

COP15 (biodiversity) and COP27 (climate) and interrelated issues, Jan 2023 ([traduction française ici](#))

by David Millar, QEW delegate to CBD. I have compiled lists of COP [contacts](#), trustworthy [research sources](#) and [NGOs](#) for future delegates, and for use by faith, climate/biodiversity peace and ecojustice networks.

Summary of climate/biodiversity negotiations: rich countries have rejected ecojustice by refusing for decades to fund the UN adequately, and refusing public (not private) aid to poor countries in Official Development Assistance (ODA), indebting them and forcing them to sell off resources. The result is a worldwide system of extractivism and exploitation, “growth” and waste, with resulting severe threats to peace, murders of land defenders, refugees, resource wars. And a UN captured by corporate lobbies. Radical NGOs call for “changing the system, not the climate”.

1. Scientific data show we are heading for catastrophic climate chaos 2.5-3C by 2100, and the 6th great extinction.
2. Neither the Paris Accords (climate 2015) nor the Global Biodiversity Framework (biodiversity 2022, with its [30x30](#) conservation targets and indicators) are legally binding. NGOs hope that the targets & indicators of the GBF, as with those of the [SDGs](#), will allow them to “monitor” progress, act as watchdogs, and shame countries that renege on their promises. The CBD (Convention on Biodiversity) remains one of the few binding treaties, but rich nations have over the years deliberately weakened the [CBD](#) principle that required aid to vulnerable populations that are not responsible for worldwide pollution, but suffer its impacts. Rich nations rejected [Kyoto renewal](#), substituting the “voluntary” action of the Accords. They completely failed to meet [Millenium Development Goals](#) (substituting the present SDGs), and the 2010 [Aichi targets](#) (as the scientists of [IPBES-5](#) reported). The USA has consistently refused to ratify these treaties, because they infringe on its “sovereignty” -- it uses the same argument to avoid trials of its soldiers for rape and murder in other countries, and for war crimes. Canada, a faithful satellite, supports the US, while calling itself different and “peaceful”.
3. The [Green Climate Fund](#) (which earmarks 50% for [mitigation](#)), promised in 2009, was supposed to reach \$100b/year but only reached about 10% of that when rich countries reneged on their promises. GCF is highly bureaucratic, slow to release funds, and has financed coal and other polluting projects. Science-based estimates of the need is \$200b/yr. COP27 approved in principle a “loss and damage” fund for poor countries - a great idea in principle, but it may be another empty promise.
4. COP27 promises to cut emissions by 50% by 2030. But in fact [IEA figures](#) show emissions increased in recent years. The promised “net zero” by 2050 means that corporations can use offsets to claim “net zero” (aka decarbonization, carbon neutrality) rather than actually cutting emissions. NGOs demand real cuts. In carbon-market offsets and net-zero claims, books are cooked, low-ball baselines and unproven results are common. Beware particularly of claims for [DAC](#), [BECCS](#), and [geoengineering](#) (see also <https://viacampesina.org/en/la-via-campesina-reflections-on-cop27>).
5. Canada earmarked \$2.7b for biodiversity a few years ago but has only approved 54% for actual projects. Slow, donor-driven, bureaucratic. Fails to protect the boreal forest, approves tarsands expansion, and offshore oil projects that will lock in fossil use for many decades. Many analyses say we have become a [petrostate](#).
6. The World Bank promised \$500b to Brazil to save the Amazon, and for other [mitigation](#) projects. But critics say it has consistently refused SDRs (Special Drawing Rights) to keep poor countries out of debt incurred for mitigation. At COP15, [Canada's last-minute official announcement](#) favoured the (US-controlled) World Bank's [GEE](#), forcing restrictions and delays that the “Group of 77” poor countries were trying to remove. Many fear a return to rightwing [Washington Consensus](#) policies that drive extractivism and inequality.
7. COP15's GBF Global Biodiversity Framework recognized rights of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC), claimed as a “victory” after years of campaigning by activists. It remains to be seen if [UNDRIP](#) and [UNDRP](#) will be respected in practice. There is danger of land-grabs in 30x30 projects. [FPIC](#) and [MAT](#) (mutually agreed terms) are crucial. NGOs must act as watchdogs.
8. “30x30” promise of GBF: to protect 30% of world's biodiversity hotspots by 2030, in CA conservation areas and MPAs marine protected areas. There is a huge campaign by corporate-financial lobbies, and Big Conservation NGOs that traditionally depend on corporate donations, to do this by means of offsets: “biodiversity credits”, aka [Nature-based Solutions](#), “nature positive”

investments (for guaranteed profit), Blue Carbon, PES, REDD+, LULUCF, and similar schemes. The [GFANZ](#) (Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero) coalition of finance lobbyists led by Mark Carney promised at climate COP26 to raise \$30 trillion – much of it not new money but relabeled. Offsets schemes can include creative accounting, false baselines and inflated claims of results, confiscatory management fees, AI and GPS management (which make a mockery of promises to consult indigenous peoples and local communities). Land grabs, armed force against indigenes, rape and murder have been reported from previous conservation projects. See my [“5 key points” powerpoint](#).

9. Governments worldwide still spend \$1000 billion yearly on subsidies (e.g. fossil fuels, industrial agri, pesticides) “that worsen species loss and climate change” [according to Carbon Brief, in a citation by [Greenleft](#)]; see also [Human Rights Watch](#). Rich nations made empty promises at COP27 and COP15 to redirect these subsidies to “just transition” (currently there is a big debate about what “just” actually means). Hard to see what is real in all the empty propaganda.

10. Compare the above figure to the drips and drops of MOI (means of implementation) announced by rich countries at COP15: “up to” \$30b/year for biodiversity promised so far. Scientists and poor countries say \$200b is needed. McKinsey consultants predict \$50b will be raised by 2030, but in the form of “biodiversity credits” (offsets). See 8.

11. Beware of misleading official propaganda from all governments: e.g. Dec 7: Trudeau [officially promises](#) “up to” \$800m over 7 years for indigenous-led conservation areas in Northernshelf Bioregion in British Columbia, in Qikiqtani Region in Nunavut, and in Ontario’s Hudson Bay Lowlands, as well as the coastline of Western Hudson Bay and southwestern James Bay. In fact this was not new money, nor new projects, will likely include private offset funds, and does not cover full wage costs for indigenous guardians – these projects were announced March 2022 in <https://www.ilinationhood.ca/>. Nature Canada and other [IUCN](#) affiliates (Big Conservation NGOs that have traditionally depended on corporate donations) heavily endorse financing these by “nature-based” offsets, and seek church and pension-fund backing. Since then, native activists have raised many questions about the projects. See my warnings about offsets as a “solution” that exacerbates the problem, in my [5 key questions about biodiversity](#) and [powerpoint for OEW](#) including videos of indigenous protests.

12. More tough negotiations and more corporate captures are coming:

- in the World Ocean Summit (precoms [IMPAC-5](#) in Vancouver Feb 3, and in Lisbon March 2023, summit in August); Sustainable Ocean Initiative online CDB workshop 24-28 April 2023. Note that 30 deep-sea mining permits have already been issued despite scientists’ warnings. See also recent [UNCLOS](#) article by Monde Diplomatique. [Warnings](#) by MiningWatch: corporate capture of ISA, deep-sea pollution. See also [IISD reports](#) on negotiations. A [Sep 2022 LRB article](#) argues that “freedom of the seas” is less a legal principle than an Anglo-imperial pretension that has caused many wars, and could cause more.

- in attempts to control POP (persistent organic pollutants) e.g. toxic “forever” chemicals, neonic pesticides (see current sessions of [OEWG1-2](#)).

- in [WASH](#) discussions of potable water crises, where the declared [human right to clean water](#) is opposed by the corporate [World Water Council](#) [for negotiation dates, see the blandly official UN sites [unwater.org/](#), [SDG6 events](#) and [March 2023 World Water conference](#), and Avaaz’ [28 Feb 2023 warning](#)]

- in the upcoming “One Health” campaign to deal with future pandemics; note the failure of [COVAX](#), and Big Pharma’s grim grip on vaccine patents for private profit, even though developed with taxpayer research money. Also, NGO attempts to impose the “precautionary principle” on [synthetic biology](#), [DSI](#), [gene-splicing](#), and [gene drives](#).

- in the 2022 World Health Summit and later negotiations, so-called “food security” proposals that permit [AGRA](#)-like capture of food systems by big biz; against which Via Campesina and other NGOs have been calling for years for [food sovereignty](#) that ensures rights of small farmers and fishers, women, youth, future generations, traditional seed rights, agroecology, resilient and restorative agriculture – rather than industrial agric: fossil-fuel driven, with chemical fertilizers and pesticides, genetic engineering/GMO, seed control, supply-chain control. See the [NGOs’ report](#) from the Jan 2023 Global Forum for Food and Agriculture. See updates at [Food Secure Canada](#), [Via Campesina](#), [IATP](#).

David Beasley head of World Food Programme, in Time magazine February 13, 2023

...six years ago there were 80 million people marching to starvation... we now have 349 million people marching to starvation.

Q: Do you ever get annoyed that the US has sent \$1.7 billion to Ukraine and not even half that to help the number of hundreds of millions of people who are starving?

A: *Leaders do not have enough money to fund every need. They’ve got to prioritize what’s critical to stability on earth, things that are in their national security interest... I say a child from Guatemala or Honduras, who is in a shelter on the US border costs \$4000 per week. With 1 to 2 dollars a week per child, I can build a resilience program so that child has food security at home.*

Some quotations:

The 2012 Quaker [Kabarak Call](#) (in multiple languages) anticipated many of the criticisms below.

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General at COP15, 2 Dec 2023: *“Humanity is waging war on nature. This is suicidal. Nature always strikes back – and it is already doing so with growing force and fury, as biodiversity collapses, species risk extinction, deserts spread and forests are lost. Oceans are overfished – and choking with plastic waste. The carbon dioxide they absorb is acidifying the seas. Coral reefs are bleached and dying. Air and water pollution are killing 9 million people annually – more than six times the current toll of the pandemic. And with people and livestock encroaching further into animal habitats and disrupting wild spaces, we could see more viruses and other disease-causing agents jump from animals to humans.”*

Women’s Caucus at COP15 [women4biodiversity.org](#) *We are a network established to advocate for a right to a healthy environment for all. We believe that Living in Harmony with Nature needs to take into account the roles and contributions of women and girls to achieve transformative change. This requires addressing gender equity and needs to embrace the holistic solutions and the recognition of women’s human rights to achieve it. Our work involves building synergies around the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and other international arenas to provide direction for more coherent and inclusive processes while ensuring their proper implementation. (See also [WECAN](#) and [Regions Refocus](#))*

“Now is the time to fight for climate justice,” said Eddy Pérez, (ex-)International Climate Diplomacy Director for Climate Action Network – Réseau action climat Canada (CAN-Rac). “It would be an utter disgrace for Canada and its rich country allies to let COP27 close without establishing a financial facility for loss and damage. We need to seize this chance for political agreement on the scientific fact that a safe future requires a managed phase-out of all fossil fuels. We need to lay the ground for an ambitious way forward on adaptation and on biodiversity. We cannot tell the people on the front lines of escalating climate impacts around the world that they must wait until another year for justice.”

“Canadian Ministers have made disturbing comments that echo the oil industries and Saudi Arabia’s position that we don’t need to stop expansion of oil and gas and decline production — and so we expect that they are part of the reason this text is so weak. The science is clear that we need to stop expansion now and wind down production and emissions. The fact that Canada is denying it and COP27 has not included that in the text is a testimony to the power of the oil and gas companies who are holding our planet and climate policy hostage,” said Tzeporah Berman, Chair of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and International Program Director, Stand.earth.

“The [COP27] text needs clear language on Just Transition, a social dialogue with the workers at the table. The idea of including the workers and human rights in the final text is not frivolous. It is about decent work and quality jobs all around the world, it is about gender equity and respect of Indigenous People. Canada needs to be a strong voice to make sure we are included and resist the pressure of some countries who want to erase mentions of human rights,” said Patrick Rondeau, Environmental and Just Transition advisor, Quebec Federation of Labour (FTQ).

“The countries most vulnerable to climate change have been resolute: the litmus test for this COP [COP27] is the creation of a loss and damage fund, which must be named in the cover text. Canada must continue to stand up loudly as a champion for delivering loss and damage finance. As the tenth largest historical emitter, Canada should make sure this money is not just promised but delivered,” said Julie Segal, Senior Manager Climate Finance, Environmental Defence Canada.

Sources. On offsets, as false solutions that exacerbate the problem they are said to solve, see <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2023/1/29/greening-ourselves-to-extinction>; my [Who created this crisis, and why? corporate capture of the UN](#); FOEI (2020) [Characteristics of false solutions to the biodiversity and related systemic crises](#); Third World Network and UBC (2022), [“Beyond the gap: placing biodiversity finance in the global economy”](#); <https://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/story/50452/forest-offsets-could-doom-canadas-climate-ambitions-and-the-cop-heres-why>

On biodiversity, see recent articles by Third World Network:

[CBD COP15: Failure to establish a dedicated Global Biodiversity Fund despite call by more than 70 developing countries](#) by Perna Bomzan (09 Jan 23)

[CBD COP15: Developing countries defend principle of common but differentiated responsibilities](#) by Perna Bomzan (05 Jan 23)

[CBD COP15: 'Global Biodiversity Framework' negotiated amidst process difficulties](#) by Lim Li Lin (28 Dec 22)

[CBD COP15: New implementation framework for Biodiversity Convention adopted](#) by Lim Li Lin (28 Dec 22)

[Biodiversity meeting agrees on limited action on technology and synthetic biology](#) by Lim Li Ching (27 Dec 22)

[CBD COP15: South successfully defends benefit sharing objective, equity in One Health](#) by Nithin Ramakrishnan (23 Dec 22)

[DSI Decision Should Not Undermine the Scope of the CBD](#) by Nithin Ramakrishnan (18 Dec 22)

[North proposals allow non-Parties to interpret Nagoya Protocol, circumvent DSI solution](#) by Nithin Ramakrishnan (16 Dec 22)

[CBD: Developing countries in show of unity, call for new biodiversity fund](#) by Lim Li Lin & Lim Li Ching (13 Dec 22)

NGOs' report from Global Forum for Food and Agriculture, Berlin: 18-21 January 2023

<https://viacampesina.org/en/global-forum-for-food-and-agriculture-berlin-la-via-campesina-defends-seed-diversity-and-calls-for-strict-regulation-of-genetic-engineering/> NGOs say, "Nothing demonstrates the extreme rise in inequality more dramatically than the 828 million chronically hungry people. At the same time, the profits of agri-food corporations continue to grow. Seed biopiracy occurs when rich people and corporations steal local seeds and commercialise them for profit. This theft is done by buying up local and national gene banks and all the research facilities associated with them. With access to local seeds, patents are developed that make the seeds less accessible to farmers, especially peasants and other small-scale farmers". NGOs warned that a powerful lobby comprising transnational corporations and technical and scientific associations is working to exempt new genetic engineering processes from regulation under EU genetic engineering law. "The first generation of genetic engineering has not contributed to the fight against hunger but has forced millions of farmers into dependence on agricultural corporations and debt. At the same time, production systems have been established based on genetically engineered pesticide-tolerant plants and place an extreme burden on biodiversity."

Rightwing/fossil disinformation <https://www.thenation.com/article/environment/climate-disinformation-cop27>