

Eco-Socialism

and Stopping C3



What is Eco-socialism? Why is it important to us all?

Eco-socialism means approaching environmental needs from a socialist perspective. Not just analyzing climate change from a Marxist perspective, but recognizing that an applied socialist approach is necessary to prevent catastrophic climate changes that will harm us all.

Today, most socialist organizations recognize green organizing must be an essential part of their work. Most have started promoting both practical short term efforts to preserve our ecosystem and long term efforts to reform our political-economic systems so that we may best survive the changes that are already underway and the greater changes that threaten.

While, the general environmental movement does see and critiques the damage done to our ecosystem by unrestrained capitalism, but it is not yet calling for a political or economic socialist response; that is a worldwide response organized to succeed by taking into account the interrelations of ecology, economics and political power. Instead the focus of much of the environmental movement seeks to educate for improvements within the current economic systems that will slow down “global warming” and prepare us to adapt to the changes that are seen as inevitable. While their sense of urgency and awareness of the looming crisis is increasing, they as yet are not calling for a worldwide plan or implementation of the changes to our political and economic systems that would be required to give us the best chance at thwarting the worst of the potential climate change outcomes.

Eco-socialism approaches climate change from almost the opposite direction. A socialist approach requires both a comprehensive understanding of the political-economic causes of climate change and most importantly, a socialist based perspective on what should be done. Equally important, it values all people equally and rejects the idea that some have more rights to survive climate change than others. It recognizes without a mass awareness, there will not be the mass movement capable of demanding necessary economic and political changes.

Meanwhile, the non-eco-socialist approaches argue that we have to accept the current economic, political and military systems and base our plans on the best outcome possible within those restraints. At best they argue that calling for system change will only become practical after severe climate change. And they understand this means the suffering and sacrifice of billions of mostly poor people.

Fortunately, a growing number of eco-socialists are declaring that not only is the non-socialist approach insufficient, but that by preventing us from doing what is necessary in the time we have, a non-eco-socialist approach is likely to lead to catastrophic failure.

See over



David Schwartzman, a member of the Metro-DC chapter of CC-DS has published a detailed analysis and plan to prevent catastrophic climate change and its devastation based on an eco-socialist perspective.

Published in Capitalism Nature Socialism, 1 March 2009, it begins:

“The ‘practical struggle’ opening up a path to a socialist future is now compelled to confront the looming threat of ecocatastrophe stemming from climate change. In what follows, other interlinked features of the ecological crisis*for example, species loss, the crisis in potable water, etc.*will be placed in the background for heuristic reasons. It should be emphasized, however, that the same basic argument applies to all aspects of the generalized crisis insofar as these are driven by the basic dynamic of capital accumulation. In this context, to confront means a full recognition of the centrality of this challenge combined with a practice drawing from a truly eco-socialist theoretical foundation. The threat of ecocatastrophe is no longer a potential contingent outcome in some indefinite future of the unsustainable mode of production and consumption of global capital reproduction; it is now highly probable in the near future unless radical changes in both political and physical economies are made in time.”

[For a copy of the CNS article please send a message to dschwartzman@gmail.com]

In this paper, David spells out the critical need to overcome the Military Industrial Complex and the real potential of a “Solar Utopia.”

An example of the discussion of strategic political needs and possibilities can be found on CC-DS’s web site listed below. These include the need for a convergence of the peace, justice, labor and environmental movements in the U.S. and transnational solidarity to develop a mass movement capable of demanding leadership responsibly inform the public of the methods needed to safely meet the climate change deadlines and tipping points we face. Eco-socialism argues that we need demand a leadership capable of implementing a comprehensive eco-socialist based plan aimed at preventing catastrophic climate changes.

We believe it is primarily a political and strategic question of what it will take to make the danger and necessity of an organized response as clear as it was in those movies where the oncoming meteors mobilized the world to act for survival’s sake – giving us a real chance to succeed.

Therefore, we need to call not only for “No More Katrinas,” but in the interests of all humanity, to demand the necessary political and economic changes needed to prevent devastating climate changes -- an eco-socialist approach. Since the economy and lives of all will be dramatically affected by climate change, much less catastrophic climate changes, it is necessary we understand and incorporate in our political work an eco-socialist approach and agenda.

1. What is eco-socialism? tinyurl.com/cl5uzg
2. CCDS web site locations: http://www.cc-ds.org/discussion/prevent_ccc_proposal.html
3. Climate Change: www.redandgreen.org/Climate_Change/index.htm
4. Ecosocialism or Ecocatastrophe? (An earlier shorter draft of the CNS article) tinyurl.com/c4mc8c
5. "Ecosocialism or Ecocatastrophe?" Full article available from [Capitalism Nature Socialism](http://CapitalismNatureSocialism) or email David Schwartzman at dschwartzman@gmail.com
6. David’s other writings: www.RedAndGreen.org/Documents/Marxism&Ecology_page.htm

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