



CLIMATE
JUSTICE
CHARTER
MOVEMENT

NEWSLETTER

#3: June 2022

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Have you signed the petition for parliament to adopt the CJ Charter? Has your organisation endorsed it? You can do so [here](#)

EDITORIAL

WHAT FUTURE ARE WE?

June, 16th 2022

Bold, United and Fearless. Thousands and thousands of young South Africans came together, joined their voices and let out a loud cry against the injustices of the system they lived under, in particular being taught in Afrikaans. They demanded to be taught in English, a universal language. They never backed down, they never surrendered, for they knew by doing that, they would have not only failed themselves but the next generations. They knew the battle field would not be kind to them. Indeed, they had to pay with their lives. Since then, the democratic South Africa has set the date to celebrate and honour the youth of 1976 for their contribution to the struggle against apartheid.

Forty-six years later, the country still celebrates that past event, but with nothing much to show for it because, to date, the youth is constantly fighting the same, and more injustices. In 2022, the youth, which by the way is labelled as *the future of this country*, is encouraged to celebrate the fallen heroes. Back then, activists were falling in the fight for justice. Today our sisters, daughters, and mothers are falling at the unmerciful hands of femicide and the silence of the law and justice system. The youth, in particular teenagers are falling at the soul hungry hands of alcohol and substance abuse. The consistency between these generations of young people is that; Black youth are still dying.

So what Future are we? When in 2015 students all over the country fought in vain for an inclusive education system? Which Future are we for? When the very existence of this planet is set for doom? In efforts to break free from the chains that bind us with poverty

and unemployment, the health of the natural environment has been greatly compromised. The use of non-renewable energy sources, land use change, land grab and corrupt leaders and the greed for rapid profit generation, accelerate the natural rate at which the climate and the entire earth systems is supposed to change.

Despite signing international treaties to combat climate change, the South African government continues to invest in fossil fuels. This happens at the cost of people's lives, especially the poor, at the cost of animal life and the whole biotic and abiotic natural environment.

The continued use of fossil fuels has already begun to have severe impacts on people, especially those in close proximity with mining industries who are exposed to deadly chemicals that pollute the air and toxic chemicals that contaminate ground water sources, leading to illness and loss of life. Moreover, fossil fuels also emit greenhouse gasses that accelerate global warming and subsequently climate change. We are living in an Anthropocene era, and the impacts are evident - extreme weather events and climate crisis, which is mostly felt by the poor and marginalised communities.

If we are the future, then ours should not be stuck in the past. It is to live in the present in ways that will ensure that the future will thank us. It starts with being as fearless, loud and united as the youth of '76 was. We must all unite and fight against climate injustice in our country. Now more than ever, is the time to breed and nurture holistic and transformative leaders that have climate justice at

the center of all development in the African continent. As the future of this continent, our present lifestyle should reflect a climate justice mindset.

It is up to us to challenge the norms and take the matters into our hands. It is with our united voices that we demand the government of the country to ban all investments in activities that threaten our future. It is our duty to build a climate just country.

Putuma Balintulo

IN FOCUS: YOUTH MONTH

Since June is Youth month, this issue has a special focus on youth voices, perspectives and youth day events.

Our editorial, by Putuma Balintulo, a student from Rhodes University, and intern at COPAC and CJCM reflected beautifully on what 16 June means for climate justice today. Below we have two more reflections from CJCM interns and students from KZN:

ACT NOW TO PRESERVE THE FUTURE

By Zuhayr Mahomed

Youth Day provides us with an opportunity to honour the contributions and sacrifices made by the youth, with specific reference to the generation of '76, in our continued struggle for liberation. Youth Day also serves as a moment for today's youth to consider how to build on the foundations laid by those who came before us.

Like all other crises which emerge through Capitalism, the Climate Crisis

has an inherent discriminatory aspect where the poor and marginalised suffer the worst of its effects. The land dispossession of Africans and the corresponding Apartheid spatial planning has meant that Black people today still live in the areas most vulnerable to climate change. The recent floods in KZN serve as just one of the many warnings for what is to come should we not adopt a radical position and take immediate action. It, therefore becomes imperative that we locate the call for climate justice within the broader call for decolonisation and safeguard it from the clutches of liberals and reactionaries.

The energy and courage of the youth play an instrumental role in creating the necessary momentum required to implement change; as such, it becomes vital that young people are at the forefront of the call for climate justice. The Climate Crisis can no longer be considered a problem for the future. In echoing the words of Tsietsi Mashinini: "We know if we don't do what we think is right for us now, our children will suffer the same way we are suffering now", we must accept that it is our responsibility to act now to preserve the future.

FORWARD TO THE YOUTH'S POWER

By Shaakira Davood

June 16th marks the commemoration of National Youth Day in South Africa, where South Africans reflect on the massacre of school children during the Soweto uprising in 1976. The uprising had taken place in the midst of apartheid - a time when liberation movements were banned. The youth and many others outraged with the Bantu education act and apartheid

system peacefully protested when the police shot at the crowd with live ammunition. This led to the loss of many lives. Similarly, the youth of today find ourselves amidst an impending climate change disaster.

Just as the youth of 1976 fought against the racist policies, we need to fight for frameworks and sustainable approaches that look to solve the socioeconomic injustices that the apartheid policies have brought about. Black people were purposefully placed in areas of high pollution due to the apartheid laws and policies such as the group areas act. If it was through laws and policies that socioeconomic injustices were brought about, then it is through policy reform and change that these socioeconomic injustices can be rectified.

It is up to us, as the youth, to fight together as a collective for a cleaner, safer environment as enshrined in our constitution.

As climate extremes are now a lived reality and part of a new planetary awareness; It is of utmost importance that the impact of climate change is managed better and that the most vulnerable communities are protected.

Individual actions must be taken to create the cumulative effect to reduce carbon emissions, as well as the collective call for adopting the Climate Justice Charter. As an individual, you can support platforms and social movements that engage in discord on the need to address climate justice issues, such as the Climate Justice Charter Movement, African climate alliance, Greenpeace, and South Durban community environment alliance, among many others.



We can take inspiration from the Soweto uprising to continue to fight for policy change that brings about climate and social justice so that the needs of marginalised people and people of colour are not overlooked. Not only are we building a better environment for ourselves, but through sustainable resources, we can ensure that future generations (of all living- and non-living forms) can live in a healthy environment.

Forward to the youth's power!
Aluta continua!

CJCM UPDATES, ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOIN THE CJCM ONLINE

If you would like to be part of the CJCM as an individual or organisation, join our online platform at:

www.cjcm.org.za/join

See below for more details:

www.cjcm.org.za/join



Climate Chaos Has Begun!

Together we can stop climate harm and injustice. We must act together now.

Register as an individual or organisation to join working groups, set up your own CJCM community or workplace forums and to receive updates. Lets **build the movement** in our communities, workplaces, schools and universities.

Join the
Climate
Justice
Charter
Movement
ONLINE

We are running out of time: Accelerate the deep just transition now! #JoinCJCM

CJCM 2022 FOCUS ON SYSTEMIC ALTERNATIVES AND POLICIES

During the course of 2022, we have been developing CJCM policies to address the worsening climate crisis, based on the alternatives in the Charter. We have focussed on a different policy every two months and asked for your input. We have also hosted webinars and shared relevant resources on the respective topic during the focus months. The following policies are under development:

February - March: Democratise the Water commons

April - May: Rights of Nature and Natural climate solutions

June- July: Zero waste and simple living

We invite you into this process of policy development, to learn with us and share with us. If you would like to give input into any of the above policies, please send your inputs to email cjcm@mweb.co.za

See the **resources** section of this newsletter for recordings of the webinars hosted under these topics

YOUTH UPDATES AND EVENTS

SU STUDENTS CREATE A POLITICS AROUND CLIMATE JUSTICE

By Matthew Wingfield

Students from across the country and similarly at Stellenbosch University (SU) are increasingly agitated and disillusioned about how their institutions are addressing the climate crisis. For those students who are able

to even get in the room with those able to influence the university on a larger scale, they often find that their contributions and concerns are not taken seriously. This is often paired with a patronising caveat that “these things take time”, or “there are considerable restraints that you aren’t acknowledging”. To break away from such engagements, SU students have recently mobilised around two events: one being a demonstration at town hall, the other a dialogue series.

The demonstration held on the 25th March 2022 outside of the Stellenbosch Town Hall brought together students from various high schools in the area and SU students in an effort to create a shared dialogue and platform around climate justice. As a University town, Stellenbosch and SU are inexorably linked, however students have rarely engaged them together in the past. This demonstration drafted demands that applied to both the Stellenbosch municipality and the University, chief among them being a space for the voices of the youth to be heard and considered in decision making processes. Through the collaboration between SU students and school students, the demonstration showed



Deputy Mayor of Stellenbosch, Jeremy Fasser accepting the demands on behalf of the Mayor.

that the youth as a collective share the same concerns around the current practices of both the University and the town. It also shows that they are willing and able to be part of creating a climate just future. The event organiser (Grade 12 student Petra De Beer), along with other speakers such as David Le Page (Fossil Free SA) and representatives from a range of student societies made a strong case for immediate action regarding the climate crisis, and the inclusion of student voices in this action.

This demonstration has yet to turn into any tangible action, or even form of critical engagement with the demands (received by both the Deputy Mayor and two representatives from SU).

Following this, Muhammed Lokhat (Mphil in Sustainability Transitions) and Matthew Wingfield (author) developed a dialogue series in parallel with the broader SU Earth Week events. Planned over two evening sessions, the dialogue series aimed to bring together academics and staff members from SU (with some external speakers) in order to break down the various barriers limiting transformative climate action at SU. These barriers include the academic and the practical and between students and staff. By bringing together staff, academics and students, the dialogue series created a foundation and a shared platform from which to base further engagements.

The first panel brought together two academics, Dr Christian Lueme Lokotela (Planetary Health) and Thembekile Dhlamini (Human Nutrition), to locate the climate crisis

in the Western Cape and specifically in Stellenbosch. The speakers talked about the connections between climate change and health, energy, water, and transport. Further, they showed that while widespread action is needed urgently, there are tangible and practical first steps that SU ought to take. The speakers clearly illustrated the way the climate crisis will impact every part of our lives.

The panel also looked at what SU as an institution and its staff and students can do to ensure a “just transition” to a carbon-neutral and more sustainable university. Feedback from students, who made up the majority of the attendees, indicates that they felt more empowered about what they could do regarding the often overwhelming narratives about the climate crisis.



The second panel comprising a range of SU stakeholders

The second panel focused on the future of Stellenbosch University. This was done by looking at how divestment and other tools can play a role in crafting a climate just future. The panel brought together Prof Stan Du Plessis (COO of SU), David Le Page (Fossil Free SA), John De Wet (SU Environmental Sustainability

Manager) Lwando Nkamisa (Ward Councillor and previous SU SRC Chairperson) and Anele Mdepa (Manager: Student Governance). Representatives from the current SRC were unavailable to participate.

Various facilities and portfolios of SU were represented and purposefully brought into conversation with one another. While SU has some mitigation measures in place such as electricity meters and functional water use management devices, it was shown that SU needs to take more radical action to adequately address the climate crisis.

Anele Mdepa argued strongly that student voices needed to be included in such decisions, which they traditionally are not, or rather taken on symbolically. The issue of divestment raised both the limitations and opportunities SU has to be an institution that fights for climate justice, both in principle and in action. Comments from the audience of mostly students pushed for further integration of students' voices into decision-making processes around how SU mitigates climate change. This was supported by a unanimous call for both students and staff (echoed by Prof Sandy Liebenberg) to access and engage SU's Environmental Sustainability Programme (ESP). The ESP has not yet been available to students or staff, with limited public participation around the creation of the document.

While the larger impacts of the dialogue series are still yet to be determined, the connections made between the speakers and students, along with various commitments around student engagement and participation paint a very different picture from the isolated and bureaucratically-laden process of the past. Further, the dialogue series shows the role that non-positional leaders at SU can play in creating a politics and transformative discussions around climate justice.

ACRP YOUTH DAY WEBINAR

Not on our soil webseries: What is the role of the youth in the Climate Justice Movement?

On 15 June, the African Climate Reality Project hosted the first webinar in their Not On Our Soil - A Climate Justice Reality webseries. Each webinar follows one episode of the Not on Our Soil docuseries. This particular gathering was focused on the youth episode of the docuseries.

The webinar started with a screening of the episode which follows Lisakhanya and Caleb and their journey as young climate justice activists.



A vibrant discussion followed with the 80+ participants about their own experiences and reflections on their climate work. There were participants from across the continent, such as Nigeria, Benin, Ghana, Cameroon and more, with a few participants joining from India as well.

ACRP facilitated a panel discussion between 3 youth climate justice activists: Ayakha Melithafa, Natalie Kapsosideris, and Sibusiso Mazomba. Each activist shared amazing insights into their own journeys to climate justice activism, their experiences engaging government and corporations as well as some challenges they face as young people living in South Africa.

Some of the interesting quotes that emerged during the webinar are:

“we want to have young people participate in decision making holistically, we need young people in parliament who are going to advocate for issues of young people, at the moment that is not something that is tangible”- **Sibusiso**

Reflecting on engagements, **Ayakha** asked: “we really have to look at the language, do people in the room really understand climate language?”

Natalie felt that although some events had been inclusive, young people are still being tokenised in some spaces, saying: “A lot of the time when you are engaging with ministers and the government and policy on that level it does still feel like they are trying to tick a box”

All in all, the panel discussion and the docuseries screening was a great

opportunity for people to engage with the stories of youth climate activists and at the same time, extend the dialogue to more South African youth.

The full webinar can be found at: <https://fb.watch/dOqMsBAoGb/>

The next episode in this webseries will take place on the 22nd of July, which will zoom in on the Civil Society episode. Watch this space for more details!

YOUTH CAN BE ECO-SOCIALISTS and the launch of a community centre in Bloemfontein

By Tshiamo Malatji

Economic power has been built around unsustainable activity. We scrape the ground, extract its minerals and process pollution into the air. Fossil fuel workers are usually poor, black and underpaid. Meanwhile, the bosses and politicians make lots of money from our extractive economy. It is an unjust system.

For people in urban metropolises, this way of life may seem invisible. But it is present in the large concrete buildings, the excess of traffic, the overflow of plastic waste and all our coal-powered electrical appliances. All of these were made, built and powered by exploited fossil-fuel labour.

But this way of life is damaging our environment, causing global climate shocks and will lead toward an unlivable earth. As youth, we need to ask ourselves if this is the way of life we want to inherit, and if we are ready to stop the cogs of climate change.



Most youth might feel powerless. We aren't in government, at the top of corporate structures or leading worker unions. But, usually, when young people eventually get into these structures, we become the very same as those that came before us. Instead, we need to create alternative structures of non-hierarchical power where all young people can combine our efforts into creating a better future. This is possible.

There is another way. It's called eco-socialism. But, how do we get there?

First, as youth, we need to invest what resources we have into community-owned projects. When I launched a community project in Bloemfontein, I was amazed by how small, micro-contributions from many people scale up into economic power. We might have little, but collectively, we have much. For instance, we were able to rent a building in Bloemfontein off just the contributions of young people in the area, and launch our community centre.

Second, we need to use that economic power wisely. We should invest in things that transition away from exploited fossil-fuel labour and lead to community-managed climate jobs. We are in the process of registering a worker co-operative in Bloemfontein where every worker gets an equal vote. This is a concept of democracy in the workplace, which replaces a structure where the boss has all the say and the workers do all the work. If we are going to do things differently, we need to end exploitative labour practices.

Third, we need to be persistent. I am learning that our revolution is a long road. Our community project is only three weeks old and I am already hoping for more impact. But, it is going to take a lot of effort to reach out to our fellow youth, and show them the world we are trying to create. Many young people are on paths that will lead them to making the same mistakes that exploit workers underneath them, extract fossil fuels and make the world unlivable. But, it is not too late for us, who are on a different path, to convince them to join us.

Finally, we need to learn from our mistakes. I ran a campaign for local government in 2021 as an independent candidate in my ward. I learned that youth were more interested in supporting the community work I was doing at the soup kitchen the months before the election than they were the campaign. So, I worked toward launching this community centre and I already see that it has much more potential of radicalising youth toward a less exploitative fossil-free world. We are also learning to improve our messaging and recruitment, to save costs, develop our own skills, and become sustainable.

The struggle we are waging is against a very big and powerful economic system, but it is fragile because it exploits the workers it relies on and is vulnerable to our activism because we give workers real power. As youth month comes to a close, let's keep our message strong, and stay on the path to a much better world.

PRESS RELEASES, MEDIA COVERAGE AND ENGAGEMENTS

18 January: Vishwas Satgar interviewed on SAFM about the floods and SA government's disaster management response

3 February: Janet Solomon and Vishwas Satgar article in Daily Maverick, [An open letter to Hosken Consolidated Investments and Minister Gwede Mantashe: A beginner's guide to poppycock](#)

4 February: [Press release](#): Cyclone warning for KZN and response to hosken Consolidated Investments and minister Gwede Mantashe

8 February: Vishwas Satgar interviewed on Newzroom Afrika about the [Open letter to Gwede Mantashe](#).

8 February: [Press release](#): Letter for Consideration by Minister of Finance on the Need for a Fiscally Neutral UBIG

21 March: SAFSC and CJCM activists are profiled in this Daily Maverick article, [Food hub launched at Wits as hunger grows](#)

7 March: CJCM-Daily Maverick series article by Method Gundidza, [Respecting the rights of nature is the only way out of climate chaos and biodiversity collapse](#)

7 April: CJCM-Daily Maverick series article by Natalya Dinat, [The Struggle for health and climate justice in SA must put people before profits](#)

13 April: [Press Statement](#): Climate Shocks, Flooding in KZN and the Loss of Innocent Lives. This is Not a Natural Disaster!

15 April: Al Jazeera [profiles](#) the CJCM's culpable homicide case against president Ramaphosa and cabinet members for KZN flood deaths

18 April: Daily Maverick also profiles the culpable homicide case in an article, [Culpable homicide case opened against Ramaphosa and Co after killer KZN floods](#)

28 April: CJCM organiser, Charles Simane is Interviewed by Kristin Engel in this article for the Independent Online, [African voices called to lead fight against the destruction of habitat and wildlife](#)

21 April: Mark Heywood profiles CJCM's culpable homicide case, [Charge those responsible for death by global heating with 'Democide'](#)

24 May: CJCM organiser, Charles Simane is interviewed for this article in Health-E News on [Climate Crisis: Rural communities, women and girls hardest hit](#)

26 May: CJCM [Submissions](#) on the Climate Change Bill [B9 - 2022]

29 May: CJCM organiser, Charles Simane is interviewed by Mike Louw, the Daily Dipatch about [Barbara Creecy response to parliament about SA climate change policies](#)

6 June: CJCM-Daily Maverick article by Shirley Walters and Astrid von Kotze, [Learning, unlearning and relearning: Popular education points the way towards climate justice](#)



14 June: CJCM youth activist, Natalie Kapsosideris and the AKF youth day parade are profiled in this Daily Maverick article, [Young people are ready to share responsibility for a better future... are you?](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE

2 Year anniversary of the launch of the Charter



On 28 August 2022, we will be celebrating 2 years since the launch of the Charter.

This will be an online event where we will celebrate and reflect on our achievements so far. We will also share and discuss CJCM policy drafts, the draft of the CJ deal and other activist guides we have developed. Join us from 1-4pm. More details to follow shortly.

NATIONAL NEWS

South Africa's April floods made twice as likely by climate change, scientists say ([The Guardian](#)).

\$8.5bn finance deal: Reality check as complex, costly negotiations get underway ([fin24](#)).

Thirsty days ahead: Day Zero imminent for Nelson Mandela Bay ([Mail&Guardian](#)).

Climate change bill: 'One of the most important draft laws to cross the desks of SA's lawmakers' ([Mail&Guardian](#)) (and [here's](#) the CJCM's submission on the bill)

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS

6 Big Findings from the IPCC 2022 Report on Climate Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability ([wri.org](#))

VIDEO: India on fire: Facing the climate crisis ([AlJazeera](#))

Bangladesh floods: 'I have nothing left except my life' ([BBC News](#)).

The Global South has the power to force radical climate action ([AlJazeera](#))

RESOURCES

CJCM WEBINARS

Theme: Democratising the Water commons:

Learning from South Africa's drought: Climate Change and the failing state.

Speakers: Coleen Vogel & Ferrial Adam
View the webinar [here](#)

Naturalising inequality: Water, Race and Biopolitics in South Africa

Speaker: Michela Marcatelli
View the webinar [here](#)

Fixing the crisis of South Africa's water commons: Climate justice perspectives

Speakers: Ferrial Adam, Victor Munnik, Yuri Ramkissoo & Mary Galvin
View the webinar [here](#)

Theme: Rights of nature and natural climate solutions

Beyond sustainable use: redefining our relationship with nature through harmonious co-existence

Speakers: Cormac Cullinan & Katrina Lehmann-Grube
View the webinar [here](#)

Advancing rights of nature and human rights in Africa and beyond

Speakers: Lucy Mullenkei, Pooven Moodley and Amelia Heyns.

View the webinar [here](#)

Endangered wildlife, ecosystems and the rights of animals and nature: New approaches and challenges

Speakers: Prof Ashley Dawson, Ashleigh Dore and Charles Simane

View the webinar [here](#)

CJCM earth day panel discussion:

Defending the ocean commons

Speakers: Janet Solomon, Maia Nangle, Cassandra Schnoor and Jerome Singh

View the webinar [here](#)

CJCM LINKS

Find all CJCM resources on our website: cjcm.org.za

Join the CJCM online: cjcm.org.za/join

Link to [endorse](#) the charter as an organisation.

Continue to upload your photos to the [Ark of South African Life](#)

CJCM PETITIONS

Link to the [petition](#) for parliament to adopt the Charter

Link to the [petition](#) to make ending coal, gas and oil investment a condition for financial support to South Africa

Make ending coal, gas and oil investment a condition for financial support to South Africa



We are running out of time; Accelerate the deep just transition now!

Sign our petition - see link above

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this newsletter.
If you would like to contribute by sharing your stories or events, please email us at cjcm@mweb.co.za