



contents

Editorial 2

Light a Fire under South Africa's Climate Policy 2

International News 5

Argentine Newspapers Recuperated by Workers' Cooperatives 5

Can Co-op-to-co-op training help drive worker co-operative development? 6

P2P: A new cycle of post-civilisational development: interview 8

National News 16

SAFTU's Working Class Summit: building solidarity to address the climate crisis 16

The SA Food Sovereignty Campaign 18

UN's 8th Harmony with Nature Interactive dialogue to celebrate Mother Earth Day 18

Banned chemicals: what's all the buzz? 19

Going against the grain: launch of communal kitchen at Wits Food Sovereignty Center 19

The Worker Cooperative Campaign 21

Call to Cooperatives: Join the Solidarity Economy Movements Website 21

Profiling Co-operatives on the Solidarity Economy Movements Website 22

Activist Resources to Advance the Solidarity Economy From Below 23

Democratic Marxism Seminars available for viewing on Youtube 23

Peer 2 Peer Tools 24

The Climate Crisis: South African Global Democratic Eco-Socialist Alternatives free e-book 25

Environmental Justice Atlas 25

Contact Us 27



Editorial

Light a fire under SA's climate policy

by Vishwas Satgar



Image Source: <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-04-13-00-light-a-fire-under-sas-climate-policy>

Most South African's don't appreciate that we are living in a new world, shaped — and increasingly determined — by a heating planet.

In 2015, when the World Meteorological Organisation declared a 1°C increase in planetary temperature since the industrial revolution, it acknowledged that the planetary conditions that sustain life had been fundamentally changed.

For geologists meeting in South Africa on August 29 last year, and responsible for documenting the Earth's history, a sober scientific conclusion was reached. We are now living in a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene. This means humans as a geological force are shaping the Earth's systems and planetary conditions that determine life.

The Anthropocene is a geological, historical and climatic marker that confirms we have broken with a relatively stable climatic condition known as the Holocene, which lasted about 11 700 years. How we produce, consume and organise social life affects the Earth's systems. Carbon emissions from burning oil, coal and gas are contributing to global warming.

A planet that heats by three, four or five degrees will make human life almost impossible. If we do not act now, we are likely to breach two degrees in this century. As our planet heats complex feedback loops such as methane release from melting in the polar zones, carbon saturation in oceans and even destruction of rain forests will feed into global warming.

There is no time to spare if we want to create the conditions, institutions and practices that will sustain South Africa into the future. We also cannot hide behind false dichotomies of jobs and development versus the environment.

The longer we postpone the urgency of climate change the more costly and catastrophic it becomes. There are currently 20 vulnerable countries, mainly island states, with 700-million people who do not have the capabilities to deal with the climate shocks induced by a 1°C increase, including the rise in the sea level. Many of these countries will have to be abandoned and climate refugees will increase.

Some estimates say Hurricane Harvey, which crashed into the United States mainland last year, cost the country \$180-billion. Together with hurricanes Irma and Sandy, these are now in the top five most costly hurricanes in US history. The US also experienced severe wild fires also linked to drier climatic conditions.

The Syrian conflict is also considered a “climate war” — one of the worst droughts in Syria's history (which fell between 2006 and 2011) caused the failure of most of Syria's agriculture and the migration of 1.5-million Syrians to urban areas. Although the conflict is complex, climate change as a contributing factor cannot be ignored.



The cost of South Africa's drought has not been calculated and we are not coming to terms with what we are dealing with. Most politicians and policy-makers use the language of a "natural disaster", which suggests this is a freak event of nature — a transient problem and the concomitant response is "disaster relief". This mode of thinking betrays a serious crisis of leadership and the makings of climate crisis in South Africa.

The drought that has ravaged rural South Africa since 2014, and which is now threatening big metropolitan conglomerations such as Cape Town, Nelson Mandela Bay and Durban, has to be a defining moment. The Cape Town water crisis portends the problems we face if we want to construct a climate emergency state that can support a citizen-led transition that affirms climate justice.

The poor and working-class citizens of Cape Town have endured three levels of climate injustice and, if this repeats itself, climate conflict will tear South Africa apart.

First, inequality and geographies are racialised in Cape Town.

A Day Zero approach, with its emphasis on disciplinary demand management and fear, squeezed households and neighbourhoods already dealing with water insecurity. Water management devices and punitive tariffs shifted the burden and cost to poor communities, whereas agriculture and business were let off the hook.

More generally, farming in South Africa controls 62% of our water resources. Because of irrigation-fed agriculture, including in the Western Cape, we are exporting our water as we export food. This approach to water and food systems contributes to climate injustice and is not viable in a climate-driven

world.

Second, the state at all three levels has failed, thus passing the burden on to the most vulnerable.

The City of Cape Town and the Western Cape did not have a sustainable water management strategy in place, despite numerous warnings and the science of climate change already forewarning drier conditions in the Cape.

The national government has been incompetent and in disarray, confirmed by the revelations of mismanagement coming to the fore regarding the failed leadership of the former water and sanitation minister, Nomvula Mokonyane. Moreover, Parliament has been slow to respond, declaring a "national disaster" only recently.

At the same time, activists and civic organisations have developed compelling critiques of the state's responses and have also developed systemic solutions. Many of the water crisis organisations in Cape Town justifiably reject desalination as an expensive techno fix, with serious negative environmental effects.

Instead, they are calling for water leaks to be plugged, water to be harvested from water channels leading to the ocean, the protection of agro-ecological farming communities such as the Philippi horticultural area, the integration of ground water into the water system in a sustainable manner, incorporation of farmer-controlled dams into the water system and reuse of water, among other just solutions.

A discourse on water and food sovereignty is emerging from below but is not finding policy traction in the state.

The third injustice experienced relates to an ANC



government committed to a fossil fuel energy path (as entrenched in the Integrated Resource Plan). This can be seen in President Cyril Ramaphosa's ambition to see mining as a "sunrise industry" — which includes more coal, fracking and off-shore extraction — and a National Development Plan that affirms the importance of resource nationalism.

The carbon criminality of the ANC government is not exceptional and includes President Donald Trump's United States, Russia, China, India and other petro-states.

Essentially, ruling elites have chosen more carbon emissions and hence a climate-driven world with devastating consequences for the poor, working class and marginal. This exists alongside imperial designs to police zones of climate chaos and to keep the world enthralled by symbolic gestures such as the Paris Climate Agreement, which provides too little, too late. Cape Town registers the disproportionate effects and climate injustices of carbon criminality.

We are in a "no-analogue" situation and as uncharted territory for the human race we have to develop a new paradigm to sustain life in response to the climate crisis. This has to reflect in how we think about decarbonising our society and building new ecocentric systems (water, energy, food, living, governance) to manage climate shocks.

South Africa is one of the most un-equal countries in the world. Climate change and shocks will deepen racial, gender and class inequalities, yet at the same time it affords us the opportunity to address these challenges and build for the future.

The climate crisis does not have to be about catastrophism or end-of-times millenarianism. The ecocidal destruction of the conditions that sustain

life can be confronted with radical nonracialism and a new direction for the nation-building project that unites us all.

South Africa can be a beacon to the world again. As a climate-justice state it can embrace a deep and just transition, an idea championed by trade unions and consider democratic systemic reforms already emerging such as food, seed and water sovereignty, climate jobs, zero waste, the rights of nature, socially owned renewable energy, solidarity economies, a substantive basic income grant and democratic planning, among others.

As in the struggle against HIV, the world could not stop us from producing the generic drugs we required to sustain lives. Trump's US cannot stand in the way of us confronting the existential threats of climate change.

In this context, climate crisis international relations require us to build support for a climate-justice agenda in our continent, the inter-state system and isolating those countries that are carbon criminals. This might even include climate justice sanctions against some states.

Global leadership has failed over the past 20 years to tackle the climate crisis. South Africa, post-Zuma, can show a different way for humanity and other life forms we share this beautiful planet with.

It is not too late to advance a deep and just transition for South Africa, as the central thrust of a new ecocentric National Development Plan.

This article was originally published in the Mail and Guardian. Article source: <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-04-13-00-light-a-fire-under-sas-climate-policy>



International News

Argentine Newspapers Recuperated by Workers' Cooperatives

This article by Carolina de Assiss was originally published on the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas blog.

The full article is available at this link: <https://knightcenter.utexas.edu/blog/00-19412-argentine-newspapers-closed-or-abandoned-owners-are-recuperated-workers-cooperatives>

In this newsletter, we provide a summary of the article.

'At the end of 2001, Argentina's political and economic crisis was the main theme in Latin America news coverage. The economic recession that culminated in the intense popular protests and the resignation of then president Fernando de la Rúa also fostered a peculiar phenomenon: that of companies recuperated by their workers.'

Since then, Argentina has increasingly witnessed the formation of worker takeovers of companies on the verge of closing their doors, or which have already declared bankruptcy, particularly in the textile and metalworking sectors.

In the last two years a new phenomenon has arisen, media outlets have been the main companies undergoing worker takeovers. According to a survey done by the Open Faculty Programme of the University of Buenos Aires, at least six media outlets underwent worker takeover between 2016 and 2017.

The article tells the stories of two particularly interesting cases, and while doing so demonstrates the 'reconfiguration of the country's media landscape that is connected to the relationship between media and governments, but also represents new paths for journalism in Argentina.'

The case of Tiempo

Tiempo newspaper was founded in 2010 by businessman Sergio Szpolski, and was part of Grupo 23. The group was composed of nine media outlets

including radio stations, news sites, newspapers and a TV channel. The group received the highest amount of official government advertising between July 2009 and July 2015 during the Fernandez de Kirchner government. However, with the change of government the company no longer had income so the owner stopped paying salaries and disappeared. Workers of Tiempo Argentino stopped receiving their salaries from as early as December 2015. The newspaper was printed for two more months until February.

After three months of unpaid work, about 100 journalists decided to organise and occupy the newsroom. They decided to print a special edition and sell it at the Buenos Aires demonstration on 24 March (the annual demonstration when Argentina recalls the 30 000 dead and disappeared by the military dictatorship between 1976 and 1983.

30 000 printed copies were sold at the demonstration indicating that the public was interested in continuing to support the newspaper if it was recuperated by its workers.

"We decided then to take the money collected and share it among those who had not been paid in three months."

Despite a few setbacks (like offices being raided by a group of 20 men and all equipment in their news room destroyed), the newspaper is still going strong. They relocated to a new building. There are 100



staff including journalists, designers, photographers and newspaper management staff. Each has their own task of doing their professional job, but also ensuring that work is organised and administrative tasks are seen to.

Since its establishment as a cooperative, Tiempo Argentino has sought to strengthen its relationship with readers by inviting them to help support the newspaper. According to Borelli, 70 percent of Tiempo's income comes from contributions from readers, both those who buy or subscribe to the print newspaper on Sundays and those who have joined the newspaper and pay about 120 pesos a month (about US \$6). Another 20 percent is accounted for by advertising sales and 10 percent by activities carried out by the cooperative, such as journalism workshops and cultural events.

"Today we have almost 2,000 people that are members of the newspaper, additionally we have about 2,500 who are subscribers of the print newspaper," said Borelli. For him, in the last two years "the logic that readers also feel responsible for financing a media outlet and the understanding that the journalistic production is an expensive event, that it's worth giving to produce information that is necessary, has seen a strong rise in Argentina."

The second example is the case of Infonews. It became the first online news site in the country to be taken over by workers.

Both these examples show how journalist organisations can become democratic institutions, and that public money that has always flowed to the media in a perverse way (to build official journalism), can flow in a democratic and transparent way.

Read the full article at this link: [https://knightcenter.utexas.edu/blog/00-19412-argentine-newspapers-](https://knightcenter.utexas.edu/blog/00-19412-argentine-newspapers-closed-or-abandoned-owners-are-recuperated-workers-cooperatives)

[closed-or-abandoned-owners-are-recuperated-workers-cooperatives](https://knightcenter.utexas.edu/blog/00-19412-argentine-newspapers-closed-or-abandoned-owners-are-recuperated-workers-cooperatives)

Can Co-op-to-co-op training help drive worker co-operative development?

by Anca Voinea

Cross posted from Coop News

A new report from Co-op Culture is looking at ways to grow the worker co-ops sector.

With limited funding available for co-operative businesses and a reduced number of professionals to deliver co-operative business support, worker co-ops are exploring how to help the sector grow.

A new report by Co-op Culture, a co-operative development co-op, has found that the key issues with which worker co-operatives need support are finance and starting up.

Released in January, the report is based on two workshops by Co-op Culture with support from SolidFund, the worker co-op solidarity fund.

Barefoot Co-operative Development Practitioners is based on the idea of co-ops helping each other to support and promote the worker co-op model.

The initiative came from co-operative development bodies themselves, says Dr Mark Simmonds, a member of Co-op Culture. A lot of co-operative development bodies have formed from the old co-operative development agencies.

Others were set up later by members of worker co-ops who found their way into delivering co-operative development. As some of the co-operative development leaders are approaching retirement, they are considering how the sector could continue



to benefit from support and advice.

“A lot of co-ops deliver support on a geographical basis – we need to identify co-ops in particular areas and then introduce them to co-op development bodies in that area,” said Dr Simmonds.

The National Co-operative Development Strategy, produced by Co-operatives UK in 2017, also projects a significant growth in the size of the co-operative economy and the number of co-operatives. The strategy sets out a target to triple the rate of co-operative start-ups and conversions.

“If the targets in the national co-op development strategy are going to be reached, we need more people to be delivering them,” he explains.

The report found that existing co-operatives are already delivering significant amounts of co-operative development support for free without publicising it. Worker co-operatives are keen to explore greater involvement in promotion of the co-operative option, co-operative peer-to-peer networking and the actual delivery of co-operative business support.

What are their key challenges? While many members of co-ops have developed significant business skills developed through their work, they can lack knowledge around business development processes and funding models, and be unfamiliar with some of the language used.

The report suggests there is a general lack of knowledge within the co-operative sector around the support programmes that are already available for co-operative development.

Another barrier is self-doubt among the co-operative development Barefoot practitioners about whether

their skills are transferable, or their skill levels sufficient.

“They had the skills but lacked the context, even on finance side; they are skilled but don’t have the experience of supporting other co-ops. They are a lot better than they know they are,” says Dr Simmonds.

Participants in the workshops, which took place in Manchester and London, stressed that engagement in the Barefoot programme should involve significant continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities for the individual co-op members involved. An online survey by Co-op Culture also revealed that co-ops wanted support with improving facilitating and mediation skills, co-operative team working, participative management and co-operative organisation management.

They also asked for help with operational planning, restructuring business, consensus decision-making, change management, policy governance, self-management systems and legal advice.

The workshop revealed there was a big desire among worker co-ops for a curated space around resources. Participants are now exploring the possibility of creating a central resource platform for worker co-ops as part of a wider idea of setting up a platform co-op around co-operative development.

Co-op Culture is working with Co-operatives UK to help develop training courses for Barefoot practitioners to equip them with the context, tools and resources as well as the confidence to deliver support to co-operatives and people wishing to start them.

The co-op has already delivered a training course on co-operative finance, looking at understanding accounts through Co-operative UK’s the Hive



programme. It is also exploring the idea of developing one-day workshops for co-operatives to learn the basics of co-operative development.

Following the Barefoot co-op development workshop in Manchester, a Worker Co-operative HR Group has been established as a mutual support group and community of practice.

The report suggests ways worker co-ops can help each other, such as publishing “How to” guides, using existing support providers, trusted co-op developers and networks and meeting up to share experience.

Article source: <https://www.thenews.coop/127746/topic/education/can-co-op-co-op-training-help-drive-worker-co-operative-development/>

P2P: A new cycle of post-civilisational development: interview

This interview was originally published on <https://www.resilience.org/stories/2018-05-24/p2p-a-new-cycle-of-post-civilisational-development/>

Rajani Kanth: What, in a nutshell, is P2P?

Michel Bauwens: Peer to peer is a relational dynamic which allows every individual to connect ‘permissionlessly’ to any other individual. You could call it ‘networking freedom’ if you like. This has been a hallmark of small groups of humans but has recently been scaled up by technology, creating the possibility of global ‘open source’ civic networks and generative economic coalitions that are on a par, if not surpassing, the capacities of both state hierarchies and capitalist market-dynamics.

But be careful: the concept of p2p, which is derived from the new structure of computers in which every

server is autonomous, is now used in two competing ways. One, which the way I use it, is peer to peer as the capacity for commoning, i.e. the free association to pool, mutualize and share resources; and two, the anarcho-capitalist, libertarian-propertarian vision, which sees society as a collection of individual entrepreneurs. Between the commons view and the hyper-market view, there is a huge stretch.

RK: Explain your own history/connection with it.

MB: I was a typical nostalgic leftist, who had abandoned collective struggle for adaptation in a system which I had rejected. But by the mid-nineties, I felt all the planetary indicators, both ecological and social, were all converging in the wrong direction. Personally, I started to question my own activities: am I part of the problem or part of the solution?

Working in a large corporation and forced to act unethically on multiple occasions, I felt I had to change. But the invention of the world wide web in 1993, with the hugely increased capacity for horizontally-driven collective intelligence, i.e. the capacity to cooperation non-locally in real time (or in asynchronous time), was the epiphany. I immediately thought that, like print in the 15th century, this will be a driver for change, as it affects the very logic of social relationships. Thus, we have a new leverage point for social change, i.e. the power of horizontal or ‘diagonal’ networking, at scale.

I therefore decided to quit my well-paid executive function to spend two years, during a sabbatical in Thailand, studying historical phase transitions and seeing how this new leverage of peer to peer structures could help struggling people create the world that we need to survive planetary emergencies. How can we create new types of trust-based tribes, based on affinity and shared objects/goals, that



can operate trans-locally and trans-nationally, to help serve a global transformation? My move to Thailand, and my adoption into my wife's extended family, enabled me to combine a warm family life and activism in trans-local, affinity-based communities.

RK: What was your own inspiration in formulating it?

MB: It's a combination of different things. Before my shift, and since the mid-90's, the spread of peer to peer logic in different domains of social life was becoming very evident. I started to document examples as I found them in a specially dedicated wiki. My methodology was rather simple: keep it empirical, keep it coherent, and think about the most integrative narrative that makes sense for social change.

From my study of historical transitions, I started seeing the importance of seed forms that accompany the crisis of the previous and dying civilizational models, and how these seed forms carry new social logics (they have to, if they are to solve the problems of the previous systems). Then I started looking at the governance and property mechanisms of the seed forms today, specially the open source communities with their commons, and the entrepreneurial coalitions that surround them, moving later on to emergence of urban and physically productive commons as well. This evolved into a closer attention to how these emerging micro-networks could be models for society as a whole.

This meant attention to both public-commons institutional processes and to commons-market dynamics. In essence, I have been looking how the coop-tation of the commons by the state and the market can be reversed into its opposite, i.e. how the commons and the commoners can transform market forms and territorial governance so that it

works to expand the commons, and the livelihoods of commoners in a way that is sustainable to the planet and its beings. More recently I have been moving my attention to the shift from a redistributive economy (which is extractive of human and natural value and tries to redistribute afterwards) to a pre-distributive economy, and from ecological damage limitation to regenerative practices.

My work is a pragmatic theory of social change today, hopefully useful for accelerating this transition, that is based on a engagement with commoners and their experience. I want the P2P Foundation to be the collective intellectual of the autonomous precarious workers that I see as vital agents of change today, and be a catalyst in the sense of increasing the velocity of collective learning between these various communities. The commons is today the central category of change, i.e. citizens have become directly productive of social value as contributors to the commons, and peer to peer is the key social relationship to enable and scale it beyond the capacities of both market and state. If the original state of humankind was the closely bonded human tribe, then today we are working on a new layer of close and empathic tribes based on the co-construction of shared value.

RK: What do you means by a 'Commons' Economy?

MB: A commons economy is an economy where core value creation happens around shared resources, and where other forms of human exchange have been adapted to its own needs. The commons economy is not a totalitarian alternative, but rather a reconfiguration of the capitalist market economy, in line with the logic of previous transitions. Today, value is thought to be created only in the market and then redistributed. In the commons economy, all contributions are recognized, whether at commons



or societal levels, and the other forms of exchange and distribution are redesigned to serve the common-creating productive communities. Think of the historical success of the prayer-maximising enterprises in the monasteries of medieval Europe, which used mutualized infrastructures. Think of open source communities as the equivalent, but without the life-denying obedience and abstinence; think of mutualizing all human provisioning systems to radically diminish the thermodynamic footprint of humanity on the planet.

At the core of the commons community are open productive communities with globally shared immaterial commons and locally re-mutualized physical infrastructures. They interact with purpose-driven, mission-oriented non-capitalist entredonneurial (meaning, 'giving between' rather than entrepreneurial, or 'taking between') coalitions, supported by democratic, not-for-profit infrastructural organisations which enable and empower the infrastructure of cooperation. At the macro-level, this makes for a productive citizenry, an ethical economy, and a partner state.

RK: What might be the obstacles to this vision?

MB: Mutualization itself is pretty much inevitable in situations of civilizational overshoot and has happened multiple times throughout history. The question is whether the mutualization itself is captured by internal and outside extractive forces, or whether the democratic commons can become the mainstream model.

The record, so far, is that there have been long periods in pre-civilization with civilization defined as class-based societies, as the situation was for tens of thousands of years in hunter-gathering egalitarian societies; or, the more limited successes in class-based civilizations. Medieval democratic

communes lasted 3 centuries, as did Greek democracy. Whether we can last beyond that, if successful, depends on whether we can transcend class-based society altogether, as suggested by Keith Chandler in his brilliant 'Beyond Civilization'. The best bet is to work with scenarios, and focus on the one we prefer.

Imagine two axes: abundance vs scarcity, and equality vs hierarchy. Scenario 1 is the one we want, equality in abundance, depending on successful mutualization. Scenario 2 is equality in scarcity; Cuba might be a model for this type of society.

Then imagine scenario 3, hierarchy in abundance. This is what we have now in the emerging models of cognitive capitalism as a new feudalism in information and services, only accessible to those with monetary means.

Finally, scenario 4, hierarchy in scarcity, has been described in the last book by Latour: elite survivalism, with a mass die-out of human population, the expulsion into poverty and subsistence of the surviving poor, and with a new elite surviving in high-tech survivalist compounds. Lots of people in the elite are preparing for exactly that, and this exterminalist project is the great danger.

RK: Is this another Utopian project?

MB: While I have nothing against utopias myself, and they may be needed to inspire people with new visions of the possible, I consider my own work to be explicitly not utopian. My method is to look at real-life practices and examples, and when enough weak signals show up to prove it is a real trend, to analyse the underlying logic of these seed forms. It is only from there that I begin visioning exercises about what a society would look like if it would exhibit the same logics at the macro-level. Obviously, it is



not because phenomena emerge at the margin that they will necessarily become dominant, or even survive in the long run, but I think this is legitimate methodology.

I have two remarks about the resistance to utopianism. First of all, what we consider as utopias are often very real. For example, the utopian socialists had real communities and experiments, as opposed to the marxists that were dreaming of another society. Secondly, the awful things we usually blame on utopias, let's say the Inquisition or Stalinism, were consolidations of power using utopian visions in purely ideological ways as means of propaganda and control. After three decades of anti-utopian neoliberalism legitimating itself through capitalist realism, I think a revival in utopian thinking, at least a dose, would actually not be a bad thing.

RK: How does it compare to classical alternative economies like 'socialism'?

MB: The peer to peer and commons approach is very close to the traditions of civil socialism of the 19th century, and even more so to the social doctrine of the Catholic Church which says that civil society should be at the center of society, with markets and state formations serving them. The mainstream socialist traditions have become very state-centric, in either Stalinist and totalitarian, or social-democratic forms.

Our tradition is civil society-centric. We consider all citizens (by whom we mean all people living in a given era) to be productive, i.e. creating value for society. But we believe we need common good-centric institutions at both the territorial level and at the 'virtual' level, to go beyond the mere corporate egotisms. Even commons communities think about themselves first, and not the totality of the ecosystem. I do not believe in societies that are mere

expressions of contracts, either between individuals or between communities (as left-anarchists believe). Meta-governance is needed, and this is likely so for the foreseeable future, especially in societies which are structurally unequal.

Anarchists believe we would be safe without the state. I tend to believe that this would just give more freedom to private militias. What we can expect, though, is an increase in the mutual coordination capacities of our societies and economies as the functional governance of the commons complexifies to levels making the state obsolete. But in the meantime, we need facilitating mechanisms and infrastructural organisations, what I call the 'partner state'. To the degree that the commons approach could be called socialist, is to the degree that decision-making is informed by social, ecological and ethical concerns, rather than by mere private interests.

RK: Is there any critique of capitalism in your vision?

MB: Yes, capitalism separates producers from their means of livelihood, promotes one-sided visions of humanity, and ignores social and ecological externalities. This leads to dangerous level of inequality, and hence social instability, and to an ongoing, and now dramatic and life-threatening, destruction of the planet and its other beings.

Neoliberalism is a particularly pernicious form of capitalism, since it creates total insecurity and the struggle of all against all. The 400-year experiment is pretty much over, but it survives as a zombie system and has set up something that could be much worse than itself. However, despite all this critique, we have to recognize that popular struggles created all kinds of counter-trends, that people continue to create non-capitalist forms and that it has created a complex society fulfilling needs that many people



would not like to give up. So our approach is to say, let's keep educational, health, housing and mobility advances, but mutualize them so their functioning becomes compatible with the survival of the planet. At the same time, we define ourselves as post-capitalist, because we focus on the creation of the models, rather than focusing on resistance and struggle 'against'.

RK: How does one get from where we are to your ideal?

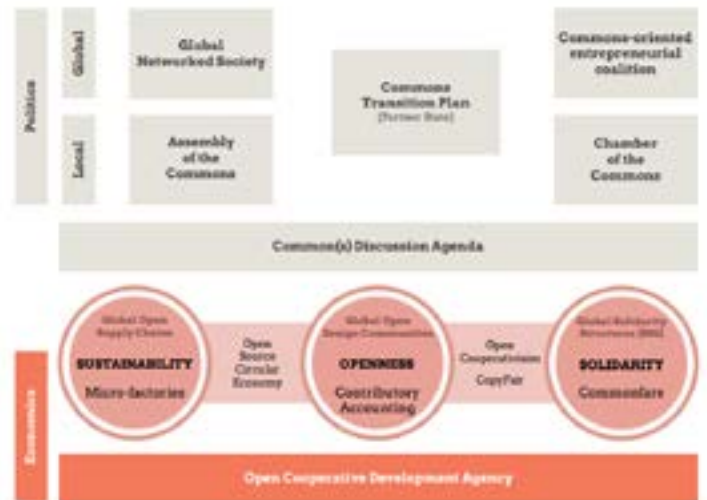
MB: That is a difficult question. Our strategy is that of a relentless interweaving of projects and people, and to increase the level of understanding and mutual organization. The idea is that, as the mainstream disintegrates in stages, the alternatives will also strengthen in social and political power and become powerful attractors.

We see the commoner – the person who contributes to common social objects, defends what he/she loves, and fights for transformation in societal institutions so that they serve these commons – as the new subject. We believe there is a multitude of them, once they stop regarding themselves as labor dependent on capital, but as commoners constructing their own livelihoods – disregarding the beast, or using it where they can if it fits their interest, and struggling against it when they must.

Right now, the nation-state is no longer a key instrument of change, so we must focus on building transnational open source communities of collective intelligence, i.e. a noopolitik for the noosphere.

We must also build transnational entredonneurial coalitions, i.e. livelihood organizations that permit social reproduction around our commons, and cosmo-local production units that are socially pre-distributive, and ecologically regenerative . But there is no blueprint as yet for any final showdown. However, this illustrates our approach quite well, I

think:



RK: What current movements might support your vision?

MB: I think there are three powerful 'currents' that are converging, consisting of many different movements and projects. One is the movement to share knowledge and things, i.e. both the open source movements but also the genuine 'sharing' movements. The second are all the people that are caring for and fighting for the environment and the planet. And finally, the movements for fairness, equality, solidarity, cooperativism.

The challenge is that they all have to come together. Equality and ecology are very closely linked since the more unequal a society is, the more intensely the rulers will go beyond planetary boundaries while competing with their peers. Equality will insure a softer descent, and a faster healing of the planet after the inevitable catastrophes that awaiting in the coming decades.

Finally, there is absolutely no way we can solve these two first issues without an intense mutualization of knowledge and resources. If the solutions remain privatized and subject to profit, we will not be able to save ourselves, either. For me, the work we are doing is to provide a possible integrative narrative



so that a lot more mutual coordination can occur, which can replace the industrial society narrative of labour vs capital. Right now, all that needs to happen is happening, but at tiny scale, too slowly, and with a huge fragmentation of effort. The more we can see ourselves in a common story, involved in a convergent structural effort to change the very DNA of our societies, the more we can mutually coordinate and the faster we can grow to the scale needed to tackle the global emergency.

RK: How do you define the current crisis in world affairs, its causes, etc?

MB: It's a converging of three social ills, as I suggested in previously, but essentially: 1) we have a system that erroneously believes that that natural resources and the planet's beings are abundant, and resources that can be over-used for short-term human profit 2) we have a system that believes that what is naturally abundant and shareable, essentially human culture and knowledge, should be made artificially scarce and that sharing is a criminal activity; hence capitalism is not just a scarcity-allocation system, but a scarcity-engineering system; 3) finally, all of this is done by increasing social and economic inequalities and creating general insecurity as concerns livelihoods. If all this is true, it means our problems are really systemic. It will not be sufficient to reject only capitalism, as the most recent instantiation of class society and its ills, but also to reject class society as such, and recreate a higher, more complex instant of more egalitarian social forms based on ecological balance and massive mutual learning for collective intelligence.

RK: List your major publications for the curious.

MB: I have books in 3 languages so far. The Dutch, *De Wereld Redden*, and the French *Sauvez le*

Monde, both subtitled 'With p2p and the commons to a post-capitalist society'. These are easy to read conversations explaining our historical, philosophical, economic, political and even spiritual ideas and proposals about societal change.

Our English book is more academic and focuses on the economic aspects, i.e. the interaction of the commons with transformed market forms that can work for the commoners and their livelihoods, sharply distinguished from the dominant and extractive models of the so-called 'sharing economy'. We explain alternative forms such as open cooperatives and platform cooperatives; you can find it here.

Next spring (2019), Westminster Press will present our ideas in more detail. We have lots of smaller booklets, based on our collective research with the P2P Lab – see our library here.. If you want to know about such things as 'value sovereignty', 'open and contributive accounting', public-commons cooperation and the like, this is the place to be. Our P2P Lab is very active in researching our hypotheses in real life with real communities through action-research, with numerous peer-reviewed scientific articles, see at here.

RK: Is there a website you might wish to provide readers?

MB: Yes, the main reference is our wiki (<https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/>) which also links to our blog (<https://blog.p2pfoundation.net/>). For more easy to read material on the commons transition, we have developed a specialized site (<http://primer.commonstransition.org/>).

RK: How can the interested support your project?
MB: People complain that it is hard to help us but that is essentially because we are an organized network rather than a network or organization, and this means



that we do not have much hand-holding capacity. Essentially, if you agree to be of service through the co-construction of a knowledge commons, and willing to contribute to our resource base, you will find a way first to connect, and later, to create a livelihood around this passionate engagement.

RK: What are the achievements of P2P so far?

MB: You have to remember, we work in the background as a knowledge sharing facilitator rather than as a active social movement ourselves, so we help others in their achievements. But we have a well-used and growing knowledge base that has accumulated 60 million viewers and reach at least 20,000 people per day, all influencers in their own right. We have consulted with the Ecuadorian government on building national knowledge commons, and with the city of Ghent, on a 'commons transition plan'. We have been invited to some influential spaces like the Vatican, China, and various political movements. We were cited a few years ago as the most important influence on Barcelona's co-working spaces. We have worked a lot of converging social movements, such as coops and commons, with real progress in countries like the UK and France. Concrete local initiatives, such as the Commons Transition Coalition in Melbourne, and various 'assemblies of the commons' in France, are closely related to our ideas. We also have failures, such as for example our work in Ecuador, where the government just filed our recommendations and went for an even more extractive policy; or Syriza, which bowed to the Troika.

Right now, I am very enthusiastic about my association with the cooperativist/mutualist movement SMart, which is focusing on organizing solidarity for autonomous workers (freelancers) and with the interest of indigenous movements, who are using our ideas in their study groups, for example in

Taiwan. Some of our associates have been locally active, for example in creating production coops in Ecuador. We are a tiny speck in terms of 'material' influence but in terms of post-socialist ideas, I think we are an important actor for social change movements to listen to.

RK: What is your best guess scenario for the imminent future of world society?

MB: I discussed this in a previous question where I outlined a few scenarios. Our best hope is to strengthen the social forces aligned with p2p and the commons during the brief intermezzo in which our civilization prepares for major catastrophes, and to have enough seed forms ready to attract those that will be vitally interested in resilient economic and social alternative forms. Things will probably get a lot worse before they can get any better, but we hope the 'imaginal cells' of the commons will be a significant factor in diminishing the amount of damage in the transition period.

RK: How do race, class, gender, and culture, figure in your project?

MB: Today we have a tension with different kinds of commons. Traditional commons are numerous, but under full onslaught of capitalism, while digital and urban commons in the advanced countries are strengthening. Finding a connection between both is crucial to strengthen the efforts in the Global South. In western countries, there is a tension between the civic commons of what Thomas Piketty calls the 'brahmin left', i.e. citizens with high educational but low financial capital, who are pioneering many of the urban commons, and the even more numerous migrant commons, which are limited to ethnic and religious communities. Again, vital connections will have to be created.



Culture is crucial, because while the contemporary commons are by definition open and self-governed, affinity-based clustering (the commons' version of the filter bubble) isn't always integrating communities. But the strength of the commons is that it creates a common endeavour around shared objects that are meant to be shared, which allows to significantly overcome identitarian conflicts. More significantly, the commons are an important social-economic paradigm to massively recreate local value streams and thus to create meaningful activities for those excluded. We have an answer to Trumpian rage that is not rooted in protectionism and nationalism, but in transnational, trans-local cooperation at the immaterial level, and on relocalization production at the bioregional level.

All these changes are undergirded by cultural evolution towards a re-strengthening of cooperation after the atomisation of the neoliberal age. We need to work on a culture of cooperation for a 'more-than-human-commons' (i.e. Zack Walsh in the Arrow), that has strong spiritual and ecological aspects, and overcome the subject-object split introduced by the Enlightenment, but without abandoning the aspirations for human equality.

The last thing we want is to replace a dysfunctional capitalist world order with a return of a much worse class exploitation. I think of the commons transition as the creation of global affinity tribes, in alignment with a return to local affectivity, an 'archaic revolution' as Terence McKenna put it, which combines high touch with 'convivialist' high-tech enabled collective intelligence. P2P is not a reactionary utopia towards a lost golden age or to earlier forms of class exploitation, but a brahmin-worker synthesis of a new cycle of post-civilizational development.

RK: Is the project Eurocentric?

MB: The project is world-centric, while recognizing a plurality of possible commonwealths adopted in various cultural, territorial and trans-local contexts. But it is rooted in the emancipatory traditions that developed in the historical West, and which can connect with similar traditions that developed in other cultural and historical contexts – something I call 'neotraditional' on occasion.

As suggested by William Chandler in *Beyond Civilization*, these are all markers of a deep trend to overcome the trauma of class-based civilization, the cycle of which must end if we are to preserve the very planet we live on. The current trends towards overcoming racialization, gender exploitation, and for seeing humans as equipotentially enabled contributory peers, corresponds to the deep human yearning to have warm affective communities in balance with the environment and all beings, in which everyone is recognized for their contribution to the common good. This is a profound aspiration of human beings, even in currently non-egalitarian cultures. I will never forget that the most enthusiastic responses to my ideas were in the indigenous communities of Ecuador.

Source: <https://www.vividsydney.com/speaker/michel-bauwens>





National News

SAFTU's Working Class Summit: building solidarity to address the climate crisis

Courtney Morgan and Aisha Domingo

On the 21-22nd of July, the South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU) held South Africa's first Working Class Summit. This Summit took place in Soweto and was attended by members of trade unions as well as over 130 civil society organisations. This historic event was an attempt at uniting the working class, by encouraging discussions between civil societies groups, workers from both the formal and informal sectors as well as the unemployed.

Over the 2-day summit, a host of issues were discussed, all of which affect the working class. The issues ranged from climate and environment to landlessness and student struggles. It was a space for the most vulnerable and disenfranchised of society to have a voice, and was also an opportunity to confront the ills of capitalism. The aim of the summit was to embark on the first phases of building a united working class mass movement which is independent of any political party, working toward a more democratic and free country. This kind of movement is necessary in the current political climate with the Ramaphosa presidency committing to carbon-based, exploitative neoliberal policies which will only further entrench current inequalities and increase poverty rates in South Africa.

This commitment to a carbon-intensive economy also implicates the country in the disastrous effects of climate change we are experiencing. The drought in the Cape, flooding across Kwa-Zulu Natal and other extreme weather conditions can be blamed on the carbon-intensive, capitalist systems, globally.

RESOLUTIONS

The summit committed to the basic principles of being anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-patriarchic and anti-xenophobic. It was also agreed that the ills that the working class experiences can be attributed to the capitalist system. Because of this, it is imperative that this movement is people-driven and must take a bottom-up approach.

One of the plans that came out of the summit was that working class assemblies should be held around South Africa in various communities to try and establish connections and to unite struggles across sectors. It was also affirmed that it was important for members of the trade unions to be leaders in communities and active in community struggles.

WHAT WAS THE PROCESS?

The summit began with the adoption of the agenda, which was a very long process as there was a bit of back and forth on the topics of the mini-conferences. The mini conferences were initially set up as:

1. Economic crisis and threats to workers;
Corruption in the private and public sector
2. Free decolonized, quality public education
3. Free National Health Service
4. Decent and affordable housing and service delivery
5. The Land Question
6. Struggle for an Egalitarian society
7. The climate and environment
8. Mining affected communities
9. Informal Economy
10. International Solidarity

After the welcoming by Nomvule Ralarala from the Housing Assembly and a keynote address by the SAFTU President, Comrade Mac Chavalala, the mini conferences were discussed and debated. Some of the conferences were merged, such as the housing and land conferences, with 7 conferences remaining



in total. The Chairpersons and rapporteurs for each conference were determined and the summit then broke off into each mini conference.

The following is a report back from the Climate and the Environment conference:

[Full report back from all mini conferences can be accessed at: <https://saftu.org.za/working-class-summit-21-22-july-2018-soweto/>]

Climate and the environment



This conference sees capitalist accumulation as the underlying cause of the climate crisis due to its excessive emissions of greenhouse gases. There is a need for a deep just transition to a cleaner environment; the working class must actively take part in this transition in order to shape it according to working class interests. This process needs to mobilize for a deep transformation of the current economic system while also raising workers' shop floor concerns. This transformation should be toward a low-carbon economy, and one where poverty and inequality are eliminated, and issues of environmental sustainability are addressed. The demands are:

- We must phase out fossil fuels and other high-emitting industries. We must find a way to reconcile the interests and concerns of workers in the related industries, and the concerns of the working class who are facing the effects of

climate change. We must take charge of the way forward.

- The conference supports the Million Climate Jobs campaign- to create decent and permanent jobs that assist with climate solutions. The conference does not endorse “green growth” which they see as a capitalist venture aimed at expansion.
- Public jobs must not be turned into commodities to be bought and sold; we must resist privatisation and call for the social ownership of water, electricity supply and natural resources.
- We also need to establish a low-carbon transport system which will provide the working class with affordable, reliable, convenient and safe transport for them to access economic opportunities.
- The food production system needs to be people-centered and support smallholder farming. We need to be growing crops for food, not for commercial agriculture.

Apart from existing school feeding schemes, schools should also have food gardens growing healthy and nutritious food.

Apart from concrete resolutions and a declaration that came out of this summit, the 2-day engagement was also a reflection of the power that can be created when there is honest collaboration across sectors, and working class unity.



The Food Sovereignty Campaign

UN's 8th Harmony with Nature Interactive dialogue to celebrate Mother Earth Day

By Method Gundidza

In this recording, made on 23 April 2018, Method Gundidza, EarthLore's programme director, finds himself in New York speaking to heads of state and to the world at the UN's 8th Harmony with Nature Interactive dialogue to celebrate Mother Earth Day.

When Method moved to South Africa in 2008, his expectation was to lead a successful life as an accountant. Little did he know that his response to an advert for the position of Finance Manager of a small NGO working with rural farmers in Venda would be a huge turning point in his career. He discovered that his passion is the revival of traditional seeds and farming practices which is based on the indigenous understanding of how farming isn't an end in itself but a human activity that both derives and contributes to Earth's life supporting system. As he puts it in his UN presentation farming "... is about participating with humility in the dance of life; working in harmony with Nature; contributing to the food system of the land, and sharing with other species as they are part of the web of life."

Method felt compelled to go back to his roots in Bikita, Zimbabwe to implement what he had learned while working in Venda. This vitally important work involves accompanying rural farmers, mainly women, to become seed, food and economically sovereign. It recreates supportive, caring communities and reweaves the basket of life. It also leads to the recovery of "lost" indigenous seeds and ancient wisdom and knowledge, as well as the revival of associated rituals, like first fruits and rain ceremonies, and the restoration of sacred natural sites. All these elements have long been considered by indigenous people as very important elements of

the ecological governance of their territories.

Method is an Earth Jurisprudence graduate and views our Mother Earth as the source of everything that exists on this miraculous planet. He understands that Earth's natural lores govern creation in its entirety. This contrasts sharply with the anthropocentric world of our modern society, where human-made laws are rapidly leading to the devastation and destruction of our living planet. In this compelling presentation, Method shares his journey back to his Bikita roots and the rich fruits this is bearing.

Watch Method's input at this link: <http://webtv.un.org/search/part-2-interactive-dialogue-on-harmony-with-nature-during-the-commemoration-of-international-mother-earth-day-general-assembly-72nd-session/57757-99160001/?term=Interactive%20Dialogue%20on%20Harmony%20with%20Nature%20during%20the%20commemoration%20of%20International%20Mother%20Earth%20Day%20-%20General%20Assembly.%2072nd%20session&lan=english&sort=date>



Banned chemicals: what's all the buzz?

by Courtney Morgan



Image Source: <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-04-27-eu-to-ban-bee-killing-pesticides>

In April 2018, the 28 member states of the European Union voted in favour of a proposal to ban the outdoor use of 3 chemical insecticides; clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam. This particular make up of insecticide does not stay on the surface of the plant, but is incorporated into the tissue of the plant as it grows. This means that the chemical is present in the seed, as well as the leaves, pollen and nectar, affecting any insect that tries to eat the plant. These chemicals are also known to enter the water sources. Clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam are used as insecticides on cereal crops such as corn and barley, as well as sorghum, on potato crops and are also found in some treatments for animals to deal with fleas.

These insecticides have a similar chemical structure to that of nicotine and affect the nervous system of insects, and are particularly dangerous honey bees as they cause disorientation, decreases their resilience to diseases and in some cases can cause sterilization in male bees. Honey bees are integral to the pollination of the environment, being responsible for around three quarters of food crops in the world, and therefore are also integral to biodiversity which makes the use of these chemicals so concerning, and the banning of them key to not only the survival

of bees as a species but also an important win for the entire environment, including humans. Current research is also being done on the role of these chemicals in the decline of some small insect eating birds and bats.

Despite its effects on biodiversity, clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam are all yet to be banned to be in South Africa. Thiamex, which contains Thiamethoxam, is used on mangoes, grapes, apples and citrus to control mealy bugs, aphids and weevils. Imidacloprid is used in South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe on apples, citrus, potatoes and sugarcane. These pesticides are produced by big businesses such as Syngenta and Bayer, who deny its effects on bees and maintain that these chemicals are useful to farmers and are necessary for agricultural success. South Africa's large scale industrial wastage of water through commercial agriculture coupled with the use of contaminating chemicals as pesticides paints a bleak future for the country. We need to begin to pay more attention to the intricacies of the environment and the indirect biodiversity damage seemingly small acts can cause, especially in the face of decreased water availability and increased climate concerns. Finally, like many things, the decline in bee populations cannot be entirely blamed on these 3 chemicals, but the banning of these insecticides must be banned in conjunction with various environmental efforts such as the protection of bee habitats.

Going against the grain: launch of communal kitchen at Wits Food Sovereignty Center

by Courtney Morgan

On the 20th June 2018, COPAC, along with the Wits Citizenship and Community Outreach (WCCO) and Inala (a student organisation) held a small lunch to launch the communal kitchen at The



Sanctuary at Wits University. This kitchen is the first of 3 communal kitchens that the partners wish to establish, in the hopes of creating a Wits Food Sovereignty Center. This center will not only serve as a space for students affected by the hunger and accommodation crises to cook and consume their food in a dignified manner, but also as an eco-space from which lessons can be learnt. This space will house alternative energy sources, water harvesting as well as a number of food gardens.

The launch was attended by Wits management, WCCO staff, COPAC staff, as well as students who are involved in the running of the gardens and the center some of which are Inala members. The then Dutch Ambassador; Marisa Gerards who has made a significant donation to the building of the first kitchen was also in attendance. The money that her and her embassy donated allowed for the purchasing of kitchen appliances, which are now installed and being used. The first meal prepared in the newly equipped kitchen was a three course lunch which was served to the 25 guests at the launch. The meal was prepared by professional, award winning Chef Nompumelelo Mqwebu with the help of some volunteers who were keen to learn, which is very much in the spirit of what the communal kitchen is there for. Between meals there were presentations by various guests on what the aim of the center is, and thanks to those who have contributed thus far. There was also a spoken word performance by Mbali who not only entertained the guests but also provoked reflection on the relationship people have with the land, culturally and spiritually.

The meals prepared by Chef Nompumelelo were not only delicious, they were also unique and used indigenous vegetables in a creative way. The starter was Umlaqwa soup with ujeqe, which is a free range chicken soup with traditional steamed bread, with a vegetarian option of vegetable soup. This dish

was an amazing introduction to traditional methods of preparing food and the free range, hand raised chicken was a welcomed alternative to the chicken one gets in a supermarket. The main meal was amadumbe (indigenous potato) gnocchi with a trio of kudu, chakalaka and spinach with a vegetarian option of amadumbe stack with chakalaka, spinach and kale in peanut sauce. The main meal introduced guests to new flavours that perhaps they had never encountered, done in a way that incorporated both African and international methods. The amadumbe gnocchi was an especially interesting fusion, which shows the versatility of indigenous ingredients. The final course was a common African dish made into a dessert of Isijingi with berries in a red wine reduction.

This butternut dessert was an amazing end to a truly interesting menu. These dishes proved that indigenous ingredients can be just as tasty as imported, mainstream options in the supermarket.

This center aims to continue with this spirit with the growing of indigenous and organic vegetables in the vegetable gardens. At the center, the students are also encouraged to cook dishes which they grew up eating and to experiment with indigenous vegetables to make truly African meals which will also allow for cultural exchange and a space of knowledge sharing. This ties in perfectly with the overall narrative of Food Sovereignty which calls for control of and access to culturally appropriate and nutritious food.





The Worker Cooperative Campaign

Call to Cooperatives: Join the Solidarity Economy Movements Website



The Co-operative and Policy Alternative Centre has launched a Solidarity Economy Movements website to serve as a marketing platform for co-operatives in South Africa. The website is a useful tool for all cooperatives as they can register and create a profile of their cooperative, describe their activities and market their products and services online at no charge.

The aim of this website is to promote the Solidarity Economy by providing citizens who want to support cooperatives with a portal that allows them to search for cooperatives near them.

Based on the idea of the Solidarity Economy the aim is to transform production, consumption, savings and ways of living to sustain life and advance transformative values in their practices.

We invite all cooperatives to register on the website by following these simple steps:

1. Type the following address into your internet browser: www.sem.org.za
2. Click on the block in the top right corner '+ add your coop'

3. You will then be asked to register so type in your email address and choose a password
4. Fill out all your coop details and press 'submit'

Share this link with co-operatives you know so that we can strengthen this platform for building the solidarity economy in South Africa.

Profiling Co-operatives on the Solidarity Economy Movements Website

Ahithirheni Mqekwa Agricultural Primary Co-operative Limited

The Ahithirheni Mqekwa Agricultural Primary Co-operative limited is a primary cooperative that grows vegetables. They also made ploughing services available to new and emerging farmers for sale. Some of their produce include tomato, cabbage, okra, carrots, butternut, onion, green pepper, chinese spinach, sweet potatoes, chillies, beetroot and green beans.





The Manyeding Agricultural Cooperative

The Manyeding Agricultural Cooperative is a primary cooperative which sells vegetables, and their primary purpose is to be an example of how a local cooperative can indeed achieve economic empowerment and success for its members and beneficiaries as well as provide food through sustainable organic farming.





Activist Resources to Advance the Solidarity Economy from Below

Democratic Marxism Seminars available for viewing on Youtube

Reading Capital in the 21st Century
For this seminar, Alfredo Saad Filho delivered a three-day series of seminars and one public lecture on reading *Capital in the 21st century*.



The Youtube videos can be accessed at:
Day 1 - <https://youtu.be/gaRzk9kFvnA>
Day 2 - <https://youtu.be/1y8cVODDDQc>
Day 3 - <https://youtu.be/IKZMiwkiQJo>
Public lecture - https://youtu.be/qe_as3mSk08

Democratic Marxism Vol. 3: The Climate Crisis- South African and the Global Democratic Eco-Socialist Alternatives

This seminar was a presentation on some of the chapters in the 3rd volume of the Democratic Marxism book series, by the

authors; Jacklyn Cock, Patrick bond, Vishwas Satgar, Devan Pillay, Michelle Williams and Andrew Bennie.



The Youtube videos can be accessed at: https://youtu.be/0pN_iqudbkE

Climate Change, Transnational Class Analysis and Fossil Fuel Capitalism

This seminar was presented by William Carroll and JP Sapinski in the form of a three-day series and one public lecture.



and states. It must be noted that this network is used as a tool for communing characterised by the freedom of association and shared resources. The purpose is to create new configurations of trust-based tribes based on shared goals and objects which will operate trans-locally and trans-nationally for the overall goal of global transformation. It sees the need for open source communities where sharing of intelligence and knowledge is the norm. These transnational coalitions are needed for transformation, as the nation-state is no longer an instrument of change.

The Youtube videos can be accessed at:

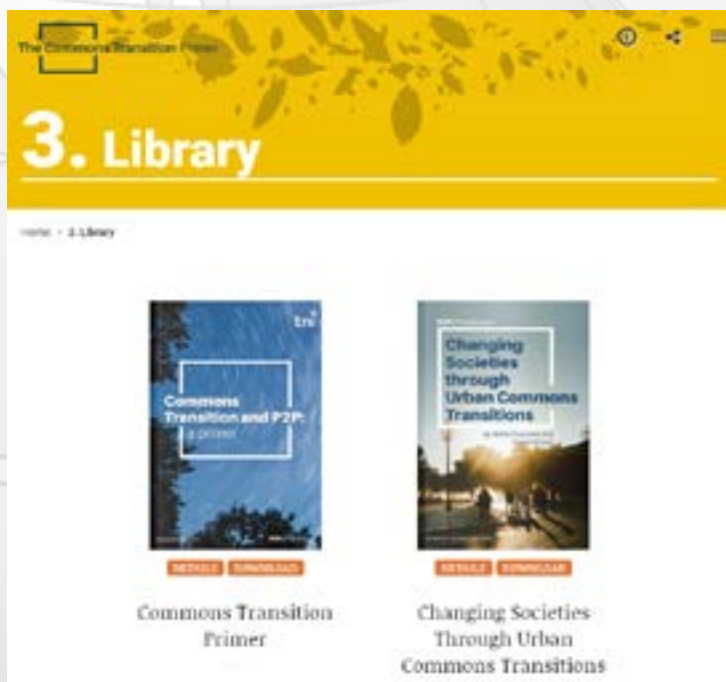
Day 1 - <https://youtu.be/pmce0iPmLjY>

Day 2 - <https://youtu.be/YEGsXw43rel>

Day 3 - <https://youtu.be/RjP7DYt7jEA>

Public Lecture: https://youtu.be/h8ou_csoRpU

Peer 2 Peer tools



The Library presents some of the research that the P2P Lab has undertaken on cooperatives and alternatives, it can be accessed at <https://primer.commonstransition.org/3-library>

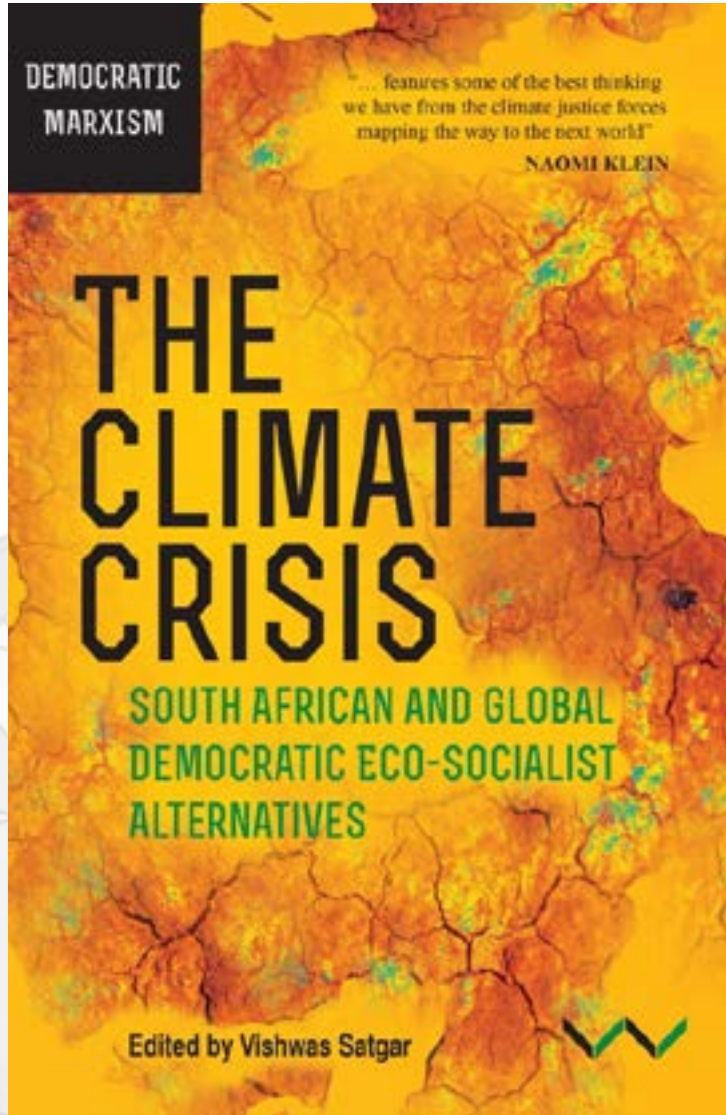
The P2P wiki documents various examples of peer to peer logic in social life, and can be accessed at <https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/>

The P2P blog, along with the wiki allows for easier access and easy to understand material on the commons transition, accessed at <https://blog.p2pfoundation.net/>

Peer 2 Peer is a platform that allows for 'networking freedom'. This practice, although not new, has been scaled up with the use of technology, creating somewhat of an 'open source' civic network and generative economic coalitions. These networks have capabilities that could potentially be more successful than the capacity of capitalist markets



The Climate Crisis: South African Global Democratic Eco-Socialist Alternatives free e-book



With the recent drought in the Western Cape, unprecedented storms and high rainfall causing flooding in Durban and other uncertain and unusual weather patterns in much of South Africa, it is increasingly clear that the crises brought on by climate change are becoming more severe, and if not addressed will bring even more destruction. It is imperative that we begin to explore alternative ways of living. This volume of the Democratic Marxism series explores eco-socialist alternatives that are emerging. It presents the thinking of leading climate justice activists, campaigners and

social movements advancing systemic alternatives and developing bottom-up, just transitions to sustain life. It is also an attempt at exploring the renewal of historical socialism as democratic eco-socialism to help address current challenges facing South Africa, and the world.

This book is available for free download at this link: <http://oopen.org/search?identifier=1000474>

Environmental Justice Atlas



In a highly extractivist world with a lot of our resources being used to fuel economies around the world, with unsustainable cycles of extraction, processing and disposal; environmental and social impacts are abundant. These impacts are often most devastatingly felt by marginalised groups, who are suffering away from the consumer eye. All around the world, there are indigenous, marginalised groups who are defending their land, water, air, forests as well as their livelihoods by opposing projects with adverse environmental impacts such as mining, fracking and dams. Although these struggles are happening every day, they are often silenced and not in the mainstream media.

The Environmental Justice Atlas which can be accessed at <https://ejatlas.org/> is an online resource which catalogues these struggles by documenting and following communities who are involved in environmental justice. It is a great tool for those work-



ing for environmental justice to join other groups and can be used to find case studies in order to hold states and big business accountable. It is also a tool for mobilisation, and allows for coverage of struggles which are not necessarily in the public eye.





contact us

We invite organisations and activists to make contributions to the Newsletter by writing stories, contributing photographs or cultural contributions, such as poetry, art, songs etc.

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All back issues of the Solidarity Economy News are available on our website.