

# PEOPLE'S WORLD

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## Massive climate change march heats up national debate

By Marc Brodine

**O**n Sept. 21 at the United Nations in New York City, a massive People's Climate March will coincide with a summit of world leaders called by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon. Moon called this summit because the negotiations set up by the UN to finalize a climate change agreement have floundered. On the environmental front, there is a confusing and contradictory mix of bad news along with progress to celebrate.

First, some of the bad news: May 2014 was the hottest May ever recorded. Greenhouse gas emissions are still increasing. One hundred percent of California is in the middle of a drought emergency. And Republicans are taking aim at EPA funding and another government shutdown over new EPA rules on existing coal-fired plants. Ninety-five percent of Alaska's glaciers are melting at an unnatural and unprecedented pace. The collapse of the West Antarctic ice sheet is now irreversible.

Internationally, along with progress in renewables in many countries such as Germany, other countries are taking steps in the wrong direction, particularly Canada and Australia, where right-wing governments are backing away from previous commitments. Globally, greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase.

The exception to the increasing awareness of



the reality of climate change is the House Republican caucus, ironically especially in their leadership of the Science Committee in the House.

Second, some good news. In addition to the EPA regulations on existing and projected power plants, Obama is using his bully pulpit to shame the deniers. Further, his administration is working to address ocean acidification. Mayors are preparing cities for the impacts of climate change. The market price and efficiency of solar energy is

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improving rapidly. If we eliminate the subsidies to traditional energy production, the transition to renewables will happen more quickly. The Supreme Court recently decided, in a 7-2 decision, to uphold most of the authority of the EPA to regulate carbon pollution. Cities are contemplating

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and taking independent action. Many prominent business people are waking up to the financial difficulties already caused by climate change. Scientists are getting more aggressive about challenging climate change denier's. They understand that it is not just a lack of knowledge causing U.S. Congressional inaction but even more, the purposeful and intentional misunderstanding being promoted as a legitimate part of the public debate.

The best news is that the struggles to address climate change and other environmental hazards are gaining strength.

- The movement to divest from fossil fuel companies is gaining speed, with Union Theological Seminary and the University of Dayton recently deciding to divest. High-visibility struggles have taken place, such as one at Harvard. This is a worldwide campaign.

- The fight against the Keystone XL pipeline continues to grow. The Cowboy and Indian Alliance, sponsored inspiring demonstrations in Washington DC in May. This alliance between farmers,

ranchers, Native American tribes, and environmentalists is beginning to transform politics in unexpected places like Nebraska and Wyoming, as well as on the national stage.

- The Blue-Green Alliance, started by the Steelworkers union and the Sierra Club, now totals ten unions and four major environmental organizations.

- There is a proposed public works program to employ low-income youth doing home weatherization. This would put people to work, would weatherize buildings so that less carbon dioxide would be emitted from the energy used to heat and cool them, they would require less energy in the first place, and would save consumers money.

- The Idle No More movement is part of a worldwide surge of indigenous peoples working to address many issues including environmental ones.



**Marc Brodine is Chair of the Washington CPUSA.**

## **Teen: Give us a chance to nurse the planet back to health**

**By Sydnee Odei-Ntiri**

**People think that teenagers don't care, that they have no interest in the world around them but that's not true.**

**C**limate change is more than just greenhouse gasses being released into the atmosphere. It is rising water levels, food shortages, and extinctions of both animals and humans. It is more damage to a people who have had no part in destroying this world. Climate change impacts are projected to slow economic growth, make poverty reduction more difficult, erode food security, and create new poverty traps, particularly in urban areas and emerging hot spots of hunger.

This summer I participated in the Leaders in Environmental Action for the Future program with the Nature Conservancy, where students from vocational schools around the country are exposed to scenery they may have never seen before and learn about conservation. It was eye-opening. The beauty that Connecticut has to offer is breathtaking.

Until July, I had never experienced it. When you put teenagers in the middle of nature, you

leave them awestruck. People think that teenagers don't care, that they have no interest in the world around them, but that's not true. Sure, I may be different than most young people. Most of my friends will tell you I'm not the average teenager, but I am a teenager. And this summer, I was with other girls who were just as awestruck as I was.

One day, none of the adults who are here, who created this problem and so far have failed to act, will be here. It is the job of the young people to clean this planet up and nurse it back to health. Teenagers will care if you give them a chance. Forget the stereotype. View us as apprentices. Share new information with us. Really listen to our ideas. Give us the opportunity and watch us rise to the occasion. I guarantee that we will astound you.

The Peoples Climate Change March is a groundbreaking step in the right direction. Let's stand together, take responsibility, and demand action.

# Future of bird species up in the air

By Blake Deppe



**E**xperts have issued a new warning that many species of American birds are facing extinction.

According to a report released Sept. 8 by the National Audubon Society, global warming has drawn birds across the U.S. into a fight of their own against global warming - a fight for their very survival. The disconcerting new report notes that climate change will affect the bird population so severely, half of all North American bird species will be decimated over the next 65 years. The hummingbird? Three-toed woodpecker? Trumpeter swan? They're just some of 314 different birds that will soon be put on the brink of extinction.

The Society used 30 years' worth of scientific observation to determine the "climatic suitability" for each of 588 major North American bird species. The varying suitabilities were then juxtaposed with internationally recognized greenhouse gas emission projections, and from this, they were able to extrapolate each bird's future climatic range, amidst the changes caused by global warming. The findings showed that at least 314 species are in deep trouble, and will lose more than 50 percent of their range by 2080.

Activists might be able to take measures to save

some species, the report suggested. This will involve continuing the fight against climate change. That means moving away from fossil fuels, curbing carbon emissions, and helping in the battle for animal conservation. Even then, some bird species may indeed be doomed.

The city might also soon lose the red-billed gull (those local seagulls that so often forage in McDonald's parking lots), a songbird called the bobolink, the aforementioned trumpeter swan, and the tree swallow. Chicago has at least taken steps to save the bobolink, with Bobolink Meadow in Jackson Park having been recently restored; this could allow the songbird to actually make a comeback to the area.

There's a certain trickle-down effect that could result from this coming decimation, and that will affect humans. The absence of birds that consume pests and disease-spreading insects could allow those would-be prey to run rampant and overpopulate, according to Terry Root, a Stanford University biologist. She remarked, "If we are losing as many species as this is saying, what's going to happen to all the insects they eat? There are going to be winners if you move a species out of a region, and those winners might be mosquitoes and spiders."

**Activists might be able to take measures to save some species.**

## Illinois Communist Party in action

by Shelby Richardson

The month of August was a busy one and this one looks no different. With John Bachtell, who was District Organizer for Illinois, now the National Chairman of the Party, adjustments in collectives and personnel are being made. A three day training of district leaders was held from August 25th through August 27th. The training showed how party collectives work, how policy is developed and how the Internet and the use of social media expands the reach of the Party.

We just completed a district-wide electoral meeting. All the information we have so far on voter registration campaigns and get-out-the-vote strategies by labor and mass organizations was shared. Our aim is to encourage every comrade to participate with their union or a mass organization to win a large turnout in the November mid-term election.

We are committed to deepening our support for the Walmart Workers. We have completed the first of two trainings. We will adopt a Walmart store and help the workers win a living wage. We also decided to work with the Workers Education Society to establish a workers center at the Unity Center where our meetings are held.

Last but not least we enjoyed a White Sox victory over Texas, and raised a little money too.

## En el futuro sólo se ve más CO2

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Las plantas de energía existentes en todo el mundo emitirán más de 300 mil millones de toneladas de dióxido de carbono a la atmósfera antes de quedar vetustas, según un nuevo estudio publicado por el Science Daily.

La investigación también es la primera en cuantificar la rapidez con que este procesamiento de emisiones crece a medida que se expanden las plantas de energía, a un ritmo de 4% anual.

La construcción de nuevas centrales eléctricas que queman combustibles fósiles a a un ritmo superior a las que van saliendo de servicio.

El carbón representa alrededor de dos tercios de los 300 mil millones de toneladas de emisiones, mientras que el gas natural ocupa gran parte del resto, con 27 por ciento y un crecimiento significativo de 15 por ciento de las emisiones derivadas de las plantas de gas natural desde 1980. “Reducir las emisiones de carbono significa desactivar más plantas que queman combustibles fósiles de las que construimos”, dijo Steven Davis, profesor asistente de ciencias del sistema Tierra en la Universidad de California en Irvine y autor principal del estudio.

“Pero en todo el mundo hemos construido más centrales a carbón que en cualquier década anterior, y el cierre de plantas antiguas no va al ritmo de esta expansión”.

Así es que, en este aspecto, los humanos están haciendo exactamente lo contrario de lo que hay que deberían hacer frente al cambio climático.

“Lejos de resolver el problema es

tamos invirtiendo fuertemente en tecnologías que lo agravan”, dijo Davis.

Los científicos estiman que la humanidad puede volcar hasta 1 billón de toneladas de carbono a la atmósfera sin traspasar el umbral de los 2°C el aumento de la temperatura mundial (tras el cual la mayoría de los científicos estiman que el cambio climático se tornará realmente catastrófico).

La actividad humana ya ha dado cuenta de emisiones por 531 mil millones de toneladas métricas de su “presupuesto de carbono”, por lo que la segura emisión de estos otros 300 mil millones de toneladas elimina gran parte del margen de maniobra restante. La gran mayoría de las nuevas plantas de combustibles fósiles son el resultado del crecimiento económico en el mundo en desarrollo, lo que pone de relieve el desafío de abordar el cambio climático y la pobreza a la vez. El aumento del uso de energía per cápita es esencial para elevar el nivel de vida de la gente, pero la tecnología actual implica también la intensificación de las emisiones de carbono.

En total, China representa el 42 % de las emisiones futuras comprometidas, la India el 8%, Estados Unidos el 11% y Europa el 9%, con otros países como Indonesia, Arabia Saudita e Irán absorbiendo gran parte del resto.

Las personas en todo el planeta, vamos a hacer historia sobre el cambio climático – nuevamente. Estamos a punto de escribir un nuevo capítulo y hacer del mundo un lugar más justo, seguro y pacífico. El 20 y 21 de septiembre, les diremos que es el momento para acciones, no para palabras.

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