

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. 80: September 20, 2021

Revolution

Imagine the World
YOU Want to Live In

Submitted by C.B., Pennsylvania USA

By Surnai Ó Maoildhia, Ireland
Parabola: Spring 2020
Groundswell News Journal: #61, July 2020

There came a time when the square concrete slabs sitting heavy along the suburban streets were pried up with crowbars and the squashed soil beneath sucked in the fresh air and people kneeled down along the stretches of dark earth and said sorry.

There came a time when all of the lightbulbs in each of the streetlights in each of the streets were unscrewed. And in the night the stars shone down unblinded.

The bricks of derelict houses were pulled from tired walls by many sets of hands and were stacked, like the building blocks of children, in wheelbarrows, to be wheeled away and used again. Then the foundations of the lonely houses crumbled and were swept away and soil flew in on the breeze carrying dandelion seeds with it, and those many hands with soil in the curves of their fingerprints placed tiny seeds in tiny pressed hollows that grew to be oak and sycamore and birch and ash.

The black smoke that once wheezed from car exhausts and chimneys and seeped up into the sky, staining the white clouds dark, was now only in the burning of fallen branches on beaches from bonfires, and the smoke was grey, not black, and the red sparks wove within it a fiery embroidery that sparkled beneath the unveiled stars.

The trees that lived in their circles in the pavement in the cities now stretched their roots out, stretched the length of them, stretched long and lovely and intoxicatingly as all that concrete was changed to loose earth and so the roots could uncoil and the trees could stand steady.

And in this time, this time that came, on Sunday mornings, people went to the sea and kneeled and saw the waves swell against the cliffs or lap against the stones or soak into the sand. They went to the forest and kneeled and looked at the trees shiver, shake and lose themselves in the wind. They went to the mountains and kneeled and watched, straining their eyes to see the breaths in the earth of the mountains, the mountains that breathe so slowly in their millennial meditation that one cannot see the rise and fall.

And above this breathing, above this spiralling of roots and trickling of water in the hollows in the soil, and alongside the curling of the waves and amidst the frolicking of the dandelion seeds, is the turning, turning, turning of bicycle wheels as people make their way



Photo Sharon Mollerus, Creative Commons Attribution 2.0

through their day, to the sea or to work or play or school...

To school where children have risen from beds to kneel against rows of different beds and gently pluck out weeds and water the seedlings and the growing bulbs, and place potatoes in their patterns and name each one before they bury them...

To school where children solve puzzles with simultaneous equations and build contraptions with blueprints and nimble fingers and then discover the workings of plants, animals, atoms, space, and the rhythms of a story as they read and read and read...

To school where children fill the halls with music and the foot-stomping of dancing and the pounding of running feet and the careful breathing of yoga and meditation as they learn to stretch their limbs and minds and where to stretch them so as to get the most light...

The light that fruit and vegetables have used to swell and ripen, to be gathered then in baskets on bicycles or pooled in cloth bags, and the soil is brushed off with fingers and the slugs are placed outside and the vegetables, each one a different shape, are chopped and cooked.

And the flowers are nourished by that same light, the flowers that were planted in the ground and in boxes and baskets and on rooftops and in the old bulbs of streetlights hanging upside down from loops of twine. The same light that's sprinkled like sugar onto the fields and fields of daisies, fields bursting with daisies, trimmed with pink and

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

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Contributors: Susan Butler, Trevor Decker Cohen, Uche Isieke, Surnai Molloy, Geoffrey Ouma Ngunre, Leon Simwerayi, Willy Ssenindde

Our Motto:

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

Our Slogan:

The way forward:
cycle back to basics.

Our Word: INVINCIBLE

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.



Iona's Column: *Close to my Heart*

Dearest Global Family,

This is a turning point; I love Surnai's "Revolution" so much that I'm publishing it again. It will take a revolution, of which we are already part, so let's try remaining positive amidst chaos. Here's what I sent Surnai this morning (August 22, 2021).

Dearest Surnai,

First of all, how are you? Are you still in Ireland? What are you doing? Have you written more visions of a possible future like "Revolution?"

I'm taking 10 days "off" to do a lot of thinking and self improvement work. As I lay in bed defying my normal urge to rush into the day, thoughts of all the crises we are facing tumbled around in my brain/heart and I started wondering how can I, one aging woman, be the most help to it all?

I have treasured the copy of "Revolution" my friend sent me which was published in *Parabola* and I just reread it. Back in bed, I knew that I needed to reach out to you and see if you have written anything as beautiful since we last communicated?

It occurs to me to run "Revolution" on the front page of the next issue of *Groundswell* and share these thoughts with my readers in my column on page 2.

I hope you are well; I hope you maintain your futuristic visions and are sharing them with others; that's what I've tried to do and want to do and will do my best to continue doing.

Love, Iona

Word for the Day on August 22, Courtesy A Network for Grateful Living
Life is an opportunity given to satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul.

Pir-O-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan



Photo: Nana Taimour

Over a three-month participatory design process, we rounded up ideas from students, neighbors, and staff at a nearby community center to imagine a brighter future for the schoolyard at P.S. 7 in the Bronx – one of the more than 200 playgrounds we've created in New York City. The result is a custom play area, plenty of shady benches and tables for families and seniors to hang out, and a running track where anyone in the neighborhood can work out when school isn't in session.

Schoolyards: The Park Access Solution Hiding in Plain Sight

By The Trust for Public Land: August 6, 2019

America has a park problem. Nature is essential for healthy, happy communities, but today, 100 million people in this country – a third of us! – don't have a park within a 10-minute walk of home.

The Trust for Public Land is focused on fixing this problem. That's why we created the world's most comprehensive geospatial database for park access – and we're putting it to work to pinpoint where parks are needed most, and where and how to invest for a fu-

ture in which everyone has nature nearby.

To close our country's gaps in park access will definitely require the creation of some new parks. But it will also require us to get the most use from the open space we already have, in places like forgotten alleyways, postindustrial waterfronts, and asphalt-covered schoolyards.

Today, America's schoolyards are packed with potential. Collectively, public school districts own tens of thousands of acres across the country. In a few places, school-

yards are vibrant community hubs, open to the public after school hours and designed to meet the needs of neighbors as well as students. But in too many communities, schoolyards look more like parking lots than playgrounds, and their gates lock as soon as students head home for the day.

The Trust for Public Land has been helping communities make the most of their schoolyards for nearly 50 years. Every school in every neighborhood in every city

Schoolyards *continued on next page*

Revolution *continued from page 1*

centered by their own little suns, and if you look quickly, especially at dusk, it is only pink you see; oh, but how can you only glance? Of all the standards of beauty, there is nothing more lovely than a field full of daisies...

And in a house where all the windows are open a bumble bee has found himself trapped and a young girl sees him and gasps and she runs for a glass. And following him on tiptoe through the different rooms of the home, she finally moves the glass over him and places a book on the end and shifts the buzzing bee, buzzing, buzzing, buzzing, into the garden where he swoops up into the air, pauses, buzzes, and swoops again and disappears.

And though the girl can't see – but can imagine – the bee moseys over miles of green grass, dotted with pockets of gardens and houses and trees, and the bee criss-rosses with swallows who have tuned the sounds of spring to summer with the forks of their tails. And the bee pauses on a sunflower planted in a stretch of space that was once a graveyard, and is still, but the rectangles of gravel and the squares of headstones have been swapped with shrubs and flowers and so bluebells grow from the bodies and the memories of

lost ones, who are not truly lost, simply shifted, and their names are painted on pebbles that have been moved from the shore.

And all of that rubbish that dropped from all of those cluttered lives, the rubbish that could not decompose, that could not die – immortal – heaped on top of nature, smothering; and then on top of itself, piling, over and over, minute after minute, until it leaked into the cracks in the planet, filling the gaps and then overflowing until it spilled and spilled into all of the bellies of all of the whales, cleared. It was cleared.

And there came a time when the ocean released that breath it had been holding and eased down a few inches. And the wounds in the sky were allowed to heal and knit back together and dolphins could sew their threads through the clean, blue waters again.

And there came a time when the tree-tops were patched up and noisy again and orangutans collected their armfuls of fruit again and all that crumbling, wilting, dying turned to growth and the world was fresh and clean, as after a spring rain.

And the poles became solid once more.
And the famine ended.

And people learned to love this nature.

Loved it wholly and completely and unconditionally. And they learned that they are not excluded, that they are nature too. And the indomitable nature within them loved the uncontrollable-ness, the insuppressible-ness, the irrepressible-ness... loved the wildness of it all, the mess and the chaos; they learned to love the life in it, the life in them, in us, the organic, circular movement of everything.

And we learned to say, sorry.

"Revolution" was published in the Spring 2020 edition of Parabola under the pseudonym "Surnai Molloy." <https://windthread.typepad.com/windthread/2020/02/my-entry-26.html>

Surnai Ó Maoilidhia was raised on Inis Mór, a small island off the west coast of Ireland, She was homeschooled there along with her siblings. Homeschooling is certainly a way to encourage creativity. Her parents ran an organic garden and housed volunteers. At the age of 15, Surnai went to school on the island. She is currently studying Creative Writing with English and Mathematics in the National University of Ireland, Galway. When we communicated in March 2020, Surnai was studying on exchange in Ottawa, Canada.

Schoolyards *continued from previous page*

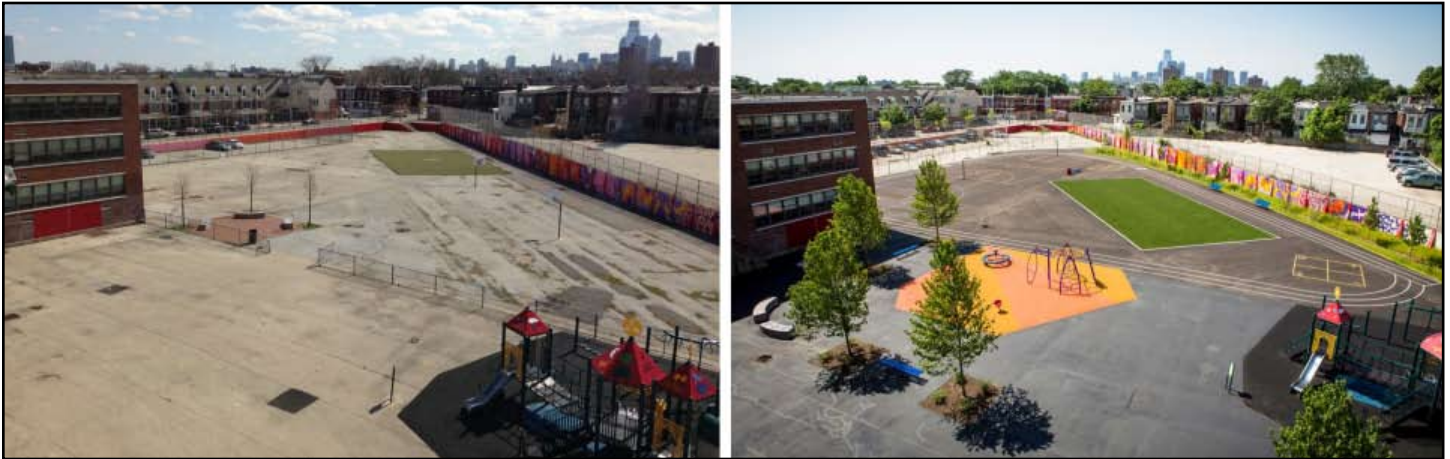


Photo: Jenna Stamm

“Right now the typical schoolyard in Philly is just asphalt, and it’s usually in bad shape,” says Helaine Barr, a policy analyst with the Philadelphia Water Department. “But they’re often the only open spaces in dense neighborhoods, so they offer a great opportunity to capture stormwater.” At William Dick School in north Philadelphia, we helped students design a cooler, greener – and way more fun – schoolyard.

is different, but over time, we’ve developed a few guiding philosophies:

1. Schoolyards should be designed for the community, by the community.

For the most part, schoolyards have been designed – IF they’ve been designed – to meet the needs of students alone. But there’s a better way: we help communities transform their schoolyards using a participatory design process that invites the whole community – from students and teachers to neighbors and other local groups – to weigh in on what the space can be. The result? A place brimming with one-of-a-kind artwork, custom play areas, plenty of space to run around, and useful features for neighbors of every age. When neighborhoods unite to design their schoolyards, they create places that reflect what’s important to the whole community, where everyone feels welcome.

2. Schoolyards should be shared.

If a community comes together to imagine a great schoolyard, they should be able to use it! But it’s not as simple as leaving the gates unlocked: public access can mean more maintenance costs, and raises questions around liability – and public school districts shouldn’t be expected to take on the added burden alone. That’s why The Trust for Public Land helps communities implement “shared-use agreements,” contracts between a school district and other local agencies that can resolve liability concerns and shift the burden for increased costs and maintenance away from school districts.

In Houston, the SPARK School Program works with schools and neighborhoods to develop community parks on public school grounds. In the past 30 years, SPARK has built over 200 parks throughout the Houston metro area, improving access to the

outdoors for nearly half a million people.

3. Schoolyards should be green.

Opening schoolyards to the public can help fill in some big gaps in the map of park access in America. But access alone isn’t enough. In many cities, the typical schoolyard is a fenced-in expanse of blank asphalt – a featureless space more akin to a prison yard or parking lot than a park. That’s why we help communities imagine, fund, and build schoolyards packed with trees, grass, gardens, and other climate-smart features that capture stormwater. Green schoolyards reduce the risk of flooding, and combat the urban heat island effect, keeping our cities cooler. They’re places where birds and pollinators find refuge, and double as outdoor classrooms where kids can learn about the

natural world every day, all year long.

And since every green schoolyard we build is open to the public when school isn’t in session, green schoolyards serve as neighborhood parks, where anyone is welcome to pause, breathe, and experience nature’s benefits, even in the heart of the city.

Of the 100 million people in this country today who do not have a park within a 10-minute walk of home, almost 20 million of them do live that close to a public school. That means if every public schoolyard were designed for the broader community, with greener features, and open to the public, we’d already be a fifth of the way to solving the problem of outdoor access for everyone in America.

Source: <https://www.tpl.org/schoolyards>



Photo: Annie Bang

Children walking through the gate at Aliso Park in Los Angeles, California.



Photo Courtesy AJVDC

Bakanja School is where we implemented this garden. The students (11 to 17 years old) are standing with their teachers surrounding cabbage plants in the garden.

Green School, Green Education, Green growth = Hunger Solution and Climate Solution

By Leon Simwerayi, DR Congo

The School Gardens Project aims to promote environmental and food education, to fight against hunger and climate change by teaching young people on how to grow foods, plant trees, and how to manage Water, Hygiene, and Sanitation. We wanted it to be implemented in many schools and community centers, we are still searching for support.

AJVDC (Association De Jeunes Visionnaires Pour Le Developpement Du Congo) is working with schools and community centers to install Agroecology gardens at schools and community centers, to train volunteers or Training of Trainer (ToT) on how to grow (vegetables, rabbit, chicken) for producing food and items for selling and increasing incomes, and helping students get school fees through this agribusiness

program. This will help also to promote Sustainable Development Education (Environmental Education, Food Education, Health Education, Water and Sanitation Education or WASH Education (menstrual health) – even Peace Education. AJVDC is willing to train at least 5,000 volunteer students in the school year period.

Contact Leon: @Leon Simwerayi or @Brigade Verte Goma DR Congo

**THE EYES OF THE FUTURE ARE LOOKING BACK AT US
AND THEY ARE PRAYING FOR US TO SEE BEYOND OUR
OWN TIME. THEY ARE KNEELING WITH HANDS CLASPED
THAT WE MIGHT ACT WITH RESTRAINT, THAT WE MIGHT
LEAVE ROOM FOR THE LIFE THAT IS DESTINED TO COME.**

~ Terry Tempest Williams ~

<https://www.mindfulnessassociation.net/words-of-wonder/the-eyes-of-the-future-terry-tempest-williams/>



Photo Courtesy RUWAI M&E Team

Fidelia is a rural farmer in Nigeria. The Rural Watch Africa Initiative visited her home garden and took many photos showing the success of this program.

Rural Watch Africa Initiative Teaches Woman Grow Food

Dear Reader,

Rural Watch Africa Initiative is a non-profit organization with the aim of strengthening the resilience of poor and marginalized rural communities whose lives and livelihood are been threatened due to degradation of their natural resources, climate change, and social exclusion.

We find it pleasing to reach you with some updates about our most important work with local communities. We believe that sustainable food production can help capture carbon as a means to enhance fertility, soil health, nutrition, water availability, food systems, and eradicate poverty.

As the world marked the #WorldPhotographyDay2021, we reflected on the impacts we are creating in the communities where we work.

Fidelia (pictured above) is a rural farmer. Before the RUWAI intervention through the Seed To Wealth Project, where we are helping poor rural Nigerian women and

smallholder farmers to address poverty and land degradation through sustainable land management and alternative income skills, she had no idea why her land could not produce as expected. Luckily she received our support through training and supply of economic tree seedlings, crops, and skills to sustain our effort.

As part of our Monitoring and Evaluation policy, we visited her home garden recently and this photo and many others, which we didn't send, were what we captured.

She displayed some crops she's preserving for the next farming season. So our support taught her why and how to harvest and store some for subsequent years. That's the only way you can be sure it is organic.

In case people reading may wish to learn more or support the work of the Rural Watch Africa Initiative (RUWAI), here is some information.

Website: www.ruralwatchafrica.org

Email: info@ruralwatchafrica.org; ruwai.

africa@gmail.com

Phone: +2347018713011

Donation options: Paypal:https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=DS7LWBE6BZ3T2, through our website or GlobalGiving

Regards,

Uche Isieke, Rural Watch Africa Initiative (RUWAI), Nigeria

From www.ruralwatchafrica.org: Rural Watch Africa Initiative was founded in 2016, an outcome of the "Digitize My Community Initiative" embarked on by Uche Isieke, to be a voice for the unheard poor and the marginalized communities effected by climate change impact and social exclusion, and to advocate for the basic infrastructures and enhanced rural livelihoods.





Photos: Fredrick Ochieng

Geoffrey Ouma Ngure (in yellow vest) was donating trees in schools in Kenya; this was school #105 out of 164 schools.

Father Teaches Son Importance of Trees; Son Starts Tree Planting Project

My name is Geoffrey Ouma Ngure born in 1996 in Mabinju Village, Siaya County, Kenya. The villagers' main economic stay is fishing and subsistence farmers. Raised in abject poverty, my parents were subsistence farmers forcing us to live from hand to mouth as they couldn't save for the better future. Drought in the area made the situation worse as crops withered due to lack of rains.

One day as I sat outside our house, the sun boiling my brain like a porridge due to lack of a tree to provide shade over my head, I heard my dad lamenting how he wished to have planted a tree, at least now there would have been shade to rest during scorching sun.

Being very inquisitive at the age of seven,

I asked my father the importance of trees to human beings, which he boldly explained that trees provide shades and rain. And that's how the idea was born of planting trees. I asked my mom to lend me Ksh.5 to buy a tree sapling (Eucalyptus). I planted my first tree at the age of seven and since then got involved in environmental conservancy.

In the year 2017, I rallied youths in the area to start tree nurseries and conducted education in the Communities on the importance of trees. I have been facing surmountable challenges in my quest to plant trees to increase forest cover from 0.002% to 10% to attract steady rainfall for farmers to grow crops for food security.

The major problem was poverty and the youths in the group lacked the spirit of vol-

unteerism; they believed after participating in planting trees they will get paid at the end of the activities. Seeing this not forthcoming since we were giving free tree saplings and no income generated, many of the youths opted out of the group. We were left with a few who were ready to achieve the dream.

To avert this, the group started raising funds through the sales of fruits saplings, to sustain its operations. Lack of funds to purchase working materials like potting soil and bags, wheelbarrows, spades, and protective gears also hurt our initiative and we were forced to improvise.

The culture in my community of cutting down trees for fuel and not planting another was also frustrating efforts to plant and

Tree Planting *continued on next page*

Tree Planting *continued from previous page*



care for the trees until maturity. The drought was a major problem, for trees require adequate water to grow. Since the inception of the project, the community mindset has changed for the better and the area has started receiving adequate rain enabling farmers to grow crops all seasons.

Contact Geoffrey:

Email: ogeoffrey950@gmail.com,

Phone: +254746574112

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/people/Mabinju-power-house-youth-group/100057104532706/>

Blog: <https://blog.climateaction-challenge.net/20-84-mabinju-power-house-youth/>

Hashtags: #treeislife, #treeforke-niaplantingforfuture

(top left) People potting seedlings for the tree nursery. They're scooping up dirt to put in small bags. You can see hundreds (or maybe even thousands) of seedlings in the background.

(top right) Students are watching trees being ready for delivery in Kenya. This was the 98th school where Tree for Kenia (sic) Planting for Future handed out trees for the kids to plant.

(bottom right) The tree nursery planted by Tree for Kenia (sic) Planting for Future. There is no website yet, only a facebook page: Mabinju power house youth group (link above).



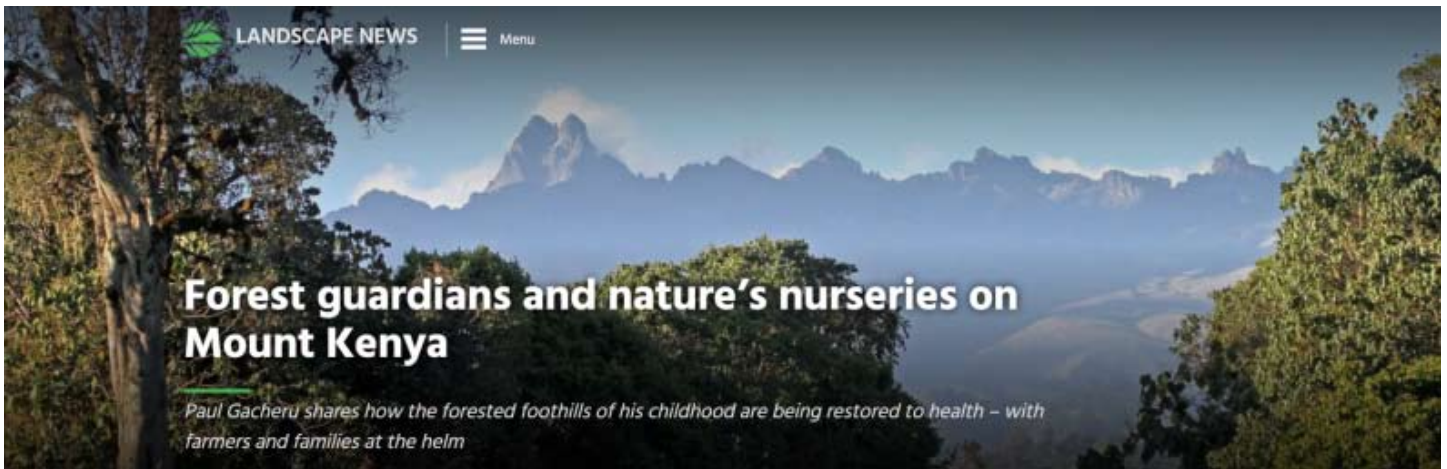


Photo: Peter Usher, Nature Kenya

A view of forests leading up to Mt. Kenya.

Submitted by Bill Boteler, Maryland USA

Paul Gacheru shares how the forested foothills of his childhood are being restored to health – with farmers and families at the helm.

This article is part of a narrative series from global conservationists working as part of Trillion Trees.

By Paul Gacheru
Global Landscapes Forum: July 19, 2021

I have a very personal connection with the forests that flank Mount Kenya and their exceptional wildlife: I grew up in the village of Kangema, driving my father's cattle between the fields and the Aberdare Forest to graze. Father would warn us of the dangers of being trampled by elephants – 3,000 of them roam the bush there, along with remnant populations of black rhino and a vibrant array of bird species, including the endangered Sharpe's longclaw and threatened Chapin's flycatcher.

In the 1990s, the government started securing much of the forest through fencing. The idea was to reduce tensions between people and nature, but the evidence suggests it failed. In the old times, villagers had to visit their chief to ask permission to fell timber – they understood the value of a tree. But the new physical barriers meant communities became detached from any sense of ownership or stewardship of their ancestral lands. Mount Kenya forest has lost 20 percent of its closed-canopy forest in the last 20 years, and illegal logging and encroachment by agriculture have been major factors.

Reversing this degradation is not just criti-

cal for wildlife: the forests of Mount Kenya are a vital water tower, supplying more than 8 million people with drinking water in Nairobi and beyond, irrigating 2 million hectares (almost 5 million acres) of crops, and driving 95 percent of Kenya's hydroelectric power.

As a boy, I liked to watch the fish jumping in the river where we drew our water and loved being part of my school's wildlife club. It led me to a degree in wildlife ecology, and today I help guide Nature Kenya's efforts to return these same landscapes to health – with local people at the heart of things.

Since 2010 we have been developing a community forestry model that empowers community associations to set up their own tree nurseries, sowing and growing more than 3 million Indigenous tree saplings over the last two years alone.

Everything is founded in science: using satellite imagery, we have identified 6,200 hectares (15,320 acres) of degraded areas of Mount Kenya forest that urgently need restoring; with the Kenya Forest Service's advice we know the best species to plant; and with help from Trillion Trees partner BirdLife International, we have carried out an ecosystem services assessment that shows the economic value of enriching each site, using metrics like water quality and mitigation of soil erosion.

We've supported 32 tree nurseries so far – and crucially, they are largely self-governing. We provide tools, training and the seeds, plus a support to cover three years of weeding, maintenance, and monitoring for each tree planted. That element is critical to ensure our rehabilitation of the habitat sticks. We're achieving more than 80 percent survival rates for our saplings so far, and by returning to study the same forest transects, we can prove beyond doubt that the diversity of native flora and fauna is growing year on year.

In the same stroke, we are significantly boosting the livelihoods of thousands of im-

poverished people: they earn money not just for tending trees for restoration but also sell their saplings commercially too – and some are adding wood-lots to their own farmland to reduce timber extraction from the forest.

I spoke to one man who has made USD 1,500 for his toils in a single year: enough to finish building his house and put his children through school.

Growing up, I observed how forest-edge communities like ours would rally to support each other, such as sharing water – and the village women were often at the fore of these efforts.

Those same cooperative principles now inform our restoration approach: typically around two-thirds of our forest association members are female, and one nursery even

Forest Guardians *continued on next page*



Paul Gacheru, whose early days as a herder have now led him to become a conservationist restoring deforested landscapes in Kenya.

Forest Guardians *continued from previous page*



Photos: Courtesy Nature Kenya

A tree nursery set up by Nature Kenya, governed by a local community and aided with support from conservation organization partners.

sets aside separate plots of ground for women, men, young people and the disabled, so that all sectors of society feel the benefit. Meanwhile we've refined our template to offer other sustainable sources of income, whether that's beekeeping, fish-rearing, or eco-tourism.

Those villagers now have a stake in the future of the forest again, and they've become the first responders when loggers pose threats or fires take hold. It's great to go back to the communities where I grew up and hear that the river level has risen by 30 centimeters (almost 12 inches), or that a spring is flowing again where it recently ran dry. And my childhood self is especially inspired by the schools' project that's grown from our work, with students nurturing seedlings in milk and juice cartons – Tetra Pak tree nurseries! It sends the roots of restoration deeper. We are fostering the forest guardians of the future.

I feel Nature Kenya has established a tried and tested model that can roll out nationwide – we just need the funds to keep on scaling. The task ahead is huge, but I'm optimistic – especially because the impact of deforestation is already being felt in the pockets of industry. Siltation from deforested land has forced water companies to spend 60 percent more on treatment since 2010, and hydro-power plants are losing 10 to 15 percent capacity. So I spend a lot of my

time engaging with the businesses that benefit from the forest ecosystem downstream, persuading them to invest in restoration and entrench sustainability in their systems for decades to come. It is a win-win for people and nature – a win-win for Kenya.

This project is part of the BirdLife Forest Landscape Sustainability Accelerator, partially funded by Trillion Trees. The Forest

Landscape Sustainability Accelerator helps local Partners to attract long-lasting investments and explore forest-friendly business opportunities that will safeguard the whole landscape for decades to come.

Source: <https://news.globallandscapes-forum.org/53638/forest-guardians-and-natures-nurseries-on-mount-kenya/>



Local community members plant trees in the area.



Image: Extemporalist via Wikimedia Commons

Across the world, forests are rainmakers: those who live in them know best how to care for them.

Forest People Offer the Best Hope of Saving Them

By Tim Radford
Climate News Network: August 23, 2021

Trees are vital for solving the climate crisis. But there's nothing simple about the forested world, as forest people know.

LONDON, UK – Here's something you perhaps didn't know (but you can be sure forest people did). Rainforests make their own rain. Just how much rain they make is a revelation. The process starts with evaporated ocean, which condenses over coastal forest: thereafter, the trees get to work.

The initial deposit of rain will be transpired through the foliage, back into the air to be caught in a pattern of winds that might even be helped by the trees themselves: the same water will fall again across the forest five or six times before journey's end.

The scale of this natural corporate utility service is colossal: one pilot followed the Amazon's own flying river from Belém near the Atlantic coast across to the Andes, where

the airstream and clouds of vapor turned south to reach the coast again at São Paulo, at the same time transporting 3,200 cubic meters (10,500 cubic feet) of water a second.

There's no case for doubt. One of the plane's passengers collected air samples along the way: once inland, the water vapor had the molecular signature associated with vegetation rather than freshly evaporated seawater.

And somehow the forest actually adds to the delivery: at one place near the ocean, the fall is 215 centimeters (85 inches) a year; at the heart of Amazonas it is somehow 245 centimeters (96 inches) a year.

Trees as Rainmakers

The phenomenon that is the flying river is not unique to the Amazon. Others cross North America, the Congo rainforest, the Sahel, and Ethiopia. The world's most mighty high-altitude aquifer runs for 6,000 kilometers (3,728 miles) west-to-east across the Eurasian landmass, taking six months, at the end of which four-fifths of the rain in northern China has been generated by the great boreal forest that begins in Norway, Sweden, and Finland.

Trees make the rain. Arid places may be

treeless not because they are arid; they could be arid because someone cleared the foliage.

A Trillion Trees: How We Can Reforest Our World, by Fred Pearce, (Granta, £20) is a reporter's book. Pearce has been reporting the science and impacts of the environment for the *New Scientist* and other journals for four decades or more.

He doesn't just deliver the big picture: he illuminates the detail. He goes to forests and the desolate landscapes where forests had once flourished. He meets scientists, activists, campaigners, government officials, loggers, farmers, businessmen, politicians, and where possible the indigenous peoples of the forest.

He isn't just there for the rainforest: he knows the American landscape, the great forests of the north, the plantations of Israel, the woodlands of Europe, and the mangroves of the African shore, and he introduces the people to whom these places matter.

This is the book's strength, and occasionally its weakness: just as the dense understory slows the trek through the great forest, so the vigorous tangle of evidence

Forest People *continued on next page*



Forest People *continued from previous page*

and counter-argument sometimes leaves the reader a little confused.

That seeming weakness is best considered part of the book's big message: forests and trees may be simply marvelous, but they are never simple. There is good evidence that trees cool the planet, and manage their own airflow, but not so good that it is not disputed.

There is convincing evidence that trees emit volatile organic compounds that help the rain-making process but also extend the life of that potent atmospheric greenhouse gas, methane: convincing enough to permit at least one scientist to argue, seriously, that forests might not cool the world after all, even as they absorb that other greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide.

And along the way Pearce and his articulate arboreal experts deliver other challenges to the orthodoxies of popular ecology. Big money and unthinking greed help in the destruction of forests everywhere, but the richer the nation, the more likely it is to be extending its own canopy. Between 1990 and 2015, high-income countries on average increased forest cover by 1.3%. Low to middle-income countries however lost 0.3%, while the poorest of all bade farewell to 0.7%.

It would be nice to think that "levelling-

up" would play its role in slowing climate change. But, of course, the rich nations are exporting deforestation in the service of trade. The poor world's forests are being felled and land cleared for our beef and cattle fodder, our coffee, our chocolate.

Second Thoughts

In the course of this absorbing book, Pearce undertakes some enthusiastic root-and-branch re-examination of other arboreal orthodoxies. North America was not once covered by "endless pristine forest." For millennia, forests have been managed by indigenous peoples; the same is true for African and South American jungles.

Plantation – commercial or otherwise – may not be a good way to restore global canopy. Systematic, government-endorsed "greening projects" may not be the best solution to either carbon absorption or biodiversity restoration. It might be better to leave nature to do what nature does best: the results of "wilding" what was once degraded or deserted land can be remarkable.

Agroforestry – partnering of trees and crops – on the other hand, also has a lot going for it. Unexpectedly, the seeming connection between land degradation and overpopulation isn't really there. In the words

of one research paper, "Population density is positively correlated with the volume of planted woody biomass."

And on the evidence so far, centralized policy and government initiatives might be less effective than indigenous or local guardianship. Where communities do have genuine control of their own woodlands, community management of the world's forests "works staggeringly well."

There is a case for people power after all. Pearce writes: "If, as I believe, natural regrowth has to be the basis for the renaissance of the world's trees, then the custodians of that process must be the people who live in, among, and from them ... They know them best and need them most."

A Trillion Trees: How We Can Reforest Our World, by Fred Pearce: Granta, £20, ISBN: 9781783786916

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/forest-people-offer-the-best-hope-of-saving-them/>

To Save the Rainforest, Think Like the Rainforest

Submitted by David Hunter Bishop, Nomad

The wisdom of how the forest regenerates its resources may save the forest, uplift smallholder farmers, and help fix the climate crisis.

By Trevor Decker Cohen
July 16, 2021

This article is adapted from *Bright Green Future*, a book of stories from a global renaissance to heal the planet by empowering communities. We published the first part of this story in our last issue.

As Regi works to uplift farmers in the U.S., Kofi Boa has started a revolution among smallholder farmers in Ghana. Though only two percent of Americans work in agriculture, farming is still the most common livelihood on Earth. Globally, an estimated two billion people manage plots of only a few acres. Kofi seeks to give these farmers the skills to heal the soil, preserve the forest, and grow their income.

His journey into agriculture began with a fire. One evening, at the age of 12, Kofi waited for his mother to return home. She was out tending to her cacao farm, the family's only source of income.

"Deep in the night, I heard my mother coming home, crying in the darkness of the village." A nearby farmer had set fire to his field, a common technique to prepare it for planting. Unfortunately, the blaze whirled out of control as it swept across the brush and up the cacao trees.

This accident was the result of a practice known as "slash and burn," or swidden agriculture, which for millennia has fertilized fields around the world. A patch of forest is cut, and the vegetation is allowed to dry. It's then burned, and the ash serves as fertilizer for future crops. If the forest has enough time to recover, then this practice can be done sustainably. But with many more people alive today than in the past, swidden agriculture can cause rapid deforestation. Sometimes, it burns down the neighbor's farm. In 1983, one of those fires wiped out 90 percent of Ghana's cacao farms.

After that night as a child, and in the hard years that followed, Kofi made a pledge. He turned to his mother and said, "I'm going to spend the rest of my life fighting the use of fire on the farmland." He went searching for existing techniques that didn't re-

quire farmers to burn the forest. "I spoke to elders in the village and learned that, rather than use fire, they used to cut vegetation, leave it on the ground for a year, and then come back to plant crops." This technique, known as *proka* in the local Akan language, means "to let rot, in order to bring back." Kofi adapted it to work in a quicker cycle, so that he didn't have to wait an entire year for everything to fully decompose. He planted immediately among the cut vegetation, using it as mulch.

Kofi went on to pursue an education that took him from the top agricultural school in Ghana to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln [in the U.S.]. He learned how no-till farming works on some of the biggest and smallest farms in the world, spanning the extremes of high-tech and low-tech operations. He decided to put it all into practice back home in Ghana.

Leading a government initiative, he and his team expanded conservation agriculture by more than 100 times. Participating farmers nearly doubled their family income, while cutting the time they spent working in the field by half. But despite its success, the government decided to prioritize other initiatives, and funding for the project dried up. The momentum came to an abrupt halt.

Kofi eventually ended up back in the village where he grew up. There, he started his own program, the Centre for No-till Agriculture. Today, he teaches regenerative agriculture in a way that matches the tools available to smallholder farmers. He shows how the machete can be used to clear the field, chop up vegetation, and make slits in the ground to plant seeds. Kofi's organization focuses on in-person training. "We work on the premise that hearing is believing but seeing is the truth."

Their goal is to create a class of skilled advocates in communities across Ghana. "We're able to build a group of local farmers and

build them into champion farmers. And unlike government workers, unlike NGO staff that can easily be relocated, most of these people are natives to wherever we find them."

Felicia Yeboah, one farmer who learned through Kofi's program, was able to diversify her family's income. She plants maize, beans, pepper, plantain, cocoyam, and cassava. "I can get lots of returns to care for my household," she says. Meanwhile, because no-till doesn't require as much labor, her kids don't have to spend as much time in the field, which allows them to focus on their education. Two of her children graduated from high school. "I am paying for their education through my farm."

The Centre for No-till Agriculture estimated that conservation agriculture increases the disposable income of farmers by an average of 25 percent in the first two years. Kofi hopes to spread this prosperity to the 500 million farmers across the world practicing swidden agriculture. "It is my dream that the whole of Africa will know how to sustain the productivity of a piece of land."

The wisdom of how the forest regenerates its resources may save the forest, while uplifting smallholder farmers around the world. When put at odds, nature, food security, and income all suffer. When brought together, forest cycles enter farm rotations, rather than farms encroaching on forests. It's a relationship of mutual prosperity, where food becomes abundant, local livelihoods improve, and the surrounding nature can begin to recover.

Trevor Decker Cohen is an author with a passion for moving from climate change anxiety to action. His book *Bright Green Future* shares gripping stories from a growing renaissance to empower people and heal the planet.

Source: <https://www.earthisland.org/journal/index.php/articles/entry/to-save-the-rainforest-think-like-the-rainforest>



At The Howard G. Buffett Foundation Centre for No-Till Agriculture, WE ARE GROWING lives through the positive impact of conservation agricultural practices.

Photo <https://centrefornotill.org/>



Photo: Courtesy of A.J. Plumtre/WCS.

Montane Forest in Kabuzi Biéga National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Advocates Raise Alarm Over Proposal to Reopen DRC Forests to Loggers

Submitted by Bill Boteler, Maryland USA

Grassroots Coalition member sent this email; he's been fighting to protect a forest in DRC:

Thank you Iona to share this article, thank you Bill Boteler to publish this. Yes, our country DRC is concerned, and we are working hard to boost our country to be at the frontline of climate change battle, also, to make local communities beneficiaries of the efforts of conservation and climate actions,

Best regards,

Leon Simwerayi, DR Congo (Association de Jeunes Visionnaires Pour Le Développement Du Congo)

By Ashoka Mukpo, *excerpt*
Mongabay: August 13, 2021

• In 2002, the DRC imposed a moratorium on new logging concessions under pressure from environmental campaigners concerned about deforestation and corruption.

• Eve Bazaiba, the current minister of environment, submitted a plan in July that would end the moratorium.

• Advocates say a round of new concessions could lead to massive carbon emissions and the violation of community land rights.

Since 2002, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has had a moratorium on the issuance of new logging concessions in its vast portion of the Congo Basin rainforest. If the country's minister of environment has her way, that may be about to change.

In July, Eve Bazaiba submitted a 10-point action plan for reforming forest governance in the DRC. Tucked away toward the end of the list was a proposal to lift the long-standing moratorium, which would open up millions of hectares of forests to

industrial logging.

"There's potentially 70 million hectares [172 million acres] of forest that could be available to the logging industry, maybe not straight away, but it would certainly send a signal that these forests are up for grabs," Joe Eisen, executive director of Rainforest Foundation UK, said in an interview with Mongabay.

The moratorium was issued by former president Joseph Kabila, who was under pressure by environmental campaigners and foreign powers at the time to slow deforestation and prevent timber profits from fueling the country's long-running civil crisis. After 18 years in power, Kabila was replaced by Félix Tshisekedi, the current president, in early 2019.

In the years since, campaigners have accused the government of repeatedly violating the moratorium, including in 2018 when three cancelled concessions were reallocated to Chinese-owned logging companies.

While a number of former ministers have complained about the moratorium and suggested it should be lifted, so far it has stood in place. But the current proposal represents the greatest threat to the moratorium in years, advocates told Mongabay.

"This time is very serious, because the current minister took this decision at a government council, so this has been approved by the government, and the meeting was held by the president," said Irène Wabiwa Betoko, Congo Basin forest campaign leader with Greenpeace Africa.

The proposal comes on the heels of the U.S.-hosted Leaders Summit on Climate this past April, in which Tshisekedi, who also assumed the chair of the African Union this year, called for increased financing for climate mitigation measures in Africa and pledged to restore forest cover in the DRC to 63.5%.

In 2012, the world's largest tropical peatlands were discovered in the Congo Basin's swamp forests, much of which lie inside the DRC. Thought to sequester as much as 30 billion metric tons of carbon, a new round of logging concessions could threaten the integrity of the peatlands and lead to huge carbon emissions. According to a 2018 report by Global Witness, France's Agence Française de Développement estimates that if the moratorium is lifted and the area currently covered by logging concessions triples in size, an extra 35 million tons of carbon would be emitted per year.

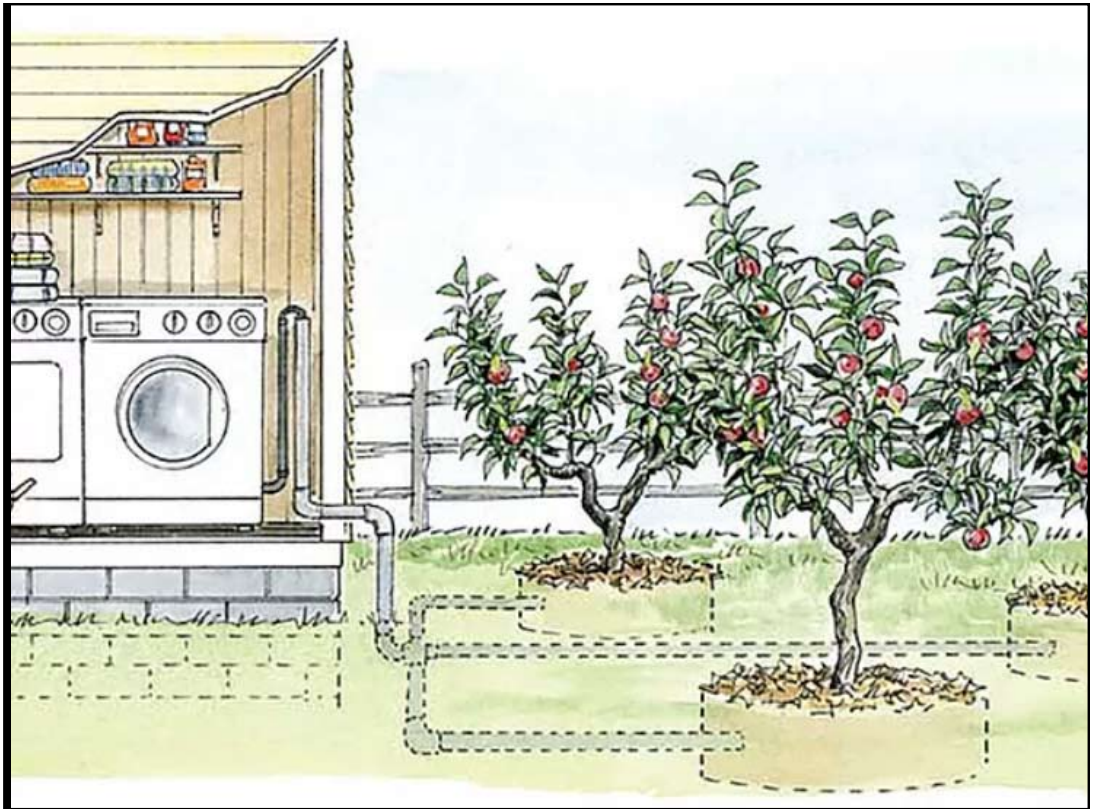
Environmental campaigners say Tshisekedi's reforestation proposal is incongruous with any movement toward the issuance of new logging concessions.

"If the moratorium is lifted, that means more forests will be sold off and destroyed, and more communities will be impacted and won't have access to the forests that are key to their survival," Betoko said. "A lot of biodiversity will be impacted and more greenhouse gases will be released into the atmosphere." . . .

Source: <https://news.mongabay.com/2021/08/advocates-raise-alarm-over-proposal-to-reopen-drc-forests-to-loggers/>

**Teen's Grey
Water
Project
Wins
Children's
Climate
Prize**

Photos: <https://www.thegreywaterproject.org/>
(right) This is one way grey-water recycling/reuse works. (below) Shreya Ramachandran amidst her students and supporters.



Submitted by Linda L., Idaho USA

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization was founded by Shreya Ramachandran, a freshman at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California who is passionate about grey water reuse and water conservation. She won the Children's Climate prize in 2019.

Shreya Ramachandran has made it her mission to tackle global water scarcity after witnessing and experiencing droughts and water scarcity firsthand in California and India. She conducted several years of grey water research to explore methods to safely reuse it. However, when she started her outreach, she realized that most people had either never heard of grey water or had misconceptions about its use. In order to educate and provide resources to people of all ages, she founded The Grey Water Project in 2016.

Whether you install a grey water system, advocate for water policy change, fix a leak, or just take a shorter shower, every drop counts. Through actions big and small, The Grey Water Project empowers people and organizations to be water heroes.

The Grey Water Project is a nonprofit aimed at promoting the safe reuse of grey water and water conservation, through outreach, advocacy, policy changes, and grey water curricula.

The Grey Water Project is also working towards the achievement of SDG6: ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for

all. Specifically, SDG 6.3, 6.4, and 6.a on issues surrounding substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse of water globally, reducing the number of people suffering from water scarcity, and expanding international work for water efficiency, wastewater treatment and reuse technologies.

Water Conservation Challenge

Water conservation starts with us, and simple changes can make a huge impact in terms of water savings. The Grey Water Project's Water Conservation challenge is open to people of all ages from across the world.

Actions are divided into two categories:

- One-time actions, and
- Habit forming ones.

To join the challenge, enter your name, email, and age, and select the actions you would like to take by clicking the checkbox at the bottom of each action tile at <https://www.thegreywaterproject.org/waterchallenge>.

Don't forget to report back with your progress on the Report Back form

in the upcoming weeks!

Register for the Water Challenge

Watch Shreya's video at <https://nowthisnews.com/videos/earth/teen-finds-new-low-tech-way-to-recycle-water>.

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





Collage: NOAA

A collage of typical climate and weather-related events: floods, heatwaves, drought, hurricanes, wildfires, and loss of glacial ice.

July Was Earth's Hottest Month on Record

U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: August 13, 2021

July 2021 has earned the unenviable distinction as the world's hottest month ever recorded, according to new global data released today by NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information.

"In this case, first place is the worst place to be," said NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D. "July is typically the world's warmest month of the year, but July 2021 outdid itself as the hottest July and month ever recorded. This new record adds to the disturbing and disruptive path that climate change has set for the globe."

July 2021 by the Numbers

- **Around the globe:** the combined land and ocean-surface temperature was 1.67 degrees F (0.93 of a degree C) above the 20th-century average of 60.4 degrees F (15.8 degrees C), making it the hottest July since records began 142 years ago. It was 0.02 of a degree F (0.01 of a degree C) higher than the previous record set in July 2016, which was then tied in 2019 and 2020.

- **The Northern Hemisphere:** the land-surface only temperature was the highest ever recorded for July, at an unprecedented 2.77 degrees F (1.54 degrees C) above average,

surpassing the previous record set in 2012.

- **Regional records:** Asia had its hottest July on record, besting the previous record set in 2010; Europe had its second-hottest July on record – tying with July 2010 and trailing behind July 2018; and North America, South America, Africa, and Oceania all had a top-10 warmest July.

Extreme Heat and Global Climate Change

With last month's data, it remains very likely that 2021 will rank among the world's 10-warmest years on record, according to NCEI's (National Centers for Environmental Information's) Global Annual Temperature Rankings Outlook.

Extreme heat detailed in NOAA's monthly NCEI reports is also a reflection of the long-term changes outlined in a major report released this week by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/).

"Scientists from across the globe delivered the most up-to-date assessment of the ways in which the climate is changing," Spinrad said in a statement. "It is a sobering IPCC report that finds that human influence is, unequivocally, causing climate change, and it confirms the impacts are widespread and rapidly intensifying."

Other Notable Highlights from NOAA's July Global Climate Report

- **Sea ice coverage varied by hemisphere:** The Arctic sea ice coverage (extent) for July 2021 was the fourth-smallest for July in the 43-year record, according to analysis by the National Snow and Ice Data Center offsite link. Only July 2012, 2019 and 2020 had a smaller sea ice extent. Antarctic sea ice extent was above average in July – the largest July sea ice extent since 2015 and the eighth highest on record.

- **The tropics were busier than average:** In the Atlantic basin, the season's earliest fifth-named storm, Elsa, formed on July 1. The Eastern North and Western Pacific basins each logged three named storms. Overall, global tropical cyclone activity this year so far (through July) has been above-normal for the number of named storms.

- **Access NOAA's July global climate report and images:** Visit the NCEI website at <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/global-climate-202107>.

Source: <https://www.noaa.gov/news/its-official-july-2021-was-earths-hottest-month-on-record>

IPCC Report: A Mental Health Minefield

By Mitchell Beer, @TheEnergyMix
Below 2C: August 22, 2021

“There is a tragedy unfolding in the face of overwhelming evidence of its dangers,” writes Kevin Taft in Oil’s Deep State. Given the depth of science on global warming and climate change and given the recent IPCC Report code red warnings, “one would expect... to have active leadership... aimed at meeting aggressive deadlines for an orderly phase-out of fossil fuels.” But that is not the case. Instead, the report is a mental health minefield leading to deeply troubling anxiety for millions around the globe.”

This story includes details about the impacts of climate change that may be difficult for some readers. If you are feeling overwhelmed by this crisis situation there is a list of resources on how to cope with fears and feelings about the scope and pace of the climate crisis at <https://www.theenergymix.com/a-crisis-is-a-scary-time-you-are-not-alone/>.

Before [the recent] science assessment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change even arrived, climate publications and social media were brimming with advice on how to take in a batch of truly scary news, take some time to rage and grieve – then get back to the work of driving faster, deeper carbon cuts.

“Every fraction of a degree averted is suffering (human and non-human) averted,” Climate Interactive Co-Director Elizabeth Sawin tweeted Friday. “Just because you can’t stop all suffering is not a reason to not prevent what suffering you can. There’s no giving up, my friends.”

1. Yes, it’s scary.

2. No, you’re not overreacting.

3. No, the fight is not over.

4. No, you’re not alone,” said @RealHotTake co-creator Mary Annais Heglar.

“I know we’re all dreading the next IPCC report, but I’d like us all to remember that nothing, and I mean NOTHING, changed the conversation and galvanized climate action like the 2018 IPCC report,” Heglar added. “People will get sad and then they will get mad. Be ready.”

In Sunday’s edition of *Heglar’s Hot Take* newsletter, youth climate podcaster Georgia Wright urged readers to take care of themselves in the face of bad news.

“I’m not the first to point out that this means there’s going to be an onslaught of downright dystopian headlines in the news this week,” she wrote. “They will be designed for maximum terror. And for those of us, like me, who are prone to incapacitating climate grief and anxiety, browsing the Internet is going to be a mental health minefield.”



Photo: Matthew Ball, Unsplash

“There are tipping points in the human heart and the collective consciousness that could be just as sudden and big as any in the Earth system. And there’s nothing worse than giving up just shy of a tipping point, and no way to know how close you might be,” said Climate Interactive Co-Director Elizabeth Sawin.

To cope, she suggested an adaptation on her mom’s advice in response to scary messaging she’d encountered as a teen, reminding climate readers that they’re already worrying about (and working on) the issues that others may be hearing from the IPCC for the first time.

“As you’re exposed to headlines that are crafted to grab the attention of the disengaged, don’t let fear eat you alive,” she said. “You’re already here, aren’t you? Instead of panicking, stay your course. Call your senators. Take a walk. Go to a protest. Do what you need to do to sustain your involvement in this movement. If not for yourself, do it for the climate. We can’t afford burnout – we’re in this bitch for the long haul.”

Sawin’s tweet was the beginning of a thread that dug into what that long haul might look like.

“There are tipping points in the human heart and the collective consciousness that could be just as sudden and big as any in the Earth system. Just because the IPCC isn’t charged with documenting them does not mean they don’t exist, latent, stirring to life,” she wrote. “And there’s nothing worse than giving up just shy of a tipping point, and no way to know how close you might be.”

The IPCC’s findings “will be most discouraging if you assume that the ‘soft stuff’ – people’s willingness to connect, to give, to serve, to be brave, to stand up – will be constant at today’s levels, or at best trend

slowly and gradually,” she added. But “I don’t believe that’s a good assumption on a planet that is only getting started burning and flooding. We don’t know (we can worry) what that level of threat will awaken, but it will be novel, and it can be nudged even if it can’t be controlled, and it could be nudged towards something beautiful and powerful and useful and needed.”

In an email exchange Sunday, Sawin had advice for people trying to absorb the latest news.

“I plan on digesting the report with others,” she told *The Energy Mix*. “What did we just learn? What has changed from our prior understanding? That’s the factual part.” But it’s important not to skip the feelings those facts evoke.

Don’t Bypass the Feelings

“There’s information there,” she said. “Fear tells us to pay attention, to prioritize the climate crisis. Anger tells us there’s something precious that needs protecting. Grief is part of adjusting to the losses we can’t prevent, and we can honor the grief by preventing even more losses. Don’t bypass feeling those feelings. It’s tempting, but to find the action we each are called to, those feelings have information for us.”

And then, “finally, there’s turning to action,” Sawin continued. “There will be as many actions as there are people to act, but

Mental Health *continued on next page*

Why the Race for the Earth Needs Sport's Help

By Ian Curtis

Climate News Network: August 20, 2021

In the green race for all life on the planet, the Earth needs sport's help. It has plenty to give, not least sheer spirit.

ATHENS, Greece – Greece, home of the Olympic flame, is ablaze. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), chose to release its latest, chilling report just hours after the Olympic flame was quenched at the Tokyo Games. Where to turn to escape Code Red? The Earth needs sport's help.

Just now it feels as though Nike, ancient Greece's goddess of victory, had ordered the Fates to announce that humanity is in injury time. A lead IPCC report reviewer, Durwood Zaelke, had a stark message: "Climate change is like a marathon," he declared. "We need to stay in the race."

If that seemed like a coincidence, another was close on its heels. The former Olympic marathon runner Mara Yamauchi is the daughter of the late Norman Myers, the Oxford academic who in 2001 received the Tokyo-based Blue Planet Prize for leadership in warning about new environmental problems.

Mara Yamauchi has written the foreword to Rings of Fire, a report from the British Association for Sustainability in Sport about the impact of climate change. She writes: "My own event [long-distance track and road running]... is especially vulnerable to what climate change might bring. I sincerely hope that future generations of athletes will be able to compete safely in an Olympic marathon. But more and more, heat acclimatization will become essential ..."

Mental Health *continued from previous page*

if you go through those first two parts, especially in the company of others, you'll be well set up to find the way of acting that's right for you. Where do you have influence? What are you good at? Who can you collaborate with? Give yourself some time to move through those steps and ask those questions."

In her own Twitter thread, Gimlet Media podcaster and former *New York Times* climate specialist Kendra Pierre-Louis looked at what that action might look like. In contrast to the other collective problem humanity faces that needs a collective solution – the Covid-19 pandemic – she said the prescription this time is not for most of us to stay home.

"We need you – yes, you – who care about climate, to DO things. And no, this is not where I tell you to shop differently," Pierre-



Photo: Ian Curtis

With the energy and vigor of sport and its followers to back it, perhaps the world can cross the finishing line to reach zero carbon.

Not surprisingly, she focused on the increasing threats to sport. But what if she'd gone another mile and echoed Pheidippides, renowned as the first marathon runner? Ordered to run from the battlefield to distant Athens with news of a Greek victory against the odds, Pheidippides burst into the Acropolis proclaiming: "Nike! Nike! Neniekiam!" ("Victory! Victory! Rejoice, we conquer!").

In 2011 there was an equally important message for the Ninth World Conference on Sport and the Environment in Doha. "Sport has the power to enlist global public support," said Achim Steiner, who now heads the UN Development Programme.

I used to recall his words as we stood together, two fellow football-watching fathers,

on an Oxford touchline during our sons' early sporting forays. My son has just turned 18. It's his generation who are now into injury time. How can he and his football-crazy mates be inspired to score green?

They'll have another big chance very soon to help the world to unlock the power of sport and to inspire one of the greatest comebacks of all time. In November 2022 (later in the year than usual, because of the heat), Doha will unleash the World Cup. What might an updated Achim Steiner speech find to say there?

Football matters hugely, as one of its best-known figures, Bill Shankly, is said once to have memorably insisted: "Some people

Sports *continued on next page*

Louis wrote. "We need you to go to planning board meetings and push against development in places we know will burn/flood etc./ and push FOR development in safer places. We need you to push for mass transit. We need you to run for office... and to run the people halting action out of office."

"We need you to dream," Pierre-Louis added. "We also need you to get weird: we know we have the technology to keep emissions below 2°C. The tech is there. What we need is the will, the desire, and the effort. This thing we are trying? Nobody's really ever tried it before." So "we can learn from past social movements, but there's TONS of room for creativity and oddity."

Below2C | Primary Source: Mitchell Beer | @TheEnergyMix

We have a global Climate Emergency! Climate change is the most critical issue of our times – the greatest threat ever faced by humanity. The goal of the Paris Agreement is to keep the global temperature rise well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Below2°C is premised on the Paris Agreement. Because if we don't solve climate change, nothing else matters.

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Source: <https://below2c.org/2021/08/the-latest-ipcc-report-is-a-mental-health-minefield/>

'Resounding' Climate Win as Judge Blocks Alaska Drilling Project Defended by Biden

By Jake Johnson

Deep Green Resistance News Service: August 22, 2021
This article originally appeared in Common Dreams.

"We must keep Arctic oil in the ground if we want a livable planet for future generations."

A federal judge on Wednesday tossed out construction permits for a sprawling, multibillion-dollar Alaska oil drilling project that the Trump administration approved and the Biden Interior Department defended in court earlier this year, infuriating Indigenous groups, climate advocates, and scientists.

In a 110-page decision, Judge Sharon Gleason of the U.S. District Court for Alaska ruled that the Trump administration failed to adequately consider the climate impacts of the Willow project, which – if completed – would produce up to 160,000 barrels of oil a day over a 30-year period.

Specifically, Gleason deemed "arbitrary and capricious" the Bureau of Land Management's failure to include potential greenhouse gas emissions from foreign oil consumption in its analysis of the project, which was planned by ConocoPhillips. Gleason also faulted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for not detailing how polar bears would be protected from the massive

fossil fuel initiative, which would include the construction of several new oil drilling sites and hundreds of miles of pipeline.

A spokesperson for ConocoPhillips said the company intends to weigh its options in the wake of the judge's decision, which environmentalists hailed as a "resounding win" for the climate.

"We were very surprised to see the Biden administration, which has promised historic progress on climate change, defending this plan in court – but today's decision gives the administration the opportunity to reconsider the project in light of its commitment to address the climate emergency," Earthjustice attorney Jeremy Lieb said in a statement. "We are hopeful that the administration won't give the fossil fuel industry another chance to carve up this irreplaceable Arctic landscape with drilling rigs, roads, and pipelines."

"We must keep Arctic oil in the ground if we want a livable planet for future generations," Lieb added.

Kristen Miller, acting executive director at the Alaska Wilderness League, said Gleason's ruling vindicates environmentalists' warnings that, "[T]he Trump bureau downplayed the significance of climate change, underestimated emissions, and ignored the concerns of local Indigenous communities toward increased oil and gas extraction in the region."

"The Biden administration must now

review Willow with a fresh eye," said Miller. "The reality is that a massive oil project like Willow, so close to local communities and projected to emit hundreds of millions of metric tons of CO2 into the atmosphere over the course of its lifetime, moves us away from our nation's long-term climate and environmental justice goals and simply should not move forward."

The Willow decision comes as the Biden administration is facing mounting criticism from lawmakers for shielding major fossil fuel projects from legal challenges. In recent weeks, scientists have made [it] increasingly clear that oil and gas extraction must stop immediately if the worst of the climate crisis is to be averted.

On Monday, dozens of Democratic members of Congress sent a letter imploring President Joe Biden to revoke permits for Line 3, a major pipeline project that would damage the climate as much as 50 new coal-fired power plants.

"President Biden: please quit greenlighting fossil fuel projects!" Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), one of the lawmakers who led the Line 3 letter, tweeted last week. "This must stop."

Source: <https://dgrnewsservice.org/civilization/ecocide/habitat-loss/resounding-climate-win-as-judge-blocks-alaska-drilling-project-defended-by-biden/>

Sports *continued from previous page*

believe football is a matter of life and death ... I can assure you it is much, much more important than that." And Shankly's vision endures today.

But (believe it or not) there's more to sport than football. In her 2010 Christmas message the British monarch, Queen Elizabeth, said: "... It is as important as ever to build communities and create harmony, and one of the most powerful ways of doing this is through sport ... I have seen for myself how important sport is in bringing people together from all backgrounds, from all walks of life, and from all age-groups."

Only the Start

Achim Steiner was right first time, obviously. Sport engages humanity – massively. A cool three billion or so followers for the Olympics and the World Cup each, and a supporting worldwide army of hundreds of thousands of amateur sports clubs are already panting down the necks of the scientists as the growing reality of the climate crisis sinks in.

But read the briefest digest of the IPCC report and you'll see how far we are from the real numbers the Earth needs to enlist: from royals to street kids, celebrities to the unknowns, stadia crowds to the lonely village spectator.

Sport does other big numbers, too. The scoreboard is all-powerful: everybody knows what's going on. (Imagine sport handling the poorly-understood 1.5°C headliner and other arcane emission reduction formulae.)

On the flipside, the clock is the other all-powerful regulator, forever signaling the unforgiving minutes' elapse. In sport, you make it count before the whistle blows – or not at all.

Hearts and Minds

Sport knows how to use numbers to kindle interest. Match reports aren't all. There are endless statistics, player performances, league tables, historical records, and more – all with an unbelievable take-up by very knowledgeable players and fans.

Perhaps most importantly, there is sports psyche. Being an individual with a unique

role and opportunity within a team; performing at key moments, but also knowing when to pass the ball, or similar; coming back from losing; committed to crossing the white line again next week, regardless of what happened today. Training, effort, injury, respect, cheering, pride, legacy, defeat, victory: the list goes on.

Above all, sport is about hearts and minds. Every player, every fan, every official wants to – because they've bought in emotionally. Why does this matter for the environment?

Because, as Arnold Schwarzenegger once said, "Successful movements are built on passion, they aren't built on guilt." Sport's USP really is unique. Unleash it, and we'll all have a sporting chance to be chanting "Nike!"

Ian Curtis played cricket for the University of Oxford (where he won a Blue) and for Surrey. He returned to Oxford to work for the Environmental Change Institute.

Source: <https://climatenetwork.net/why-the-race-for-the-earth-needs-sports-help/>



Photo: Max Wilbert

The road to Thacker Pass. You can see that same “knob” hill from the camp at Thacker Pass. The Thacker Pass Lithium Mine is a proposed lithium clay mining development project in Humboldt County, Nevada. The project is 21 miles (34 kilometers) west-northwest of Oronada, Nevada within the McDermitt Caldera, and overlaps with 2,866 acres (1,160 hectares) of big sagebrush habitat, as well as golden eagle breeding sites. Thacker Pass is the traditional homeland of several related Indigenous nations, including the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation, the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe, Lovelock Paiute Tribe, Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, and the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thacker_Pass_Lithium_Mine)

Electric Cars and Oil Both Accelerate Us Towards Ecological Collapse: From Line 3 to Thacker Pass [Dispatches from Thacker Pass]

By Max Wilbert

Deep Green Resistance News Service: August 21, 2021

This article originally appeared in Protect Thacker Pass.

The great poet and playwright James Baldwin wrote in 1953 that, “People who shut their eyes to reality simply invite their own destruction.”

Perhaps never has this been truer than in this era of converging ecological crises: global warming, biodiversity collapse, desertification and soil erosion, ocean acidification, dead zones, plastic pollution, sprawling habitat destruction, and the total saturation of our environment with radioactive or toxic chemicals.

Ignorance is not bliss; it is dangerous.

That is why I am so concerned that, while searching for solutions to global warming, many people imagine that fossil fuels can be simply replaced with solar and wind energy, that gas tanks can be swapped for lithium batteries, and that this will solve the problem.

For years, I have been arguing that this is wrong, and that we need much more fundamental changes to our economy, our society, and our way of life.

For the last six months, I have been camped at a place in northern Nevada called Thacker Pass, which is threatened by a vast planned open-pit mine that threatens to destroy 28 square miles of biodiverse sagebrush habitat, release millions of tons of greenhouse gas emissions, bulldoze Paiute and Shoshone sacred sites, and leave behind piles of toxic waste for generations to come.

Electric cars and fossil fuel cars don't differ as much as lithium mining companies would like us to believe. In fact, a direct link connects the Water Protectors fighting the new Line 3 oil pipeline in the Ojibwe territory in Minnesota and the land defenders working to protect Peehee Mu'huh, the original name for Thacker Pass in the Paiute language.

The new Line 3 pipeline would carry

almost a million barrels a day of crude oil from the Alberta Tar Sands, the largest and most destructive industrial project on the planet, to refineries in the United States. On the way, it would threaten more than 200 waterbodies and carve a path through what CNN called “some of the most pristine woods and wetlands in North America.” The project would be directly responsible for millions of tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

For the last seven years, indigenous Water Protectors and allies have rallied, petitioned, established resistance camps, held events, protested, and engaged in direct action to stop the Line 3 pipeline from being built. More than 350 people have been arrested over the past few months, but pipeline construction continues to progress for now.

Ironically, the proposed Thacker Pass lithium mine would require importing nearly 700,000 tons of sulfur per year – roughly

Electric Cars *continued on next page*

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Submitted by Rituraj Phukan, India

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Electric Cars *continued from previous page*

equivalent to the mass of two Empire State Buildings – for processing the lithium. This sulfur would likely come (at least in part) from the Alberta tar sands, perhaps even from oil that would flow through Line 3.

Almost all sulfur, which is used in a wide range of chemical processes and fertilizers, comes from oil and gas refineries, where it's a byproduct of producing low-sulfur fuels to meet air-quality regulations around acid rain.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, tar sands contain 11 times as much sulfur as conventional heavy crude oil, and literal “mountains” of sulfur are piling up in Alberta and at other refineries which process tar sands fuel. Sulfur sales revenue is important to the economics of tar sands oil extraction. One report released in the early years of tar sands extraction found that “developing a plan for storing, selling, or disposing of the sulfur [extracted during processing] will help to ensure the profitability of oil sands operations.”

This means that Thacker Pass lithium destined for use in “green” electric cars and solar energy storage batteries would almost certainly be directly linked to the Line 3 pipeline and the harms caused by the Tar Sands, including the destruction of boreal forest, the poisoning of the Athabasca River and other waters, and an epidemic of cancers, rare diseases, and missing and murdered indigenous women facing Alberta First Nations. And, of course, the tar sands

significantly exacerbate global warming. Canadian greenhouse gas emissions have skyrocketed over recent decades as tar sands oil production has increased.

Mining is exceptionally destructive. There is no getting around it. According to the EPA, hard-rock mining is the single largest source of water pollution in the United States. The same statistic probably applies globally, but no one really knows how many rivers have been poisoned, how many mountains blown up, how many meadows and forests bulldozed for the sake of mining.

The Water Protectors at Line 3 fight to protect Ojibwe territory, wild rice beds, and critical wildlife habitat from a tar sands oil pipeline, oil spills, and the greenhouse gas emissions that would harm the entire world. Here at Thacker Pass, we fight the same fight. The indigenous people here, too, face the destruction of their first foods, the poisoning of their water, the desecration of their sacred sites, and the probability of a toxic legacy for future generations. I fight alongside them for this place.

Our fights are not separate. Our planet will not cool, our waters will not begin to flow clean again, our forests will not regrow, and our children will not have security unless we organize, stop the destruction, and build a new way of life. The Line 3 pipeline, and all the other pipelines, must be stopped.

And so must the lithium mines.

The wind howls at Thacker Pass. Rain beats against the walls of my tent. A steady drip falls onto the foot of my sleeping bag. It's June, but we are a mile above sea level. Summer is slow in coming here, and so the storm rages outside, and I cannot sleep. Nightmare visions of open-pit mines, climate breakdown, and ecological collapse haunt me.

James Baldwin gave good advice. In this time, we must not shut our eyes to the reality that industrial production, including the production of oil and the production of electric cars, results in industrial devastation. And with our eyes wide open, we must take action to protect our only home, and the future generations who rely on us.

We are an independent, grassroots collective of people resisting the Thacker Pass lithium mine. We work in solidarity with Atsa koodakuh wyh Nuwu, the People of Red Mountain. Thacker Pass, or Peehee mm'huh, is sacred land to the Northern Paiute and Western Shoshone, and critical wildlife habitat. We invite all people with good hearts to join us at our protection camp on the proposed mine site, and help us stop the greenwashing!

Source: <https://dgrnewsservice.org/civilization/ecocide/habitat-loss/electric-cars-and-oil-both-accelerate-us-towards-ecological-collapse-from-line-3-to-thacker-pass-dispatches-from-thacker-pass/>



Photo: Mike Licht, from Washington DC, via Wikimedia Commons

Making inroads in the U.S.: A cargo bike on Capitol Hill.

Cargo Bikes Offer New Way to Deliver Goods in Town

By Alex Kirby
Climate News Network: August 25, 2021

Moving goods – and even people – around towns and cities is becoming easier and healthier. Enter the cargo bikes.

LONDON, UK – Don't be too surprised if you come across an unwieldy-looking contraption trundling across a European city – and even a few North American ones, too. It's probably just one of the new cargo bikes, a mega-version of a much older technology. And it could be the answer to a range of urban problems.

Cargo bikes come in two versions, manual (or rather pedal) and electric. Either is ideal for tackling that bane of urban living, air pollution. Globally, air pollution kills an estimated seven million people annually; in the UK alone, it is responsible for approximately 40,000 deaths a year. Cargo bikes, where they work (obviously there are places where they don't) cut the pollution drastically.

One study by scientists at the University of Cambridge said they had found an association between living in parts of England with high levels of air pollution and Covid-

19 severity.

A member of the research team, Marco Travaglio, a PhD student at the MRC Toxicology Unit, said, "Our results provide the first evidence that SARS-CoV-2 case fatality is associated with increased nitrogen oxide and nitrogen dioxide levels in England."

The UK-based Rapid Transition Alliance (RTA) argues that humankind must undertake "widespread behavior change to sustainable lifestyles ... to live within planetary ecological boundaries and to limit global warming to below 1.5°C" (the more stringent limit set by the Paris Agreement on climate change).

Faster and Cheaper

The Alliance has published a report, *Large-Tired and Tested: How Europe's Cargo Bike Roll-Out is Delivering*, which argues for the widest possible uptake of the vehicles, for a range of reasons. It's urging readers not to dismiss them as an example of "old, unglamorous technologies," but rather something which represents a move "from a niche transport option to a mainstream delivery choice."

A recent study from Possible, a climate charity and member of the RTA, found that cargo bikes cut emissions by 90% compared with diesel vans, and by a third when

compared with electric vans. The study also concluded that electric cargo bikes are 60% faster than vans at making deliveries in urban centers, achieving higher average speeds, and dropping off 10 parcels an hour compared with just six for a van.

Cargo bikes are essentially a new and larger form of something that used to be a familiar sight on the streets of many countries: the modest delivery bicycles used to take meat and groceries from retailers' shops to customers' homes.

In that guise they are still often seen, at least in the UK, their riders racing to get comestibles, often ready meals, into the hands of waiting diners. The main difference from 50 years ago is simple: the sheer scale and greater capacity of the behemoths now plying the streets.

The RTA is full of praise for the way simple butchers' bikes have morphed into their (relatively) sleek successors: "Cargo bikes offer a win-win solution for cities, residents, safer streets, the environment, and businesses alike. Greening growing industries early is vital to meeting climate targets: With spending habits shifting during the Covid-19 pandemic, providing low-impact and low-emissions solutions for new, expanding markets is essential."

Cargo Bikes *continued on next page*



Image: www.BCG.com

Economic Resilience Is Built on Societal Well-Being

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

By Christian Schwaerzler, Abhishek Gopalka, Qahir Dhanani, Nikolaus Lang, Vincent Chin, and Dwaa Osman, (*Exhibits can be seen at BCG website*)
Boston Consulting Group (BCG): June 8, 2021

This article is the first in a series providing insight on why government leaders need to look beyond economic development and prioritize the overall well-being of citizens. The second article will explore how leaders can approach and tackle inequality, and the third will cover direct actions governments must take for the short- and long-term development of countries and their citizens.

One of the biggest lessons Covid-19 taught governments is that societal well-being makes countries more resilient. Nations that invest across a range of development dimensions – such as education, health, infrastructure, and governance – have been better able to cushion the socioeconomic fallout from the pandemic. Our analysis shows that countries with

improved abilities to convert wealth into well-being as well as those with high overall well-being tended to mitigate drops in economic performance and limit the growth of unemployment rates during the first year of the pandemic. In contrast, countries with lower levels have fallen further behind, particularly in GDP growth and employment. This aligns with our previous research that shows countries better at converting wealth into well-being were able to recover more quickly from the 2008–2009 financial crisis.

Since 2012, BCG has ranked countries according to a proprietary economic development tool called the Sustainable Economic Development Assessment, or SEDA. (See “A Comprehensive Measure of Well-Being.”) A consistent finding from our research is that the more traditional metrics of economic development, which focus on GDP and other macroeconomic indicators, are not sufficient to gauge the true state of development in any society. Rather, countries need to take a more comprehensive and sustainable approach that

incorporates and optimizes societal well-being. Viewed through this lens, SEDA analyses have shown that some lower-income countries are actually better off than high-income countries because they look beyond economic metrics and invest in well-being more broadly. Covid-19 brought in a new dimension – an opportunity to observe how such efforts make countries more resilient in a crisis.

A Comprehensive Measurement of Well-Being

Even as countries continue fighting the pandemic, they need to think long-term and make investments today that will lead to faster and more sustainable progress during the coming recovery. Specifically, we believe that three overarching themes have the potential to generate positive change across multiple well-being dimensions: accelerating actions to slow climate change, investing in digitization, and strengthening social protection systems to ensure inclusive and equitable growth. Each of these themes should be a priority for governments.

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Cargo Bikes *continued from previous page*

The Alliance says the new bikes present businesses with a way to increase urban deliveries, improving their speed and reliability, and have also revolutionized the urban school run, some of them able to hold up to eight children.

“The result,” it says, “is less congested roads, more breathable air, fewer road traffic accidents, a radical drop in carbon emissions, and a flourishing ecosystem of businesses that can go direct to their customers without harming the environment.”

In Germany nearly 100,000 e-cargo bikes are sold every year and in France around 50,000. The UK managed only 2,000 sales for commercial use in 2020, but sales are

expected to grow by 60% this year, with market size set to increase 15-fold within the next five years. European sales are also expected to increase by 50% year on year, reaching an estimated total by 2030 of a million cargo bikes for commercial use and a million more for families to enjoy.

There’s money to be made from megabikes too. Some estimates of the financial benefits to businesses range from 70-90% cost savings compared with reliance on delivery vans. The leading UK-based bike manufacturer, Raleigh, saw sales increase by 75% last year at its main British factory

Happy pedalling!

The Rapid Transition Alliance is coordinated by the New Weather Institute, the STEPS Centre at the Institute of Development Studies, and the School of Global Studies at the University of Sussex, UK. The Climate News Network is partnering with and supported by the Rapid Transition Alliance. If you would like to see more stories of evidence-based hope for rapid transition, please sign up at <https://www.rapidtransition.org/>.

Do you know a story of rapid transition? If so, we'd like to hear from you. Please send us a brief outline on info@climatenetwork.net.

Source: <https://climatenetwork.net/cargo-bikes-offer-new-way-to-deliver-goods-in-town/>

Well-Being *continued from previous page*

The Pandemic's Lasting Impact on Development

Covid-19 has left an unprecedented mark on global development. The United Nations Development Programme's simulations of the pandemic's real-time impact suggest that the Human Development Index fell in 2020, for the first time since measurements began in 1990. Similarly, the UN's Sustainable Development Goals are expected to be significantly disrupted and many of the historic gains over the past several decades could be reversed, at least temporarily.

At a country level, the pandemic revealed the way that all realms of society are interconnected. Evolving from a health crisis to an economic and education crisis, Covid-19 has led to rising social tensions, high unemployment, and failing health systems, even in high-income countries. In low-income and developing countries, inequality has increased across several realms.

- **Income.** The International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicts that income inequality for emerging-market and developing economies will rise to levels not seen since the global financial crisis of 2008–2009, essentially wiping out a decade of development in these regions.

- **Health.** Disparities in access to health services – due to factors such as income, race, gender, and resident status – have widened the gap in life expectancy, accentuating the vulnerability of disadvantaged groups within poorer countries.

- **Education.** According to UN data, close to 1.5 billion students have been affected by Covid-19-related school closures. Inadequate internet penetration has hampered lower-income countries' ability to pivot to distance learning and likely exacerbated education inequality both within and between countries.

The pandemic has reinforced the need for governments to look beyond income growth and GDP and focus on the broader goal of overall well-being.

Well-Being Stabilized Countries During the Crisis

It's too early to measure the full response of any country to Covid-19, but early indications suggest that countries with high SEDA scores – indicating higher levels of societal well-being – will suffer less of an impact. Indeed, well-being served as a form of stabilizer, enabling countries to absorb the shock and potentially positioning them to bounce back more quickly once the crisis ends. In our analysis, we looked at two leading economic indicators: economic growth and employment.

In terms of economic growth, countries which improved their ability to convert wealth into well-being since the global financial crisis, saw a smaller drop in their real GDP growth rate in 2020, while countries that have experienced a deterioration in their ability to convert wealth into well-being saw a correspondingly larger drop. (See Exhibit 1.) This reveals that investing in well-being enhances long term resilience and can further enhance a nation's ability to withstand future crises. Notably, the countries that experienced the biggest drop in GDP also underperformed significantly in SEDA measurements of governance and civil society, suggesting that these are key dimensions in fighting the pandemic's economic repercussions. Governance is critical because it boosts transparency and accountability, leading to greater public trust in government and increasing participation and engagement of citizens. Civil society matters because it helps countries deal with the unequal fallout from a crisis – for example, providing support and aid to those who are disproportionately affected.

The positive correlation between wealth, as reflected in per capita income levels, and SEDA scores should come as no surprise. After all, income affects well-being in many ways. At the same time, well-being is not simply a function of income. Many countries at similar income levels have significant disparities in well-being.

In terms of employment, we saw a similar effect. Countries that had high SEDA scores were better able to cushion the blow of Covid-19 and limit the growth of unemployment. (See Exhibit 2.) Many of these countries already had measures in place to increase the resilience of labor markets – such as unemployment safety nets and job retention schemes. Even in cases where the labor market policies needed to be adjusted, doing so was a faster process than creating them from scratch. A stubborn question remains as to whether retention schemes will lead to a stronger labor recovery once the pandemic ends; to some extent, that depends on whether they support jobs that have been temporarily at risk but are still viable in the long term.

Capitalizing on the Post-Pandemic Recovery

Even as countries continue to face immediate priorities in addressing the crisis, they must reset their ambitions for the future. In fact, severe shocks like Covid-19 present a real opportunity to spring forward and introduce broad reforms toward the goal of overall societal well-being. Regardless of

their past performance, governments should seek to leverage the current hardships to re-imagine and realign policy imperatives across the full range of SEDA dimensions. From our analysis, we believe that *three themes* can have a multiplier effect in increasing well-being and thus should be at the top of government agendas.

1. Accelerate Actions to Slow Climate Change.

The pandemic is estimated to have driven a 5% to 10% drop in CO2 emissions in 2020. That may seem promising as a temporary relief, but compared with the change in trajectory required to slow global warming, it is a mere blip. As the economic cycle resumes momentum, governments and societies have a unique opportunity to accelerate climate-related actions and build a green recovery. Previous recessions have led to an increased adoption of renewable energy sources and battery technologies. In fact, citizens expect governments to tackle climate change as part of Covid-19 recovery efforts. In a BCG survey of more than 3,200 corporate leaders, 77% of respondents say that companies receiving public aid or grants due to the pandemic should take on additional environmental responsibilities and commitments. A recent analysis by the International Energy Agency and the IMF found that a well-structured green recovery plan could lead to an increase in global GDP of 3.5% over the next three years and create 9 million jobs over the same period.

Indeed, some nations are intensifying their investments in environmental well-being. While countries that are already leading in SEDA environmental performance tend to be doubling down on a green recovery, other countries that are not environmental frontrunners have also passed recovery packages with a substantial share of investments targeted at environmental objectives. (See Exhibit 3.) This suggests that these countries see the crisis as an opportunity to accelerate their sustainability efforts.

For example, India's green stimulus measures include investment in biogas and cleaner fuels, incentives for high-efficiency solar, and advanced battery production. South Korea's "New Deal," in addition to focusing on digitization, prioritizes initiatives that support a green transition, including investments in renewables and R&D funding for electric vehicles (EVs) and batteries. China's green efforts entail substantial funding for EVs and related infrastructure, railway infrastructure de-

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velopment, and electricity transmission. In addition, China – the world’s largest emitter of greenhouse gases – recently pledged to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060 and the European Union has strengthened its commitments under the Paris Agreement by pledging to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030.

Despite these promising early signs, further action will be required. To stay on track to achieve the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C above preindustrial levels, roughly 1% to 3% of global GDP will need to be allocated to climate-change initiatives. To build a green recovery and accelerate actions to slow climate change, governments should focus on four actions.

- **Hardwire sustainability into stimulus spending.** Focus investments on both decarbonizing existing sectors (for example, industrials and energy) and spurring growth in new green sectors such as green hydrogen. Include incentives and regulatory standards, such as sustainability targets and carbon disclosure requirements, in stimulus packages.

- **Create green jobs and prepare for job transitions.** Prioritize investments and programs based not on their absolute job creation potential but on the number of jobs created in the green sector. Manage an equitable transition of the workforce toward a zero-carbon economy. Actively invest in reskilling programs to train workers who are displaced.

- **Partner with the private sector.** To alleviate fiscal constraints, access private funding through structures such as public-private partnerships. Capitalize on the growth in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investing and integrate ESG factors into investment processes.

- **Coordinate across borders.** Partner with other national and regional governments on climate initiatives to make faster progress. The UN’s COP26 climate conference, which has been rescheduled for November 2021, will be a key milestone in monitoring progress toward the Paris Agreement. With representatives from nearly 200 countries, it also provides an opportunity to step up global momentum in forwarding a green recovery from the pandemic.

2. Invest in Digitization as an Enabler and Amplifier of Well-Being.

Done right, digitization can help countries manage shocks in the short term and keep economies running. In the medium to long run, it can help developing and emerging economies leapfrog developed nations, accelerating human capital development, industry competitiveness, and

access to global markets. Indeed, our previous analysis shows that digital infrastructure increases the ability to convert wealth into well-being at lower income levels; that is, its spillover impact on other well-being dimensions such as employment, education, and governance is particularly significant for developing countries.

Several countries have successfully integrated digital technologies into their crisis response; for example, by using mobile apps to trace transmission chains, register populations for vaccines, increase collaboration, and provide community support. Looking ahead, the pandemic has made clear that the future will be even more digital than previously imagined. Many of the behavioral shifts we are experiencing today, such as online grocery shopping and working from home, are expected to endure beyond the crisis.

Specifically, countries should focus on the following priorities.

- **Bridge the digital divide.** As evidenced by those who have been disproportionately affected by school closures and the move to telework and telehealth, digital inequality tends to exacerbate existing social inequality. At the foundational level, countries need to ensure the provision of universal, reliable, and stable connection to the internet. Equally critical to safeguarding connectivity is bridging the access gap. Covid-19 has exposed the hardware divide, in which availability of devices (smartphones, PCs, laptops, tablets) and peripheral services (apps and subscriptions) dictates the extent to which people are able to leverage critical digital services such as e-learning. Furthermore, digital inclusion policies need to be multi-dimensional – promoting digital literacy, enhancing technological competence, and fostering the effective use of technologies to promote fruitful participation in the digital economy. As Exhibit 4 shows, there is a correlation between a country’s digital inclusion performance (as measured by the Network Readiness Index) and how well it converts wealth into well-being.

- **Leverage digital to build more resilient cities.** Curbing the spread of Covid-19 has tested the capabilities of urban environments. City resilience will continue to be the main buffer against inevitable shocks, particularly as the 70% the world’s population will live in metropolitan areas by 2050. Big data’s role in smart city platforms will be essential in responding to future disasters in real time.

- **Digital government.** Governments must continue to expand their digital capabilities with a citizen-centric mind-

set, as delivering simpler, more seamless, and faster government services becomes increasingly important. By harnessing both the human and technological elements of their organizations, governments can provide positive outcomes for citizens.

- **Strike the right balance between data accessibility and privacy.** Covid-19 has shown the enormous potential for governments to use and leverage citizen data. Yet this raises important ethical and legal questions. Governments need to safeguard information while instilling high ethical standards for its utilization. For instance, by creating data-sharing frameworks that put in place data use guardrails, governments can support accessibility and adoption without compromising privacy.

3. Establish Social Protection and Welfare Systems to Ensure Sustainable and Equitable Growth.

Social protection systems can dramatically mitigate the impact of crises like Covid-19, particularly for vulnerable populations who have been disproportionately impacted. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the number and scope of social protection initiatives has been unprecedented. Overall, as of December 2020, approximately \$590 billion (or nearly 1% of worldwide GDP) had been pledged toward more than 1,500 specific measures in 209 countries. More than half of these were for new programs or benefits. (See Exhibit 5.) Many countries prioritized benefits for workers and their dependents along with benefits for poor or vulnerable populations.

Despite these efforts, however, many social protection schemes still fall short. According to research from the UN’s International Labour Organization, 55% of the global population has no form of social protection. About 40% of people have no access to health insurance or national health systems, and only 20% can count on unemployment benefits.

There is a clear need for future-proof welfare systems, which should not only act as an immediate cushion during a crisis but also make countries more resilient and equip them to transition to more sustainable economic growth. It is crucial, therefore, that governments treat the Covid-19 pandemic as an opportunity to rethink their approach to social protection. Rather than a safety net for vulnerable populations, these programs should serve as a trampoline, empowering citizens to be more socially and economically adaptive. The right approach will reduce inequalities, strengthen human capital, and

Well-Being *continued on next page*

Well-Being *continued from previous page*

contribute to long-term productivity.

To that end, governments should focus on the following priorities in revamping social protection systems.

- **Institutionalize successes.** Identify which of the programs launched in response to Covid-19 functioned best and make them permanent. Cut or modify other programs as needed.

- **Increase financial sustainability.** Look beyond one-time stimulus spending packages to make programs – particularly basic protection measures – that will be viable over the long term.

- **Collaborate across stakeholders.** Design programs to draw on support from government, business, and citizens.

- **Use digital delivery channels that are**

fast and cost-effective in interacting with participants and delivering benefits.

The pandemic has served as a forced experiment in testing countries' resilience, and as our analysis shows, the results are clear. Societal well-being not only helps countries during good times; it also makes them more resilient during crises. The SEDA framework is a powerful tool for governments to assess and track their progress in this realm and identify specific policy interventions that will comprehensively improve the well-being of their populations. By focusing on the three overarching themes we identified – slowing climate change, fostering inclusive digitization, and enhancing social protection – countries can capitalize on multi-

plier effects and accelerate overall progress.

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Source: <https://www.bcg.com/en-us/publications/2021/prioritizing-societal-well-being-seda-report>

Moving Forward

We should not ask or expect governments corporations or the wealthy to care about the dilemma that the majority of the world's population now find themselves in. It is our time for the 90% plus of us to take into our own hands the outcome that we envision for our futures. With love guiding our intentions we will transform communities worldwide, giving everyone an opportunity to share in the wealth this planet offers. Community cooperatives will be the strength of our future. Based on honoring and respecting cooperation we can build new businesses and communities. Incorporating all these skills we have learned from supporting each other over the many millennia.

By LaLainya, Maryland USA



Photo submitted by Paul Odiwuor, Kenya



Poisoning Water Must Be Stopped

MAYA Press Release: September 9, 2021
By Jussa Kudherezera, Coordinator, Zimbabwe

Manica Youth Assembly (MAYA) is deeply worried by the recent news that some unidentified people suspected to be fishmongers did the most unthinkable act of poisoning the Fern Valley dam in a desperate bid to make a big catch. However, as expected, this despicable act didn't end well as the poison decimated most of, if not all, the ecological system of the dam.

The fishmongers who poach fish in illegal ways, were not concerned about other people, other fish, flora, and fauna species including frogs, fish eagles, or animals that drink from that dam. They are all at risk of dying as well. This is a very unsettling development that must be condemned as loudly and all responsible citizens to action against such heinous acts from being perpetrated again.

As MAYA, we are further perturbed by the obvious public health risks attached to the poisoning act which goes beyond fish but exposes many people to food poisoning after consuming the fish. Hundreds if not thousands of unsuspecting people -- adults, children, pregnant women, lactating mothers, fathers, and elderly -- could be munching the fish now, happy that they have had a hearty meal with juicy fish after a long time due to the hard times only to realize that it was a fishy meal. The water and fish are now a poisoned chalice putting people and a whole range of biodiversity that rely on the Fern Valley dam/water in great danger.

It must be noted that the water from the Fern Valley dam proceeds as the Dora River, which joins Sakubva River 5 kilometers (3 miles) downstream, itself a tributary of the Odzi River. This illustrates how grave the situation is and what is at stake. It is in this respect that we urge the responsible authorities to urgently investigate the type of chemical/poison that was used and the possible effect it may have on humans and biodiversity in the immediate and intermediate future. This information is necessary for those who may have eaten the fish who may need immediate medical attention and the possible preventive measures that those people and animals living downstream in Dora may have to take to mitigate the effects of the poison.

MAYA salutes the quick action from Councillor Matsiya (Ward 19) for alerting the public. This is leadership. As an elected official, he has done his part. Section 73 (1) (Environmental Rights) of the Constitution says that, "Every person has the right to (a) An environment that is not harmful to their health and well-being and (1) prevent pollution and ecological degradation. This reminds us all as citizens that we have a duty and responsibility towards the environment, and this entails that citizens must at all times act responsibly. Lacing water with poison to catch a few fish is irresponsible and criminal. We regard it as culpable homicide if not a genocidal attempt. There is no justification for this callous act, it cannot be hunger nor poverty. It can only be terrorism.

MAYA urges law enforcement to upscale their investigation regarding this criminal action while the local Authority (City of Mutare) must be authorized to run and maintain the dam. We understand the ownership issues involved; however, we believe the local authority is better placed to protect and manage the dam. The Environmental Management Agency must also up their game and be more visible, lest very soon, there will be no environment for the Agency to manage. Further, since this is more of a public health matter, we await quick action by all concerned stakeholders especially EMA and the Ministry of Health. Citizens must act responsibly towards fellow beings and the environment and must support the local authority, EMA, and police as they, in their various capacities, manage the environment for our benefit either by discouraging negative actions from fellow citizens wherever we encounter such or reporting such actions to the authorities. We are sure, someone somewhere saw this evil act happening and is quiet now. By choosing silence, you're siding with evil. Love your neighbor as you love yourself. So as the environment. Thus is Ubuntu.

Contact MAYA:

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Twitter: @ManicaYouth

Website: <https://manicayouth.org>

Press Release: <https://manicayouth.org/?p=284>

The Low Road

By Marge Piercy

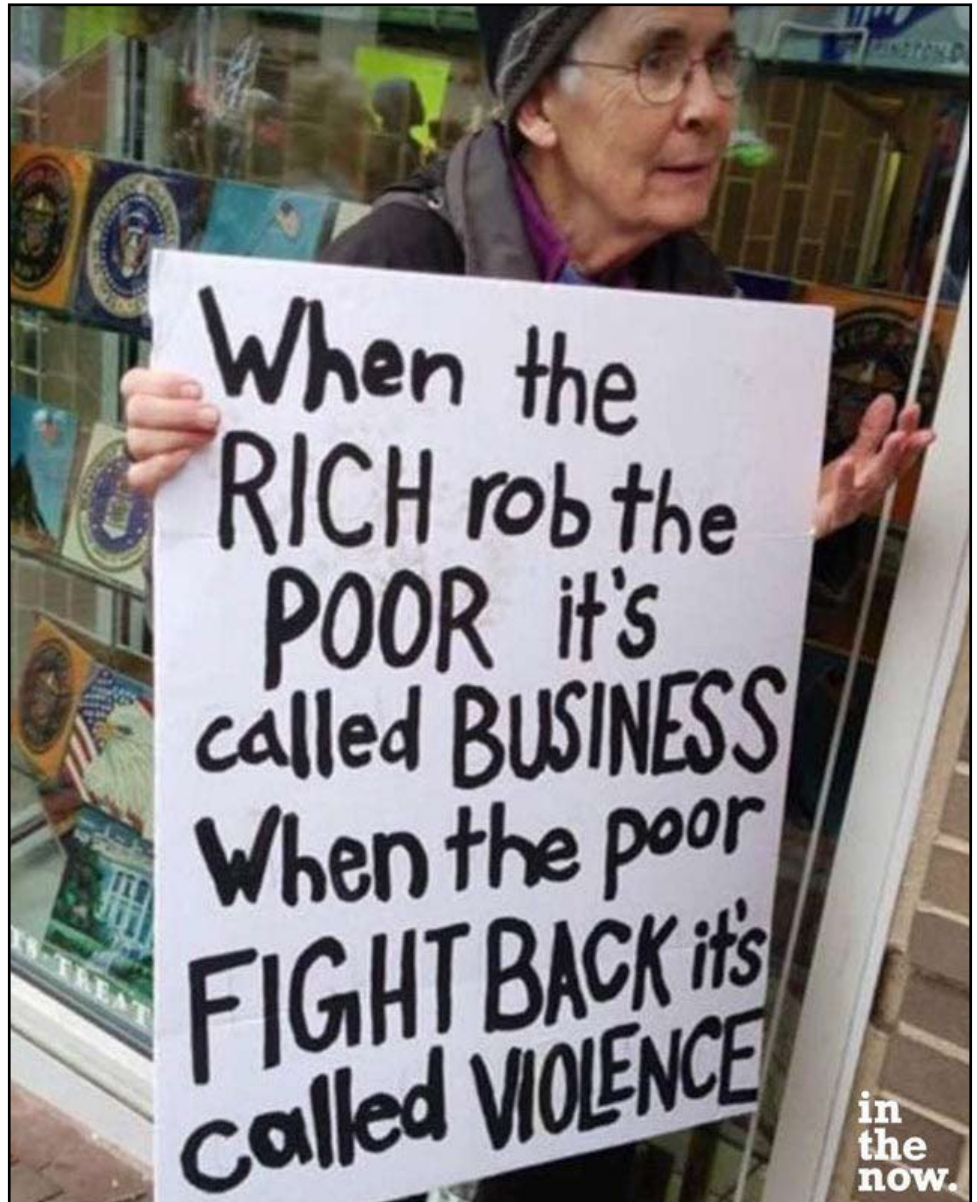
What can they do
to you? Whatever they want.
They can set you up, they can
bust you, they can break
your fingers, they can
burn your brain with electricity,
blur you with drugs till you
can't walk, can't remember, they can
take your child, wall up
your lover. They can do anything
you can't stop them
from doing. How can you stop
them? Alone, you can fight,
you can refuse, you can
take what revenge you can
but they roll over you.

But two people fighting
back to back can cut through
a mob, a snake-dancing file
can break a cordon, an army
can meet an army.

Two people can keep each other
sane, can give support, conviction,
love, massage, hope, sex.
Three people are a delegation,
a committee, a wedge. With four
you can play bridge and start
an organization. With six
you can rent a whole house,
eat pie for dinner with no
seconds, and hold a fund raising party.
A dozen make a demonstration.
A hundred fill a hall.
A thousand have solidarity and your own newsletter;
ten thousand, power and your own paper;
a hundred thousand, your own media;
ten million, your own country.

It goes on one at a time,
it starts when you care
to act, it starts when you do
it again after they said no,
it starts when you say *We*
and know who you mean, and each
day you mean one more.

Source: <https://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/piercy-low-road.html>



Earth is a Person

By Susan Butler, RN, MSN, PhD
Massachusetts USA

[This note preceded her story: Nathan Phillips remarked to me that trees were like lungs. I thought, it's far more than that...]

In the Surgical Oncology Unit, the cancer ward, you can't always save people. Sometimes all you can do is keep them comfortable, be there with them, then care for their families as they go. You see the many ways that each person dies. You see the young woman with breast cancer who stays alive to see her daughter graduate from High School or get married. You see the angry person go, full of tension and knots of rage. You are surprised that someone didn't make it through the night, when that person seemed so well the day before. Each death is unique. Each death is unpredictable. Each death tells the story of the life that has gone before. Was it full of love? Tyranny? Isolation? Fullness? Humor and Joy?

The final catastrophe that ends a person's life is never predictable in every detail, but it is reflective of everything that has gone before. So it is with each ecosystem we see in failure. Some are dying of poisons dumped on them. People are ill from polluted water that is also poisoning the plants and animals. You see it in the air and the land, in the cities, where the heat zaps suddenly kill the trees. Young trees, their leaves turn brown at the edges, and then entirely, and then the tree is completely gone, just a trunk, no sap, soon to be cut down and replaced with another tree that will fail. Or coral reefs, blanched, failing, from so many distant causes, from ocean acidification to sunblock chemicals that do not biodegrade. Who would have guessed that such distant causes could bring this about? He seemed so good last night, what happened? We can skate along for quite a while, and then the collapse comes, and comes quickly, irreversibly.

Consider the corpus of this complex system, the geology of our bones, the acid-base balance of our fluids, the failures of our circulations, the pulmonary failures, the dehydration, the fever. As our Earth is mined, with vast volumes of solids, liquids, and gasses removed from the structure of the Earth, do you wonder why we have so many earthquakes and volcanoes? Please call the orthopedic consult. As the atmospheric CO₂ level rises and is absorbed into the ocean, the resulting ocean acidosis



Lovely Day on the Bay painting by Farist Butler

will kill, won't it? Please get a nephrology consult. Please hang an IV with bicarbonate in it, as we do for people in acute cardiac failure. As the Jet Stream slows and the deep ocean currents stop, our circulatory system is failing. Please start CPR. As the trees fail, in dehydration and heat, how will the planet respire? No respirator will work here, as the leaves, the alveoli, can no longer function. There is no palliative maintenance when the lungs have failed. As flooding from water-heavy, warmer air happens, we erode our skin. Please call the burn unit for a consult. As dehydration brings desertification, how do we protect the water cycle, or restart it? The IV nurse could not get a line in, we'll have to try a central line. As the temperature rises, all failures accelerate, desiccation exacerbates, forests burn, how do we stop this cascade of failures? Could we please increase the IV and get the patient on an ice blanket? No, too much fluid will overload the cardiac/respiratory systems, flooded lungs, failing heart. Diagnosis, climate catastrophe.

The interconnectedness of it all is central to the fragility. If the kidneys fail, if the ocean absorbs to the max, and the acidification cannot be flushed anywhere, we fail. If the trees can no longer respire, they cannot remove CO₂ from the atmosphere, worsening the acidosis. If the fever and

heat kill the trees, then the shade, the water cycle and the CO₂ absorption are lost, worsening the fever, the acidosis. If the Jet Stream is stopped, and ocean currents have slowed, are we not in circulatory collapse? The earthquakes, and tsunamis and volcanoes are making it hard to treat the patient, but we have to get the acid-base balance restored. We have to get the circulation restored. We have to restore respiratory function. The burn patient, oozing fluids and nutrients, do we have adequate nutrition in the IV? Nutrition won't matter if we cannot maintain respiration and circulation. Is this the complex collapse that is irreversible?

We do not know which of these will kill the patient. We know our patient is in a very unstable state. It is amazing that the doctor has not yet been called to pronounce the patient dead. You never know, that impulse to survive can keep one going for a surprisingly long time, but eventually.... As one system fails, it destabilizes another, and another. The complex system can only sustain so many assaults, before that last challenge becomes insurmountable.

A patient on the Surgical Oncology Unit lay dying. Her best friend told a story about their working together that was completely hilarious. The patient, semi-comatose, sat up, opened her eyes, and laughed with us. That laugh was the final challenge, and she was gone.

I am the night intensive care nurse, trying to call a Code Red on my patient.

Can we decide to take action and try to preserve life?

Sue Butler advocates for climate stability, from adopting early innovation to engaging community in changing our ways. Her academic work in experimental psychology of judgment and decision-making and her work as a nurse clinical specialist inform her advocacy and her work for the environment.

She gives eco-chats to groups small and large, aimed at helping people understand the urgency of the situation and the value and importance of individuals taking personal responsibility and action for their energy choices. Even the little ones accumulate and have big effects.

Her film, Leaving the Carbon Economy is about some of her choices and the thinking behind them. The film is central to the eco-chats, and available on YouTube or from Sue's website, LeavingtheCarbonEconomy.com.



Organic Catnip Toy

Made with and filled with scrap fabric. Plus a half cup of Organic catnip.



T-Shirt Shopping Bag

Made from quality recycled materials with a classic proven design. Machine washable.



Covered Plastic Bottle Dog Toy

Heavy duty fabric pouch with waterbottle toy inside. Dispose when fabric is destroyed.



Ballon Cover

A safe way to play with a ballon. Made from scrap fabric. Inflate until hard. Hand wash&dry.



Tug-of-War Dog Toy

Braided fabric rope, tied in nots. Used as a tug of war toy.



Cloth Car Trash Bag

Hang from stick shift or head rest. Stash your big gulp; children's toys, etc or trash. Machine washable.

[etsy.com/shop/GreenEarthGoodsLLC](https://www.etsy.com/shop/GreenEarthGoodsLLC)

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

By Derrick Jensen, Lierre Keith, and Max Wilbert, excerpt from pages 118-120

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

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

Iron ore is the main raw precursor to steel and is mined around the world. Five of the 10 largest iron ore mines are in Brazil. Because iron ore mining is big business, worth hundreds of billions of dollars annually just in Brazil, the government does all it can to streamline mining permits, sidestep environmental regulations, and mute community opposition.

The world's largest iron-ore mine is the Carajás mine, located in the Amazon rainforest in Brazil. More accurately, the mine is located in what used to be the Amazon rainforest. Now, it's located in the center of a wasteland, a clearcut, an industrial chasm. Every year, more than 2,400 square miles of forest around Carajás are cut down, mostly to make charcoal used for smelting iron ore.¹⁹ Yes, you read that number correctly. And yes, that's annually. The latest \$17 billion mine expansion project has already destroyed mile after mile of rainforest, and threatens a unique part of the Amazon, a savanna around two lakes, home to more than 40 endemic plant species found nowhere else on Earth.

Toxic "tailings" sludge from these mining operations is impounded behind huge earthen dams, two of which have failed in recent years. A 2015 collapse near Mariana, Brazil destroyed two villages, killed 19 people, polluted water supplies for 400,000, and released more than 43 million cubic meters of toxic waste into 400 miles of rivers of streams and the Atlantic Ocean. According to a United Nations report, "Entire fish populations – at least 11 tons – were killed immediately when the slurry buried them or clogged their gills." The same report describes that "the force of the mud flow destroyed 1,469 hectares (3,630 acres) of riparian forest."²⁰

The report uses the term "eliminating all aquatic life" to describe what has happened to more than 400 miles of river. The Mariana tailings dam failure has been called the worst environmental disaster in Brazil's history.

The second major failure at a Vale iron-ore mine hit Brumadinho, Brazil, in January 2019. This time, the mudflow killed 270 people and released 12 million cubic meters of toxic sludge – destroying all life in another river, the Paraopeba. In the aftermath, Vale safety inspectors "failed to guarantee the safety" of 18 other Vale dams and dikes in Brazil.²¹ As one researcher put it in the aftermath, "In Brazil and [the state of] Minas, it is the ore above everything and everyone."²²

Iron ore mines in the Amazon basin have displaced tens of thousands of indigenous people, decimated newly contacted tribes through the spread of infectious diseases, and flooded remote areas with thousands of workers. A 2011 report from the International Federation for Human Rights attributes "incessant air pollution" to the iron ore mines. Forced labor and child slavery have been documented by the Brazilian government. Mines become the locus of networks of roads that cut into the jungle, leading to poaching and illegal logging in protected areas.

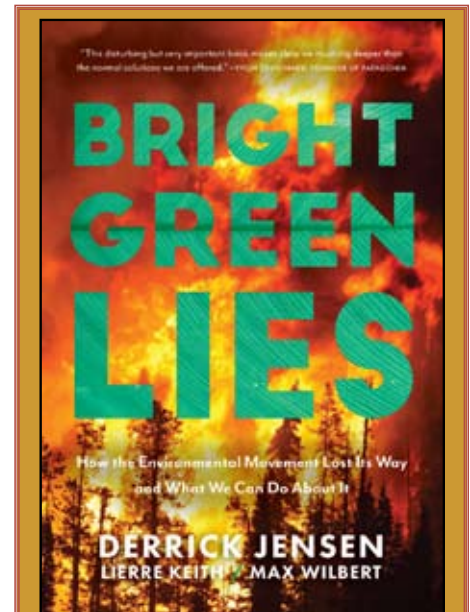
People in the region contend with cancers, birth defects, and lung diseases caused by pollution from processing facilities, factories, and constant traffic of industrial trucks and trains. In some towns, a fully loaded train passes every 20 minutes, day and night. "[The town of Piquiá de Baixo is] a place where practically the whole population is likely to get health problems and lung diseases," says local teacher Joselma Alves de Oliveira.²³

Resistance has been widespread, with tribal people, students, and forest lovers blockading railways and holding public protests, but with little success.²⁴ Local business elites and politicians, many of whom have been powerful since the days of Brazil's military dictatorship, protect the mining operations with the help of police and paramilitary forces.

"In thirty years, iron exploitation [has left] deforested areas, slave labor, migration, and has torn apart the identification of the communities with their territories," says community organizer Padre Dario Bossi, who has been fighting iron ore mines for decades. "It has also left land conflicts, pollution, urban disorganization, and violence due to the intense exodus of people in search of work, the most affected being indigenous or African."²⁵

Footnotes:

19 Roger LeGuen, "Amazon Mining: Extracting Valuable Minerals and a Pandora's Box of Problems," World Wildlife Fund. Note that WWF's source is from 1997, and deforestation rates have gone up since then. We used



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

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

that conservative estimate, but estimates run up to 4,000 square miles per year. Please note also that when environmentalists were opposing the mine back in the 1980s, they feared the mine would consume a little over 275 square miles per year. Isn't that the way it always goes?

20 "Mine Tailings Storage: Safety is No Accident," U.N. Environment, 2015.

21 Samantha Pearson and Luciana Magalhaes, "Inspectors Fail to Guarantee Safety of 18 Vale Dams, Dikes in Brazil – 2nd Update," MarketScreener, April 1, 2019.

22 Gabriel De Sá, "Brazil's deadly dam disaster may have been preventable," National Geographic, January 29, 2020.

23 Fabiola Ortiz, "Brazil—The Polluted Face of Carajás. 1," Latin America Bureau, September 17, 2014.

24 Dom Phillips, "Another huge and open iron mine is carved out of Brazil's rain forest," The Washington Post, April 13, 2015.

25 Raúl Zibechi, "Mining and Colonialism in Brazil's Giant Carajás Project," CIP Americas Program, May 31, 2014.

Grassroots Coalition Member Publishes Book

Revelation and Healing: A Father and Son Reunion

By Morgan Zo-Callahan

Not just a tale of pain, although there is pain, nor one of easy resolution, although there is eventual closure, this book recounts the author's slow journey from an adoption that left him longing for his biological mother and wondering about his biological father.

Discovering, while in high school, his mother's identity, years later he found that of his biological father, Lionel Durand, a Black man born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Suddenly the author realized the source of his own immediate empathy with Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights movement he led.

Recovering painfully from his years of estrangement and loss, the author shares the often-shocking details of his adoption and the therapies that brought him healing, therapies helpful not only to adoptees but to all who need healing from emotional suffering and losses of all kinds.

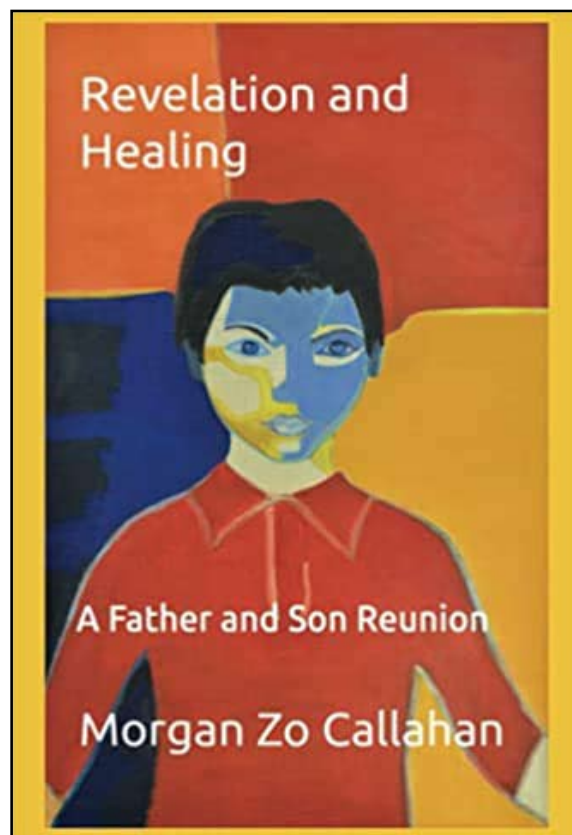
With a heart "stretched large" by his own experience, the author has traveled to El Salvador and Mexico to accompany the many there who are suffering from collective trauma, poverty, and discrimination, victims of systemic injustice, wounded yet unbowed.

Finally, with filial admiration, the author traces the life of his beloved father, Lionel Durand, an internationally acclaimed newsman and journalist, who fought in the French Resistance during World War II, and whose struggles for peace and justice mirror those of our own day.

Welcome to this reading journey and its wondrous surprises!

Available at Amazon.com: 257 pages, paperback \$18.00, Kindle \$7.95; <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0976276FC>. Royalties will be donated to Faith in Action, Haiti.

(Paid ad; message from Iona: This is a fantastic, heart-warming book!)



Book Royalties Will Go Directly to Haiti

Dear Friends,

Thank you for allowing me to announce a fundraising invitation for Faith in Action Haiti, on the occasion of the publication of my book *Revelation and Healing: A Father and Son Reunion*, whose royalties of \$6.50 per book will be donated to Faith in Action Haiti, founded by my friend, Rev. John Baumann, SJ.

I invite you to buy this book which details my search for my biological father, and the amazing things I have discovered about him, including his identity as a Haitian Black man. The book expands to explore themes related to adoption, healing trauma (both individual and collective), forgiveness, and the civil rights movement. I think you might find it interesting and timely, and you would be helping a very worthy Haitian cause.

Our dear sisters and brothers in Haiti critically need our regard and shared energy more than ever as they grieve and recover from the catastrophic earthquake on Saturday, August 14. The death toll was over 2,189 as of August 23rd and is expected to continue to rise. Over

12,200 are injured, with hundreds more missing. The earthquake is estimated to have destroyed or damaged 27,000 homes, schools, churches, and hospitals, and according to the U.N. in a country already suffering, a food crisis.

The earthquake destroyed roads, bridges, and other infrastructure that were already unable to meet the needs of the people. Many hospitals, churches, hotels, businesses, and homes are now completely destroyed and uninhabitable with many people still trapped inside and underneath the rubble. On top of these dire conditions, we are right in the middle of hurricane season and Haiti is in the path of Hurricane Grace. The hurricane could make rescue efforts and humanitarian relief more difficult.

Buying the book with Haitian roots will be interesting and timely. Given the fact that it is not too heavy a cost, it will be mutually beneficial. We aren't asking for direct donations to Faith in Action Haiti but that we are supporting Haiti by buying the book which will help you learn more about Haiti. We are aware

that churches already may have fundraisers in place, but this is different. Our regard of Haiti and her people deserve your heartfelt response, if at all possible.

To learn more about Faith in Action Haiti, visit <https://faithinactioninternational.org/where-we-work/haiti/>

Thank you for considering buying the book, as well as for making a critically needed donation directly to FIA Haiti (any amount gratefully received).

Click here to DONATE NOW to FIA Haiti: <https://faithinactioninternational.org/salsalabs.org/faithinactioninternational-donationpage/index.html> (Indicate Haiti as the specific campaign for your donation.)

If you prefer, mail a check payable to Faith in Action Haiti to:

Faith in Action Haiti
Oakland, CA 94610-1316

With appreciation and best wishes,
Morgan Zo Callahan, California USA
morganzc@hotmail.com

NO ONE HAS EVER BECOME POOR BY GIVING.

Anne Frank, diary of Anne Frank: the play

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/81804-no-one-has-ever-become-poor-by-giving>



JOIN THE DO SOMETHING CLUB NOW

Want to do something for the environment? Join the Do Something Club - forging the future with smaller ecological footprints. This course offers tips on simple living, encourages creative thinking, and helps you save money while leading a more sustainable life. Make new friends via Zoom or with in-person programs; share your ideas, experiences, and accomplishments with others and help to make this world a better place. Collectively we will make a difference. Hosted by Iona Conner, a former air pollution inspector in Middlesex County, NJ and former spokeswoman for the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Hazardous Waste Management, Bureau of Community Relations. Currently Director of the non-profit Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice. Publisher of Groundswell News Journal, an online climate change newspaper. Contact Iona at dosomething@pa.net.

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. \$30 per year if you can afford that. Pay with PayPal using groundswellnews@pa.net or mail to the address on page 2. A project of the 501(c)(3) Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice. Photo <https://www.google.com/search>

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Thank you.



Remember your dreams.



Messages from Our Friends

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



Iona, there's a small check waiting for you at PAX, the little avant-garde Catholic church Patty and I attend. What is your correct address? Thanks, and I wish you well in your new direction. Your July newsletter is beautiful, and I shared it with my friends.

Sylvia Diss, Maryland USA

I am hosting an Open Garden for Wild Ones the morning of your meeting. Actually, our meetings are always on the second Saturday. I am very interested in this discussion, as you probably remember. If you care to share my information, we started a chapter of Wild Ones two years ago (shortly before the pandemic hit). Wild Ones is a national organization that was started in the 70's focusing on gardening with native plants, eliminating the use of pesticides, controlling stormwater, and all that good stuff. So, I am a gardener. But our motto is "Saving the Earth one garden at a time." The incredible interest in gardening sustainably has grown and so has our chapter – Chesapeake Wild Ones. It's not as impressive as the work so many others are doing, but we are busy planting native trees and plants, eliminating vast expanses of turf grass (and all the fertilizers and pesticide), and changing the way we see our landscapes. And this includes changing governments & home owners associations, as well as homeowners.

Marney Bruce, Maryland USA

Enjoying learning from your newsletter. Thanks for the wonderful book ad & fundraising for Haiti. Thought meeting today was excellent. God bless us all.

I loved this: "About 40 years ago, I had my first mystical experience and wrote this: I stood at the edge of the water, at the edge of my world as I knew it, at the edge of time, at the edge of the Universe. I stood. And as the sun was rising, my molecules – my body, my material physical self vanished. I was pure spirit. I was one with the Universe. I WAS the ocean!"

Morgan Zo-Callahan, California USA
(see page 32)

Dear Reader,

We find it pleasing to reach you with

some updates about our most important work with local communities. We believe that sustainable food production can help capture carbon as a means to enhance fertility, soil health, nutrition, water availability, food systems, and eradicate poverty.

As the world marked the #WorldPhotographyDay2021, we reflected on the impacts we are creating in the communities where we work.

Uche Isieke, Rural Watch Africa Initiative, Nigeria (See page 6.)

The FB connection I sent you was about how bad electric cars are for the environment. Actually their batteries, the fuel consumption for mining the ore that goes into the batteries is 21 billion gallons per year. The batteries only last 10 years so that means by 2050 there will be 50 million pounds of waste that won't break down from electric car batteries. In comparison,

the U.S. uses 19 billion gallons of gas per year on airplanes. Anyway, I had never heard that about electric cars being bad.

Linda L., Idaho USA

I would like to appreciate your incredible job well done as well as the beautiful Article about my work that was published last time.

I can't thank you enough.

Much Love,

Mariam Nabukeera, Uganda

Mother I have sudden news/Bad news but really call upon your support. My wife was tested; she has cancer stage 1 but doctor told me they need about \$3,500 to \$5,000 to start her dose so call upon your support.

We need help. Mother I wish had access to GoFundMe page – I could use one.

Ssendendo Yasin Signalaminat, Uganda



Photo Courtesy God's Support Orphanage Ministry

Email from Willy SSendinde on August 20: We are working hard to assist our power to these kids please but what we do, we are very proud it unfortunately right now we are seeking any assistance please. Contact Willy at kigoziangel12345@gmail.com.