am searching for opportunities to explore my career bigger.

Your son,

Hanson G. Blayon, Liberia

Hello everyone,

Now spending most of our time mobilizing effective resistance to the elite coup as awareness gradually spreads but the censorship gets ever tighter and 'freedom of expression' disappears as rapidly as other human rights. A trivial example (given what is happening globally): 13 editors of progressive news outlets (in eight countries) who published virtually everything I wrote for the past decade will no longer publish me.

The latest article: 'Killing Democracy Once and for All: The Global Elite's Coup d'état That Is Destroying Life as We Know It' is at <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2021/05/killing-democracy-once-and-for-all-the-global-elites-coup-detat-that-is-destroying-life-as-we-know-it/>.

'TRANSCEND Media Service: Solutions-Oriented Peace Journalism', Germany/Switzerland, 3 May 2021.

Warmest regards;

Robert Burrowes and Anita McKone, Australia

Email: flametree@riseup.net

Websites: We Are Human, We Are Free at <https://wearehumanwearefree.org/>

Nonviolence Charter at <https://thepoplesnonviolencecharter.wordpress.com/>

Flame Tree Project to Save Life on Earth) at <https://tinyurl.com/flametree>

'Why Violence?' at <https://tinyurl.com/whyviolence>

Hi mommy,

It's totally been a while since last year, I haven't sent down any project reports and feedbacks. I am sorry for that, you know how hard it always is. And whenever you're leading something, you need to take good focus toward the responsibility. Alhamdulillah the Rescue A Girl project, so far has made a lot of impact in 2020; we are able to impact 350 women and girls only. While 2021 we continue to push down the dream, learn not to give up on what you really believe and have hope on. So good, after the sanitary pads. I understand, women need to be aware on prepare menstrual hygiene and if we really want to make it possible, we need to find a sustainable way to end period poverty. So, I work on a reusable pads product, which we empower a lot of women and girls. And definitely I will share some new reports and captures to publish it for us smiling.

Secondly, I want to know more about the proposal I saw people submitting. If possible, I will submit my own to you soon, hope we can get donors to continue our efforts.

Messages *continued on next page*

Messages *continued from previous page*

Please take good care of yourself, I really miss you a lot. When I go through our last year messages. I feel like flying over there to see you real. Love you very much mommy.

You know it's Ramadan and almost time to Sallah soon. I will share the report to you anytime from you.

Your lovely son,
Idris Bilyaminu Ndasadu'Lau, Nigeria,
Youth Awareness and Peace Development

I have a diploma in mechanical engineering, I worked in different companies. I wish you to come in our country because people are still green about environment, we have a challenge on our people who burn bushes to get pasture for livestock and charcoal burning. Connect me to teach our people the useful of environment.

Onesmus Tumukunde, Uganda

Namaste from Nepal. I am Jeeban Bastola your brother from Nepal.

First of all, I would like to say namaste and hope you and all your family are well. I am from Amrit Kunja Organic Permaculture Farm Nepal as you know very well.

Nepal is going through a very tough stage of its Covid-19 pandemic – deadly second wave, with extremely severe problems. The health services which have a poor infrastructure have been overwhelmed and the infection rates and death rates are rising very sharply.

There is a desperate shortage of hospital beds, ventilators, oxygen, & PPE, meaning that the population in general are not able to be treated in hospital and the health care workers are in short supply as a huge number of them have become infected.

The hospitals and the health authorities are asking for urgent help to alleviate the acute problems in setting up a Nightingale-type field hospital in the existing premises of an isolation center area near Pokhara, providing liquid oxygen which is vital as well as PPE. The aim is to benefit the public without involving the ministry of health. We do not aim to fund any private hospitals

either.

Children who are orphans and vulnerable are becoming more at risk of coronavirus; therefore, we are protecting them, feeding them, providing basic needs.

We need support and as you know that we cannot make any account in Go Fund Me and other links used to collect money from donations so I would like to request you to create a link and collect money in your account then you can send me later.

We are not well equipped. There is no access to safety and preventive measures in societies.

We have provided food and health assistance for thousands of school children in Nepal.

So, in the name of humanity, we need to help them. Many people lost their lives; many of them are in severe condition so we need to help them in many ways. Please help us.

Since last three months, I have no job and I spend all time to take care of many children and people around Pokhara.

How we can help them please guide me, help and support those children and people.

1. We can collect little little from us and help them.

2. Please help me to make account in Go Fund Me and other fundraising links so we can collect some donations.

Sincerely yours,
Jeeban bastola
anjanjb@gmail.com
977-9825113728
amritkunja.com

[Note from Iona: I felt so bad that I had to tell Jeeban that I'm not capable of setting up a Go Fund Me site for him so I'm hoping maybe one (or more) or our readers will be able to do that.]

Iona:

Thanks for thinking of me! And yes, the situation in Palestine is dire, as we have known for a long time. I have written several appeals to the White House (on their

Internet messaging service) – pleading for fairness – and urging the administration to do everything in its power to bring about a just and lasting resolution to the conflict. I do think that is where our focus should be – as nothing positive is likely to evolve out of the present arrangement of things – though I guess anything is possible!

I continue to think that one of the primary problems is that most Americans have never actually met with Palestinian people – to see what they are like and to understand what the experience of this conflict looks like from their point of view.

I still think that a full-fledged movie/cinematic production would be the best way to get that message across – and wish very much that it would happen. Because I think the changes in perception that would follow would likely prove to be very positive and beneficial.

You are kind to say I am an 'expert;' I think I would more likely put myself in the category of 'advocate.' If you publish this, you might ask your readers to please come forward with any ideas they may have on how we can reach a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

Always looking for good proposals in that direction!

No question that support for the Palestinian cause is continuing to increase, especially among younger and better educated voters. And more people seeing that no one has to "choose" one side or the other – but rather promote equal rights for all. To me, this is exactly what we want. Very promising!

Many thanks again,
Dan Adams, Pennsylvania USA
danieljadams007@gmail.com

There is growing interest in preserving nature in developing countries according to research by World Wildlife Fund and a lot of the most interesting stories I read are published there.

Bill Boteler, Maryland USA

WE ARE CALLED TO ASSIST THE EARTH TO HEAL...INDEED, TO EMBRACE THE WHOLE CREATION IN ALL ITS DIVERSITY, BEAUTY AND WONDER. THIS WILL HAPPEN IF WE SEE THE NEED TO REVIVE OUR SENSE OF BELONGING TO A LARGER FAMILY OF LIFE, WITH WHICH WE HAVE SHARED OUR EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS.

~ Wangari Maathai ~

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2004/maathai/26050-wangari-maathai-nobel-lecture-2004/>