

# **Fight for Our Future! No Price on Nature! - Asian Movements' Statement on the Green Economy**

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We are movements and organizations from Asia, waging struggles on various fronts and arenas to defend our rights, resist policies and projects that cause harm and destruction, and to fight for immediate priorities and demands, as well as profound transformation of our societies.

We envision a social and economic system:

- that is aimed at providing for the needs of people and aspirations for a humane, empowering and liberating life in a manner that respects the earth's capacity to regenerate, and to sustain life based on the integrity of natural systems;
- that is based on and promotes equity, parity, solidarity and mutual respect among people and nations regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, capabilities and class;
- that promotes sharing of land, water, forests, atmosphere, eco-systems and territories based on the principles of stewardship and not private ownership, and the rights of all people to equitable and responsible access to, and use of the commons;
- where there is equitable and democratic control of economic resources;
- where there is peace based on justice, and not the overcoming of conflict through the use of deception and military might.

Our sufferings and struggles have been compounded by multiple, recurring global crises of food, energy, finance and climate. These crises are symptoms and results of the fundamental flaws and injustices of the global capitalist system.

The recurring crises of the global capitalist system have spawned various efforts to save the system and keep generating profits, most recent of which is the "Green Economy" being proposed by global institutions and now the subject of debate in the Rio+20 process.

## **We reject the "Green Economy" as proposed and envisioned for the following reasons:**

- The Green Economy is not characterized by a redistribution of the ownership and control of economic resources. It is premised on a highly inequitable and undemocratic structure where a few control a vast portion of resources - natural, economic, financial.
- The Green Economy is not oriented towards providing for peoples' needs in a manner that is in harmony with the environment and within the earth's carrying capacity. Instead it upholds profit generation as the main motivation for economic undertakings, aggregate growth as the main measure of success, and markets as main determinants of what goods and services are sold and who

can buy them.

- A strong and sustainable global economy can only be founded on strong, vibrant, sustainable and equitable national and local economies. The Green Economy is premised on continued integration of national and local economies of South countries with global markets, resulting in the net outflow of resources and wealth from the South to the North, a race to the bottom in terms of wages and prices of our materials, and weak economies. Only Asian elites are benefiting from these kinds of national and local economies.
- The Green economy does not recognize and account for discrimination and disparities based on gender, class, race and ethnicity, nor does it recognize social reproduction and activities outside of the public sphere such as the invisible work of women. Economies that are blind to these conditions will only serve to reinforce injustices arising from these.
- The Green Economy will not green agriculture, feed the hungry, generate decent jobs or eliminate poverty. Instead it will distort entitlements in favor of those who can pay, cut subsidies in areas crucial to the poor and lead to the disintegration of local, diverse food systems.
- The Green Economy does not recognize the principle that land, water, forests, atmosphere, ecosystems and territories should not be subjected to private ownership and control, nor does it recognize the rights of all to fair and sustainable access to and use of the commons.
- In fact, the Green Economy is being defined on quite the opposite principle – to treat nature and the functions of nature as capital. This “natural capital” and accompanying low carbon technologies will supposedly be the new drivers of what will now be “green growth.” These propositions are supposedly what primarily differentiate the green economy from the “brown economy”.

Capital by definition is owned, can be bought, sold, traded, on the basis of which financial instruments can be derived several times over. The proposal to treat nature and the capacities and functions of nature as capital is clearly intended to subject them to private ownership, and to package them as commodities for trading in global markets and for profit generation.

- This Green Economy will definitely not result in “improved human well-being and social equity while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities.”
  - Instead, the Green Economy will raise the commodification, privatization and financialization of nature and concentration of control over nature by elites to new heights.
- o Commodification, privatization and financialization of natural resources have been happening for some time. The Green Economy will deepen these processes and expand them to include all resources that are crucial to life, e.g., water, biodiversity, atmosphere, forests, lands, seeds, etc. The Green Economy will intensify the globalization of the right to own and monopolize these resources, the globalization of such markets, and the globalization of impacts.

o Commodification, privatization and financialization of whole eco-systems and specific functions of nature has just began, as exemplified by REDD. The Green Economy will complete, consolidate and globalize this process.

## **Our Calls and Demands**

1. Humans do not own nature; rather, we are part of nature. We call for the re-establishment of the balance with our Earth System and preserve the vital cycles of nature. We call for an immediate stop to the commodification, privatization and financialization of nature, and all its components and

functions.

2. Lands, water, territories, eco-systems and the wealth of natural systems must be defended from all forms of privatization, commodification and corporate control. We call for a stop to all policies and laws that allow land-grabbing. We support governance systems that ensure equitable access of local communities and peoples to the natural commons.

3. The world must move decisively and immediately towards drastic reduction of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and shift to low-carbon, equitable and climate-resilient systems. The transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient systems should be socially just, rather than an opportunity for further expansion of finance capital and commodification of nature and life. Those principally responsible for the climate crisis – the rich, industrialized countries – should deliver on their legally binding obligations to make drastic cuts in their GHG emissions based on historical and differentiated responsibilities, and fulfilled through direct domestic measures without loopholes and offsets. All false solutions, especially those involving the commodification nature and its functions and the violation of peoples' rights, must be stopped. We also denounce the labeling of nuclear power as “green” and “clean” energy.

4. The obligations of rich, industrialized countries also include providing the appropriate technology and covering the full cost of enabling people of the South to deal with the impacts of climate change, and to make the shift to low carbon, climate resilient and equitable systems. Climate finance must be new and additional, not in the form of loans and debt-creating instruments, not treated as aid, or as investments to generate profit from.

5. There must be a rapid shift to economic systems and methods of production (industrial and agricultural), social reproduction and consumption that are compatible with the limits of the planet and are aimed at meeting the needs of people. Profits must never be given primacy over people's rights. Economic systems must provide secure, sustainable and decent jobs and livelihoods for all with no discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity and belief systems, and uphold the rights of workers, farmers, fishers, women and indigenous peoples.

6. There must be redistributive measures to democratize control, stewardship and access to economic resources, and to re-organize economic relations to redress power imbalances. Economic decision-making should be democratic and ensure the participation of workers, farmers, fishers, women and communities. The rights of workers to organize, strike and conduct collective bargaining must be upheld.

7. The power and excessive privileges of Transnational Corporations (TNCs) should be dismantled and their profits should be taxed heavily. Laws should not favor corporations. They must be subject to strict, high and mandatory environmental, social and labor standards.

8. We call for the reversal of export led growth strategies based on the exploitation of labor and the environment, and aimed primarily at increasing the volume of exports and the constant expansion of market access. There must be a departure from the current free trade and investment regime that promotes export-led growth. Trade and investment agreements and programs must enable sustainable production and consumption, strengthen national and local economies, and ensure equitable distribution of benefits.

9. We call for food sovereignty, whereby food is produced not for the accumulation of capital and generation of profits, but to guarantee the sustainable livelihoods of small-scale food providers and to fulfill the rights to food of all peoples. We recognize that it is small-scale food producers who feed people, not corporations, and demand that national/local policies enhance the capacities of small-

scale food producers and providers.

10. Agricultural production must shift from industrial, monoculture oriented and chemically intensive models to agroecological systems and practices. Agroecology will revive and recover agricultural biodiversity, sustain food and other agricultural production, and heal the deep rift that has been created by industrial agricultural production. Agroecological family farmers farm not to get carbon credits, but to care for nature and ensure safe and healthy lives for their families, communities and societies. We call for the rejection of “smart agriculture” promoted by global institutions, corporations and many governments.

11. The transformation of the financial architecture is vital. There should be strong regulation and redirection of finance capital to ensure that it serves a social and economic system aimed at providing peoples’ needs in a sustainable and equitable manner. We call for an immediate halt to the liberalization of finance at all levels. Capital controls and monetary policies must curb speculation, especially of crucial items such as food, and the volatility of capital and commodity markets.

12. Finance must be governed through a participatory and transparency regime at all levels. We call for the dismantling of all undemocratic international and regional financial institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank.

13. We call for all governments to provide essential services such as health, housing, education, water services and social protection to citizens. Privatization and corporatization of these services in all variations—including public-private-partnerships—must be reversed and stopped.

14. We call for effective systems and infrastructure for progressive taxation to generate domestic resources and facilitate the move away from aid and debt dependency. We support calls for financial transaction taxes, which have the potential for generating finance for development and the transition to a low carbon and equitable society. Funds for environmental and social protection should be generated by levying carbon and environmental taxes in a fair and just manner, ensuring that the burden does not fall on the poor and vulnerable.

15. We call for comprehensive, transparent and participatory government audits on public debt, and the pursuit of debt repudiation and unconditional debt cancellation initiatives, beginning with all unjust and illegitimate debts, and debts of countries in crisis.

16. We call for the full recognition of the capacities and contribution of women to production and social reproduction, and the social and economic empowerment of women towards emancipation and equality. We call for an immediate end to gender discrimination in the economy and in all spheres of society. The social and economic system must respect and fulfill the rights of women, including reproductive rights.

17. We call for a global economic system that uphold peoples’ sovereignty and human rights, and foster economic relations that are fair, mutually beneficial and founded on respect, parity and solidarity.

*SIGNATORIES June 10, 2012*

## **REGIONAL MOVEMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

Jubilee South-Asia Pacific Movement on Debt & Development (JSAPMDD)

Alternatives Asia

Asia-Pacific Network on Food Sovereignty (APNFS)

Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives (ARENA)

Focus on the Global South  
LDC Watch  
Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)  
NGO Forum on ADB  
South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE)

## **BANGLADESH**

Bangladesh Krishok Federation  
Coastal Livelihood, Ecology and Adaptation Network (CLEAN), Bangladesh  
Equity and Justice Working Group (EquityBD), Bangladesh  
Humanitywatch, Bangladesh  
Jatiyo Sramik Jote, Bangladesh  
Nabodhara, Bangladesh  
Participatory Research & Action Network (PRAN), Bangladesh  
Resource Integration Centre, Bangladesh  
VOICE, Bangladesh

## **INDIA**

Adivasi Mulvasi Astitva Rakcha Manch Jharkhand, India  
BKU, India  
All India Peoples Science Movement  
Environics Trust, India  
Himalaya Niti Abhiyan, India  
Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF)  
Kalpavriksh, India  
mines, minerals and People (mmP), India  
Nadi Ghati Morcha, India  
National Alliance for People's Movements, India  
National Hawkers Federation, India  
River Basin Friends, NE India  
RTE Forum, India  
Water Initiatives Odisha, India

## **INDONESIA**

debtWATCH, Indonesia  
Indonesian Political Economy Association (AEPI)  
KIARA (The People's Coalition for Fisheries Justice), Indonesia  
Koalisi Anti-Utang, Indonesia  
KRUHA, Indonesia  
LVC-Indonesia  
Serikat Petani Indonesia (SPI)  
Solidaritas Perempuan, Indonesia  
WALHI/Friends of the Earth Indonesia

## **JAPAN**

ATTAC Japan  
NOUMINREN, Japan

## **NEPAL**

All Nepal Peasants' Federation (ANPFa)  
All Nepal Women Association (ANWA)  
Campaign for Climate Justice Network (CCJN), Nepal  
Human Rights Alliance Nepal  
Jagaran Nepal  
Rural Reconstruction Nepal (RRN)

## **PAKISTAN**

Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum  
Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee

## **SRI LANKA**

Centre for Environmental Justice/Friends of the Earth Sri Lanka

## **THAILAND**

Tourism Investigation & Monitoring Team, Thailand

## **TIMOR LESTE**

MOKATIL, Timor Leste

## **PHILIPPINES**

Alliance of Progressive Labor, Philippines  
Alliance of Progressive Labor - Women, Philippines  
Aniban ng Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (AMA), Philippines  
Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines  
Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA), Philippines  
Consumer Rights for Safe Food (CRSF), Philippines  
Ecological Society of the Philippines  
Evangelical Youth for Social Action (EYSA), Philippines  
Faith-based Congress Against Immoral Debts (FCAID), Philippines  
Freedom from Debt Coalition, Philippines  
Gitib, Inc., Philippines  
Green Convergence for Safe Food, Healthy Environment and Sustainable Economy, Philippines  
HKP-MPC, Philippines  
Institute of Religious Education and Philosophy (IREP) - San Sebastian College, Philippines  
Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture, Philippines  
KAISA-University of the Philippines  
Kalayaan!, Philippines  
Katarungan, Philippines  
Kilusang Mangingisda (KM), Philippines  
Koalisyon Pabahay ng Pilipinas, Philippines  
Kumpas, Philippines  
Laya Kababaihan, Philippines  
Makabayan-Pilipinas, Philippines  
Matinik, Philippines  
Patamaba, Philippines

Penuel School of Theology, Philippines  
Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA)  
Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ)  
Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM)  
PKKK-Bicol, Philippines  
PKKK, Philippines  
PLM, Philippines  
Y4C, Philippines  
Save Sierra Madre Network Alliance (SSMNAI), Philippines  
SANLAKAS, Philippines  
Sarilaya, Philippines  
Task Force Food Sovereignty, Philippines

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