

Agham Bayan

AGHAM AT TEKNOLOHIYA PARA SA REBOLUSYON

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The people struggle against climate imperialism

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The current state of the climate and environmental crisis

The current global environmental crisis is the devastation of global ecosystems and the intensification of global warming. The year 2023 was the hottest year on record since 1850. Meanwhile the years 2010 to 2022 was the hottest decade recorded since the same period.

Global warming, or the significant rise in average global temperatures, directly results from the massive release of greenhouse gasses (GHG), primarily carbon dioxide, into the atmosphere. This emission is mainly brought

about by the production and consumption of fossil fuel and the exploitation and destruction of the natural environment, such as the widespread deforestation and massive industrial processes of imperialist countries like the United States and China.

Carbon emissions started to accelerate in the late 1800s. In 1950, after World War II, the world emitted 6 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂). By 1990, this had almost quadrupled, reaching more than 20 billion tonnes. Emissions have continued growing rapidly; we now emit over 35 billion tonnes yearly.¹

Global warming has

resulted in an estimated increase in global temperature of 1.0 degrees celsius (°C) by 2017, relative to pre-industrial levels. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said that in 2023 the average near-surface temperature was 1.45 °C above pre-industrial levels. This is dangerously close to the critical 1.5 °C threshold that nations agreed to avoid stipulated in the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

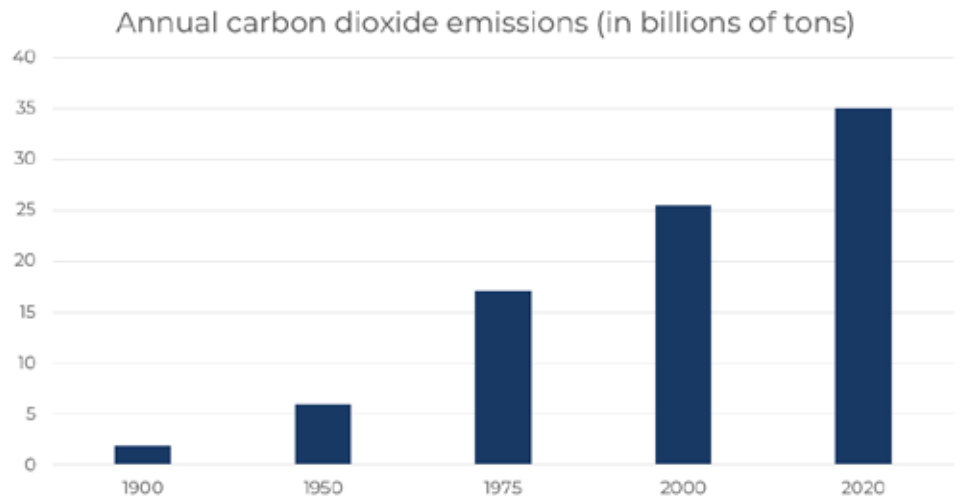
The frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including forest fires, floods, and droughts that global warming can bring, have increased in the past 50 years. Meanwhile, the global average sea level has risen by between 16 and 21 cm since 1900, at a rate of more than 3 millimeter (m) per year.

The biosphere is a network

of interdependent fauna and flora of which we humans are a part of and on which humanity fully depends. The interconnectedness of the biosphere means that when human activity has been damaging, negative consequences may cascade together as they are closely related, inter-acting, causing and exacerbating each other. That is because the natural environment is a set of systems whose various components support each other.²

Environmental changes can trigger positive feedback loops that amplify the initial impact. For instance, as global temperatures rise, polar ice melts, reducing the Earth's albedo and causing further warming. This creates a self-reinforcing cycle that accelerates climate change and contributes to planetary destabilization. Climate change, particularly global warming, further exacerbates the destruction of the environment and vice versa.

Environmental crisis encompasses a range of



interconnected issues that pose significant threats to climate, ecosystems, biodiversity, human health, and the overall well-being of the planet and humankind.

Forest degradation and biodiversity loss

Large-scale deforestation, driven by agriculture, logging, and urbanization, contributes to losing vital carbon sinks, disrupts ecosystems, and accelerates climate change. Forests play a crucial role in regulating climate by absorbing and storing carbon dioxide. Corporate plunder and devastation have contributed to a rapid decline in global biodiversity. Species are going extinct at an alarming rate, disrupting ecosystems and diminishing the resilience of natural systems.

Since 1990, some 420 million hectares of forest have been lost (around 10 percent of the total). As a result, the 20th and 21st centuries have seen significant declines in animal life—terrestrial, avian, and aquatic, big and small, everything from large primates to insects.³

The 2019 global assessment

report on biodiversity and ecosystem services showed that around 25 percent of species in assessed animal and plant groups are threatened; the extinction rate is tens and hundreds of times higher than it has averaged over the past 10 million years. More recently, the abundance of wild vertebrates (fish, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds) fell by 60 percent between 1970 and 2014.⁴

Resource depletion

Environmental degradation, including deforestation and resource depletion, can lead to shortage of essential resources. Over-exploitation of natural resources, such as water, fish, and minerals, leads to depletion and scarcity. This affects ecosystems and has socio-economic implications for communities dependent on these resources. This, in turn, can contribute to social and economic instability, with the potential for conflicts over dwindling resources, migration pressures, and the collapse of vulnerable communities. More so, depleted resources such as metal minerals



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deprive poor or underdeveloped countries of the material wealth needed for industrialization and production of basic products and services.

Waste and pollution

Improper waste disposal, including plastic waste, electronic waste, and hazardous materials, poses significant environmental challenges.

The world generates 2.01 billion tonnes of municipal solid waste annually, and at least 33 percent of this must be appropriately managed. Though high-income countries only account for 16 percent of the world's population, they generate about 34 percent or 683 million tonnes of the world's waste. Global waste is expected to grow to 3.40 billion tonnes by 2050.⁵ One of the biggest problems in waste management is plastics. Since 1950, the world has produced an estimated 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic.

Releasing pollutants into the air, water, and soil has caused widespread and detrimental effects on the environment and human health. Air pollution, plastic pollution, chemical contamination, and industrial waste contribute to various environmental problems.

Ocean Acidification

Increased carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere are causing the oceans to absorb more CO₂, leading to ocean acidification. This has harmful effects on marine life, particularly on coral reefs and shell-forming organisms. It will also significantly disrupt marine ecosystems, which may lead to shifts in species distribution, altered predator-prey relationships, and changes in overall ecosystem structure, particularly freshwater

ecosystems. This can have cascading effects on fisheries and the livelihoods of communities dependent on fishing and aquaculture.

Climate emergency and ecosystem collapse

It is a known fact that the environmental and climate crises have put the planet in a climate emergency, with the ecosystem on the brink of catastrophic collapse. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), tipping points are 'critical thresholds in a system that, when exceeded, can lead to a significant change in the state of the system. Often that change is irreversible.' Climate tipping points are elements of the Earth system in which small changes can kick off reinforcing loops that 'tip' a system from one stable state into a profoundly different state. The crossing of one tipping point could lead to the triggering of further tipping elements – unleashing a domino-effect chain reaction and could lead to some places becoming less suitable for sustaining human and natural systems.⁶

In the IPCC report last COP 28, they cited that climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe. Evidence of observed changes in extremes include heatwaves, heavy precipitation, droughts, and tropical cyclones. The IPCC also said climate change has caused substantial damage and increasingly irreversible losses in terrestrial, freshwater, cryospheric, coastal, and open ocean ecosystems. The extent and the magnitude of climate change impacts are larger than estimated in previous assessments.

This is strong evidence that biodiversity loss and habitat destruction, exacerbated by climate change, can result in the collapse of entire ecosystems. This significantly disrupts the ecological balance and affects ecosystems' services, such as pollination, water purification, and climate regulation.

Overall, it is a reality that the environment and its functions and services to people are deteriorating, particularly in the poorest countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Poor nations and poor peoples of the world are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and environmental destruction.

Given the dire situation, scientists have warned that the earth has declared that the world is now in a climate emergency. The World Scientists' Warning of a Climate Emergency 2022 reported that the consequences of global heating are becoming increasingly extreme, and outcomes such as global societal collapse are plausible and dangerously underexplored. Climate change has increased the frequency and intensity of severe weather events across the world.



This is likely because of a variety of interconnected processes, including an overall warming trend, changing precipitation patterns, rising sea levels, and changes in the jet streams. Disasters associated at least partially to climate change have been steeply trending upward.⁷

The world is in a climate emergency, and failing to reverse the current climatic changes will surely spell more ecological destruction, social hardships, and political turmoil worldwide.

Capitalism: inherently destructive, wasteful, and pollutive

Capitalism, the economic system where corporations compete for profits, often prioritizes short-term gains with no concern on the long-term impacts to ecological balance. Capitalists see nature and labor as primarily a source of wealth. It is the source of raw materials where human labor can be applied to produce commodities and reproduce capital, not as a means to meet basic human needs but to constantly expand and concentrate profits into the hands of a few. This has led to environmental devastation, such as pollution and resource depletion, that are not factored into the cost of production, resulting in destructive consequences for the natural environment. Capitalists have no qualms in exploiting and ravaging both nature and humans as long as this will lead to their aim of getting the maximum profit. The bigger the profit and the faster the accumulation, the better for the capitalists. The development of his tools, production systems, including science and technology, are geared towards this end. The relentless pursuit of economic dominance, driven by superprofits, is the main cause of the depletion

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Under monopoly capitalism, the world is extracting its natural resources more than the rate that the earth could replenish. The earth needs 20 months to regenerate our annual natural resource consumption.⁸ The insatiable greed for profit maximization, especially by multinational corporations, has led them to plunder new territories across the globe. The waste and emissions they create are often offloaded back to the environment which in turn alters the earth's geology and ecosystems.⁹

The capitalist drive for profits became even more extreme when capitalism reached its last stage – monopoly capitalism or imperialism. The great revolutionary Vladimir Lenin clearly pointed out that imperialism is the moribund stage of capitalism. Lenin identified the five key features of imperialism: monopolies dictate the global economy, the dominance of financial oligarchs, the export of capital, the economic division of the world among monopolies, and the territorial division of the whole world among the imperialist powers.



History of exploitation and destruction

Monopoly capital has a history of exploiting and depleting resources through deforestation, mining, and other extractive practices of their colonies and neo-colonies. These practices have led to habitat destruction, biodiversity loss, and soil degradation, exacerbating environmental crises globally. Industrialization associated with imperialism has led to the massive release of pollutants into the air, water, and soil, contributing to environmental pollution and long-term ecological damage in their home countries.

In the development of capitalism, science and technology were rapidly developed in order to improve economic production and gain advantage over their fellow competitors. During the 1700s, the steam engine was invented. The mechanical movement created by high-pressure steam generated from the burning of coal was exploited by the then rising industrial capitalists to hasten production and later, build railways powered by the steam engine to transport products. The

expansion of the use of the steam engine meant the expanded use and burning of coal – then already being burned to generate heat in colder climates – necessitated more coal mines, more workers to mine the coal, and an emerging class of workers in the factories to man the engines. By the late 1800s the expanding towns of London, Germany, France and the United States were reliant on the burning of coal as a key source of energy and fuel for their industries and transport. England held a particular edge in this regard with the vast sources of coal found in its Northern area. By the 1880s, coal-fired power plants were bringing light to the streets and homes in the U.K. and the U.S., and then later to power rail transport. Around this time, deteriorating air quality due to the burning of coal in the cities and towns of England was becoming a health concern coinciding with the common usage of terms like smog and pollution.

In the US, the 1850s saw the beginnings of the modern oil industry with the development of the first commercial, engine-drilled oil well. By the 1880s in Germany, developments on the internal-combustion engine led to the first commercial production of motor vehicles. The rise of the cheap, mass-produced motor car in the 1900s increased the demand for petroleum. This transition from coal to oil was further facilitated with the drilling of the first commercial oil wells in Iran. This in turn set off a century of imperialist exploitation of oil – and consequently, wars for control of said oil – in the Middle East. Just before the first inter-imperialist war, vast oil reserves were owned and exploited by newer forms of monopolies such as Anglo-Persian Oil Co. (the precursor of British Petroleum) and the Royal Dutch Shell in Europe,

and by Rockefeller's Standard Oil Co. in the US. During World War I, the armies of imperial powers were already replacing their coal-fired steamships with oil-powered ones.

Imperialism equals miseries and crises

Monopoly capitalism is seen as the root cause of the climate crisis. The advancement of science and technology and improvement in production systems, result in higher productivity (lower cost of production) and increasing profit for the capitalist but widespread poverty for the working class and oppressed peoples. There is a basic contradiction with the socialized character of production and the private accumulation of wealth. The Oxfam International 2024 report on inequality and global corporate power reveals that the world's five richest men have more than doubled their fortunes from \$405 billion to \$869 billion since 2020 while nearly five billion people have been made poorer. 148 of the world's biggest corporations together raked in \$1.8 trillion in total

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net profits in 2023. The report finds that for every \$100 of profit made by 96 major corporations, \$82 was paid out to rich shareholders. Meanwhile, people worldwide are working harder and longer hours, often for poverty wages in precarious and unsafe jobs. The wages of nearly 800 million workers have failed to keep up with inflation and they have lost \$1.5 trillion over the last two years, equivalent to nearly a month of lost wages for each worker.¹⁰

Monopoly capitalism logically leads to the concentration of economic power for the few while the overwhelming majority lives in despair and poverty. It continues to stagnate and buries itself in different crises – economic, social, political and environmental. Monopoly capitalism in its pursuit of profit needs to further exploit people and the planet. It becomes more rapacious in its further plunder of the world's natural resources at the expense of humankind.

With capital being re-invested into high technology under their control and disposal, monopoly capitalists are able to deplete and exploit resources at a faster rate than before. Beginning in the 1980s to 1990s, under the mantra of neoliberal globalization, the loosening of restrictions that protect labor and the environment coupled with the denationalization of economies of the semi-colonies and dependent countries give foreign monopoly corporations free rein and priority treatment to hyper-extract natural resources through deforestation, mining, land conversions, and such. This coincides with peak deforestation in the tropical forests of neo-colonies.

The world's remaining forests are disappearing at an unprecedented rate to make

way for monocrop mega-farms, industrial livestock facilities, and large-scale mining operations. Mega-factories and industrial agriculture are rapidly depleting and polluting water bodies that are vital resources to ecosystems and communities. The production centers of monopoly capitalism, along with the gas-guzzling machines that they unleash on the consuming public, are also releasing increasing amounts of toxins and greenhouse gasses to the planet's atmosphere.

In spite of the fact that the scientific evidence indicates the need for a 43% reduction in global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030 compared to 2019 levels to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees celsius, imperialist countries, particularly the US and China, continue their polluting ways. Monopolies wantonly plunder the environment to produce goods in excess and create voluminous waste materials that pollute the ecosystems and climate. Scientists have indicated that we will breach the 1.7 degree celsius increase in global temperatures by the 2050's with the production and consumption of fossil fuel products unabated as this will still be the primary source of energy until the 2040's.

According to a report published by the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), since 1998, a mere 100 companies in the world have been responsible for 71% of the global greenhouse gas emissions. It is no surprise that the mix of companies in this list is mainly dominated by the fossil fuel industry.¹¹

Military industrial complex and imperialist wars, bane to the environment and the people

The global military industry and

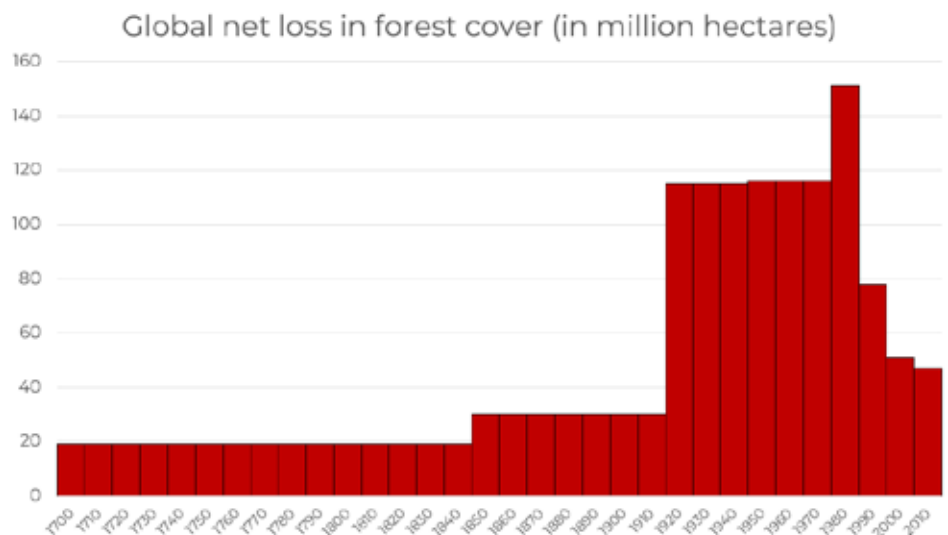
wars of aggression are another inherent feature of monopoly capitalism. Arms race and wars are being pursued by imperialist powers to control territories and resources for them to plunder and profit. Imperialist practices like colonization displaced indigenous populations from their lands, resulting in large-scale agriculture, mining, and environmental impacts such as deforestation, soil degradation, and water pollution. This is often accompanied by militarization and human rights violations.

Since the military-industrial complex continues to incite and fund wars for profit, wars of occupation and aggression are not being tackled as major sources of environmental destruction, carbon emissions, and wasteful resource usage. The military-industrial complex is still the largest consumer of fossil fuels and minerals, which are primarily being used to maim and kill people and destroy communities, infrastructures, and nations. Clearly this is an industry which serves no purpose for the development of society and humankind, yet the most supported by imperialist countries like the US and China.

Imperialist competition over strategic resources and geopolitical control has led to armed conflicts. Wars of occupation and military activities often result in environmental destruction, including deforestation, habitat destruction, and contamination from the use of weapons and explosives.

The US, which remains as the most powerful imperialist country, is also the number one polluter and aggressor in the world. Incomplete statistics showed that from the end of World War II to 2001, among the 248 armed conflicts that occurred in 153 regions of the world, 201 were initiated by the United States.¹² The US wars, including those it supported such as the ongoing Zionist invasion of Palestine, are the most destructive ever in human history.

The US Department of Defense is the largest institutional consumer of fossil fuels in the world. Based on the estimate by Watson Institute International and Public Affairs of Brown University, that between 2001 and 2017 with the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, the U.S. military emitted 1.2 billion metric tons of greenhouse gasses. More than 400 million metric



| War | Year | People killed, displaced | Environmental impact | Other impacts |
|----------------|-----------|---|--|--|
| US-Korean | 1950-1953 | More than 3 million civilians killed, 3 million displaced from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) | US military's germ warfare via planes, dropped large numbers of disease vectors that could cause plague, cholera, typhoid | Destroyed 8,700 factories, 5,000 schools, 1,000 hospitals, 600,000 homes |
| US-Vietnam | 1955-1975 | 2 million civilians killed, 3 million displaced | 350,000 tons of unexploded mines left by the US military in Vietnam | 3 million Vietnamese exposed to Agent Orange from US chemical warfare |
| US-Iraq | 2003-2011 | 200,000 - 250,000 civilian deaths | Over 3,400 tons of depleted uranium bombs exploded in Iraq; 25 million mines that need to be removed; Tigris and Euphrates rivers polluted with military waste | Massive destruction of public facilities, turning Iraq from one of the most developed to one of the poorest among Arab countries |
| US-Afghanistan | 2001-2021 | Over 100,000 civilians killed and injured, 10 million displaced | US military's use of depleted uranium bombs and mini nukes | Majority of population experiencing destitution and hunger |

Impacts on people and nations

The chronic plunder of the world's natural resources by monopoly capital, aggravated by war, the impacts of global warming, and pollution, have victimized poor communities many times over. The peoples and nations who have been historically oppressed and subjugated by monopoly capital are now suffering the brunt of the impacts of the climate crisis. The working class, peasants, and poor peoples can quickly attest to how rising food prices, falling wages, and extreme weather can wreak havoc on daily living. Even academics concur, as in 2019, a study by Stanford University found that "the poorest countries on Earth are considerably poorer than they would have been without global warming."¹⁵

Climate imperialism makes working and living conditions even more miserable especially for the working class. The International Labor Organization in 2019 recognized that "heat stress...is a serious problem for a large proportion of the world's 1 billion agricultural workers and 66 million textile workers, many of whom have to work inside factories and workshops without air conditioning, and for workers employed, inter alia, in refuse collection, emergency repair work, transport, tourism and sports."¹⁶

Urban heat islands created by heat absorption by buildings and roads, coupled with cramped and polluted housing with poor ventilation, create hell-like conditions for the world's urban poor especially during periods of intense heat. During periods of extreme rainfall, shanties built from light materials and on low-lying or high-risk areas are especially vulnerable to be washed out by floods or blown away by monsoon

tons of greenhouse gasses are directly due to war-related fuel consumption. The largest portion of Pentagon fuel consumption is for military jets.

In the table above are some examples of the environmental and human destruction caused by US wars after World War II.¹³

All imperialist countries are preparing for war. Total global military expenditure increased by 3.7 per cent in real terms in 2022, to reach a new high of \$2240 billion. Military expenditure in Europe saw its steepest year-on-year increase in at least 30 years. The three largest spenders in 2022—the United States, China and Russia—accounted for 56 per cent of the world total.¹⁴

The proxy war in Ukraine between the US-NATO forces and

Russia and the skirmishes between China against the US and its allies in the South China Sea, all have the potential to become a direct shooting war between the biggest imperialist powers.

As history shows us, imperialism means wars. While this leads to the massive deaths and widespread destruction, imperialism also compels the people to resist imperialist aggression and to fight for national and social liberation, as seen in world history. The revolutionary history of the USSR led by Lenin and Stalin, and China under the leadership of Mao have shown us how to take advantage of imperialist wars as an opportunity to break free from the shackles of imperialism and tread the path of socialism.

winds.

Monopoly capital uses the climate crisis to overhaul and wrest greater control over the vital mining, power, and transport industries. The greater demand for so-called transition metals (nickel, copper, lithium, cobalt, graphite, manganese, and rare earth elements) needed for battery, solar panel, and electronics production is spelling more misery for mine workers and the environment. In the Philippines, tens of thousands of jeepney drivers and their families face losing their livelihoods when traditional jeepneys are eased out of the streets in the name of green transport and transport modernization.

For the rural poor, every day is a struggle to survive as farm lands are being carved out by big business, urban sprawl, and by the force of disaster, while chemicals from mining and industrial agriculture are bringing poison to crops, animals, and peoples. Indigenous peoples in particular experience the erosion of their cultural identity both by floods and neo-colonialism bearing the mask of climate solutions. Academics have noted the increase in land grabs by climate mitigation policies like biofuel plantations and REDD+.¹⁷

Neoliberal policies and false climate solutions

The problems of global warming, climate change and environmental collapse took a turn as a global concern starting in the 1970s, with the first Earth Day protest taking place in the US on April 22, 1970 as a reaction to the publication of research on and widespread concern of people on the impacts of pesticides and industrial toxins to human health and the environment. In 1972 the

first conference on environment and development was organized by the United Nations (UN) in 1972 and talked about chemical pollution, atomic bomb testing and whaling and created the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Stockholm Declaration that talked about concepts of sustainable development but with no real binding solutions.

The Rio Earth Summit in 1992 did not curb monopoly capitalism's ravaging thirst for resources for its own gains. Poverty, social inequity, and imperialist control of natural resources persisted. While the framework agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) signed in 1992 includes such principles as common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR) and respective capabilities, the precautionary principle to anticipate, prevent or minimize the causes of climate change and mitigate its adverse effects, and the principle of a right to sustainable development for all, manipulation by imperialist countries and big private monopolies in successive negotiations and annual Conferences of Parties (COP) have rendered it ineffective. Carbon emissions and global temperatures continue to rise, and we have lost biodiversity and witnessed the destruction of entire communities since the climate talks began.

Imperialist countries use COP processes to promote false solutions for the climate crisis, such as clean coal, nuclear power, and big dams as clean technologies. Since the institutionalization of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, carbon offsets through corporate market mechanisms and profit-making financial instruments like carbon trading and REDD have given monopoly capital a profitable way out of taking responsibility for the



climate and environmental crisis which they themselves created. The 2015 Paris Agreement virtually gave a free pass to major polluters, namely multinational fossil fuel corporations, the global military industrial complex, and countries like the US, China, European Union, Russia and Japan, to operate under a "business as usual" scenario under voluntary commitments for emissions cuts, climate financing, technology transfer, and policy reforms on climate change.

The COP processes and their false market-based solutions have only led to more biodiversity loss, forest degradation, and displacement of indigenous peoples. These efforts are all at the expense of the environment, communities, and peoples.

The latest COP28 global stocktake highlights the need to cut global greenhouse gas emissions by 43% by 2030 to limit global warming to 1.5°C. However, the parties are not on track to meet their Paris Agreement goals. Efforts towards phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies and transitioning away from fossil fuels

are being pushed, but developed countries with the greatest historical and moral responsibility to take action are not taking the lead.

At the COP28, the global loss and damage fund, projected as the primary focus of the climate talk, fell far short of the much-needed support that third-world countries needed to address the climate change impacts. Initially, polluting imperialist countries committed a meager over \$400 million to the fund, which represents a mere drop in the bucket. It is estimated that up to \$387 billion is needed annually for developing countries to adapt to climate-driven changes, the initial commitment just 0.1% of the real annual budget needed for loss and damage.

Imperialist countries use COP processes to promote false solutions such as clean coal, nuclear power, and big dams. They profit from carbon trading, REDD, and the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net-Zero, leading to more biodiversity loss and forest degradation, indigenous displacement, and pollution. This is all at the expense of the environment, communities, and people.

Much as the world's wealthiest are using different multilateral bodies and agreements like the UN and the COPs to maneuver their way into cementing their economic interests. The UN clearly is an imperialist institution that manipulates and dictates the climate talks to push the neoliberal agenda and greenwashing of imperialist countries and their giant corporations.

However, civil society groups, people's organizations, and poor countries have repeatedly exposed imperialist countries as the real climate crisis perpetrators. Climate activists and people's

organizations have consistently conducted protests and mobilizations inside and outside the formal negotiation tables of COP to expose its chicanery and imperialist schemes.

Struggle for social justice, defeat imperialism, and strengthen international solidarity to achieve climate justice!

The global climate justice movement right now is facing so many challenges. As the imperialists try to cover up their criminal acts against the environment and the people, they simultaneously deceive, derail, and misdirect the climate justice movement. They tried to make the issue of climate crisis as supra-class issue, meaning that it emanates from a society that is not divided among classes, with the absence of contradictions between exploiters and the exploited, and denies the acute class struggle between the few billionaires wallowing in obscene level of wealth and the billions of working people suffering in extreme poverty and misery. Monopoly capital and their lackeys promote ideas that the climate crisis can be solved just by mending the ways of individuals, big corporations to be mindful of the environment, use of modern technologies, and reforms in government institutions both at the national and international level.

Imperialists try to drive a wedge between the working-people by selling schemes that the climate justice and environmental movement are exclusive to other democratic rights and demands of the people such as the right to job security, higher wages, land reform. They argue that the fight for national and social liberation are unrelated to the environmental and climate justice movement.

Imperialists use paid civil society groups, NGOs, and sometimes anarchists to obfuscate the climate justice movement and to come up with false struggles. Sometimes in the extreme, they put up a fatalist concept that if the global movement fails to solve the climate crisis in the near future, humankind will meet its catastrophic end and society will be lost. They also promote ideas that the movement for climate justice is primary and it subsumes other people's struggle or national movements. Some propose further that for the climate movement to be able to achieve 'victory', we must have a centralized global justice movement. They are dreaming or waiting for a big global spontaneous movement (revolution) that they hope will change the balance of forces in favor of the people.

Given that monopoly capitalism brought about and further worsened the climate and environmental crisis, the real solution to the crisis is to overthrow imperialism. Jose Maria Sison, who is also the founding chairperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has clearly pointed to the relation and the interconnections of the struggle for climate justice and the fight



against imperialism. He aptly said that *“the climate crisis is not just some transient problem but has become almost as wired into the imperialist system as its other fundamental self-contradictions such as financial crises, wars, fascism and national oppression. It may well be an important arena in the forthcoming people’s battles against imperialism...The global struggle for climate justice is interconnected with the global struggle for social justice, with a common enemy in monopoly capitalism and the imperialist powers as the ultimate causes of climate and social injustice. The real solutions to the climate crisis, and the economic, financial, political and social crises that are intertwined with it, lie in the hands of the people and movements that are struggling to resist imperialist control and plunder of the world, and which are seeking alternatives to the rotten system of global capitalism.”*

Sison explained that *“the people should struggle against imperialism, and for climate justice, social justice and democracy on all fronts: through mass campaigns and mobilizations to defend specific rights and win specific reforms within the system, and through national mass movements that can install new governments and build alternative systems based on the people’s democratic power. As people’s struggles for national liberation and social emancipation advance, draw from each other’s strengths and gain victories, we gain more ground in resolving the ecological and social crises in significant stages.”*

Part for struggle for reforms is maximizing parliamentary efforts towards concrete adaptation plans, ambitious emissions

reductions targets, moratoria on new fossil fuel projects, cutbacks on military spending to finance green initiatives, debt forgiveness for the Global South, reparations and obligatory support from the historically emitter countries, and a working for just and socially responsible transition which ensures to protect the rights and welfare of the working class.

This can and should, of course, be augmented by meta-legal pressure which in some countries and communities involves armed struggle. These campaigns and reforms will surely strengthen the people’s movement in eventual seizing political power from the state. This is simultaneously in having a strong international solidarity with the anti-imperialist line at its main principle.

In the semi-colonial, semi-feudal Philippine society, the climate justice and environmental movement is vibrant and developing. There are several victories on the ground that the environmental movement was able to stop big hydro dams, large-scale mining, massive reclamation, and nuclear power



plants. These environmental campaigns against destructive projects are usually linked to opposing neoliberal policies of the government which basically aims to privatize, deregulate and liberalize the Philippine industries and economy. The movement was also being raised and linked in defense of basic human rights and against the fascist repression being done by the reactionary Philippine government. The demand for resource conservation, environmental protection and ecological rehabilitation goes hand in hand with the demand for genuine land reform, national industrialization and the resolution of civil war in the country by addressing its root causes.

The most effective way of conserving natural resources, protecting the environment, opposing environmental destruction and plunder, and even rehabilitating the degraded ecosystems are being done by the revolutionary groups such as the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) with their revolutionary armed group the New People’s Army (NPA) and revolutionary front the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

We may say that the Philippine environmental movement is one of the most vibrant and strongest in the world. At the heart of these environmental movements, whether in the different arena, legal and illegal, armed and unarmed, are the working class particularly the workers, peasants, urban poor, and the indigenous peoples.

Resolve the crisis, fight for a socialist future

We must work towards a socialist future if we want to genuinely resolve our ecological crisis at its

roots. The struggle for the complete overthrow of imperialism has been a protracted and arduous one. In neo-colonies, particularly those most vulnerable to the climate crisis, people have no choice but to struggle to fight imperialist dominance and control over their country. Every territory, economic, and political power that the people can wrestle from the imperialists and their lackeys is a contribution in weakening and a step toward defeating monopoly capitalism.

The proletariat and the people of occupied nations and neo-colonies have the highest stake to fight for environmental and climate justice. The proletariat who are the most exploited and oppressed under capitalism will benefit most in advancing the climate justice and environmental as these will strengthen the link and deepen the understanding that fighting for social liberation such as ending the unbridled exploitation of workers by capitalist comes hand in hand in stopping the wanton exploitation and devastation of the environment. In occupied nations and neo-colonies, the climate justice movement is important in strengthening the fight for self-determination and national liberation. Environmental movement is an important part of the struggle for resource conservation and against corporate plunder.

In the Philippines, India, Kurdistan, and Columbia, communist parties are leading armed revolutions through protracted people's war. Communist parties in these countries for decades have successfully organized their peoples to take up arms to fight for their democratic rights and national liberation.

In the Philippines, the CPP-NPA-NDF have established

their own government in the countryside, the Peoples' Democratic Government. It implements their revolutionary policies in their areas which include environmental protection and resource conservation. Commercial logging and big mining are prohibited in the controlled areas. The NPA has a long record of armed actions against big multinational corporations such as Sumitomo of Japan, global mining giant Glencore, multinational company Del Monte and Dole and their local partners ravaging the environment and violating the rights of the communities. An example of this is the attack by the NPA on October 3, 2011 against the largest nickel mining operation in the Philippines which is owned by Nickel Asia and the Japanese owned Sumitomo and Mitsui & Co. About 200 NPA men and women descended on the mine and destroyed construction cranes, hauling trucks, barges and four buildings resulting in US\$11 million worth of damage. On October 6, 2020, the NPA attacked the agro-plantation operations of multinational Del Monte Philippines Inc. (DMPI) causing around US\$360,000 worth of damage. The punitive actions were done because of the violations of the company against the communities and the environment such as land grabbing, militarization, community displacement, pollution, and environmental destruction.

In India, Maoist party is supporting the people's campaign against mining. One of the strongest movements against big mining is being led by such groups. In the eastern Indian state of Chhattisgarh is one such area where indigenous people are defending themselves with arms in hand against expropriation of

Socialism under the leadership of the proletariat is the alternative to address the global environmental and climate crisis by ensuring public ownership and state control of systems of production for the benefit of the majority of the people and the environment.

their land by mining companies. Here the Maoists are active, also known as Naxalites.¹⁸

The armed revolution for national liberation and self-determination by the people of Palestine, Myanmar, Peru, and West Papua are also a struggle by the people and nations to wrest control over their territories and natural resources from the foreign invaders and imperialists.

While even imperialists still dominate the world, the people of Afghanistan, Iraq, Vietnam, Korea, and Cuba have shown us that imperialist powers like the US are paper tigers that can be defeated as long as the people are united and resolute in their fight against foreign aggression, and for national liberation. These victories significantly weaken the control of US imperialism in their countries and regions.

More importantly, these victories will inspire people and nations both in neo-colonies and imperialist countries to rise up and fight against monopoly capitalism. As the influence and control of imperialist power such as the US and China weakens, it will further corrode their power to control nations and the world.

Joma Sison noted that *"the struggle for climate justice and*

social justice and against imperialism is ultimately for the world's peoples to establish an alternative social system that is centered on the emancipation of the billions of toiling masses, and national liberation for countries long oppressed by the neocolonial system. Ending monopoly capital's dominance over the planet and people's lives ultimately means building a socialist future for all."

Socialism under the leadership of the proletariat is the alternative to address the global environmental and climate crisis by ensuring public ownership and state control of systems of production for the benefit of the majority of the people and the environment.

Previous socialist countries such as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, and China under the leadership of Mao Tse Tung have made strides in environmental protection and optimal use of natural resources. The early Soviet Union notably placed some importance into environmental preservation. Under Lenin, and interestingly in the context of an ongoing civil war, some key initiatives include the declaration of public ownership of land and water resources, and the establishment of dedicated committees handling environmental concerns. The establishment of *zapovednik* (nature reserves for research) was another initiative by the Soviet Union in the interest of protecting the environment. *Zapovedniki* served as reference points when it came to restoring resource extraction areas to their natural state.

In the 1960's, under Mao's leadership China has always emphasized the use of mass mobilization campaigns to resolve

environmental problems such as flood control, drought, and deforestation. Even in the early years of socialism in China, the country was able to build dams to provide irrigation to drought stricken areas, increase fertility of the soil using indigenous materials, more so in just a few decades and was able to develop China into a progressive and self-reliant economy by 1970's. Cuba has also presented itself as a role model in handling climate change in recent years, particularly for climate-impacted countries. Their *Tarea Vida* or Project Life initiative is a century-long plan to tackle the effects of climate change, involving nature-based solutions such as mangrove planting to keep coastal communities protected, climate education initiatives, as well as relocation programs for communities that will be underwater due to rising sea levels within the next few decades.

We have the valuable historical experiences and lessons of the past and the modern technologies that can be used in mitigating and addressing the global climate crisis. In addressing climate change impacts, ecological restoration while wisely utilizing natural resources for the benefit of the nation and people, there should be a genuine proletarian party to lead in pursuing socialism to the end; in every national effort, whether in politics or economy, mass mobilization (of the people, by the people, and for the people) is the key to make it successful; and science will be the guidance for all of our actions.

In this way we can aptly apply what Marx said in Capital Volume III of our responsibility to the future generations. He noted that, *"Even an entire society, a nation, or all simultaneously existing societies taken together,*

are not the owners of the earth. They are simply its possessors, its beneficiaries, and have to bequeath it in an improved state to succeeding generations as boni patres familias [good heads of the household]."

Yet again, the task at hand is to weaken and eventually defeat imperialism. As Jose Maria Sison said, *"We can be certain that the proletariat and people in the imperialist countries will carry out all possible forms of struggle to win the battle for democracy against imperialism and all reaction, prevail over the worsening crisis of capitalism, end the rule of unbridled neoliberal greed and fascism and the threat of inter-imperialist wars and to aim for the victory of socialism. Ending monopoly capital's dominance over the planet and people's lives ultimately means building a socialist future for all."* ■

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Demokratikong rebolusyong bayan, ang natatanging sagot sa krisis sa kalikasan sa Pilipinas



WALANG MAAASAHAN ang sambayanang Pilipino sa kasalakuyang sistemang malakolonyal at malapyudal sa Pilipinas, at sa pandaigdigang sistema ng imperyalismo, sa usapin ng kalikasan.

Simula't sapul, nakabatay ang pagtakbo ng imperyalismo sa tuluy-tuloy na pandarambong sa kalikasan. Kasabay nito, pinipiga ng imperyalismo ang lakas-paggawa mula sa manggagawa at masang anakpawis para magkamal ng supertubo. Sa mata ng mga imperyalista at malalaking korporasyon, ang ating mundo, ang sari-saring uri't klase ng buhay at likas-na-yaman na makikita rito, ay walang iba kung hindi isang walang-hanggang balon ng materyales at lakas-paggawa, at basurahan para sa mga produkto't gulgol ng labis-na-produksyon.

Noong dekada '70, tulak ng malawakang pagkilos ng mamamayan sa iba't ibang bahagi ng mundo, napilitan ang mga imperyalistang institusyon na pag-usapan ang lumalalang krisis sa kalikasan. Ngunit sa mahabang

panahon, walang binunga ang kanilang mga kumperensya at pagpulong kung hindi ang mga bagong lapit at patakaran ng imperyalismo para pagkakitaan ang krisis. Lalo pang kumapit sa kinakalawang na makinarya ng merkado ang mga imperyalistang bansa, at nilako sa mamamayan ng daigdig ang mga huwad na reporma at pekeng solusyon. Imbis na harapin ang ugat ng pagkawasak ng ating kalikasan — ang labis-na-produksyon sa ilalim ng imperyalismo — tinuloy lamang ng mga imperyalista ang kanilang pagbabaluktot ng kalikasan para makapaglikha ng labis-na-halaga. Nagkaroon lamang ng luntiang belo ang pandarambong, pangangamkam ng lupa, at pagsasamantala sa mga manggagawa; walang pundamental na pagbabago ang nangyari, at hanggang sa ngayon, tuloy pa rin ang paghihikahos ng sangkatauhan.

Sa mga kolonya't malakolonya kagaya ng Pilipinas, nasasaksihan ang mga pinakamasahol at pinakamalalang

manipestasyon ng ganitong klaseng pandarambong at pagsasamantala. Mula noong unang bahagi ng nakaraang siglo — kung kailan nagsimula ang kolonyalismong US sa ating bansa — tinatansang aabot sa 15 milyong ektarya (katumbas ng kalahati ng sukat ng buong kalupaan ng Pilipinas) ng kagubatan ang nawala sa kamay ng mga papet na rehimen at mga kumpanya sa pagtotroso. Sa mga nagdaang dekada, labas-pasok ng Pilipinas ang mga malalaking kumpanya sa pagmimina, dala ang tone-toneladang yamang-mineral para sa ibang bansa. Sa larangan ng agrikultura, pinalaganap ng imperyalismo ang labis-na-paggamit ng artipisyal na binhi, pestisidyo at abono na humantong sa paghina ng sustansya ng lupa at naglagaysa panganib sa kalusugan ng mga magsasaka. Ginagawang tambakan ng basura ang ating bansa sa delubyo ng mumurahing labis-na-produktong inilalako ng mga dayuhang korporasyon, at naiiwan na lang sa Pilipinas ang mga bundok ng basurang

panganib sa komunidad at sa kapaligiran. Hanggang sa mga di-umanong “sustenableng” proyekto kagaya ng mga *hydroelectric dam*, *solar farm*, at *wind farm*, hindi pa rin ligtas ang mamamayang Pilipino sa pangangamkam ng lupa at pagkawasak ng kanilang mga kultura’t komunidad. Walang-habas na pagkalbo ng kagubatan, pagpatag ng kabundukan, paglason ng katubigan, at pagpapahirap sa masa ang hatid sa atin ng imperyalismo.

Isang matingkad na halimbawa ng pagkawasak ng kalikasan sa ilalim ng imperyalismo ay ang pagbabagong-klima o *climate change*. Dulot ng labis-na-produksyong nakabatay sa isang partikular na porma na enerhiya — mga *fossil fuels* kagaya ng *coal* (karbon o uling-bato), *oil* (langis), at *fossil gas* na lumilikha ng labis na *greenhouse gas emissions* — tinulak ng imperyalismo ang buong mundo sa isang sitwasyon ng pambihirang pag-init kung saan nababago ang mga likas na proseso. Bagamat ang kalakhan ng *greenhouse gas emissions* ay nagmumula sa mga imperyalistang bansa, sa mga kolonya, malakolonya, at sa masang api bumabagsak ang epekto ng pagbabagong-klima kagaya ng malalakas na bagyo, matitinding tag-init at tagtuyot, mabilisang pagkaubos ng *biodiversity* o saribuhay, at iba pa. Damang-dama ng Pilipinas ang mga epekto ng pagbabagong-klima, sanhi ng ilang siglong kolonyalismo at neokolonyalismo na nagsisiguradong bansot at umaasa-sa-dayuhan ang ating ekonomiya. Sa pangkalahatan, sinasalamin ng pandaigdigang pagbabagong-klima ang padron ng pandarambong at pagsasamantala ng imperyalismo, kung saan ang mga bansa kagaya ng Pilipinas ang pumapasan sa

kalakhan ng mga masamang epekto nito.

Malinaw na walang maibibigay na solusyon sa atin ang imperyalismo dahil ang imperyalismo mismo ang nakikinabang sa krisis na ito. Kaya para sa mga maka-kalikasang aktibista at rebolusyonaryo, susi ang pagbasag ng kapangyarihan ng imperyalismo sa Pilipinas at kinalaunan sa buong mundo para gamutin ang iniindang sakit ng kalikasan at ng lipunan. Ang pagsusulong at pagtatagumpay ng pambansang demokratikong rebolusyon sa Pilipinas ay malaking ambag ng mamamayang Pilipino para iresolba ang pandaigdigang krisis sa kalikasan.

[Sa demokratikong rebolusyong bayan, mabibigyan tayo ng espasyo para magpasya tungkol sa kalagayan ng ating mga kagubatan, katubigan, at karagatan, tungo sa isang mas sustenableng kaayusan.]

Sa pagtagumpay ng rebolusyong Pilipino, mawawala o di kaya signipikanteng hihina ang kapangyarihan at kawing ng imperyalismong US at iba pang imperyalistang bansa sa Pilipinas at sa Timog Silangan Asya. Sa pagkakatatag ng Demokratikong Gobyernong Bayan, kagyat nating babaguhin ang patakaran sa ekonomiya na mula sa pagiging *export-oriented* at *import-dependent* ay tungo sa isang ekonomiyang progresibo, umaasa-sa-sarili at malaya sa monopolyo kapitalismo at pyudalismo. Walang pag-aalinlangan nating ibabasura ang mga hindi-patas

at anti-kalikasang mga batas at kasunduan tulad ng Mining Act of 1995, Fisheries Code of 1998, US-RP Mutual Defense Treaty at iba pang mga katulad. Ang mga hakbangin na ito ay nasa balangkas ng walang humpay na pagtatauyod ng sosyalistang rebolusyon sa Pilipinas pagkatapos magtagumpay ang demokratikong rebolusyon sa bansa sa buong bansa.

Kagyat na ipapatupad ang tunay na reporma sa lupa kung saan ang sentro ang libreng pamamahagi ng lupa sa mga magsasaka. Isa din sa mga unang hakbang ang pagnanasyunalisa ng mga malalaking industriya at mga pambansang pasilidad para sa pampublikong serbisyo tulad ng enerhiya, komunikasyon, at transportasyon. Kukumpiskahin ang mga ari-ariang lupa at kapital ng mga dayuhang monopolyong kapitalista, ng malalaking burgesya kumprador at panginoong maylupa, at ng burukrata kapitalista. Sa ganitong antas pa lamang, signipikante na ang pagpigil sa walang habas at katuturang pag-ubos ng ating likas-yaman at malawakang pagkasira ng ating kapaligiran dulot ng mga operasyon ng dating naghaharing-uri sa Pilipinas.

Buong lakas nating isusulong ang pambansang industriyalisasyon upang tugunan ang batayang pangangailangan ng mamamayan at para sa pagpapaulad ng pambansang ekonomiya. Balansyado ang pagsusulong at pagpapaulad sa mabibigat na industriya, magaan na industriya, at agrikultura.

Habang sinusulong natin ang pambansang industriyalisasyon, maipapalaganap ang mga sustenableng praktika at teknolohiya sa agrikultura at industriya, labas sa mga dikta ng imperyalismo. Mabibigyan tayo ng espasyo para

magpasya tungkol sa kalagayan ng ating mga kagubatan, kabundukan, katubigan, at karagatan, tungo sa isang mas sustenableng kaayusan. Maisasagawa natin ang isang kumprehensibong rehabilitasyon ng ating kalikasan upang ibalik ito sa isang balansyado, malusog, at mapangalagang kapaligiran.

Sa ganitong paraan, ang sambayanang Pilipino ang paunahing magtatakda kung paano sasalubungin ng ating lipunan ang kalikasan. Bilang bahagi tayo ng kalikasan, itong kolektibong pagpapasya ay isang karapatan natin na ipinagkakait sa atin ngayon ng mga imperyalista at nga kanilang mga bwitrenng kasapakat.

Sa kasalukuyan, tinatanim na ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas, Bagong Hukbong Bayan, at Pambansang Demokratikong Prente (PDP) ang binhi ng rebolusyonaryong pagbabago, lalo na sa kanayunan. Sa lagpas kalahating siglong paglilingkod sa sambayanan at pagsusulong ng pambansang demokratikong rebolusyon, pinakita ng PKP, BHB, at PDP ang tamang paghawak sa mga isyung pangkalikasan at pagtugon sa kabuuang krisis sa kalikasan. Sa nakaraang mga taon, sumabak ang BHB sa di-mabilang na aksyong militar laban sa mga dambuhalang minahan, operasyon ng komersyal na pagtotroso, dayuhang agro-plantasyon at iba pa. Sa ilang mga aksyon, umabot sa milyon-milyon ang halaga ng pinsala para sa mga korporasyong ito—malaking dagok sa operasyon ng mga dayuhang kapitalista at burgesya kumprador at maging sa kabuuang proseso ng imperyalistang pandarabong. Sa mga konsolidadong erya, naipakita rin ng rebolusyonaryong kilusan ang ilang halimbawa ng pamamahala sa likas-yaman,

na nakabatay sa sustenableng pagtugon sa pangangailangan ng masang api. Kabilang dito ang pagpapatupad ng patakarang pagbabawal sa komersyal na pagtotroso sa Isabela noong 2000, at ng makamasang patakarang pangkalikasan sa Panay na naitala noong 2005. Sa kaibuturan nito ang walang-hanggang proseso ng pag-unlad ng teorya at praktika, na susi sa pag-angkop sa nagbabagong kalagayan ng ating kapaligiran.

Sinasalamin din ng programa ng PDP ang ilang aspeto ng panawagan ng masang Pilipino para sa isang sustenable at makatarungang lipunan. Sa mga probisyon ng huling burador ng Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (CASER), binibigyan-diin ng PDP ang kahalagaan ng pangangalaga sa kalikasan sa proseso ng pagtugon sa pangangailangan ng sambayanang Pilipino. Bukod sa pagsulong ng tunay na repormang agraryo at pambansang industriyalisasyon, nakasaad din sa CASER ang pagpapalaganap ng mga sustenableng teknolohiya sa enerhiya, paniningil sa mga imperyalistang bansa sa pinsalang dulot ng pagbabagong-klima, antas-komunidad na pagmobilisa ng mamamayan para pangalagaan ang kalikasan, at marami pang iba. Sinigurado rin ng PDP sa CASER na nakatuon ang paggamit ng likas-yaman ng Pilipinas sa pangangailangan ng masang Pilipino at hindi ng pandaigdigang merkado.

Sa kabilang banda, walang ibang inatupag ang lahat ng nagdaang papet na rehimen kundi ang pakinabang para sa mga naghaharing-uri — pakinabang na nagmumula sa pandarabong sa kalikasan at pagsasamantala sa mamamayan. Saksi ang mga kinalbong gubat,

pinatag na bundok, nilason na ilog, at naghahirap na komunidad sa kabulukan ng isang sistema kung saan ang pagwasak ng ekosistema ay karaniwang gawi. Kaya para sa sambayanang Pilipino, ang natatanging sagot sa krisis sa kalikasan ay ang demokratikong rebolusyong bayan na sagot sa tatlong salot na ito.

Malinaw na sa lumalalang krisis sa kalikasan, nalalagay sa panganib ang mamamayang Pilipino, lalo na ang masang api at anakpawis. Nasa interes ng mamamayan ng Pilipinas, maging ng buong daigdig, na tugunan sa kagyat ang pagbabagong-klima, pagbulusok ng saribuhay, at iba pang aspeto ng krisis na ito. Samakatuwid, integral na bahagi ng pagrerebolusyon ang pangangalaga sa kalikasan — at ang tanging makabuluhang porma ng pangangalaga sa kalikasan ay mahahanap sa pagrerebolusyon. ■

