

Campaign update: Climate justice

Government shift on climate loans

While the overall outcome of the UN climate talks in Durban last December was disastrous, the UK's announcement on climate finance did bring some positive news: the UK government finally announced it would give £10 million as grants to the UN Adaptation Fund. Until this point it had not put a single penny into this fund. The government also announced that it would give the majority of its climate finance to help developing countries cope with the impacts of climate change as grants instead of loans, which will help prevent further unjust debt in the name of climate change. The UK were the first country to have given loans for climate adaptation, and we hope this shift will help ensure that loans are not seen as an appropriate form of financing by other countries. The efforts of WDM campaigners in making this an issue the government could not ignore has been critical.

However, disappointingly, the majority of the UK's allocated funds will still go through the discredited World Bank's fund (the focus of WDM's report *Climate Loan Sharks*) and loans will still be used to enable developing countries to transition to low carbon technology. There is still a long way to go, but this is considerable movement and the campaigning efforts of WDM and JDC groups and activists has been significant in putting this issue on the agenda. Well done and thank you all for your support and energy and let's hope the government's approach continues to shift in 2012.

We have made a photo slideshow, which is available on the WDM website, which tells the story of the climate campaign with pictures from several actions and events.

Materials

Due to the success we've had on climate loans, we will no longer be using the World Piggy Bank cards. However, we will soon be sending a final package of them to Chris Huhne, so please send any completed cards you have to the office as soon as possible.

Where next for the campaign?

In early February we will be holding another planning day to look at where to go next with the climate debt campaign at the WDM office. We will be in touch after this to get your input on where we go next.

Durban outcome

The outcome from Durban was a catastrophe for both climate and justice. Please see Kirsty's article on the website for a fuller picture of what happened called Durban Platform: using broken ideas to fix the climate crisis. Here's a top line breakdown of what the outcomes were on the various issues.

Durban Platform – a new roadmap for talks

The talks announced a 'Durban Platform'. Essentially this is an agreement to set up a new round of talks towards an agreement which would come into force until 2020. In essence, this is much the same as the outcome painstakingly laid out at the Bali talks four years ago, the Bali Roadmap, a roadmap where rich countries lost their way and shamelessly failed to follow what they had agreed. In the past four years, following a global financial crisis, rich countries have become much less prepared to do what was necessary to tackle climate change or provide the necessary funds. In short, the Durban Platform spells out this decade, perhaps the most critical for stopping runaway climate change, as the decade of inaction on emissions cuts.



Campaigners at the UN climate talks in Durban

Emissions reductions

The Kyoto Protocol, the only legally binding framework in which rich industrialised countries are required to take the lead, became a zombie, kept alive in name but little more than that. The protocol now only covers the EU, has lost its legally binding status and is now no more than a series of voluntary pledges that have repeatedly been shown to fail meaningful action. What's more, the same flawed carbon markets that had always undermined meaningful action under the Kyoto Protocol were kept alive with room to grow, despite being inadequate for anything beyond maintaining neo-liberal ideology.

The Green Climate Fund

The Green Climate Fund was also agreed. WDM, along with many other organisations from the Climate Justice Now network have long campaigned for this fund as an alternative to the World Bank. But the inclusion of a 'private sector facility' led the fund to be renamed a Greedy Corporate Fund during the talks. A pet project for the UK government, this addition enables multinational corporations and financiers to directly access tax funds to back up risky projects, instead of ensuring funds are delivered to the world's poorest people. There are still some elements of the fund that are yet to be designed, and there are certainly spaces where pressure from WDM may make a difference. We'll be speaking with our allies about this and will keep you posted if we think there are things we can do to help influence the fund for the better.



A 'World Bank out of Climate Finance' campaigner in Durban

Climate justice in Scotland in 2012

At a renewable energy event in Abu Dhabi this month, the Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond called for 2012 to be 'the year of climate justice' arguing that developed countries must take the lead in moving towards low carbon living. But while Scotland is doing well in its development of renewable energy technology, and also has a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 42 percent by 2020 – the Scottish budget for the coming year is not making emissions cuts a high priority. WDM Scotland has been working as part of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland to improve the budget, particularly for walking and cycling – for which public funds have been slashed while funding for new roads and infrastructure projects like the new Forth road bridge in the budget has been vastly increased. Around 350 cyclists, including some WDM members, held a rally outside the Scottish Government in January calling for a budget re-think. The final budget for the coming year is due out as Think Global goes to print and will be debated in the Scottish Parliament during February. WDM Scotland will continue to work with Stop Climate Chaos Scotland to increase money for cutting carbon emissions Scotland.

Campaigning in Scotland on climate debt: Durban and beyond

In the run-up to the UN climate talks in Durban, WDM Scotland ran an e-action to Stewart Stevenson, Scotland's climate change minister who was to attend the climate talks in Durban with the UK contingency from Westminster. We asked him to use his influence to urge Chris Huhne and the UK government to stop using UK money to finance climate loans through the discredited World Bank. Around 100 people completed the e-action, and a number of WDM members came along to a joint WDM Jubilee Scotland photo stunt outside the Scottish parliament featuring WDM's climate loan shark.

In 2012, the climate debt campaign in Scotland will focus on developing a Scottish international climate adaptation fund – something that the SNP (who won last year's Scottish Parliament elections) included in their manifesto. We will be working closely with other international development NGOs in Scotland to take this forward.