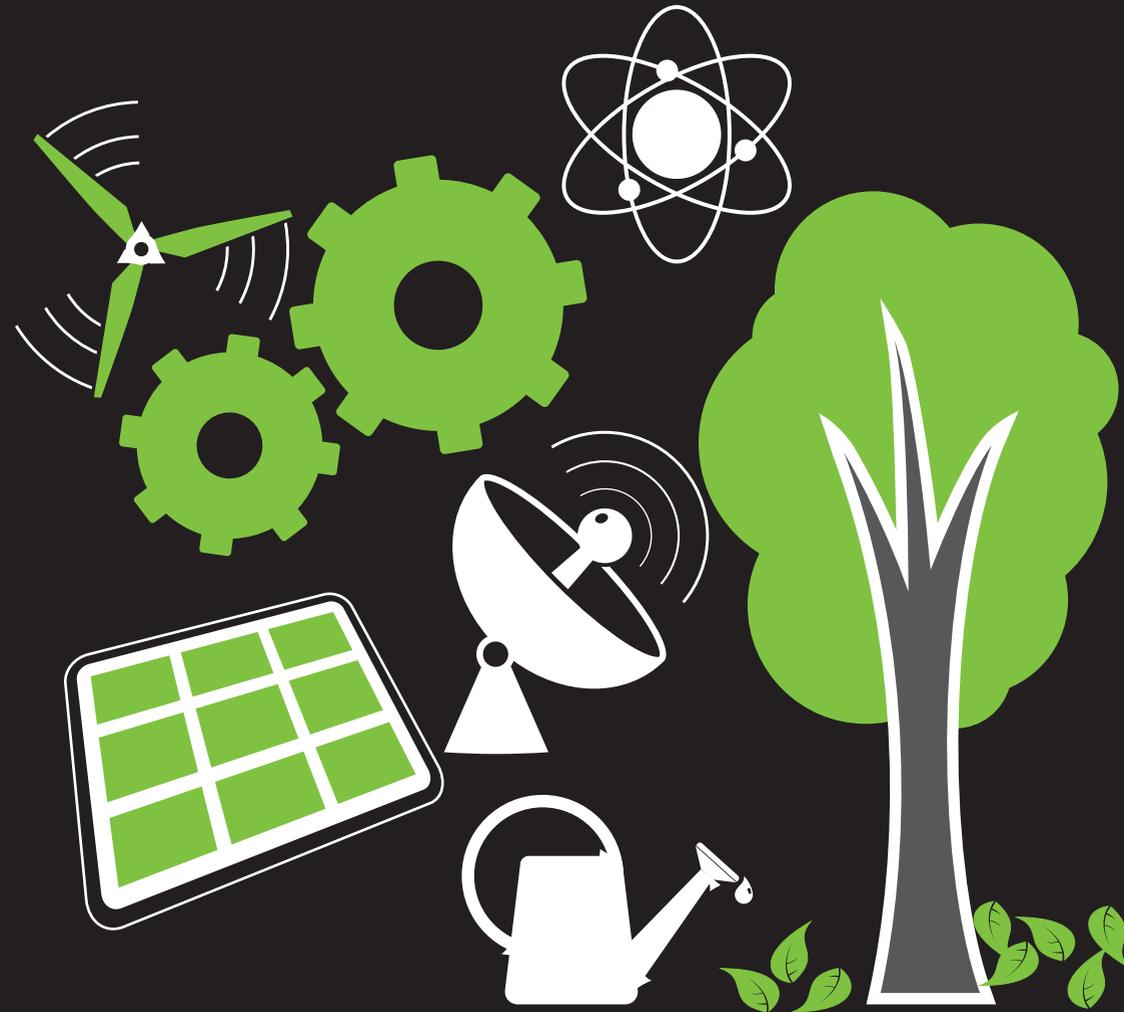


GREEN ECONOMY: THE LONG SUICIDE



The Different Worlds of **Green Jobs**
& **Climate Jobs** ABRIDGED



AIDC

Alternative Information
Development Center

Towards the World We Want

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The Different Worlds of Green Jobs and Climate Jobs **ABRIDGED**

A much longer version with references is available from the AIDC

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On 10th May 2013 a major marker on the highway to climate change catastrophe was passed. This milestone caused the Secretary of the United Nations body dealing with climate change to declare

The world must wake up and take note of what this means for human security, human welfare and economic development. In the face of clear and present danger, we need a policy response which truly rises to the challenge.

The Green Economy is the response by Governments around the world. The problem is that the Green Economy is not the solution and, worse, they know it isn't. So the question is why, when the world is rushing towards an unprecedented global catastrophe threatening the very existence of humankind, are seemingly intelligent and democratically elected governments offering a solution they know is making the problem even worse? Why do governments accept the science of climate change but then ignore the same science in practice?

This booklet seeks to answer these questions.

"Green jobs give a sense of reality to this illusionary comfort. It is only as an answer to climate change that green jobs deceive us. Climate Jobs are the real answer to climate change. The problem is that Climate Jobs are very few in number"

More specifically, the booklet seeks to demonstrate that the Green Economy is at best a fairy tale governments would like to believe; at worst, it is a deliberate lie intended to mislead. Both the good and bad versions serve the same purpose: There is a very real economy and it is this economy that causes climate change. But this cannot be admitted, so there is the need for the idea of an new and different Green Economy. This idea provides the comfort that something is being done to stop the climate change catastrophe.

Green jobs give a sense of reality to this illusionary comfort because we all know what a job is, even if we are unemployed. It is only as an answer to climate change that green jobs deceive us. Climate Jobs, on the other hand, are the real answer to climate change. The problem here is that Climate Jobs are very few in number, which is why climate change continues to get worse. The political challenge is therefore to make governments and other public bodies create Climate Jobs and to do so in the numbers required by the challenge of climate change.

This might sound rather confusing but there's no need to worry. Read on to see how simple the story actually is.



Green is the new good. But green can also be a disguise for something far from green. So what is the Green Economy? Before we can say anything about the green economy, we need to know something about climate change. We need to know at least that:

Factual Foundation

- *Climate change is not new, as it has occurred a number of times during the earth's long history. The climate change that concerns us, however, is entirely new: unlike all other climate changes, which are naturally caused, this one is made by people and is a consequence of industrialisation, the large-scale use of machinery by big factories and corporations and by us in our individual small-scale use.*
- *Industrialisation, beginning in Britain in the 1750s and now covering the world, requires huge amounts of energy to drive the machines and the gadgets we use. This energy comes mainly from fossil fuels – coal, gas and oil*
- *They are called greenhouse gasses after Green Houses used long ago in Europe to capture heat during the European winter for growing plants that would otherwise have died of the cold. Greenhouse gasses form a layer around*

our planet that allow heat from the sun to reach the earth but, like a blanket, restrict the return of the heat to space thus resulting in a build up of heat on earth. The effect is the same as the build up of heat inside a car with all doors and windows closed.

- Fossil fuels automatically release greenhouse gasses – mainly carbon dioxide (CO₂)
- It is this heat that is responsible for global warming
- Global warming seriously interferes with the earth's natural climate.
- The outcome of this interference is the climate change that now threatens all existing forms of life, including us. This climate change causes (a) sea levels to rise to levels that threaten the world's coastal areas, and (b) the unnatural and rapid increase in the frequency of extreme weather events such as droughts, heat waves and floods.

The claims...

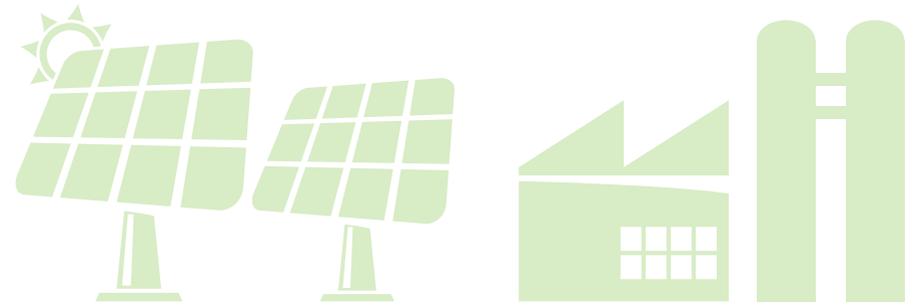
The green economy (supposedly) saves us from the catastrophe of climate change in two ways, both of which are intended to reduce the use of fossil fuels and thereby the creation of the greenhouse gasses responsible for the global warming that fuels climate change.

First, the green economy is the economy based on renewable energy (RE). RE does not use the carbon-based, fossil fuels responsible for greenhouse gasses. RE comes from the sun, wind, waves, ocean currents and tides that will last for as long as the earth itself. In the language of climate change, RE allows for 'mitigation' – the transition to a low-carbon, if not no-carbon, economy.

Second, during the time it takes to establish an economy based mainly on RE, other measures must be taken to reduce the use of fossil fuels. These measures must reduce greenhouse gasses to their minimum by greatly increasing energy efficiency. This involves

- ▶ making things to use less energy but with the same results - changing incandescent light bulbs to long-life (CFL) ones, for instance
- ▶ recycling what would otherwise be throw-away materials
- ▶ conserving (fossil fuel) energy in a multitude of ways, such as promoting the large-scale use of public transport, retrofitting existing houses with ceilings and requiring all new buildings to be designed to conserve energy in both winter and summer.

This is the internationally agreed 'climate resilient' and 'adaptation' part of the dual mitigation/adaptation strategy to climate change.



By good fortune, the green economy also creates a large number of jobs, when unemployment is a growing global disgrace, apart from countries – like South Africa – where mass unemployment is a longstanding, normal way of life. The green economy is therefore both the response to climate change, an urgent economic stimulus and the creator of millions of green jobs. This would seem to be the perfect win-win-win situation.

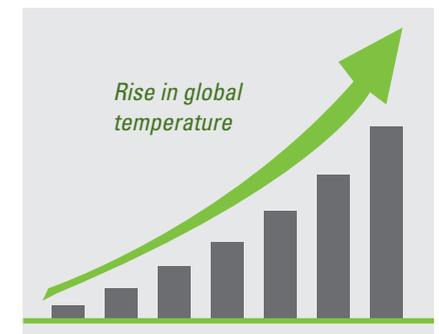
But the problem is getting worse

Alas, like many things hard to believe, the green economy is a mirage. It most certainly hasn't worked; climate change is getting worse. No less a world authority than Professor James Hansen is well placed to know. Hansen, until recently, director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space studies in the US has been driven to despair by the failure of the green economy to reduce greenhouse gas. Writing last year, in an article entitled, 'Climate Change Is Here And Worse Than We Thought', he revealed the findings of a major scientific study:

Our new study...makes clear that while average global temperature has been steadily rising due to a warming climate, the extremes are actually becoming much more frequent and more intense worldwide.

This is the world we have changed, and now we have to live in it - the world that caused the 2003 heat wave in Europe that killed more than 50,000 people and the 2011 drought in Texas that caused more than \$5 billion in damage. Such events, our data show, will become even more frequent and more severe.

The future is now. And it is hot



But neither the future nor the heat has much influence in the corporations and parliaments around the world.

The Fact or Fantasy of a Pure Green Economy

The United Nations provides an official view of what the Green Economy is and what can be expected from it. Besides being

low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive

the Green Economy produces

improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities.

The green economy claims to be everything the non-green economy isn't. Thus, the low carbon claim of the green economy is confronted by the high carbon reality of the non-green economy. Similarly, the green economy's social inclusiveness and equity – to pick only two of its many social claims – are challenged by the reality of the inequality and social exclusiveness that characterise globalisation. This sharp contrast between the desirability of the one and the unpleasantness of the other is not a coincidence. Breathing life into the green economy are all the features that makes the non-green economy so unwelcome. In this way, the Green Economy becomes the home of many fanciful-though-ideal wishes.

The green economy achieves this by *implicitly* presenting itself as an entirely new, stand-alone economic sector magically untouched by the non-green economy. This view of the essential difference or separateness between the two economies is mostly unconscious.

In advance of the more detailed explanations that follow, it is important to bear in mind that the Green Economy is neither separate nor new. Rather, it is simply an extension of the same economic system that is responsible for climate change. This system is one in which the competition for profit leads to unending and limitless compound growth. The Green Economy simply extends this competition for profit into activities associated with clearing up and containing ecological destruction. It does not challenge or supplant the fossil fuel economy. Instead it provides ideological cover for the reproduction and continuation of that economy. It does this by creating the illusion that something is being done about climate change. But the impact the green economy has on reducing and mitigating climate change is totally insignificant compared to what is needed to prevent a terrible global crisis affecting both the whole of humanity and the planet. The green economy distracts us from the radical changes that are needed to prevent this from happening. In that way, it is part of the problem, not the solution.



HUMAN STUPIDITY OR PRIVILEGED BLINDNESS?

Albert Einstein defined stupidity

As doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

Some of the world's leaders might well be stupid – we probably all have our own chosen candidates – but stupidity is too simple an explanation for why they do so little about climate change. Global temperature provides a challenging example. The world's leaders know that the temperature increase must not be higher than 20 C (centigrade) but then don't do what's required to stop the world getting increasingly hot.

The full extent of how the world's leaders are captured by political-economy is revealed by these leaders' extended inability to act on the 20 C science they accept.

A short history of lost opportunities

As the leaders gathered in Copenhagen in 2009 for their next annual climate change summit, Sir Nicholas Stern, the principal author of the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change, a 700-page report commissioned by the British Government and released in 2006, called the assembly

the most important gathering since the Second World War, given what is at stake.'

The Danish Energy Minister, Connie Hedegaard, the Conference Chairperson, added:

This is our chance. If we miss it, it could take years before we get a new and a better one. If ever.

They did 'miss it'. Although they agreed that a temperature increase of 20 Centigrade marked the maximum safe global level, nothing was implemented to prevent this happening.

How hot is hot?

They claimed that the 20C threshold represented the 'scientific view'. It was in fact no such thing. 20C was a compromise between science and political pragmatism. And the assembled world leaders knew this. They knew that even a 1°C rise would

- Cause the disappearance of small glaciers in Andes
- Threaten 50 million people's water supply
- Cause the death of 300,000 people from malaria, diarrhoea or starvation
- Precipitate the extinction of 10% of all species

They additionally knew that a 20C rise would

- Reduce water in South Africa & the Mediterranean by 30%
- Expose 60 million more people to malaria in Africa
- Cause the extinction of polar bears & caribous
- Begin melting Greenland's ice shelf with potential 7 m rise in sea level

This, to remind ourselves, is the supposedly 'safe' level!

Professor James Hansen, who, as we have seen above, warned about the 'future being now and hot', described the 20C maximum as 'a prescription for long-term disaster'. For Kevin Anderson and Alice Bows, at the University of Manchester, 20C was no longer a threshold of 'dangerous climate change' but, as they argued, stands for the threshold of 'extremely dangerous' climate change

Even Greater Stupidity or Political-Economy Induced Blindness

The leaders of the world again gathered in Rio de Janeiro, in June 2012, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the first ever conference on the environment graced by the world's Presidents and Prime Ministers. Hence its title of Rio+20



Shortly before Rio+20, the former head of the UN's Climate Panel and Chief Adviser to Britain's Environment Ministry noted

We have just not acted. The need for action is becoming more and more urgent with every day that passes,

he warned:

If you look at the commitments today [March 2012] from governments around the world, we've got a 50-50 shot at 3°, almost no chance of a 2°C world and, to be quite honest, I would say it's not unlikely that we will hit a 5° world.

Our leaders already knew some of the likely consequences of a 3 and 4 and 5 degree increase. They knew the following:

3°C rise

- Serious drought in Southern Europe
- 3 million more people die from malnutrition
- Up to 40% of species face extinction



4°C rise

- Australian agriculture ends
- Half of (the permanently frozen sub-soil) of the arctic tundra melts
- African agriculture yields down by 35%

5 C ° rise

- Himalayan glaciers disappear
- London, New York, Tokyo threatened by sea levels
- Massive migration of populations
- Greenland ice shelf melts, sea levels up 7 meters.



It's the economy, stupid

A summary is probably helpful before turning to the decisions taken at Rio+20. Climate change has been a naturally recurring feature of our planet during its 4½ billion year history.

Much of why this is so is known to science. The climate change the leaders assembled at Rio+20 had to address was of an entirely different nature: People are responsible for the current climate change, unlike those of the past that were caused by natural phenomena. In the process of making the modern industrial world, our species has become increasingly reliant on fossil fuels – mainly coal, gas and oil. These fuels power the world of the 21st century. Unfortunately, they also simultaneously and unavoidably power the global warming behind human-made climate change.

Industry, like society itself, can exist in many different forms. In the context of climate change, only one conclusion is possible regarding the economy responsible for our current climate change crisis: This economic system is not able to reduce its production of greenhouse gasses to a safe level. As a result, the earth is getting increasingly hot – with Africa being the worse affected. And all this happening despite the growing use of renewable energy.

Against this terrifying reality, our leaders at Rio

- ▶ ignored the fact that the economy was not meeting the (far from safe) 20C threshold and
- ▶ through their Declaration, entitled 'The Future We Want', they committed the 'green' part of this economy to solve many of the world's main social problems.

The Declaration, for instance, proclaims

We are convinced that a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication should contribute to meeting key goals in particular the priorities of poverty eradication, food security, sound water management, universal access to modern energy services, sustainable cities, management of oceans and improving resilience and disaster preparedness, as well as public health, human resource development and sustained, inclusive and equitable growth that generates employment, including for youth. It should be... people-centred and inclusive, providing opportunities and benefits for all citizens and all countries

Finally, the leaders of the world state

We reaffirm the key role of the private sector in promoting sustainable development...conducive to long-term investment and socially and environmentally responsible behaviour by business and industry.

The required 'reaffirmation' is telling. It draws unintended attention to the failure of the 'private sector' to deliver on previous pledges. It also underscores the leaders' failure or refusal to see any connection between the problems they so loftily commit themselves to addressing and the currently dominant private sector.

The General Secretary of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, however sees none of this:

Rio+20 has affirmed fundamental principles – renewed essential commitments – and given us new direction.

The unreality of the 'new direction'

The world leaders who again gathered in Doha, at the end of 2012 for their annual climate change summit – COP 18 – had even more scientific information to give them a real direction, even though far from being a new one. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) intentionally published its Emissions Gap Report 2012 a few days before their Doha meeting. The leaders therefore knew about the large gap between their already very modest commitments and the reality in respect of keeping the temperature increase under 20C.

Also timed to coincide with COP 18, the World Bank published, Turn Down the Heat: Why a 40C Warmer World must be Avoided. The opening sentence of the Forward to the Report, by the President of the World Bank, Dr. Jim Yong Kim, reads:

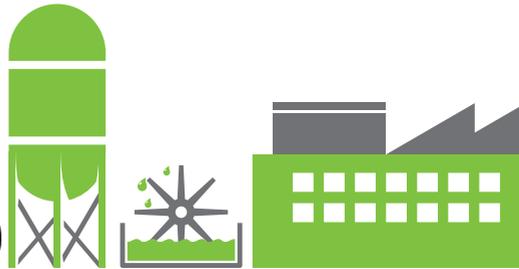
It is my hope that this report shocks us into action. Even for those of us already committed to fighting climate change, I hope it causes us to work with much more urgency.

It is science that has brought climate change to the attention of the world. It is science that keeps climate change at the centre of the global agenda. It is science that, with ever-increasing confidence, prescribes what must be done to prevent catastrophe. COP 18 did not challenge any of the science; it was simply ignored.

On May 10th 2013 the earth passed yet another global warming danger mark: 400 ppm of atmospheric CO₂. This resulted in yet another flood of pleas by important people for humanity to see what was happening.



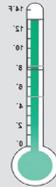
BLINDNESS BY THE PRIVILEGED



The 'terrifying new math' of Bill McKibben, a US climate change researcher and leading activist, lights up the privilege that makes our leaders blind. He uses 3 numbers.

2° CENTIGRADE

Maximum allowable rise in global temperature agreed by world leaders



565 GIGATONS

Amount of additional Carbon Dioxide consistent with a maximum temperature increase of no more than 2° centigrade



2,795 GIGATONS

Amount of carbon contained in the coal, oil and gas reserves of the world's fossil fuel companies, valued at \$27 million dollars and invested.



A potential loss of \$20 trillion to the fossil fuel industry, as 80% of fossil fuel reserves have to stay unused



The cycle of capital accumulation

The wealth of any country and the well being of its economy is measured in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). GDP is the measure of the (monetary) value of all the goods and services produced and/or provided each year. GDP is the yardstick used to measure growth. The growth it measures, however, is not simple growth but compound growth. The baseline therefore never changes but effectively reverts back to zero each year. If, for instance, an economy with a GDP of (to keep it simple) R100 million most impressively grows 10% during any given year, the new GDP will have grown by R10 million to R110 million. The GDP baseline for the following year, however, would not be the original R100 million but R110 million. Let's say that the following year the GDP also grew by 10% and thus stood at R121 million. In the third year, however, even if the economy still generated a total wealth of R121 million this would register as zero growth – and the economy would be described as being very sick. Any 'negative' growth is an official disaster called a Depression.

Behind all of this are the following basic features of our capitalist economy:

- ▶ Growth requires investment.
- ▶ The money for investment originally comes from the money each investor – whether a single business or person – makes available exclusively for making more money. This self-expansion of money – using money to make money – is the simplest meaning of capital.
- ▶ New capital, in the normal course of events, is capital made by already existing investments and ready for new and quickly available investment opportunities in anything, anywhere in the world. (The expansion by 10% of R1 million means that capital of R1.1 million is available for new investments, provided that some of it is not used up, consumed as money.)
- ▶ Investment opportunities are shaped by two fundamental conditions: First, they are required to generate a level of profit greater than inflation and higher than keeping it in an interest-bearing bank account or government bond and, second, at a level of security not dissimilar to that supposedly offered by banks or governments. (The current global financial crisis shows that neither banks nor even governments can be guaranteed safe.)
- ▶ Achieving the expected rate of profit is dependent, in the first instance, on being able to sell whatever is being made available, whether in the form of goods or services.
- ▶ What is being produced, how it is being produced, how it is marketed and how it is disposed of is of little if any relevance to each investor.
- ▶ What is central to the whole circulation of capital is that the greater the quantity of whatever is being sold the better. There is no limit to this. This applies no less to the economy as a whole as it does to each individual investor of capital.
- ▶ The obverse of this whole cycle is idle surplus capital, that is, capital that remains un-invested, because there are no suitably profitable investment outlets. This is over and above the surplus-capital-as-waste referred to at the beginning of this section. Too much idle capital means economic stagnation, which, for most people inside a capitalist

mode of production, means increased hardship, even if not actual unemployment. Many governments are now seeing the Green Economy not so much as the antidote to climate change as the antidote to the global economic crisis. The Green Economy is being targeted as an ideal investment opportunity. The frontiers of the Green Economy are, indeed, being greatly extended by the new moves to price nature and apply market mechanisms for profit.

Capitalists can never have enough capital. It is never-ending capital accumulation that drives the never-ending need for the compound growth that sustains the system. .

The uneconomic reality of cars



Just how wasteful and unsustainable this un-economic economic mode is and just how destructive it is of the environment and, finally, just how it causes the very climate change the supposedly Green Economy is claimed to counter is best illustrated by motor cars. This is because the car industry is used worldwide as a measure of the health of any particular economy. The thinking is simple: the more cars sold the better

because more cars means bigger economic growth and growth is automatically GOOD. Cars become all the more revealing because they additionally expose the claimed efficiency of competitive capitalism.

Take South Africa, for instance. Notwithstanding our small car-owning population, no fewer than 44 car manufacturers are active here. Between them, they provide a staggering 1,180 – and constantly changing – models

The difference between competing makes and models are marginal, at best. Consider, however, the carbon dioxide released by the energy used in the research and design of the engines that propel the cars that compete to see which one can exceed the legal speed limit by the greatest margin; consider the fossil fuels required to make the ever bigger engines required to make cars faster and faster; consider the global warming energy that goes into the design and making of the brakes and other components to make safer the cars designed to go faster and faster. Finally, consider the greenhouse gas emissions produced by the extracting, refining and transporting of the extra petrol required by these bigger, heavier and faster cars.

Diverting attention from the car industry's considerable contribution to climate change is – the Green Economy. Thus, we have electric cars and hybrid cars. Not said is that these 'green' cars reproduce all the far from green absurdities of the car industry. Thus, as the newest

'gee-whiz', there is a hybrid sports car with a huge engine (6 litres and 12 cylinders) designed to break the legal speed limit by more than 2½ times and burn the rubber required to go from 0 -100km/h in a mindless 4.9 seconds. 'Green' helps market cars at a premium price. As a motor journalist unknowingly put it, in an article aptly titled 'The Green Monster',



Ideally all cars should be green but if they were then the marketing people would have nothing to shout about.

Innovative production processes are similarly presented as 'green' because – and only because – they are slightly less carbon emitting and therefore 'ecologically responsible', as a major car company boasts. 'Auto Industry Turns Green' could be the headline of countless articles in different newspapers around the world.

The magic of the Green Economy is the sleight of hand inducing the belief that a slightly smaller carbon footprint means no footprint at all.

Capping Capitalism – The Need for Democratic Planning

A brief aside is necessary. It follows from the above that reforming capitalism is a climate change must. Climate change means it is no longer possible to leave it to each individual capitalist to decide what to make. If left entirely to them, they, as we have seen, will make anything provided only that it maximises their profit.

This market freedom is no longer compatible with the challenges of climate change. Climate change demands the deepening of democracy by allowing a much louder social voice. This means democratic planning that takes precedence over the profit-driven anarchy of the market.





WHY GOVERNMENT'S NATURALLY BUY THE GREEN FANTASY

Most governments just accept the fantasy. They don't have to, so it is important to understand why they do. Moreover, why do democratically elected and otherwise decent politicians ignore the science that screams the climate change catastrophe? President Obama, for instance, says:

I am a firm believer that climate change is real; that it is impacted by human behaviour and, as a consequence, we have an obligation to do something about it.

Yet, virtually everything he does is the opposite of what he says. "They are all bought" is the typical explanation of such contradictions. But this answer leads to further questions. Who would want to buy the political leaders and have the power to do so? We must also ask why our leaders are so easily bought. We already know who the buyers are. We must now answer why our leaders so ready to sell themselves.

The answer requires us to look at the nature of the state through the lens of political economy. Doing this we see that:

- ▶ Most politicians want to make money for themselves.
- ▶ Governments have an electioneering interest in creating employment and giving hope to the unemployed as well as those still being educated. The UN Environmental Programme predicts that between 15 million and 60 million additional jobs can be created worldwide in the next two decades if green policies are put in place to switch from the existing high-carbon global economy to a low-carbon one.
- ▶ In addition to these two considerations of business and election self-interest, governments, concerned by climate change and, hence, the need to do something, automatically expect the involvement of the market and their own 'green' industries in particular, especially if they have a business interest in being 'green'.
- ▶ It is 'natural' for them to have this expectation because market values and market-thinking dominate in shaping all aspects of life from birth to death. This makes the market – capitalism – the spontaneous, unthinking, 'natural' economic formation when they think of growth and job creation – or the Green Economy.



- ▶ The 'National Interest', in this way becomes the same as private business interests. It is therefore not surprising, for instance, that large business delegations always accompany our globe-trotting Presidents – whether Mandela, Mbeki or Zuma – on their various travels to around the world.

The closeness between the political and economic is as old and universal as the divisions themselves. It is this unity within all class structured societies that indeed gives rise to the very idea of a ruling class. Black Economic Empowerment, along with neo-liberalism, has merely made this systemic intimacy between the holders of political and economic power more intense and visible..

Green jobs vs climate jobs

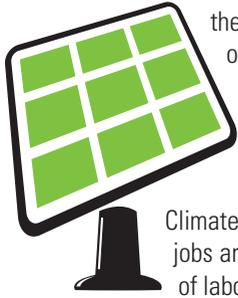
It must be highly doubtful whether the human imagination could design a more wasteful, resource depleting, environment destroying and efficient and effective way of global warming than the capitalism the Green Economy seeks to camouflage.

'Well, yes', supporters of the Green Economy might say. 'But', they would add, 'the Green Economy does at least provide jobs'. To which one could comment: 'Yes, but is it not considerably better to have jobs that do indeed address climate change, rather than serving to conceal the causes of global warming?'

The climate jobs promoted by the One Million Climate Jobs Campaign are what green jobs pretend to be. Climate Jobs will be examined in some detail shortly. For the moment, it is important to emphasise that Green jobs are certainly real jobs, for they are to be found in any work having anything to do with saving energy or improving the environment. It is only the 'green' part of green jobs that is fictitious. Green jobs are far from 'green', for they are all part of the same real economy whose productivity in global warming is so terrifying.

Green jobs have a number of features that merit attention.

- ▶ Green jobs earn lucrative state benefits for their employers;
- ▶ 'Green' commodities manage to combine the seemingly contradictory elements of being a marketing dream despite their premium price;
- ▶ More specifically – and sometimes contrary to appearances – the existence of a green job has nothing directly to do with the needs of climate change. Renewable energy jobs would seem to contradict this. However, these RE jobs exist only if suitable government guarantees make investment in RE suitably lucrative. This has been slow to happen in South Africa, which is why there are so few RE jobs here. The conclusion is that, regardless of the need or its urgency, climate change does not automatically lead to green jobs: only the expectation of suitable levels of profit results in these new jobs. If left to the market,



the millions of jobs needed to address climate change will become actual jobs only if, and to the extent that, suitable profit can be made. No profit means no jobs. With a vast amount of idle capital seeking duly profitable new investment outlets, climate change is, in practice, no more than a most conveniently timed business opportunity.

Climate jobs, by contrast, are not dependent, in any way, on the market. Climate jobs are public jobs created by public bodies to meet the public good. At the risk of labouring the point, this essential shift from the market to the public is required because the public good registers in the market as no more than a business opportunity to be picked up and dropped as determined by the profit maximisation imperatives of capitalism.

In contrast to the Green Economy, governments must do whatever is required to keep the temperature increase to a maximum of no more than 20C. This implies a totally uncompromising approach to business, as happened during the Second World War. Wartime governments told business what to do and what not to do. Unlike wartime, however, governments are now required to act in the global interest, rather than a much narrower national interest.

The public good, in the context of climate change, has the twin requirements of the maximum and speediest reduction of greenhouse gas and the biggest and quickest increase in jobs.

Reducing greenhouse gas not only necessitates alternate energy sources but also the much more efficient use of energy. Both steps must be very boldly and urgently taken not least to catch up with the already lost time. None of this can happen without labour – lots of labour and much of it new.

These new jobs are climate jobs. Climate jobs are primarily public jobs because it is the government – acting in the public interest and driven solely by both the urgency and the demands of climate change – that uncompromisingly determines what must be done. One immediate example is the retrofitting all RDP houses with ceilings, solar water heaters, and enabled to harvest rainwater; and for this to be done in a systematic and coordinated way by specialised and experienced workers. Such dedicated retrofitting units should be a part of public works departments, whether at national or local level. This also means large-scale, decent employment.

Climate jobs do not necessarily exclude the involvement of the private sector but it is a private sector doing what government says must be done to meet the 20C cap. Profit can still be made but at levels set by the government, not a profit-maximising market. Business can be expected to resist any such move to limit their profit levels.

Climate jobs can additionally embrace other organisational forms ranging from cooperatives, to NGOs and the livelihoods of small-scale agriculture.

Climate jobs also expressly provide for decent work. Being primarily public gives a better chance of this requirement being met. Moreover, government is in a position to require that climate jobs outsourced to the private sector meet agreed conditions. This is all the more important because current evidence shows that any connection between greenness and decent work is entirely accidental.

In summary:

Green jobs are part of the business-as-usual private profit realm whereas climate jobs are part of the public realm determined solely by the imperatives of climate change. More especially

Green jobs, being part of the green economy, are:

- (a) Created and sustained only for as long as profit is maximised;
- (b) Located only in those areas of the green economy where suitable profit is anticipated.

Climate Jobs are:

- (a) Independent of the market and
- (b) Dependent and sustained entirely by the necessities of climate change, as directed by public authorities, as the only body with the power and legitimacy to act solely in the public interest

A climate jobs based strategy for tackling climate change and unemployment

Responding appropriately to the demands of climate change does more than create new jobs in large numbers. Research by the One Million Climate Jobs Campaign shows that one million new jobs can easily be created in South Africa alone. Climate jobs serve other vital functions:

- (a) They make climate change meaningful to the large number of people who have little interest in climate change, even if they've even heard of it. For them, the struggle of life is just to survive each day, with the concerns of climate change being luxuries they can ill afford. Linking climate change with what, for them, are desperately needed jobs gives these millions of people a material interest in the matter.
- (b) Linking service provision, improvement, or saving money with climate change makes the otherwise arcane subject the very stuff of practical life. The same applies to communities affected or threatened by coal mining. Retrofitting the slums that pass for houses, so that they don't lose heat and indeed provide free energy and water (in varying quantities), and doing something



similar to schools, with, in this case, the additional bonus of food and a greatly enhanced learning environment, are but examples of how, via climate jobs, climate change can be made important to people who are otherwise seen as unimportant.

- (c) They provide an important part of the popular base needed to force governments to separate their interests from those of business. We have previously seen that a natural oneness exists between the political and economic classes. We have further seen that it is this essential and complementary division of labour between the two main beneficiaries of a society based on profit maximisation that explains why governments have so spectacularly remained blind to the scientific evidence.

The logic of democratic government is to act in the public interest, if that interest is voiced in sufficient numbers and sufficiently clearly and loudly and firmly and for long enough to coincide with a national election. This and this alone might exert the pressure required to split the political and economic classes, which, in turn, is required if governments are to create climate jobs in the numbers and with the speed demanded by climate change.

The potential of an organised constituency sufficiently loud and powerful not to be ignored by governments already exists. Just consider

- the ever increasing number of scientists, ecologists, environmentalists and other citizens who are already outraged by governments' failure to act properly in the interest of preserving life as we know it;
- the climate job workers and;
- the communities that would directly benefit from the work done by the climate jobs

The One Million Climate Jobs Campaign shows that unity between these various groups is possible.

Therein lies the Hope that fills these pages. Climate change is a global problem. Ultimately, only a global solution is possible. The need is to start somewhere, anywhere; ideally, there should be several starts in different parts of the world. The strategy is not modest. Its boldness, however, is determined by what we already know is already happening. From another perspective, the proposal is a model of modesty. If it's raining, wear a raincoat.

The final words belong to the person best known for his daring to think the seemingly impossible – Albert Einstein:

If at first an idea does not sound absurd, there is no hope for it.



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Other AIDC booklets available on request:

- * Climate Change & Climate Jobs – Easy Answers to 56 Important Questions
- * One Million Climate Jobs – A just transition to a low carbon economy to combat unemployment & climate change
- * Youth Wage Subsidy – Difficult Questions with Easy Answers
- * Personal Income Taxation and the Struggle Against Inequality & Poverty – Tax policy and personal income taxation in South Africa since 1994
- * The National Development Plan: 7 Critical Appraisals