

NYC Peoples' March and Convergence

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(Photos by Stephen Bartlett)

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Following two days of the Peoples' Climate Summit convened by the Climate Justice Alliance (CJA), a series of excellent panels and workshops which concluded with a Peoples' Tribunal just 100 meters across the street from the failed UN climate talks, following the dynamic convergence of organizations and individuals for the historic Peoples' March of Sept 21, following the skillfully-staged civil disobedience of Flood Wall Street, that blocked Broadway near the NY Stock Exchange for most of Sept 22 and concluded with more than 100 arrests, following myriad conversations among the activists and grassroots climate justice leaders circulating in New York these past days, we have to ask ourselves:

What Next?! Where to?



Flood Wall Street Protests Begin Street Blockade

11:15 a.m. September 22, 2014

One of the panels at the Peoples' Climate Summit touched on the subject of so-called "Climate-Smart Agriculture." Expert panelists from Mali, Peru, Black Mesa, Arizona, and eastern Montana clarified for the hundreds of people gathered what this latest scheme by corporate interests consists of. In a nutshell, so-called "Climate-Smart Agriculture" is a new version of the so-called "Green Revolution," a technological package brand of Big Ag that consists of "improved" seeds (read GMO and other proprietary seeds), wider access to chemical fertilizers, and a bigger role for the private research institutions that have distorted agronomy in the global south since the World Bank financed their development (CGIAR facilities). It is a technological approach, and an approach that compliments the market-based solutions of the so-called "Green Economy" being spun out like so much fake silk in the corporate controlled media. One of the participants in the audience said that so-called Climate-Smart Ag" was to seeds, soil what the REDD, REDD+ and REDD++ are

to the forests and ecosystems of the world, a first step in their wholesale privatization. What we all know is that the REDD agenda is fraught with contradictions and falsehoods, on how carbon offsets are measured, on what constitutes a legitimate carbon offset, on who is going to be monitoring this, on what the market value of the offsets really are, etc...

A Carbon Tax would be a huge leap forward for humanity! Does a eucalyptus or African Palm monoculture really offset carbon, on land that in its natural form is a forest with 1,000 fold diversity and ecological complexity? Does paying a landlord named Miguel Facusse in Honduras carbon credits make sense when that same individual is a known narco trafficker and the chief of the largest "security" (read paramilitary) force in the country, responsible for the assassination of hundreds of campesinos desperate for a piece of land to support their families on?



Frack Sand Mine processing plant in town of Byron, Monroe County Wisconsin. The dangers of these operations are becoming more evident. Photo Source: Wisconsinwatch.org

The recent *Climate Justice March* in New York City with nearly 400,000 people helped demonstrate to the U.N. and the assembled world leaders just how serious people consider this destructive event. When communities far above the Arctic Circle that used to be miles from the coast slide into the ocean due to melting permafrost and icecaps and when island nations face the danger of being submerged by rising sea levels, all of us should be able to understand the grave threat we face from climate change.

Contributing to climate change, we now have over 150 Frack Sand Mines in western Wisconsin, and the dangers of these operations are also becoming more evident.

Several have even been shut down after violating EPA health and safety regulations on blowing and drifting sand, as well as, leaking chemicals and other



Some factory farms have 1,500, 3,000 maybe even 8,000 cows. How can you love your cows when you don't; even know them? Photo Source: ClearwaterAct

wastes into waterways. The Frack Sand Mine near Sparta, WI has now contaminated the city's municipal water supply with the full consequences yet to be seen.

I recently read a Sept. 24th *Agri-View* editorial titled "It's Time to Speak Up" in which the author expressed concern that the dairy industry was getting a bad name. Their reasons for this were too much attention focused on animal rights thanks to undercover videos and large scale farms being blamed for massive manure spills.

Some of the specific examples included the graphic footage of cow abuse from the Wiese Brothers Dairy near Greanleaf, WI, the 300,000 gallon manure spill from the poorly designed Waunakee Manure Digester, and a Door County farm that just leaked another 640,000 gallons - apparently the largest spill in the state since 2005. I'm sure that historic event did wonders for

this year's cherry harvest and attracted lots of tourists - right... The article went on to suggest that farmers just needed to tell people how they get up everyday to milk cows because they loved them so much. How can you love your cows when you don't even know them? Come on! A factory farm with 1500, 3000, maybe even 8000 cows - especially when you don't even milk them anymore yourself? And let's not forget about the exploited immigrant workers on these CAFOs.

Family Farm Defenders remains committed to the seven principles of food sovereignty and these include caring about the earth and the plants and animals which share it with us.

Small family farms are still the best way to feed the world and cool the planet - that should be our holiday message this year.