

SUMMARY PAPER

Environment and ESCR and Corporate Accountability Working Groups

Rooted in Solidarity and Resistance: A Gathering for Peoples-Led Climate Solutions

May 2025

Over the years, members of ESCR-Net have documented and analyzed the ways that the fossil fuel industry has led to the degradation of our planet and how through corporate capture they have shaped the global response to climate change—not to solve the crisis they have created, but to profit from it, delay real action, and impose harmful "solutions" on frontline communities. **False solutions are not neutral mistakes — they are deliberate strategies of exploitation, rooted in colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchy.** Through the gathering, members shared collective points of resistance to false solutions, addressing the questions of *"What do we resist?"* and *"Why do we resist?"*.

Collective Points of Resistance to False Solutions

1. **"Green" Transition Fuels a New Wave of Extraction** - In the rush to transition away from fossil fuels, the so-called "*green*" transitions are fueling new waves of extractivism including of critical minerals and other natural resources.

We resist the co-optation of just transition narratives that mask new waves of resource extractivism to further enrich corporations and governments responsible for the climate crisis while further destroying our ecosystems.

2. **False Solutions Reinforce Colonial, Racist and Patriarchal Systems** - Fueled by patriarchy, racism and neo-colonialism, polluters and corporate-led narratives and practices continue to place the burden on frontline communities while extracting resources as well as women's unpaid care and labor in the name of "*growth*", "*progress*" and "*development*"

while continuing to accumulate wealth.

We resist systems that rely on exploitation, extractivism, commodification of peoples and Nature in order to sustain accumulation of wealth.

3. **False Solutions Silence Peoples' Resistance and Alternatives** - False solutions deepen injustice and silencing women, gender diverse and environmental human rights defenders through criminalization, violence and exclusion. The global polluters and their corporations are blocking real solutions and community-based alternatives by hijacking policy spaces and funding meant for communities.

We resist the erasure of real solutions and the silencing of those on the frontlines of environmental justice perpetrated by governments and corporations - all the while pretending to be part of the solution.

4. **Corporate Capture Is the Root Problem** - Fossil fuel and military industries have not only caused the climate crisis—they buy our policy makers, who allow them to manipulate our political systems and decision making processes. They manipulate media and academic institutions and spread false information to shape global discourse driven by profits and accumulation of power. They continue to infiltrate multilateral climate policy spaces, fund thousands of their lobbyists to influence climate negotiations.

We resist this manipulation solidifying militarism, corporate domination of climate negotiations and governance systems, that serve profit over peoples and the planet.

5. **Militarism is Fueling the Climate Crisis** - Military operations, occupations, and arms production are among the world's most carbon-intensive activities, yet they remain largely excluded from global climate commitments. We resist the theft of public resources from health, education, and real climate solutions to fund the global military industry, weapons, and surveillance.

We resist the global prioritization of war, genocides and resource exploitation over care, life, and justice.

6. **Carbon Markets and Net Zero Are Dangerous Distractions** - These mechanisms allow wealthy countries and their corporations to keep emitting while imposing responsibilities and burdens on the Global South. Carbon offsets are a double-land-grab, which deprive communities of their territories while allowing the expansion of extractive projects and ultimately making clean air a commodity.

We resist these pay-to-pollute schemes that do not drastically cut emissions, deprive communities of their rights to protect the planet, and truly recover from the worsening climate crisis.

7. **Carbon Removal and Geoengineering Are Anti-Peoples and the Planet** - Carbon removal technologies and other types of geoengineering are unproven, extractive, and deeply unjust, harming Nature and communities particularly their human rights to self-determined development.

We resist these techno fixes that deepen colonial violence, delay real climate action and threaten Nature, and communities' sovereignty over their lands, territories and resources.

- 8. Nature-Based Solutions Are Land and Ocean Grabs in Disguise** - Fortress conservation and blue carbon schemes displace frontline communities, particularly Indigenous Peoples and fisherfolk, women and gender diverse people, under the guise of protecting Nature.

We resist the commodification of land, ocean and our biodiversity that erase traditional knowledge and deny human rights including the distinct identity of Indigenous Peoples.

- 9. We Resist to Reclaim Power and Build Real Solutions and Alternatives** - We resist not only harm—but to reclaim sovereignty, collective care, and self-determination.

Frontline communities offer real, peoples-led solutions and alternatives rooted in rights, repair, care, sustainability and intergenerational equity, not in profit or wealth accumulation.

Peoples-Led, Rights-Based Climate Solutions

The solutions have always been with us. But they have been ignored, silenced, or criminalized. Our resistance is not just to say NO. It is to reclaim YES to justice, dignity, reparations, and life-centered solutions rooted in collective care and self-determination. These key elements remind us that the real solutions have always been practiced, protected, and defended by the frontline communities confronting the climate crisis, including Indigenous Peoples, women and other grassroots communities. Through peoples-led solutions, we aim to reclaim and uplift the deep, ancestral, and collective solutions that nourish life—not capital.

Key Principles of Peoples-Led, Rights-Based Climate Solutions

- 1. Deeply tied to peoples' movements for justice and liberation** - Peoples-led solutions are rooted in resistance, collective struggle, and solidarity across movements. They aim to shift power from elites to the peoples, continue to challenge and question "Solution for whom and who is benefitting?". Centering the notion of "your struggle is my struggle" as they emerge from histories of resistance to oppression and build alliances across borders to protect the planet, defend life, demand accountability, and justice.

Peoples-led solutions do not exist in isolation. They are part of the broader movements for justice and liberation.

- 2. Restore, repair and revitalize community-led resource management systems** - Peoples-led solutions and alternatives are against the privatization and corporate abuse of

resources. They bring back traditional practices including cultivation of Indigenous seeds and plants to naturally mitigate climate change impacts.

Peoples-led solutions promote agro-ecological farms, land and ocean recovery, food, seed and energy sovereignty, and most importantly women's networks for collective care of the environment.

3. **Ensure intergenerational justice and ecological repair** - Peoples-led solutions and alternatives uphold the rights of Nature, restore biodiversity and repair what's been broken to achieve ecological balance and harmony, and protect future generations rather than rely on short-term techno-fixes. They demand real zero from drastic emission cuts by polluters, not net zero.

Peoples-led solutions and alternatives recognize accountability to past, present, and future generations.

4. **Defend environmental defenders and frontline communities** - Peoples-led solutions and alternatives ensure that communities are able to fully enjoy their human rights including the right to defend their environment. Led by communities, these solutions also embody collective care and interdependence, recognizing and supporting the critical role of environmental defenders, often criminalized and attacked for resisting corporate and state violence.

Peoples-led solutions and alternatives are acts of resistance that defend and protect women and environmental human rights defenders by shifting power away from extractive, racist, capitalist, patriarchal systems.

5. **Led by frontline communities and their lived realities** - Real solutions and alternatives must be shaped by grassroots communities who are already practicing ways of living that protect ecosystems. Real solutions emerge from the wisdom, practices, and experiences of communities who have long sustained reciprocal relationships with land, water, ocean, and ecosystems—not from the global polluters including corporations and market mechanisms.

These solutions are nuanced and grounded in specific social, cultural, ecological, and political realities of diverse frontline communities, especially in the Global South.

6. **Collectively defined and self-determined** - Peoples-led solutions are designed, led, and controlled by the affected communities—especially Indigenous Peoples, women, gender diverse people, small-scale food producers, and fisherfolk—not imposed by external actors, particularly businesses or investors.

The ability to exercise human rights, including the right to self-determination, knowledge systems, and ancestral connections to Nature must be a precondition and central to peoples-led solutions.

7. **Decolonial and anti-extractivist** - Peoples-led solutions and alternatives resist colonialism, capitalism, globalization while tackling the root causes of inequality and climate harm. They

call for redistribution of wealth, power, and resources, rather than relying on corporate investments.

These solutions confront the legacies and ongoing structures of colonialism, overproduction and consumption, resisting green extractivism including transition minerals extraction that perpetuate harm under the guise of “sustainability”.

8. **Feminist and gender transformative** - Peoples-led solutions and alternatives center collective care and gender justice, recognizing that women and gender diverse people—especially in the Global South—have long been sustaining life and leading the global resistance against capitalism, colonialism, and extractivism.

Peoples-led solutions and alternatives recognize historical inequalities based on gender, between men and women in all their diversity, and value the unpaid work of women and gender diverse people, particularly in natural resource management and in protecting the environment for sovereignty over community resources and food systems.

9. **Uphold human rights and justice over profit** - Peoples-led solutions and alternatives ensure that communities have access to justice. Centering the right to a healthy environment, peoples-led solutions uphold the full spectrum of human rights—including access to information, right to land, water, health, food, and rights to their cultures and distinct identities—and reject approaches that displace, extract, exploit, or criminalize communities under the guise of climate action.

Peoples-led solutions uphold human rights and justice over profit; must be grounded in Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), accountability, and transparency.

10. **Resist militarism and authoritarianism** - Peoples-led solutions reject occupation and the use of energy heavily consumed by the military industry to fuel genocides and harm communities. These solutions resist power abuse, state violence and militarization of communities that systematically weaken their capacity to organize, mobilize, and nourish collective resistance.

Peoples-led solutions resist militarism, authoritarianism and their climate impacts.

11. **Redress and repair to ensure system change for a world beyond capitalism** - Peoples-led solutions are grounded in challenging capitalism, imperialism, patriarchy, racism, the militarized economy and centering the voices of affected communities to hold polluters accountable, not just financially but through structural and systemic change.

These solutions demand the right to remedy and reparations including ensuring equitable climate finance flow and debt cancellation.