



# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



Friends of  
the Earth  
International

MOBILISE. RESIST. TRANSFORM.



**FRIENDS OF THE EARTH INTERNATIONAL IS THE WORLD'S LARGEST GRASSROOTS ENVIRONMENTAL FEDERATION, WITH 73 NATIONAL MEMBER GROUPS AND MILLIONS OF MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS AROUND THE WORLD.**

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## OUR VISION

- A peaceful and sustainable world based on societies living in harmony with nature.
- A society of interdependent people living in dignity, wholeness and fulfilment in which equity and human and peoples' rights are realised.
- A society built on peoples' sovereignty and participation.
- A society founded on social, economic, gender and environmental justice, and free from all forms of domination and exploitation, such as neoliberalism, corporate globalisation, neo-colonialism and militarism.
- We believe our children's future will be better because of what we do.

## OUR MISSION

- To collectively ensure environmental and social justice, human dignity, and respect for human rights and peoples' rights so as to secure sustainable societies.

- To halt and reverse environmental degradation and depletion of natural resources, nurture the Earth's ecological and cultural diversity, and secure sustainable livelihoods.
- To secure the empowerment of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, groups and individuals, and to ensure public participation in decision making.
- To bring about transformation towards sustainability, and equity between and within societies with creative approaches and solutions.
- To engage in vibrant campaigns, raise awareness, mobilise people and build alliances with diverse movements, linking grassroots, national and global struggles.
- To inspire one another and to harness, strengthen and complement each other's capacities, living the change we wish to see and working together in solidarity.

*Cover: No false solutions / no carbon markets action at COP26 in Glasgow, 5 November 2021 © Hanae Takahashi/Friends of the Earth Japan.*

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# HELLO

Around the globe we have seen deepening crises and an increase in natural disasters as a result of the neo-liberal model. We have also seen the rise of the right-wing resulting in a shrinking of civic space. The impunity of transnational corporations across the territories, human rights violations and criminalisation of activism are all growing concerns for frontline communities. The defenders of the commons and the territories are facing attacks every day.

As we all know the Covid pandemic has continued devastating the world and many lives. Yet corporations had no mercy even for those needing vaccinations. More than 2 million people, including Friends of the Earth International, have been demanding a Peoples' Vaccine to tackle the unequal global access to Covid-19 vaccines, treatment and medical supplies.

Friends of the Earth International celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021. Friends of the Earth International has been playing a crucial role bringing the voices of the peoples of the South to global platforms since its beginnings. With membership in 73 countries, we have continued to promote environmental justice.

Victory against Shell in the landmark lawsuit filed by Milieudefensie was a moment for celebration. But we also saw how oil companies captured space at the COP 26 held in Glasgow. During 2021 Friends of the Earth International has spoken out against false solutions including the rise of the dangerous concept of nature-based solutions (NBS). We have observed the promotion of this false solution in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and other spaces. The Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) in 2021 came under fire from hundreds of small-scale food producers, NGOs and other



civil society and Indigenous Peoples' organisations, including Friends of the Earth International, because it ignored human rights and sidelined the small-scale producers who produce 70-80% of the world's food.

During 2021, together with several like-minded environmental organisations, we continued our work on Internationalist Solidarity to defend the front-line defenders across the world, with our main focus on Honduras, Colombia, Palestine and Mozambique. We have been working on establishing and advocating for Friends of the Earth International's vision of a feminist Just Transition and energy transformation in national and international policy forums, to challenge the false logic of a dirty energy system. The progress we have made in these areas in 2021 is part of our system change agenda to deal with the crises we face.

The specific programmes of the federation and the incalculable and incredible work of the member groups across the globe cannot be covered in detail in this report. This report highlights some key moments, from the grassroots to international advocacy work. Friends of the Earth International's communications team and Real World Radio keep sharing our stories to reach more people.

Our mother Earth needs urgent action. Protecting its beauty, rich diversity, ecosystems, millions of living creatures, and our fellow humans require unconditional actions. As a grassroots environmental justice organisation, together with our allies, Friends of the Earth International is seeking to tackle the most burning issues in the coming years, transforming the system to build the world we want. We strongly value the support given by our donor community, partners and the individuals around the globe that make this work possible.

**Hemantha Withanage**

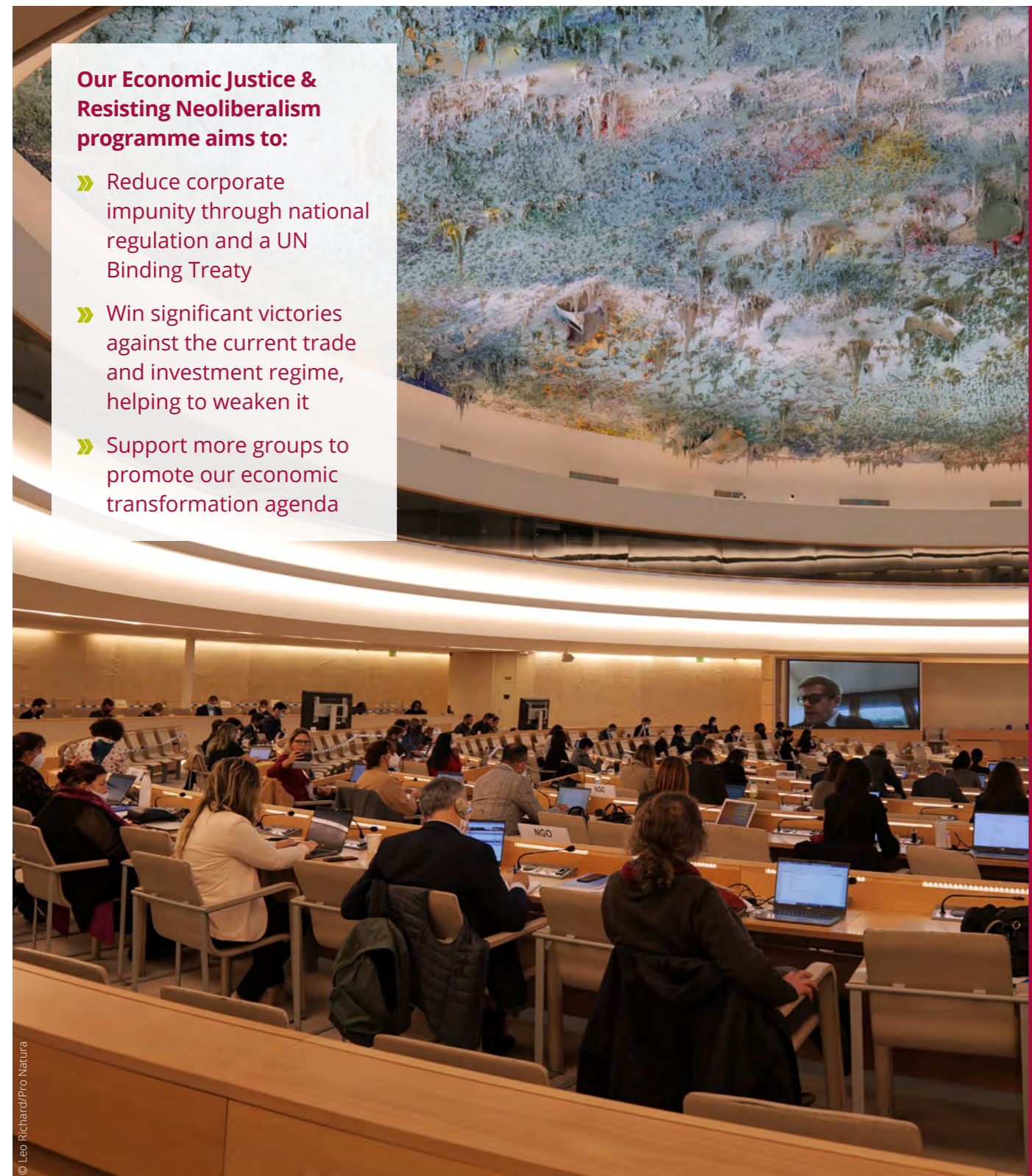
Friends of the Earth International Chair



# ECONOMIC JUSTICE & RESISTING NEOLIBERALISM

## Our Economic Justice & Resisting Neoliberalism programme aims to:

- » Reduce corporate impunity through national regulation and a UN Binding Treaty
- » Win significant victories against the current trade and investment regime, helping to weaken it
- » Support more groups to promote our economic transformation agenda



Mai Taqueban, from Friends of the Earth Philippines and Kwami Kpondzo, from Friends of the Earth Togo demanding a People's Vaccine.



## DEMANDING A JUST RECOVERY FROM COVID-19

### WE MUST HAVE A PEOPLES' VACCINE

More than 2 million people, including Friends of the Earth International, are demanding a Peoples' Vaccine to tackle the unequal global access to Covid-19 vaccines.

Despite 15 million deaths, collapsing health systems and the loss of countless livelihoods, the roll out of vaccines supported with public money and developed by pharmaceutical companies was shockingly unequal. In low-income countries, only 4% of people have had two vaccine doses.

We joined a coalition of social movements and health organisations calling for a temporary waiving of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) on the know-how, technology and licences for vaccine production and treatments at the World Trade Organisation. This [TRIPS waiver](#) would mean that more countries and companies could produce Covid-19 vaccines locally and at a lower price.

The injustice posed by the current corporate-led vaccine roll-out is having a real impact on our activists and supporters and their struggle for environmental and social justice. For example at COP26 in Glasgow, many Southern representatives were banned from entering the UK due to vaccine inequality ([see page 8-11](#)) while online participation

can be inadvertently and deliberately compromised by network difficulties and time zone challenges.

The Peoples' Vaccine and TRIPS waiver campaign is just one essential part of a Just Recovery from Covid-19 and the inter-connected, systemic crises we face. It's why we are pursuing a transformative system change agenda in which the primacy of human rights and peoples' rights over trade and investment agreements must be enshrined

in international law, and governments must tackle the root causes of these crises.

### ECONOMICS FOR ACTIVISTS

As part of our [50th birthday celebrations](#) Karin Nansen, Friends of the Earth International Chair from 2017-July 2021, said: "We need to engage in a battle of ideas" looking at "collective imaginaries and meanings, the political sphere and public policy, in order to reverse the attack on democracy and the very notion of justice that is being

perpetrated by the right wing and concentrated economic powers." One way to do that is to share ideas for a new economics for the 21st century, that puts people and planet, not profit at the centre.

Our new Economics for Activists course trained 20 Friends of the Earth comrades from across the world. The five-week course covered political economy, exposing the contradictions and lack of evidence of the dominant neoliberal economic theory. ➔

“We need to engage in a battle of ideas [...], in order to reverse the attack on democracy and the very notion of justice that is being perpetrated by the right wing and concentrated economic powers.”

**Karin Nansen, FoEI Chair from 2017-2021**



*Leticia Paranhos Menna de Oliveira from Friends of the Earth International, pushing for an historic UN Binding Treaty.*

Social movements must be able to challenge politicians and the business elite who use incomprehensible economic jargon to dress up their self-interest as the public interest, or to make the absurd seem inevitable and the inequitable seem fair.

We will continue running Economics for Activists courses, because understanding how the current economy works is crucial to building a more just and sustainable system.

It enabled participants to better engage in public debates, analyse and advocate on economic, environmental or justice issues.

"In the midst of climate and nature emergencies, with too many people trapped in poverty and businesses still reeling from the impact of the pandemic, there is no question that economic transformation is needed," said [Matthew Crighton](#), from Friends of the Earth Scotland (Senior Economic Advisor who participated in the course)

## BINDING TREATY: CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS

Despite the constraints of the pandemic, we enabled civil society participation to push for an historic UN Binding Treaty. During these crucial international negotiations to regulate transnational corporations we've been demanding rules for business and rights for peoples.

But the first challenge for all the 250 organisations in the Global Campaign to Dismantle the Power of Transnational Corporations was to involve participants from the global South more fairly.

The pandemic fall-out meant that negotiations were for some on-line, but because of the different time zones and problematic internet connections this made it unfair and difficult for full participation.

**“The strong presence of women in the negotiations is further proof that breaking the power asymmetry across transnational corporations is a feminist struggle.”**

**Leticia Paranhos Menna de Oliveira, FoEI's Economic Justice/Resisting Neoliberalism programme coordinator.**

In addition, there were no UN interpreters for the informal discussions, so organised translation for our members and allies including Movement of People Affected by Dams (MAB) and academics from the Human Rights and Business Centre (HOMA) at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora in Brazil.

We used in person and video interventions at the UN plenary by Friends of the Earth groups from Brazil, France, Mozambique, Nigeria, Philippines, Switzerland and Friends of the Earth Europe to strengthen the idea that the Binding Treaty must be as ambitious as possible. We also made sure that we had regional balance during the plenary, even though many of our colleagues were not able to attend the session in person.

Our delegation, as part of The Global Campaign in Geneva for the October session had more than 20 people including five representatives from Friends of the Earth International. Many of our allies [actively participated in](#) the meetings, including La Via Campesina (LVC), World March of Women (WMW), the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA), the Transnational Institute

(TNI), Centre Europe – Tiers Monde (CETIM), the Human Rights and Business Centre (HOMA), FIAN International, Corporate Accountability and the Union of Peoples Affected by Texaco-Chevron (UDAPT).

The participation of women during these negotiations was outstandingly strong. Our Friends of the Earth International delegation was mostly women. As there was also participation from women-led state delegations and the voices of female allies from social movements and organisations we noted a strong feminist perspective. It is clear that women are deeply affected by activities of transnational corporations, and are often leading resistance against environmental and human rights violations.

Thanks to our formal ECOSOC accreditation, we also made it possible for our allies from HOMA and members of La Via Campesina from Brazil to make oral interventions.

As the [draft text](#) became a battleground of opposing proposals, the Global Campaign's voices should ensure that the Binding Treaty draft text will reduce corporate power and guarantee that communities affected by transnational corporations obtain justice.

The main progress was in returning some of the key elements of the treaty to the negotiating table, as some States defended the need to respect the mandate and spirit of Resolution 26/9, and that the scope of the legally binding instrument should focus on transnational corporations. It is positive that some State delegations argued in favour of establishing direct obligations for transnational corporations as legal entities, and that the primacy of human rights over trade agreements should be guaranteed. They also proposed, as did the Global Campaign, important nomenclature changes, such as replacing "victims" for "affected communities" and adding "violations" instead of holding corporations responsible only for "abuses". ■





*No false solutions / no  
carbon markets action  
at COP26 in Glasgow,  
9 November 2021.*

# CLIMATE JUSTICE AND ENERGY

## Our Climate Justice & Energy programme aims to:

- » Shift and influence the global narrative to better reflect our radical, feminist vision of climate justice
- » Dismantle the current dirty energy system and advance the feminist just transition towards a new peoples' energy system
- » Undermine and block the advance of false solutions to the climate crisis, like carbon markets, offsetting, nature based solutions, and techno-fixes such as BECCS



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## SHAPING CLIMATE JUSTICE AND RADICAL NEW AGENDAS

The climate crisis is inherently unjust. We are facing a planetary emergency with floods, storms, droughts and rising seas that will greatly challenge future generations. It is already affecting the poorest and most vulnerable peoples, especially women and children, even though they didn't create this crisis.

We want the rich countries who created this crisis to act fast and address it. They must meet their fair share of emissions reductions, and provide climate finance to the countries of the global South. This will go some way towards repaying the climate and ecological debt, and finance a Feminist Just Transition.

We helped share a vision of the future we want by contributing to many webinars, including for COP26 Coalition's From the Ground Up II events, 350.org's Just Recovery gathering, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, University of Pennsylvania, Womin and CADTM on climate debt and reparations, and HOMEf's School of Ecology. We also gave interviews on *Democracy Now*, *Al Jazeera*, *Radio Franca International* and reached new audiences – ranging from a panel show with Roger Waters and Yanis Varoufakis to new magazines, such as *Arts Everywhere*. We also contributed to the important Civil Society Equity Review report on fossil fuel phaseout.

Throughout 2021, in all webinars, interviews and events, we talked about real zero and system change solutions and about Friends of the Earth International's Just Recovery principles. Our voice denouncing net zero and dirty energy has been important, but we also focused on energy solutions, food sovereignty, community forest management, land rights for indigenous and

frontline communities, and economic justice with a call for a Binding Treaty on transnational corporations.

## TRANSFORMING THE SYSTEM

We've been working to establish and advocate for our vision of a Feminist Just Transition and energy transformation in national and international policy forums, to challenge the false logic of a dirty energy system. For example:

- We used the IEA summit on 31 March to launch our 10-point People Power Now manifesto, in which we call for a genuine, sustainable transformation of the energy system, far from just adding net zero pledges to the same old extractivist system.
- We responded to the first part of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) AR6 report, released in August.

Supported by the Gender Justice Dismantling Patriarchy working group, and Friends of the Earth groups in the Netherlands, Brazil and Argentina, we led exchanges with activists about how to make a Feminist Just Transition. This culminated in a publication which clarifies the links between feminist analysis, practices and the future, which we launched at the Just Transition Hub in Glasgow during COP26.

We also worked with Friends of the Earth Africa to publish a Just Recovery Renewable Energy Plan for Africa, ahead of the Africa climate week ministerial in September. The Climate Justice and Energy team in the region held a launch webinar and used the document for campaigning and advocacy to African leaders. We also collected sign-ons from 50 African organisations to build support for our demands for widespread renewable energy on the continent. ➔



COP26 Action – conference of the people stands firm on outcome needed at UN climate summit, 12 December 2021.

## COP 26

We attended the UNFCCC COP26 in Scotland in November with a delegation of around 40 people, including eight representatives from the global South who spoke at many events across the two weeks. The Covid-19 vaccine apartheid, late information from the UK government about visas and quarantine rules, plus expensive accommodation and other costs in Glasgow, meant we did not have the diverse mix of delegates from North and South that we strive to achieve at the UN climate talks.

Inside and outside the COP, we organised actions and shared our strong messages against carbon markets and fossil fuels, at the same time as strengthening access and participation in the lobbying process. Working alongside host groups Friends of the Earth Scotland and England, Wales & Northern Ireland, with colleagues from around the world, we took part in advocacy, campaigning, civil society actions, and media work, as well as UN side events and the Peoples' Summit. We worked with the Artivist Network to build a giant smoking carbon unicorn head, which joined the rally on the Global Day of Action for Climate Justice, after hundreds of thousands of people marched

through rainy Glasgow. We led two events at the Peoples' Summit on the myriad problems with net zero, carbon markets and nature based solutions, compared to a Just Energy Transition, and ran an official side event with allies, exposing the holes in net zero thinking. We organised two press conferences, issued several press releases, and our spokespeople were featured in international media including *The Guardian*, *BBC*, *New Internationalist*, *Forbes* and *New York Times*. Two of our speakers also took to the stage for the Peoples' Plenary on the final day.

Our exhibition showcasing stories of climate resistance from around the federation, prepared by Friends of the Earth Europe and England, Wales and Northern Ireland, received many visitors online and in-person.

Regrettably, the outcomes of COP26 were devastating for communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis. Despite our efforts to push back on dangerous carbon markets, these were agreed in the last moments, leaving the 1.5°C temperature threshold in jeopardy and threatening the land and lives of peoples in the global South. The fight continues as we look ahead to COP27 in Egypt.



© Hamae Takahashi / Friends of the Earth Japan

Our publication "If it's not feminist, it's not just" was launched at the Just Transition Hub in Glasgow during COP26.

## DIRTY ENERGY EXPOSED

The highlight of our member groups' fights against fossil fuels was the landmark victory in the climate case against Shell, when a Dutch court told Shell to clean up its act in May (*see page 12-13*). We supported Friends of the Earth Netherlands with media interviews for the *BBC*, *Sky*, *Al Jazeera* and *Forbes*, and were quoted extensively in international media. We also supported Friends of the Earth England, Wales & Northern Ireland, Austria and Germany with social media for their climate litigation cases, and are working to raise funds for a climate litigation coordinator.

In December 2021, we worked with Friends of the Earth Bangladesh to launch a photo story about the energy challenges in the country. The story covered the wonderful achievements of a community solar project in the Sundarbans, in the same area which will be ravaged by the Rampal coal power plant currently under construction.

## CHALLENGING FALSE SOLUTIONS

To tackle the climate crisis we cannot rely on costly, fantasy techno fixes which have potentially devastating impacts and lead to landgrabbing, violations of peoples' rights, and destruction of forests and biodiversity in the global South. The names and terms keep evolving, but the basic, damaging principles remain the same: they strengthen corporate power, deflect responsibility from rich historical polluters, and prevent urgent and equitable action on climate change. One of our major strategies in 2021 was challenging false



Illustration by Natalia Salvatico, Tierra Nariva / Friends of the Earth Argentina

solutions, together with other Friends of the Earth International programmes and allies.

We made clear the dangers of government and corporate-led efforts to push carbon markets, BECCS, net zero, REDD+, nature based solutions, geoengineering, etc, which are impeding progress towards a Just Transition. We launched multiple reports and briefing papers in 2021, including a report about BECCS, 'Chasing Carbon Unicorns', 'The Big Con', 'Still a Big Con', and policy briefings on carbon markets and net zero.

We worked with the Food Sovereignty and Forests & Biodiversity programmes to define our critique of nature based solutions (NBS). After extensive consultation with the federation, including two webinars, we wrote a report showing how NBS are dangerous, like 'A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing'. This was launched at COP26.

In the fight against geoengineering, we started working more with our allies in the Hands Off Mother Earth (HOME) campaign. In February, Friends of the Earth International and Sweden signed a key letter to the Swedish government and Swedish Space Agency to stop the approval of a US-based open air geoengineering experiment which would impact indigenous communities in northern Sweden. The project has been delayed, though this could be a short-term victory as the threat can emerge again at any time. ➔





Friends of the Earth Netherlands' legal victory against one of the world's biggest polluters set a global precedent, when in May 2021 the Judge told Shell to drastically reduce its emissions. This court win in the Netherlands makes it clear that companies are liable for causing dangerous climate change. It's also a massive win for environmental justice as it sets a precedent for all other environmental polluters and demonstrates the effectiveness of people power.

"This victory shows that ... transnational corporations are responsible for, not the solution to, the problem. No longer can they wreck our climate, territories, livelihoods, cultures and homes with impunity," said Karin Nansen, outgoing chair of Friends of the Earth International.

Our hope is that the Judge's verdict will trigger a wave of climate litigation against other big polluters,

forcing them to stop extracting and burning fossil fuels. This is in addition to the rising tide of court cases to hold governments to account. The responsibility for stopping the climate crisis is on states *and* corporations.

It is also evidence that we need binding laws at the national level and a new international treaty to regulate transnational corporations, to force big business to respect human rights, keep fossil fuels in the ground and reduce emissions. Until we have a community-owned energy system based on people power and climate justice it will be business as usual, with the corporations growing ever richer and the poorest and most vulnerable communities hit the hardest.

During the three-year case, Friends of the Earth Netherlands (Milieudefensie) argued that Shell violated its duty of care and threatened human

*Friends of the Earth Netherlands celebrating their legal victory against Shell.*

rights by knowingly undermining the world's chances of staying below 1.5°C. Specifically, Shell was accused of violating Articles 2 and 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights: the right to life and the right to respect for private and family life. And we won.

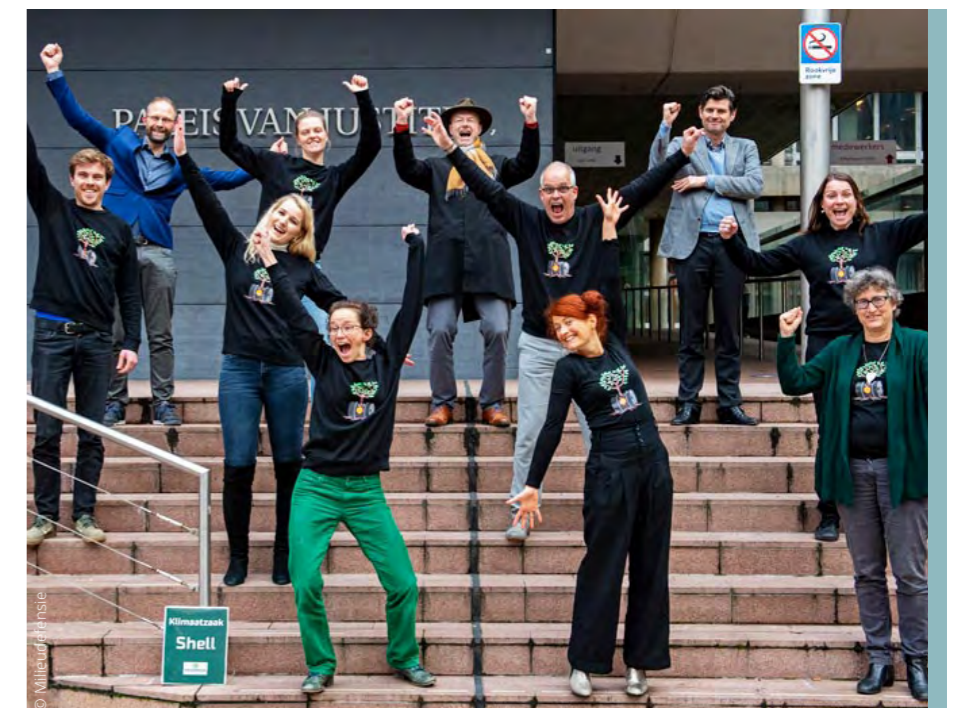
This is the first time a Judge has ordered a large polluting company to comply with the 2019 Paris Climate Agreement, that is to ensure the global temperature does not rise above 1.5°C in a bid to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. In her verdict, the Judge confirmed that Royal Dutch Shell is causing dangerous climate change. She also ruled that Shell must reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 45 per cent by 2030.

Delivering these cuts will have a massive impact on global greenhouse gas emissions. Shell is

historically responsible for one-fiftieth of the world's total emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and methane in the period 1854 to 2018. The company's contribution to global emissions has been significantly higher than even the Dutch state, which was held responsible for 0.5% of global emissions by the District Court of The Hague in 2015.

A delighted Sara Shaw, from Friends of the Earth International, said the Judge's ruling was a corporate wake-up call: "This is a landmark victory for climate justice. Our hope is that this verdict will trigger a wave of climate litigation against big polluters, to force them to stop extracting and burning fossil fuels. This result is a win for communities in the global South who face devastating climate impacts now." ■

“**This is a turning point in history. This case is unique because it is the first time a Judge has ordered a large polluting company to comply with the Paris Climate Agreement. This ruling may also have major consequences for other big polluters.**”  
**Roger Cox, lawyer for Friends of the Earth Netherlands.**





# FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Women taking part in an agroecology training programme, Sarawak, Malaysia.



**Our Food Sovereignty programme aims to:**

- » Strengthen the food sovereignty movement and contribute to its political positions and actions
- » Strengthen food sovereignty and agroecology as key pathways to build environmental, social, gender and economic justice
- » Expose and resist agribusiness power

© Amelia Collins/Friends of the Earth International

Community members holding sugar cane on small holding plot outside Namaacha Mozambique.



© Amelia Collins/Friends of the Earth International

## STRENGTHENING THE MOVEMENT

### BUILDING PEOPLES' POWER

The Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) in 2021 came under fire from hundreds of small-scale food producers, NGOs and other civil society and Indigenous Peoples' organisations, including Friends of the Earth International, because it ignored human rights and sidelined the small-scale producers who produce 70-80% of the world's food. Instead it prioritised corporations whose interests are deeply integrated into the summit leadership and processes.

This UNFSS is geared toward moving from multilateralism (involving processes and decision-making led by states) to multistakeholderism which brings multiple stakeholders including corporations, business associations, donors, academics and civil society actors together to formulate and implement responses to jointly perceived problems. Multistakeholderism is a hijack, allowing powerful transnational corporations, their platforms and associations to direct international and national policy making, financing, narratives, and governance. This allows them to promote corporate-friendly, false solutions to food systems in crisis.

We were a leading part of the Liaison Group of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSIPM) for relations with the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) which coordinated the global counter campaign to challenge corporate

**“ Unless those most affected by hunger and malnutrition become central to the UN food summit, the solutions it produces will never solve hunger.”**

**Kirtana Chandrasekaran, FoEI Food Sovereignty programme coordinator, op-ed in The New Internationalist, March 2021.**

power and narratives, build peoples' power and transformative solutions. This brought together more than 400 global, regional and national organisations. Achievements included advocacy throughout 2021 and a three-day global counter summit alongside the official UNFSS pre-summit in July 2021. See the counter summit programme [here](#) and our research report, 'Exposing corporate capture of the UN Food Systems Summit through [multistakeholderism](#)'.

We also resist multistakeholderism across all policy areas, with our allies in the [People's Working Group on Multistakeholderism \(PWGM\)](#). Together we mapped the rising trend of multistakeholderism in global institutions related to Health, Food and Agriculture, Education, Internet, and Environment, from which we produced a book: 'The Great Takeover: Mapping of Multistakeholderism in Global Governance'. The book shows how multilateral governance is increasingly privatised through the building of a parallel architecture in which corporations and philanthropic foundations rule. The English version of the book was launched on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and the Spanish version is expected to be released in May 2022. ➡



## NYÉLÉNI PROCESS: TOWARDS A GLOBAL FORUM ON FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Twenty-five years after our allies at [La Via Campesina](#) proposed the Food Sovereignty paradigm, the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) launched on 16 October 2021. The Nyéléni process: towards a Global Forum on Food Sovereignty is to be held in 2023-2024. This will bring together social movements and organisations, committed to food sovereignty and environmental, social, economic and gender justice, to build common strategies. This local to global process aims to resist the expansion of the agribusiness model and to advance agroecology, food sovereignty and system change.

We are on the IPC [Nyéléni process task team](#) to lead the launch and development of the Food Sovereignty Forum. Real World Radio shared stories ranging from agroecology wisdom to peasant songs in the [special 44th issue of the Nyéléni newsletter](#) ([see page 31](#)).

We also coordinated with La Via Campesina for a celebratory month which included a virtual global rally on Food Sovereignty: 25 years building the future, for which we organised two webinars with GRAIN and World Rainforest Movement, on Nature Based Solutions: a smokescreen for dispossession and threat to food sovereignty and There's no Climate Justice without Food Sovereignty.

## TACKLING FALSE SOLUTIONS

Throughout 2021 we raised the alarm on the rise of the tricky concept of nature based solutions (NBS). NBS is a false solution that creates the illusion that land, soils, trees, and forests could absorb carbon emissions from the expanding fossil fuel and agribusiness sectors. In a cross-programme effort, we led our federation to develop a strong political position against NBS by holding workshops, webinars and discussions, publishing articles and doing media work designed to support the food sovereignty and climate justice movements in understanding the dangers of NBS in the run up to COP 26.

Our submission to the UN Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights highlighted the dangers of NBS schemes triggering a new wave of landgrabbing. Our work highlighted that the corporations and governments promoting NBS will take us far past the Earth's limits while

undermining climate justice, food sovereignty and peoples' sovereignty.

We also:

- Convened a group of allies including Third World Network, GRAIN, WRM, ETC group and Focus on the Global South to work on Food Sovereignty and NBS. This grouping released the [open sign-on letter NO to Nature-Based Solutions!](#) that was endorsed by 257 organisations.
- Held a [workshop on NBS with the World March of Women and La Via Campesina](#).
- Submitted evidence to the [Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights consultation on the Right to Land](#) to raise awareness of the dangers of land based carbon sequestration overall.
- Wrote '[Can Land as a Carbon Sink Save Us All?](#)' in the publication 'Radical perspectives on a global green new deal'.



## SYSTEM CHANGE

The Food Sovereignty movement has succeeded in bringing agroecology to the fore as a political solution for a Just Transition, but now faces a backlash with an increasing risk of agroecology being co-opted and controlled by corporations or used to support false solutions like NBS, from local to global levels. Friends of the Earth International played a vital role in the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSIPM) Working Group on [Agroecology](#) that was effective in mobilising and consulting broadly with the food sovereignty movement to prepare joint positions and recommendations and to engage in the CFS negotiation process. However, the CSIPM working group found that the adopted policy recommendations fall short of transforming food systems and don't provide a real pathway for transformation, nor do they address the imbalance in power, human rights or the role of industrial agribusiness in the multiple crises that we are facing.

Through public briefings, the CSIPM Working Group on [Agroecology presented its positions and key messages for the negotiation process](#) as well as its [final position on the CFS Policy Recommendation on Agroecology](#).

## JUST RECOVERY

"I started working on my home orchard a year and a half ago and during the pandemic it was really useful. I was able to harvest green peppers, cucumbers and tomatoes," said Mayra Palacios from El Salvador, who has adopted agroecological farming by planting more diversified crops. In the [Food sovereignty for Just Recovery from Covid-19 video series](#), Friends of the Earth groups in El Salvador, Malaysia, Mozambique, Philippines, Togo and Uruguay showcase initiatives such as community-supported fisheries, food cooperatives,

social programmes, mutual aid, solidarity kitchens and agroecological farming. Their activities have supported peasants, fisherfolk, women's collectives and communities across the world to plug hunger gaps, reduce pesticide use and feed themselves and others during the pandemic.

In 2021 we continued to push the governments in the CFS to ensure that recovery from the pandemic is based on food sovereignty and human rights. Our Food Sovereignty programme was actively involved in the CSIPM Task Team on Just Recovery from Covid-19.

The task team engaged in advocacy in the CFS through plenary meetings, with an informal group of member states, with other UN agencies including WHO, ILO, FAO, UNEP and also with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, via regular meetings with decision makers, briefings, webinars and bilateral advocacy.

Through CSIPM advocacy efforts, a committed group was established in the CFS 47th plenary including CFS members (Mali, Senegal, Spain, France, Mexico) and participants (UN Special Rapporteur, WHO, FAO, ILO, UNEP and CSIPM) to advocate for Just Recovery from Covid-19. Notable efforts included:

- Participation in a side event with the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) on Covid-19 to present [what grassroots movements had done and what government policy responses are needed in all regions](#);
- Presentation of [CSIPM's position on the CFS policy response to Covid-19 at the CFS 49th plenary](#);
- Webinar on [Adopting globally coordinated policy guidance regarding food security impacts of Covid-19](#) co-sponsored by Mali, WHO, ILO, OHCHR, HLPE, IPES-Food, CSIPM and supported also by Mexico, Cabo Verde, Spain and Senegal. ■



# FORESTS & BIODIVERSITY

## Our Forests & Biodiversity programme aims to:

- » Promote system change in international biodiversity forums (CBD) to protect biodiversity
- » Advance a political framework favouring community forest management.
- » Expose and reduce the corporate impact on biodiversity



## GLOBAL ACTION PLAN AND THE CBD

We're inching our way closer to a new Global Biodiversity Framework. "It's an opportunity to address systemic causes of biodiversity loss rooted in an inequitable and extractive global economy. The focus must be to first halt then reverse biodiversity loss. "There is much work to be done since the current direction the negotiations are taking is not promising for achieving the system change needed to protect biodiversity," says Forest & Biodiversity Coordinator, Nele Mariën.

That's why we've worked hard analysing and contributing to the negotiations for a new global action plan, the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), that will replace the 20 Aichi Targets of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and which were not achieved (2011-2020). The Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework is tasked with advancing preparations for the development of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Due to the pandemic the Convention on Biological Diversity face-to-face negotiation meetings, originally planned for 2020, were again suspended in 2021. Some of the meetings were held virtually but this created huge participation inequalities, due to time differences and unstable internet connections, particularly affecting the global South, resulting in inadequate political discussion. Friends of the Earth International, together with allied organisations in the CBD, sent a letter to protest this situation. Some governments also objected. As a result, it was decided that in 2021 there would be only initial exchanges on the targets, and not an in-depth negotiation.

Due to the cancellation of formal negotiations, we pivoted activities towards increased online engagement with allies and member groups to

strategise and develop positions that will support advocacy when the CBD processes resume in 2022. We were also part of an online mobilisation week in October.

Friends of the Earth International and the CBD Alliance engaged in all the online CBD meetings, making statements and specific proposals on the draft texts. As a result of this advocacy work, the Global Biodiversity Framework's negotiation documents include specific text proposals from us or the CBD Alliance, which are endorsed by at least one party, and are therefore valid options on the table.

Topics we managed to include in the text cover government regulation for businesses, halting biodiversity loss, blocking offsetting proposals under the disguise of "no net loss" terminology, resisting nature based solutions and the commodification of nature, support for agroecological approaches and indigenous food systems, and legal recognition for the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs). These texts will be further negotiated at the in-person OEWG3 negotiations in Geneva in March 2022 in preparation for the Global Biodiversity Framework to be adopted at Kunming, China.

Our membership showed significant interest in the process, even though full participation was near impossible due to the restrictions of the online negotiation format. We organised online events to engage member groups and allies in the CBD process including eight CBD webinars that explained the process, highlighted key issues, and generated space for debate and consultation. We produced an analysis of the decisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as a tool for use at the national level. We also worked cross-programme to develop a position paper on nature based solutions (NBS). ➔



Exchange of seeds and agroecological products during a World Food Day Forum in El Salvador.

Many member groups were involved in the analysis and participation in the negotiations, including ProNatura (Switzerland), Amigos de la Tierra España (Spain) and BUND (Germany). Members closely followed the developments through our webinars, including groups from Denmark, Netherlands, Colombia, Costa Rica, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Bosnia, England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Norway and the United States.

### STEPPING UP OUR LOBBYING

Friends of the Earth Africa's visit to the ECOWAS Parliament is their first official engagement with the regional body in its lobby and advocacy history. The delegation member groups from Liberia, Nigeria and Togo; an Africa civil society ally from Ghana (Youth Volunteers for Environment) representing communities impacted by the Belgian agri-business company SIAT; representatives of women-led groups (Association of Women Farmers of Nigeria) impacted by industrial plantations, a representative from communities impacted by the oil palm company Wilmar and a woman lobbyist with ECOWAS from Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

This visit shows the power of collective action: it is possible for Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) and grassroots movements to advocate together to defend their territories and livelihoods against landgrabs, rights' violations and deforestation as a result of industrial plantations (such as timber, palm oil, rubber and cocoa). More specifically, they are urging ECOWAS to put in place a moratorium on new land based concessions for industrial plantations in order to prevent further human rights' violations, environmental damage, pollution and loss of biodiversity and livelihoods.

The meeting also led to confirmation of a date for Friends of the Earth Africa to attend the 2021



© Martin Pralgo/Friends of the Earth Uruguay

### PALM OIL RETHINK

In April the Centre for Environmental Justice/ Friends of the Earth Sri Lanka shared the good news that Sri Lanka is a step closer to banning oil palm cultivation – a move the president promised while canvassing in 2020. In Sri Lanka oil palm plantations have usually replaced existing plantations (eg, coconut, rubber), but oil palm expansion is blamed for absorbing too much water and drying soils while the industry ignores its social and environmental impacts and the rights of local communities.

Second Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Parliament with the aim of presenting the outcomes of the First African Peoples' Tribunal on Industrial plantations with key recommendations to the 5th Legislature led by the Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament, Rt. Honourable Sidie Mohammed Tunis.

Better public policies are also needed at the national level to strengthen the understanding of, and rights essential for, community forest management. We are currently supporting lobbying work in Costa Rica, Nepal and Georgia. In addition, our groups in Colombia, Brazil, El Salvador, Malaysia, Indonesia, Togo and Nigeria carry out similar work. We

connected this work at the national level with the work we do at the CBD level to generate synergies between local – national – international thereby strengthening our lobbying work at all levels. By sharing the resolutions approved in the Convention on Biological Diversity (*see box*), we can offer new arguments and generate mechanisms to pressure governments to comply with peoples' rights. ■



## A LOOK AT 2021 ACROSS OUR GLOBAL FEDERATION FROM AFRICA, ASIA PACIFIC, LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN, EUROPE AND CANADA AND THE USA.

*Friends of the Earth Africa with the Director of Parliamentary Affairs, ECOWAS.*

## AFRICA

### FRIENDS OF THE EARTH AFRICA ENGAGES WITH THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES

As part of regional efforts to expose the devastating impacts of large scale agro commodities expansion in Africa flowing from the outcome of the First African Peoples Tribunal on Industrial Plantations, Friends of the Earth Africa has begun the process of engaging with policy makers at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Parliament to give attention to the growing human rights and environmental violations associated with industrial plantations by agro commodities companies.

Our invitation in December 2021 by the Secretary General to the ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja, Nigeria, was the first lobby visit and official engagement of Friends of the Earth Africa with this regional body in its lobby and advocacy history.

Despite the setback of not doing a formal presentation on the outcomes of the first African Peoples Tribunal on Industrial Plantations held in November, 2020 with key recommendations to the ECOWAS Parliament under the leadership of the Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament, Rt. Honourable Sidie Mohammed Tunis, the Friends of the Earth Africa delegation met with other African legislators and key officials of the ECOWAS parliament, including the Secretary General of the ECOWAS Parliament and the Director of Parliamentary Affairs. They also discussed our '[African People's Tribunal Summary of Cases](#)', outlining the 10 cases of systemic violations by international



financiers – including development and private banks, investment and pension funds – who are controlling and financing controversial rubber, palm oil and timber plantation companies.

This meeting strengthened collective people power between Indigenous Peoples and local communities, community based organisations and civil society organisations to defend community territories and livelihoods against land grabs, rights violations and deforestation as a result of industrial plantations expansion such as oil palm, rubber, eucalyptus, timber, cocoa). More specifically, these groups (also known as IPLCs) are urging ECOWAS to put in place a moratorium on New Land Based Concessions for industrial plantations in order to prevent further human rights violations, environmental damage, pollution, biodiversity and livelihood loss.

### STOPPING THE EXPANSION

A month earlier Friends of the Earth Africa organised a pre-visit to the ECOWAS parliament. This was led by the regional coordinator for the

Forests & Biodiversity Programme, Rita Uwaka. She met the Director of Parliamentary affairs in a bid to help the regional body understand our thematic work areas and campaigns against agro commodities expansion in Africa.

We feel that this face-to-face meeting with ECOWAS officials paved the way for a strengthened relationship for lobby and advocacy work with the parliament. It also led to an outright confirmation of a date for Friends of the Earth Africa to attend the 2021 Second Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Parliament with the aim of presenting the outcomes of the First African Peoples Tribunal on Industrial plantations with key recommendations to the 5th Legislature led by the Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament Rt. Honourable Sidie Mohammed Tunis.

The delegation to the ECOWAS parliament included Friends of the Earth Africa member groups from Liberia, Nigeria and Togo; a civil society ally from Ghana (Youth Volunteers for Environment) representing communities impacted by the Belgian agribusiness company SIAT; representatives of women-led groups (Association of Women Farmers of Nigeria) impacted by industrial plantations, a representative from communities impacted by the oil palm company Wilmar and a woman lobbyist with ECOWAS from Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

FoE Africa looks forward to sustaining this established relationship with the ECOWAS Parliament in the upcoming Parliamentary sessions and other relevant engagements with the sub-regional body.

<http://foeafrika.org/>

## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

### RESISTANCE TO THE POWER OF TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

After nearly two years without being able to meet face-to-face, Friends of the Earth Latin America and the Caribbean (ATALC for its acronym in Spanish) held its Strategy Meeting from 6 to 10 December in San Jose, Costa Rica. The aim of the meeting was to develop – together with allied movements and organisations – a political framework and action plan to confront the growing power of transnational corporations (TNCs) in the region. At the meeting, ATALC groups presented eight national assessments and a regional synthesis that analyse the growing power of TNCs in the agriculture and energy sectors.

The process of conducting the assessments and developing the regional synthesis provided ATALC groups with a deeper understanding of TNCs' strategies and the policies driven by right-wing governments in the region. These governments have used legislative tools, the corporatisation of the State and monopolised violence to impose favourable conditions for TNCs' economic accumulation, while at the same time systematically violating peoples' rights.

Through the joint work, ATALC groups also identified historical trends in the imposition of policies that facilitate TNCs' growing power. These policies have led to a constant exacerbation of territorial conflicts, an increase in the privatisation and commodification of nature and rights' violations. Additionally, these policies were developed and consolidated primarily in anti-democratic periods that served to impose the neoliberal doctrine and to subject peoples to →





© Friends of the Earth Brazil

dictatorial or authoritarian contexts. The legacy of these impositions, with some modifications, is still present today.

Women's rights' violations deserve special attention. Women have endured the greatest exploitation of their bodies and their labour. They have taken responsibility for the historical resistance to the denial and violation of the rights to land and territory, water, food and health. At the same time, women have borne the burden of care work in all spheres, as well as all the activities necessary for sustaining life.

Although this historical review shows many diverse complexities, the national assessments and the synthesis of the growing power of TNCs in our region also helped to identify peoples' emancipatory proposals, initiatives and paradigms to confront this power. The main elements identified include community organisation; dissemination and advocacy; strengthening of peasant production and consumption networks; political education, formation and training; denouncing and demanding action from States and institutions; developing political-legal initiatives; resistance in agricultural territories resilient to climate change; local,

diverse and sovereign agricultural production; and promotion of agroecology as a pathway for food sovereignty.

In addition to discussing the findings from the national assessments and the regional synthesis, the Costa Rica gathering with allied movements and organisations facilitated the development of agreements for joint coordinated action to confront the power of TNCs. An analysis was conducted of the new strategies that power-holders seek to impose through multi-stakeholderism, nature-based solutions, and new false solutions and corporate actors that seek to continue greenwashing the crises while making them worse – without any concern for the consequences on peoples and their social movements and organisations.

From its commitment to environmental, social, economic and gender justice – and through permanent contributions to the Friends of the Earth International federation – ATALC will continue its efforts to build peoples' movements and power alongside regional movements and allied structures and processes in different countries.

[www.atalc.org](http://www.atalc.org)

## CANADA

We intervened at Canada's Supreme Court with the National Association of Women and the Law over the federal government's right to regulate reduction of greenhouse gases. We argued that the climate crisis impacts everyone, but individuals and groups that already face systemic inequality will be disproportionately impacted. For example, women face climate change-related health impacts, gendered social and family roles, lower average incomes, discriminatory policies and cultural attitudes. The Court affirmed the federal government has the constitutional authority to enact a national minimum standard to ensure the country's greenhouse gas emissions are reduced stating, "Climate change is real... it poses a grave threat to humanity's future".

We went back to court to insist on the right to participate in decisions on pesticides. We called for Canada's pesticide regulator to convene an expert review panel to independently examine evidence of the harmful health impacts of glyphosate not addressed in the 2017 decision. We petitioned the Auditor General for evidence documenting lack of action by Environment and Climate Change Canada when considering the impact of neonicotinoid pesticides on human health and biodiversity, including pollinators and migratory birds.

We supported the launch of the Blueprint for a New International Corporate Accountability Law led by the Canadian Network for Corporate Accountability. This provides draft model legislation to require Canadian companies to prevent human rights and environmental violations wherever their global operations and supply chains.

Although Canada is to ban the most common six single-use plastics, we challenged the unjust exemption that allows those same six to be manufactured for export.

[www.foecanada.org](http://www.foecanada.org)



Indigenous delegation with Kitack Lim, Secretary-General of International Maritime Organisation.

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

For several years, our Arctic Voices program has engaged in education, organising, technical assistance and capacity building to provide Indigenous Peoples with a greater ability to confront the growing threats to their communities in the face of a warming Arctic. In 2021, our collective efforts to create an indigenous seat at the International Maritime Organisation took a major step forward, when the Inuit Circumpolar Council received provisional consultative status. Expanding indigenous rights contributes to the sovereignty of Native people, and is a systemic-level solution in the fight for strong environmental measures governing the global shipping industry.

Friends of the Earth has been campaigning to get Memphis, a majority-Black city, to break away from the Tennessee Valley Authority, an energy giant which has locked the city into nuclear and carbon-based energy for decades. A Just Energy transition will require not only quitting nuclear and fossil fuels, but also rethinking who controls our energy systems. Our goal in Memphis is to reduce energy poverty and promote energy democracy by helping the city generate locally-owned, cleaner, cheaper renewables. This year, the campaign took a step forward when Memphis issued a Request for Proposals for alternative energy sources.

As the US rebuilds from the pandemic, we are closely monitoring economic recovery packages to ensure a fossil-free recovery, preventing several proposals from using pandemic funding to enrich fossil fuel companies. Our longstanding efforts to end fossil fuel subsidies also meant that President Biden's federal budget proposal included repealing about US\$121 billion of fossil fuel subsidies, and reduced subsidies for nuclear power.

[www.foe.org](http://www.foe.org)



COP 26 action by WAHLI/Friends of the Earth Indonesia.

## ASIA PACIFIC



### PLASTIC RETHINK

Our Asia Pacific groups have strengthened their capacities to lobby and advocate together against trade in plastics. Hard-hitting resources include the report 'Breaking the Plastic Cycle in Asia' (July) and RWR radio interviews about the impacts of waste trade, international policy processes for a legally binding treaty on plastic production, legal actions, and local initiatives. All show how it is possible to produce and consume in a different, more sustainable and economically-viable way.

Legal reform in the countries dumping their waste and impacting the health of people in countries of the Global South is key to achieving sustainable change. To make sure that new legal frameworks respect the rights of affected people, it is needed to take their perspectives into account when developing legislation. After Friends of the Earth Malaysia participated in a conference in October organised by the Zero Waste Alliance in Spain, six Spanish organisations were able to take into account perspectives from the global South in a bid to influence the Spanish parliament about legal reforms for waste and contaminated land as Spain tries to move towards a zero-waste model.

### CLIMATE JUSTICE

Across the region our groups strengthened their capacities to lobby and advocate together against carbon markets, net zero, nature based solutions and other false solutions at national, regional and international levels by evaluating the political

processes and outcomes of the UNFCCC COP26 in Glasgow. We achieved this by developing two short videos explaining net zero for climate campaigners and by developing a joint advocacy plan for the coming year. In all 12 climate campaigners from six groups have also set-up an internal network for collective action and are able to communicate more effectively around climate justice.

Nine of our groups also participated in an online meeting on 9 December 2021 to evaluate the political processes and outcomes of the COP26, as well as identifying the joint priorities for national, regional and international advocacy for 2022.

### OTHER ASIA PACIFIC HIGHLIGHTS

- **New group:** in July we were joined by Friends of the Earth India with their experience of supporting environmental defenders. "Being a member means [we are] joining the wave of global solidarity and collective action to defend the rights of Mother Earth and reverse the climate crisis and ensuing inequity and inequality."
- **Clean air win:** following a legal case by WALHI (Friends of the Earth Indonesia) and other activists in September an Indonesian court ordered President Joko Widodo to "tighten the national air quality standards." As Jakarta has 10 million residents coping with one of the world's worst air pollution records this is a massive success.

<https://foeasiapacific.org/>

## EUROPE

### ENERGY TRANSITION

We trained 23 people from 13 different countries to be community organisers for the energy transition. Over a course of 10 online sessions, the participants gained knowledge about European energy policy, and practical skills to be able to set up their own clean energy projects.

Uniquely the course brought together technical information on legal structures, financing, energy technologies and the role of municipalities, through leadership, storytelling, team-building, and other vital organising skills. Too often community projects fail because communities lack organising know-how: now 23 more people are out there making community-controlled renewable and efficiency projects happen all over Europe.

The course was based on Friends of the Earth Europe's handbook – 'Community Energy: a practical guide to reclaiming power'.

### 80% WANT STRONG LAWS

More than four out of five citizens from nine EU countries want strong laws to hold companies accountable for overseas human rights' violations (such as forced labour or land grabbing) and environmental violations: 87% agreed.

People affected by such corporate-instigated violations (such as air pollution or destruction



of biodiversity): must be allowed to take the companies responsible to court in Europe, according to the people surveyed 86% agreed.

These were the key findings of an opinion poll we commissioned in October ahead of the European Commission's draft proposal for a new human rights and environmental due diligence law.

The findings came on top of half a million signatures collected by civil society groups to demand a strong law.

The draft law, known as Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence, was finally published in early 2022. For the first time in the EU, parent and lead companies will be liable for harms by their subsidiaries and suppliers. Regrettably, the proposal leaves gaping loopholes to allow corporations to escape liability – which we are now campaigning hard to close.

[www.friendsoftheearth.eu](http://www.friendsoftheearth.eu)



# SOLIDARITY AROUND THE WORLD

*Palestinians stand in solidarity with the people in Sheikh Jarrah, in occupied territory, East Jerusalem.*

**Our Global Federation has stepped up the fight for environmental justice and renewed internationalist solidarity to protect defenders of territories and peoples' rights.**

Injustices against defenders of territories, and violations of peoples' collective rights and human rights, are committed daily around the world.

We respond rapidly to violations and mobilise internationalist support for threatened peoples and communities, according to their needs and wishes.

As individuals we can play an important role in the transformation of our societies. But internationalist solidarity sees us taking this principle further to stand up against all forms of oppression, including patriarchy, racism, colonialism and state violence, even when they impact us only indirectly.

Rampant activities of transnational corporations have caused a serious escalation of political violence and attacks on those who try to defend the environment and peoples' rights. In 2020 alone, Global Witness recorded 227 lethal attacks linked to the exploitation of natural resources. While the health emergency unleashed by Covid-19 has been used to strengthen authoritarianism and repress Indigenous Peoples in many countries including Brazil, Colombia and the Philippines.

Struggles for environmental justice – which include



defending water and public services, community forest management, building food sovereignty and energy sovereignty, and promoting agroecology – require our solidarity and system change.

## FOOD SOVEREIGNTY STRUGGLES AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN PALESTINE

In May 2021 we condemned the ongoing Israeli attacks and urgently called on global leaders to use their diplomatic means to put a permanent end to the occupation of Palestine.

Early in October 2021 we ran a webinar with PENGON (Friends of the Earth Palestine), FIAN, La Via Campesina and local farmers' union UAWC (the Union of Agricultural Work Committees)

sharing how difficult it is to access land for farming and produce sustainable food in both Gaza and the West Bank. Regrettably, on 19 October, the Israeli Defence Minister issued a military order declaring six Palestinian civil society organisations “terrorist organisations” – including UAWC. We joined hundreds of organisations across the globe to denounce this injustice and on 29 November, supported International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

## LANDGRABBING AND DISAPPEARANCES IN HONDURAS

The indigenous Garifuna People of Honduras has been suffering systematic attacks from banana and oil palm companies and more recently from land grabbers for housing and tourist developments. Garifuna peoples have not been consulted about any of the projects despite their legal right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

OFRANEH is the Afro-Indigenous Garifuna Peoples' organisation of Honduras. Their long-standing democratic and legitimate commitment to defending the territory, and their ongoing public denunciation of rights' violations, has made them targets for attacks. On 18 July 2020, four members of OFRANEH were abducted from their homes by armed gunmen in police uniforms. In August 2020, we called for their safe and sound return. The Garifuna leaders have still not been found.

Meanwhile the repressive use of Honduran state forces to defend the Petacón hydroelectric megaproject has seen persecution of social leaders from the Reitoca community who are trying to defend their lands and rivers.

Friends of the Earth International stands in solidarity with women, peasants and Indigenous Peoples in Honduras, including the Garifuna peoples, peasants

of Guapinol, the Tocoa Committee for the Commons (Comité de Bienes Comunes de Tocoa) and the Agrarian Platform (Plataforma Agraria).

## PEOPLES' UPRISINGS IN COLOMBIA

After 30 years of neoliberalism, hunger, unemployment and misery are rife in Colombia. More than 21 million people are living in poverty, almost half of the population. In May 2021, we reiterated our December 2020 call with CENSAT Agua Viva (Friends of the Earth Colombia) and showed solidarity with the National Strike and mobilisations against President Duque's tax reform bill. Our film 'Colombia in flames against neoliberalism' sought to raise awareness of the situation and show solidarity with the peoples' struggle.

## THE POWER OF MOBILISING SOLIDARITY

Six environmental human rights defenders in Uganda were arrested in October 2021, but thankfully all were released without charges after a call for action to mobilise international pressure promoted by our solidarity system. The petition was signed by 208 organisations with letters sent by our member groups to Ugandan embassies in Brazil, France, Mozambique, Netherlands and the UK.

## UN BINDING TREATY TO GUARANTEE THE RIGHTS OF DEFENDERS

As we stand in solidarity with those who defend their territories, environment and rights, we call for national and international level regulations to ensure that peoples' rights are recognised and that governments and companies are held accountable.

At the **national level**, governments should put in place environmental regulations which limit ➔



over consumption. They should develop protection mechanisms for defenders, and uphold communities' rights to free, prior and informed consent by involving them in decisions about what happens on their territories. For example in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Neretvica River Community suffered intimidation for resisting the construction of a hydropower dam on their river's vital waters.

At the **international level**, we call for a UN Binding Treaty which would oblige transnational corporations, their supply chains and their investors to comply with international human rights law, environmental law and labour standards. This treaty would make transnational corporations accountable in an international court. It would establish the right to reparation, information, justice and guarantees of non-repetition of any human rights' violations, and include specific provisions ensuring legal protection for those who defend peoples' rights and nature from corporate interests (see box page 6-7). ■

“

**The fossil fuel industry is peddling a lie that gas can be part of the clean energy transition. In reality, this so-called transition in Mozambique has meant a shift from freedom to human rights' violations, from peace to conflict, from communities living well through farming and fishing to starving populations deprived of their livelihoods. The gas rush, which is exacerbating the climate crisis and benefiting only transnational corporations and corrupt elites, must stop.”**

**Anabela Lemos, Director of Justiça Ambiental / Friends of the Earth Mozambique.**

### DIRTY ENERGY IN MOZAMBIQUE

The Mozambique gas project in Cabo Delgado has fuelled human rights' violations, poverty, corruption and violence. Over 820,000 people have also been displaced by fighting between the armies of Mozambique and Rwanda, insurgents and mercenaries. While the government and gas industry insist that the cause of the violence is religious, the reality is complex. After a deadly attack in March, French oil giant Total claimed force majeure, pausing its controversial project indefinitely.

In the same month, the UK government announced the end of overseas fossil fuel financing – a move which came too late for the Mozambique project (agreed July 2020). It is

heartening that at COP26 several countries involved in the Mozambique gas industry committed to ending overseas fossil fuel financing after 2022, but this should not get them off the hook for the destruction they are already funding.

This is an ideal opportunity for countries to cancel their current financing agreements, and for Total to make much-needed reparations to community members and contractors, including local businesses.

In December 2021, Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland took the UK government to court for their decision to fund the gas project. The case is supported by Justiça Ambiental (Friends of the Earth Mozambique).

## REAL WORLD RADIO

We're known as a radio station/podcast but in 2021 Real World Radio (RWR) took on a much more active role within Friends of the Earth International communications by also providing design, audio, video and web support. Our design work included the special logo created for the federation's celebration of 50 years, which is now part of our identity on our social media channels and the striking image used on the cover of Friends of the Earth International's positioning paper about 'Nature Based Solutions: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing' (October).

Highlights of our well-watched audiovisual work was the video on the victory against Shell in the Netherlands and the video in internationalist solidarity with social movements and organisations in Colombia. We also supported communications work in solidarity with Palestine.

We produced six videos (El Salvador, Malaysia, Mozambique, Philippines, Togo and Uruguay) for the Food Sovereignty Program called Food Sovereignty: for a Just Recovery from Covid-19, in coordination with the communications team and each of the national groups involved.

Our creation of new, short audiograms proved popular with allies and supporters, and were useful at key campaigning moments: see Kirtana Chandrasekaran at the UN Food Systems Summit (September) and Letícia Paranhos at the 7th Round of UN Negotiations for the Binding Treaty on Transnational Corporations and Human Rights (October).

The radio continued producing the radio show, Voz Campesina, (which celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2021), working with the Latin American Coordination of Rural Organisations (CLOG-La Vía Campesina), and also Furia Feminista, in partnership with the World March of Women.

A number of social movements and organisations



asked Real World Radio to participate in their activities including:

- The World March of Women for an internal communications meeting to share our social media expertise.
- As a special guest for communications meetings of CLOG-La Vía Campesina.
- Being integrated by The Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organisations of Honduras (COPINH) into their popular media group which has been keeping up-to-date on the Berta Cáceres case, COPINH's former coordinator who was murdered in 2016.

The radio is fully committed to the work of Friends of the Earth International, with the development of different ways to share messages from audiogrammes and videos to roundtables. We also remain strongly committed to the agenda of social movements and organisations from different parts of the world, especially those which are allies of Friends of the Earth International including its regional structures and member groups.

<https://rwr.fm/>



# FRIENDS OF THE EARTH IN THE MEDIA

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

### DEMOCRACY NOW

**Dipti Bhatnagar** of **Friends of the Earth International**, says that while new pledges by the US to cut emissions are “going in the right direction,” it’s still not enough. “We’re calling on the US to do its fair share of emissions reductions, and what that means is four times of what the US has put on the table.”

### THE WASHINGTON POST

“I want to tell the UK government and the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change] that they cannot ignore the voices of the South and make agreements with the North when many in southern communities are the most affected and vulnerable,” said **Hemantha Withanage**, chairperson of **Friends of the Earth International** in Sri Lanka.

### THOMSON REUTERS

**Isaac Rojas**, forests and biodiversity coordinator at **Friends of the Earth International**, said the COP15 delay would enable more participation and negotiations on sticking points. “It will ensure a better (global) framework, greater ownership and therefore better implementation,” he said.

### FRANCE 24

“Under the guise of Nature Based Solutions, big business and governments continue to expand... industrial agriculture and fossil fuel extraction, while claiming to address their climate impacts through investment in activities such as mass tree planting,” **Friends of the Earth** wrote in a recent statement.

### RADIO FRANCE INTERNATIONAL

Podcast “Escala en París”

**Juliette Renaud**, **Friends of the Earth**

**International** delegation member for the UN Binding Treaty, was invited by Escala en Paris on RFI to talk about the mechanisms under discussion to prevent multinational companies from violating human rights.

### THE NEW INTERNATIONALIST

“Unless those most affected by hunger and malnutrition become central to the UN food summit, the solutions it produces will never solve hunger.” **Kirtana Chandrasekaran**, **Friends of the Earth International**.

## “LANDMARK VICTORY”

### THE NEW YORK TIMES

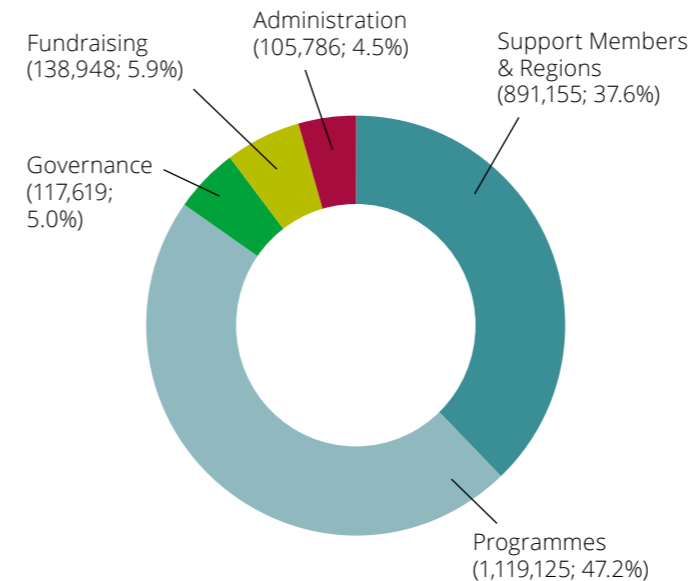
“Still, the defeat of an oil giant by an environmental group – **Milieudefensie**, the Dutch wing of **Friends of the Earth**, joined by other activists – appeared to be a breakthrough in a court’s willingness to dictate to a major business what it must do globally to protect the climate. [...] “This ruling will change the world,” said Milieudefensie’s lawyer, **Roger Cox** [...] people would now be “ready to sue the oil companies in their own countries based on our example.”



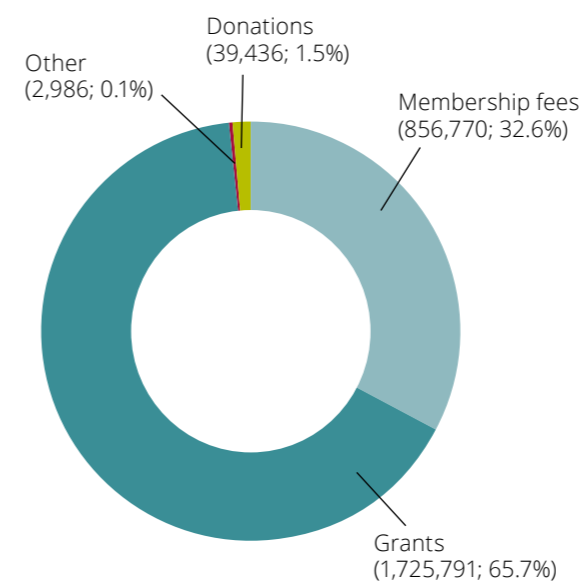
### THE GUARDIAN

**Sara Shaw**, **Friends of the Earth International**, said: “This is a landmark victory for climate justice. Our hope is that the Shell verdict will trigger a wave of climate litigation against big polluters.”

# OUR FINANCES



**Total expenses** 2,372,633  
Amounts in Euro



**Total Revenue** 2,624,982  
Amounts in Euro

## Friends of the Earth International wishes to thank our generous individual supporters and institutional donors:

- Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Fair, Green & Global Alliance and Green Livelihoods Alliance)
- Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
- Bread for the World
- Bread for All
- Friends of the Earth Switzerland
- Isvara Foundation
- Energy Transition Fund, a sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors
- European Climate Foundation
- Foundation for International Law for the Environment
- Friends of the Earth Germany
- Friends of the Earth Scotland
- Friends of the Earth US
- Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- TOP Fund

Friends of the Earth International’s complete audited financial statements are available at [www.foei.org/about-foei/annual-reports](http://www.foei.org/about-foei/annual-reports)

## ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES/ COMPLIANCE

Friends of the Earth International approved a conceptual framework on Gender Justice and Dismantling Patriarchy at the 2018 Biennial General Meeting and adopted a policy on violence and sexual harassment in 2020.

The latter policy along with ones on anti-corruption and anti-fraud, a code of conduct and a whistleblower policy form an ‘integrity system’ which aims to address violations of both personal and financial integrity, to give guidance on desired behaviour, and to provide staff with a safe way to address injustices. This system was adopted in 2020.

Friends of the Earth International has no violations of integrity to report for 2021.

Friends of the Earth International adopted a Safety and security policy in 2021.



# OUR STRUCTURES

## THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The current 'ExCom' was elected during our Biennial General Meeting in July 2021. It consists of Friends of the Earth members from national groups:

**Hemantha Withanage** – Chair, Friends of the Earth Sri Lanka

**Silvia Quiroa** – Vice Chair, Friends of the Earth El Salvador

**Lucia Ortiz** – Treasurer, Friends of the Earth Brasil

**Victor Barro**, Friends of the Earth Spain

**Anabela Lemos**, Friends of the Earth Mozambique

**Bertrand Sansonnens**, Friends of the Earth Switzerland

**Mai Taqueban**, Friends of the Earth Philippines

**Chima Williams**, Friends of the Earth Nigeria

## THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

The international secretariat, based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, supports the federation with coordination, monitoring and evaluation, fundraising, financial management, capacity building and communications.

**Dave Hirsch** – International Coordinator

**Nina Ascoly** – International Programmes Facilitator

**Colleen F. Halley** – International Fundraising Coordinator

**Caroline Prak** – International Communications Coordinator

**Wieke Wagenaar** – Operations Manager

**Loreto de Amunátegui** – Internationalist Solidarity System Officer

**Myra de Bruijn** – Regional Programmes Facilitator

**Amelia Collins** – Communications Officer

**José Elosegui** – Real World Radio Coordinator

**Mara Hotiu** – Events and Logistics Coordinator

**Fieke Jagers** – International Programmes Officer

**Willie Meester** – Human Resources Officer

**Madeleine Race** – Communications Officer

**Kaetlyn Roberts** – International Programmes Officer

## THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME COORDINATORS

### Climate justice and energy

**Dipti Bhatnagar**, hosted by JA! / Justiça Ambiental / Friends of the Earth Mozambique

**Sara Shaw**, hosted by Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland

### Forests and biodiversity

**Nele Marien**, hosted by Friends of the Earth Flanders and Brussels

**Isaac Rojas**, hosted by COECOCEIBA / Friends of the Earth Costa Rica

### Food sovereignty

**Kirtana Chandrasekan**, hosted by Friends of the Earth Scotland

**Martin Drago**, hosted by REDES/Friends of the Earth Uruguay

### Economic justice and resisting neoliberalism

**Leticia Paranhos Menna de Oliveira**, hosted by Friends of the Earth Brasil

**Sam Cossar**, hosted by Friends of the Earth Australia

## THE MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM

**Kwami Kpondzo**, Africa

**Chloe Aldenhoven**, Asia Pacific

**Elaine Gilligan**, Europe

**Karin Nansen**, Latin America & the Caribbean

## THE REGIONAL FACILITATORS

**Nerisha Baldevu**, Friends of the Earth Africa

**Bareesh H. Chowdhury**, Friends of the Earth Asia Pacific

**Jagoda Munic**, Friends of the Earth Europe

**Danilo Urrea**, Friends of the Earth Latin America and the Caribbean

## INTERNATIONALIST SOLIDARITY SYSTEM FOCAL POINTS

**Emma Harvey**, Asia-Pacific

**Kwami Kpondzo**, Africa

**Theiva Lingam**, Asia-Pacific

**Natalia Salvático**, Latin America & the Caribbean

**Shenna Sanchez**, Europe

**Danilo Urrea**, Latin America & the Caribbean



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# GROUPS AROUND THE WORLD

## AFRICA

Cameroon Ghana Liberia Mali  
Mozambique Nigeria Sierra Leone  
South Africa Tanzania Togo Uganda

## ASIA PACIFIC

Australia Bangladesh East Timor  
India Indonesia Japan Malaysia  
Nepal Palestine Papua New Guinea  
Philippines Russia South Korea  
Sri Lanka

## EUROPE

Albania Austria Belgium (Flanders)  
Belgium (Wallonia & Brussels)  
Bosnia and Herzegovina Bulgaria  
Croatia Cyprus Czech Republic  
Denmark England, Wales and  
Northern Ireland Estonia Finland  
France Georgia Germany  
Hungary Ireland Latvia Lithuania  
Luxembourg Malta Netherlands  
North Macedonia Norway Poland  
Russia Scotland Slovakia Slovenia  
Spain Sweden Switzerland

## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Argentina Brazil Chile Colombia  
Costa Rica Curaçao (Antilles)  
Ecuador El Salvador Grenada  
(West Indies) Haiti Honduras  
Mexico Paraguay Uruguay

## USA AND CANADA

Canada United States of America