

# ADVANCING CLIMATE JUSTICE

# NOT CLIMATE CATASTROPHE AT COP26



## Why We Must Say No to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement

Climate Justice Alliance (CJA) attended the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ([COP26](#)) in Glasgow, Scotland, from October 31 to November 12, 2021. As in past years, our members joined together with our sister alliances under the banner of the [It Takes Roots Alliance](#). Together, we combat false climate promises masquerading as solutions to the climate crisis that have been put forward by big business, the fossil fuel industry, and the cluster of interests that sustain and benefit from business as usual.

At COP26, we pushed for grassroots solutions to climate change that protect Mother Earth and all her creatures. Many at the meeting promoted techno-fixes that do little or nothing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at source. We advocated for solutions that are generated, designed, and controlled by communities--solutions that lead to a [Just Transition](#) away from fossil fuels and toward regenerative, renewable sources of energy and economy. So-called solutions and recommended policies must not continue to turn our communities into toxic sacrifice zones through unproven and dangerous programs like [geoengineering techno-fixes](#), [carbon capture and storage](#), [nuclear energy](#), [biofuels](#), and other harmful practices.

**If we want to address climate change we need to move toward zero emissions, [not net zero](#), and reduce emissions at source. Real solutions must put an end to the extractive economy while fostering a [Just Transition](#) to locally-based, regenerative economies.**



Climate Justice Alliance members Ironbound Community Cooperation, Organización Boricúa de Agricultura Ecológica, People Organizing to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights (PODER), East Michigan Environmental Action Council (EMEAC), and Grassroots Global Justice Alliance on an It Takes Roots delegation at a march in Santiago, Chile in October 2019. Photo by Hendrik Voss

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## Why We Must Say No to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement

Photo: "Which Side Are You On?" and "Stand with People, Not Polluters" banner action at sit-in during COP24 in 2018 in Poland.



### What is Article 6 of the Paris Agreement?

[Click here to watch a video of the sit-in: https://vimeo.com/306573409](https://vimeo.com/306573409)

Each year, United Nations climate change conferences are held to negotiate key areas of climate action agreements with the intention that nation states will adopt and comply with them. The Paris Agreement was signed in 2015 and has been in negotiation since that date. It is the successor to the Kyoto Protocol--an earlier effort to lower greenhouse gases, which was signed in 1997 and expired in 2020.

Article 6 contains key clauses that outline the details of how the Paris Agreement is supposed to work. However, much of Article 6 hinges on dangerous false promises and measures that stand to harm frontline communities, especially Indigenous, rural, and low-income people. At COP 26, the main agenda item was the finalization of the "implementation guidelines" contained in Article 6. However, while the rhetoric surrounding the negotiations employs language like "cooperative approaches" to tackling climate change, our experience was otherwise.

**The language of Article 6 is that of the market.** It does not recognize the sacred act of caring for Mother Earth and our communities by eliminating carbon emissions and putting an end to fossil fuel extraction. Instead, it puts forward a trade agreement. At [COP25](#) (Madrid 2019), the biggest pavilion inside the UN complex was that of the [International Emissions Trading Association](#) (IETA), which was sponsored by Shell Oil. There, the high stakes, high tech, high ticket false promises were

shamelessly displayed, as fossil fuel industry executives and supporters talked about how to make them profitable.

In Article 6, dangerous schemes to continue to make money for extractive corporations have been rebranded with new terminology. REDD+ and Carbon Offsets are now referred to as "nature-based solutions," "net zero emissions targets," and "carbon capture and storage" (CCS). In Article 6, familiar terms like "carbon neutral" and "forest, soil, and ocean offsets," which CJA has always opposed, are replaced and disguised with these more palatable-sounding terms. But the reality is these half-baked, market-serving approaches do not solve the climate crisis in the only way that will work: by reducing emissions at source. These weak policies will only serve to increase greenhouse gas emissions by enabling polluters to continue harming the most vulnerable communities and member states.

Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR) is a dangerous false techno-fix that is now promoted globally as the "inevitable" wave of the future. In the US it is included in current federal and state legislation, usually under the name "[carbon capture and storage](#)." **One of the dangers of Article 6 is that it can be used to legitimize these activities as part of Member States meeting their "nationally determined contributions" to stop climate change.** Sadly, nothing could be further from the truth.



## Why We Say NO to Article 6

None of these so-called “solutions” address the root cause of the climate crisis, which is a crisis of the economy. Carbon offset programs such as REDD+ allow states and corporations to continue to emit carbon as long as they plant trees somewhere else, usually resulting in the displacement of Indigenous communities. Carbon trading schemes enable emitters to continue polluting wherever they want, as long as they have the money to purchase permits. The Paris agreement is full of these market approaches that allow corporations to continue to extract resources and labor while poisoning communities.

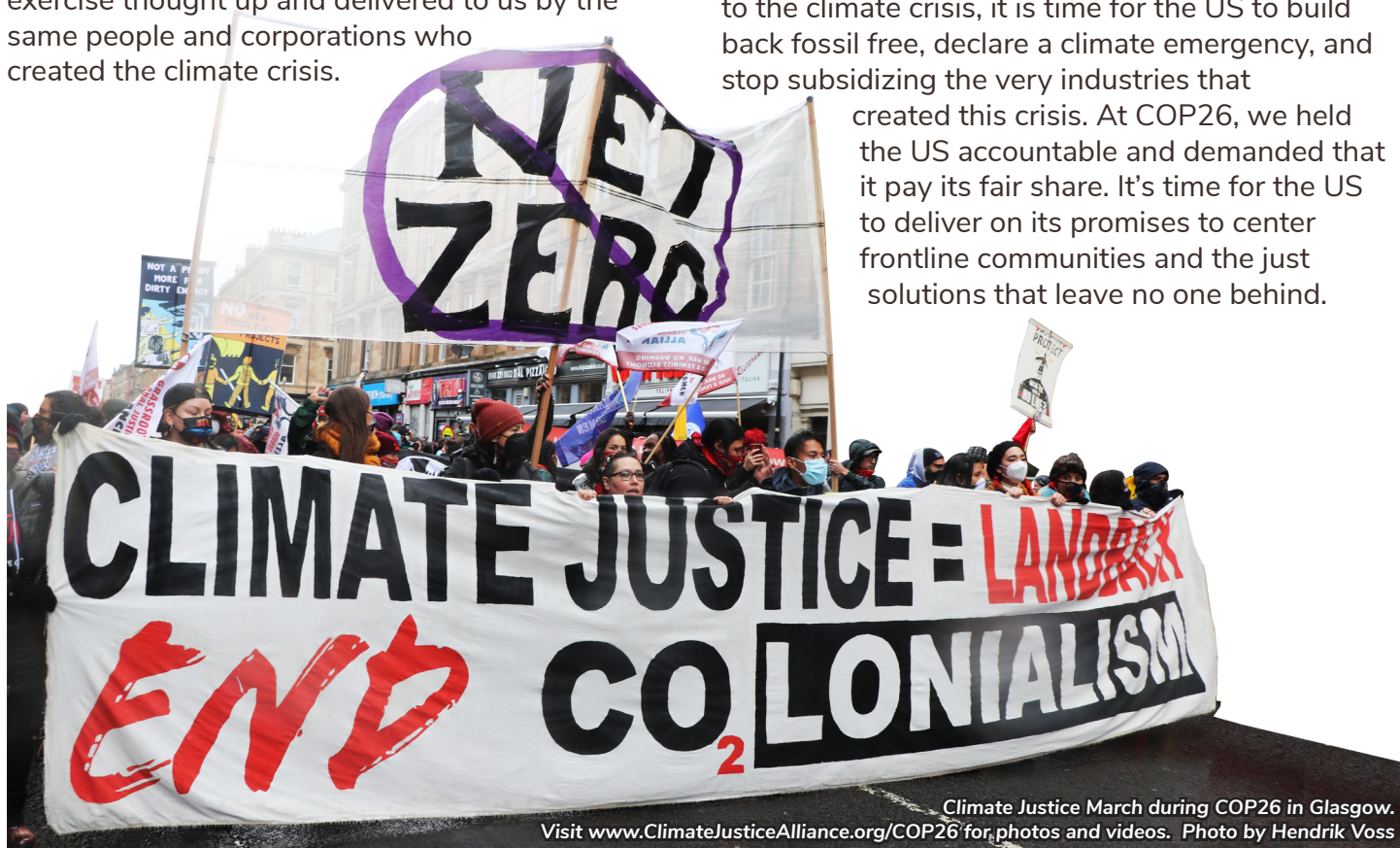
## Reject Net Zero & Push for Real Solutions

In general, these programs are promoted as ways to advance a [net zero plan](#) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The problem is that they do not actually do that. Instead, they are a greenwashing exercise thought up and delivered to us by the same people and corporations who created the climate crisis.

Net zero is based on unjust offset schemes that would be carried out through the above unproven technologies, land grabs, and risky geoengineering experiments that will alter the Earth’s atmosphere.

If we want to address climate change we need to move toward zero emissions, [not net zero](#), and reduce emissions at source. Real solutions must put an end to the extractive economy while fostering a [Just Transition](#) to locally-based, regenerative economies. Economies that not only give communities access to safe renewable energy, but also democratic decision-making power over how this energy is produced and used. Economies that create meaningful jobs that give people control of their labor and provide a good standard of living. Economies that ensure we are not extracting resources or exploiting labor of the many for the sake of the few.

**As the largest contributor to climate change in the world, we call on the United States to stop promoting false corporate-controlled quick-fixes to the climate crisis** and adopt real solutions that will reduce emissions at source and actually cool the planet. As the top exporter of false “solutions” to the climate crisis, it is time for the US to build back fossil free, declare a climate emergency, and stop subsidizing the very industries that created this crisis. At COP26, we held the US accountable and demanded that it pay its fair share. It’s time for the US to deliver on its promises to center frontline communities and the just solutions that leave no one behind.



Climate Justice March during COP26 in Glasgow. Visit [www.ClimateJusticeAlliance.org/COP26](http://www.ClimateJusticeAlliance.org/COP26) for photos and videos. Photo by Hendrik Voss





Direct Action intervention during the US administration's [COP24](#) panel, which pushed for the continual use of dirty energy, [Poland](#) in 2018. [Click here to watch a video of the take-over.](#)

## Additional Resources

To hear first hand about the false solutions presented in Article 6 of the Paris Agreement from those on the frontlines at last year's COP25, you can view the film [Distraction from Climate Action](#) produced by the Indigenous Environmental Network.



**CLIMATE JUSTICE ALLIANCE**  
**COMMUNITIES UNITED FOR A JUST TRANSITION**

[WWW.CLIMATEJUSTICEALLIANCE.ORG](http://WWW.CLIMATEJUSTICEALLIANCE.ORG)