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# THE MAGAZINE

## CRUSHING COLONIALISM



### Seas of Change

The impacts of overfishing and neocolonialism in West African waters.

### No to the Tren Maya

The impact of the mega rail project in the ecosystems of México's Yucatán peninsula.

### Resisting Climate Destructors

Indigenous people call out large climate disaster financiers.

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

In this edition of *The Magazine*, we delve deep into the intersection of colonialism and climate change, exploring the intricate connections between environmental degradation, Indigenous rights, and the lasting impacts of colonial legacies. As we confront the urgent challenges posed by climate change, it is essential to recognize the historical injustices and systemic inequalities that underpin our current environmental crises. From land dispossession to resource extraction, colonialism has left a profound imprint on the landscapes and livelihoods of Indigenous peoples, exacerbating their vulnerability to climate impacts.

Throughout this issue, we shine a spotlight on the resilience and resistance of Indigenous communities who are on the frontlines of the climate crisis. Despite facing disproportionate impacts, Indigenous peoples continue to uphold traditional knowledge and sustainable practices that offer critical insights into adaptation and mitigation strategies. By centering Indigenous voices and honoring their rights to self-determination and land sovereignty, we can forge pathways towards climate justice and environmental sustainability.

As we navigate the complex nexus of colonialism, climate change, and Indigenous rights, *The Magazine* remains committed to amplifying diverse perspectives and fostering dialogue that transcends borders and boundaries. Together, let us confront the legacy of colonialism, champion Indigenous rights, and work towards a future where all communities can thrive in harmony with the planet. Thank you for joining us on this journey of reflection, learning, and solidarity.

Warm regards,



Isabel María Riofrío Miranda
Editor-in-Chief



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Cover photo: The sun sets over the wooden fishing pirogues as the sea washes the quiet beach of Sanyang, located in The Gambia fishing grounds. Photo credit: Abubacar Fofana, February 22, 2024

*Throughout the magazine, we default to using Indigenous place names unless otherwise stated. Colonial names are indicated in quotation marks for context.



*The sun sets over the wooden fishing pirogues as the sea washes the quiet beach of Sanyang, located in The Gambia fishing grounds. Photo credit: Abubacar Fofana, February 24, 2024*

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EARTH RISING FOUNDATION

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# Community Members in México Say *Ma'* to the Tren Maya

BY JESSE FOLEY-TAPIA



*A member of the National Guard stands at the entrance of the Teya Mérida train station, in Yucatán. Photo credit: Jesse Foley-Tapia, March 10, 2024*



*Inside the Teya Mérida train station. Photo credit: Jesse Foley-Tapia, March 10, 2024*



*A man walks towards the ticket booth inside the Teya Mérida train station. Photo credit: Jesse Foley-Tapia, March 10, 2024*

The sound of hammer and nail is ever present as México's growth and expansion reach new heights it has never seen before. In Yucatán, southeast of the country, the installation of the 28 billion dollar Tren Maya mega rail project has caused much debate throughout the community. While some say new transportation systems are necessary within the region, especially for longer commutes, the preservation of the natural ecosystem is treasured by many Indigenous peoples here.

"It was a surprise. Because it never happened in our heads that we need a train for the Indigenous communities," says Pedro Uc Be, a Mayan land and territory defender and a member of the Assembly of Defenders of the Maya Múuch' Xíinbal Territory and The National Indigenous Congress (CNI).

The Tren Maya, a project created by Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), has a total of 42 trains with tracks stretching over 900 miles through the states of Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo, covering most of the southeast region of the country and the Yucatán Peninsula. As of today, there are 24 out of the 34 stations in operation. According to Tren Maya's website, the hope is that this new mode of transportation will reduce more than 50,000 cars on the roads per day between Cancún and Playa del Carmen. Since the inaugural trip on December 15th of last year over 64,000 passengers have ridden the train according to the website.

The project promised many positive outcomes and an economic boost to the surrounding communities but some Indigenous communities say that in actuality the project brought more negative than positive.

"It's not just that we don't have positive things, but there are damages, injuries, aggressions, and violations of our rights. Benefits are there, but not for us," says Uc Be. Since the construction of the railway things have actually declined for surrounding communities, says Uc Be.

"Rather, there is greater poverty, there is displacement, there is insecurity, there is broken social fabric, there are conflicts, there is polarization, there is fear, there is penetration of the organized crime, there are raped women, there are missing women and children, there are people murdered and thrown to the streets, and there is a situation of contamination of water."

Yucatán is home to thousands of cenotes or sinkholes, caused by the collapse of limestone, with some estimates saying there are up to 10,000 cenotes in the region. This underground cave network of cenotes connects to the Great Mayan Aquifer, which provides water for millions of people in the area. Now, with the construction of the Tren Maya, these cenotes and the drinking water they provide are at risk. According to a report by CartoCrítica, the Tren Maya's construction comprises over 25,000 acres of land, in which 61% of the jungle has now been deforested. The report alleges that 81% of this deforestation has been done so illegally.

In a 2018 interview with journalist Carmen Aristegui, AMLO said that no trees would be cut down during the construction of the train.




*A Va-y-Ven electric bus unloads passengers outside the Teya Mérida train station. Photo credit: Jesse Foley-Tapia, March 10, 2024*




*Passengers make their way inside the Teya Mérida train station. Photo credit: Jesse Foley-Tapia, March 10, 2024*




*People line up to board the train at the Teya Mérida train station. Photo credit: Jesse Foley-Tapia, March 10, 2024*

**About the author:**

**Jesse Foley-Tapia obtained his degree in English in 2020 and his Masters in Journalism in 2023, both from the University of California, Berkeley. Jesse is a firm believer in abolition and community care. He also believes that organic food, clean drinking water, shelter, healthcare, and some form of higher education should be available for all, for free. Ultimately, he would love to help historically and intentionally marginalized communities overcome obstacles and barriers set upon them. You can check more of his work at jessefoleytapia.com.**

"Not a single tree, none, nothing, on the contrary, not a single tree."

Years later, the Selvame del Tren organization estimated that over 10 million trees have been cut down. While the government website says that "more than 64,000 plants have been rescued with 85% survival," the environmental effects have been devastating for local Indigenous communities and will continue to affect the region as a whole in the coming years. However, others disagree.

"It can be reforested," says Jose Genaro Molina, a retired federal teacher from the Secretary of Education.

Typically a megaproject this big takes several years to plan, but as AMLO's term is close to end, the push was on to complete his envisioned project. Residents of México say this is nothing new, as past presidents have done much of the same by prioritizing rapid expansion at all costs. As the president declared the construction of the train a matter of "national security," many precautions to the environment were ignored during this rushed process and community members were asked to sell their land or be displaced. The national army was even tasked with controlling certain sections of land during the expedited construction. "This land is not for sale" became the rallying cry for the CNI. In December 2019, Uc Be and his family received death threats.

"They had given us 48 hours to leave the country," says Uc Be. Adding, "Despite this threat, we continue here."

In addition to Mayan communities being taken away from their homes with the construction of the Tren Maya, they've also had their identity and name taken away.

"Well, the train's name, I think the situation marks precisely the seal of the dispossession. Not only have we been stripped away from the land, but we have been stripped from our name," says Uc Be.

Some have taken this opportunity to benefit from the demand for land as property values have increased near construction sites such as Tixkokob, a small town located in the north-central part of Yucatán that had remained rather untouched by México's fast-growing development throughout much of the country.

"These people buy it to be able to resell it for the plus value that it already has," says Gricelda Uitz Ek, whose family's home is just blocks away from the Tixkokob station.

This increased value, however, comes at a cost. Uitz Ek explained that obtaining the evaluation and ownership proof is now more expensive.

"The writing cost us around 60,000 pesos [$3,500 US dollars] when years ago we were said it would cost 15,000 pesos." With the average income in Yucatán being around $400 and far less for Indigenous communities, these evaluations can amount to a small fortune.

Uc Be also raised objections against Rogelio Jiménez Pons, the General Director of FONATUR, a governmental entity dedicated to pushing tourism projects that should prioritize the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage of México, for suggesting that the train project would be beneficial to the Mayan Indigenous community by providing them with the opportunity to sell food at train stations, arguing that such rhetoric from government officials diminishes the Mayan community, implying that their aspirations and contributions are limited to selling bread in train stations.

Indigenous communities in the region have remained strong as Mayan peoples have resisted forms of colonialism dating back to the 1500s when the Spanish conquistadors invaded Yucatán.

"This struggle does not only exist for having the capacity to exist, but for existing as Mayan people, as a culture, and the train, what it has done is to become a projectile in the heart of Mayan culture," says Uc Be.

*A special thanks to Paulina Bautista Cupul who helped with interview translations.*

# Seas of Change: The impacts of overfishing and neocolonialism in West African waters

**BY YSM**

Overfishing in West Africa has become a pressing issue, with detrimental effects on Indigenous populations and marine ecosystems. As the fishing industry in the region has expanded, driven largely by foreign interests seeking lucrative export opportunities, Indigenous communities have faced increasing challenges. Many West Africans see this as a new type of colonialism, where the region's resources are taken without caring about the people's well-being or the health of the marine ecosystems.

At the center of this problem is fishmeal, a highly sought-after product for foreign industries, leading to more foreign boats appearing in Western African waters and industries along the coastlines owned by foreign investors, without fair compensation for Indigenous populations. When deals are made, the true value of these resources is often ignored. But how did this all start?

In the mid-20th century, with the introduction of large-scale industrial fishing fleets and an increase of strict laws of offshore fishing in international waters, many countries looked to new regions to exploit fishing industries with either less infrastructure or policies to safeguard their waters. In the beginning, the fishmeal industry fueled by these fleets became a way to turn unsuitable fish or bycatch into a marketable item but as time passed it became a staple resource to support the growing livestock and aquaculture feed industry in countries such as China, Norway, Chile, and Vietnam.

With technological advancements in the global large-scale fishing industry, the construction of large fishmeal production factories began along the Western coastline of Africa, particularly in countries like Mauritania, Senegal, and The Gambia. In Mauritania alone - one of the world's richest fishing grounds - the number of fishmeal production factories has risen from 6 to 23 factories since 2010, according to the Coalition of Fair Fisheries Agreement.



*The sun sets over the wooden fishing pirogues as the sea washes the quiet beach of Sanyang, located in The Gambia fishing grounds. Photo credit: Abubacar Fofana, February 24, 2024*



*A young boy pushes a rusty wheelbarrow down the beach of Sanyang, in Kartong, to help collect the catch of the day off of the fishing boats. Photo credit: Abubacar Fofana, February 22, 2024*

The decline in the fish population accessible to artisanal fishers is just one of the most direct consequences of fishmeal production. As reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), fish stocks in numerous regions across West Africa have plummeted by more than 50% due to overfishing and unsustainable fishing practices. Moreover, the arrival of these large fishing fleets has brought extensive destruction to traditional fishing grounds and communities. The environmental degradation is significant, evident in illegal dumping, extensive damage to seabeds caused by bottom trawling, and habitat destruction, posing a looming threat of collapse for marine ecosystems.

Fishermen have also reported a significant shift in their fishing routines over the past 15 years. Previously, daily trips were sufficient, but now, according to research conducted through interview surveys by The Gambian Marine and Environmental Conservation Initiative, most fishermen find themselves venturing out for 2 to 5 days at a time. This change has become widespread throughout the region, stretching as far as Mauritania. These extended multi-day trips are necessary to secure an adequate survival catch and support their families.

Mustapha Manneh, a Mandinka man from The Gambian village of Kartong and one of the most vocal opponents of fishmeal factories, says the fishmeal industry is equivalent to the blood diamond industry. "It is very unfortunate that the fishmeal industry turns five kilos of raw fish into one kilo of fishmeal and this fishmeal is meant to feed European and Asian aquaculture while depriving the local people access to fish. You're depriving people of access to fish, you're depriving people of access to their identity. You're depriving people of access to their basic rights."

According to the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), over 30% of West Africa's fish stocks are overexploited, with another 60% fully exploited. The significant quantity of fish leaving Western African waters



*One of the many fishmeal factories lining the coastline of the village of Kartong, in The Gambia. Photo credit: Abubacar Fofana, Photo credit: Abubacar Fofana, February 22, 2024*

not only exacerbates food insecurity but also prompts scrutiny of the economic losses stemming from overfishing. Many deals undervalue the resources extracted resulting in billions of dollars in annual losses due to unsustainable practices and short-sighted agreements.

Alongside the environmental issue, conflict has also become another consequence of large-scale fishing in West Africa, sparking clashes within communities, and leading to riots and the torching of villages. One recent incident occurred in The Gambian fishing village of Sanyang in 2021. Since then, protests against these foreign destructive fishmeal factories have increased. Additionally, insufficient waste management infrastructure at several factories has contaminated small farms operated by Indigenous women in the region, leading to the loss of income and food sources for many families.

Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach that involves empowering Indigenous communities and exploring avenues to enhance food security through permaculture. By prioritizing local needs and environmental stewardship, these communities can begin the process of healing their land and restoring balance to their ecosystems.

Community associations and projects in the region are striving to develop alternative approaches to food security, emphasizing self-sufficiency from the land. Along with the Kartong Permaculture Association, Mandinka educator Alaghie Manneh has dedicated her work to exploring how permaculture can offer hope for the future of these communities. “Permaculture is a holistic system that does not encourage large-scale fishing and neocolonialism,” says Manneh. “What we promote is to work with our nature and to let it create its diversity. We want to help train people to understand that they can have other sources to have fish in their own homes through raising fish through aquaponics and organic fish farms as well as general small-scale farming.”

*A man entices potential customers to buy his fresh fish for the day while staying cool from The Gambian sun under a parasol, at the Tanji Fish Market, in Kartong. Photo credit: Abubacar Fofana, February 22, 2024*



Collaborative efforts are crucial to address socio-economic and environmental challenges, safeguard marine biodiversity, and uphold the rights of Indigenous peoples. Listening to the voices of those affected is essential to forging a path that guarantees sustainable livelihoods, preserves cultural identity, and safeguards the prosperous future of West Africa's marine ecosystems.

By prioritizing local needs and environmental protection, Indigenous communities are shifting away from exploitation and towards empowerment.



*A woman at the Tanji Fish Market, in Kartong, sells fresh catches of the day, fresh off the boat. These products will be sold directly to community members and generally to the local market. Photo credit: Abubacar Fofana, February 22, 2024*



*A young fisherman runs with freshly caught product from the wooden fishing pirogues pulling up to the beach of Sanyang, in Kartong. Photo credit: Abubacar Fofana, February 22, 2024*

**About the author:**

**YSM is a marine and environmental conservation professional with 10+ years of experience with a passion for shark conservation, Indigenous-led conservation, and land/ocean rights. They use nature-based solutions as a tool to spread knowledge and awareness in Western Afriqiyah and Abya Yala through the project of The Gambian Marine and Environmental Conservation Initiative.**

# Palestinian Genocide *IS* Environmental Destruction

*Drawing parallels between the colonization of Palestine, and Turtle Island, and the environmental devastation that both lands have endured through chemical warfare and occupation.*

**BY TONY ENOS**

The environment is an inevitable casualty of modern political conflicts. Wars are no longer fought in a field with wooden shotguns like they were centuries ago. The modern technologies used in warfare now are more devastating than ever. When we speak of environmental damage, it is important to remember that people and the environment do not exist separately, or independently of one another. The people of a land, the prior generations that have worked that land, the present generation who cares for it and survives off of it, and even the generations that are yet to come are all integral parts of an ecosystem. Drinking water, plants, animals, crops, and "weather, landscapes, biotic or living parts, abiotic factors, or nonliving parts," are all factors in an ecosystem according to the National Geographic Society. Ecosystems like those have been meticulously cared for by the Palestinian stewards of the land for generations before the beginning of Israel's occupation in 1948. It is important to understand the gravity and the holistic totality of what environmental damage and disruption really are.

According to research done by David Butterfield, Jad Isaac, Atif Kubursi, and Steven Spencer for McMaster University and Econometric Research Limited, "agriculture is the largest sector of the Palestinian economy, generating over 22% of the Gross Domestic Product of the West Bank and Gaza and providing employment to over 15% of the population." As the landscape sustains more and more traumatic assaults, Palestinians in Gaza are left with no sustainability after a demeaning and degrading 76-year-long occupation by Israel.

Journalists from Al Jazeera reported that "according to the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, Israel has dropped more than 25,000 tonnes of explosives on the Gaza Strip since October 7th, equivalent to two nuclear bombs." The technology of chemical warfare such as the white phosphorus used in the Bunker Bombs that the "United States" has supplied to Israel can cause burns and irritation, liver, kidney, heart, lung, or bone damage, and death according to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

The radiation of missiles and bombs along with heavy metals and chemicals such as Uranium-235, a chemical agent used in nuclear bombs that has a half-life of 700 million years - the time any substance takes to decay by half of its original amount - according to the CDC, all have an unfathomable impact. These bomb components seeping into the ground, and running off into drinking water with the rains are enough to impact generations to come with fatal cancers and altered genetics of plants, animals, and the very ecosystems they all need to survive.

***"As the landscape sustains more and more traumatic assaults, Palestinians in Gaza are left with no sustainability after a demeaning and degrading 76-year-long occupation by Israel."***

Though the British had to exercise a bit more ingenuity than just direct bombings when they began genociding the Indigenous peoples of "North America" in 1587, certain parallels are gut-wrenchingly similar.

When colonizers came to Turtle Island (what's now known as "North America") from Spain in 1492, followed by several other invading nations, and ultimately the British, Indigenous Nations experienced agricultural and environmental devastation. The loss of over 90 million acres of ancestral lands, displacement, population devastation brought on by diseases like smallpox - which the government harnessed as warfare against the Indigenous Nations of the time - and invasive species of animals such as pigs and sheep from the white settler occupation brought "the old ways" of Indigenous living and thriving to an end as our ancestors knew it.

Pigs from Europe for example quickly grew in population size and destroyed crops and ecosystems. As Climatehub cites, "They are a destructive, invasive species that cause extensive damage to natural ecosystems, croplands, pastures, and livestock operations." Along with the desecration of the Earth for its riches and natural resources by the settlers, and the ramifications of

colonizer warfare, the environmental impacts of these industrial sins such as deforestation, and lost crops, seeds, plants, and grasses, are ones that we are still healing from, and working to reverse today.

While it's a known fact that governments profit from war, the burden of healing and creating anything in the way of sustainability always falls back on the people who are suffering the most, consistently with little to no accountability or help from said government. With examples such as the survivors of the 1945 American bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki according to Time Magazine, the gravity of grown men playing war games and the hell on Earth that its victims are made prey to are agonizing facts of war and occupation.

Though Jews and Arabs may have commingled in Palestine for thousands of years, perhaps we're unclear on what an occupation is. Israel forcibly removed Palestinians from their ancestrally owned homes and lands in 1948 so that Jewish families could live in those homes, along with the ethnic cleansing of such Palestinian villages, and Israel imposing and enforcing its government infrastructure on the Palestinian people is an occupation.

Similarly, Indigenous people in Turtle Island were forced from their lands, put into holding camps, and herded onto reservations to endure the newly imposed infrastructure of the "United States" government. Surviving off of small government rations, the irreparable results were starvation and a deep traumatic loss of a people and their way of life such as the outlawing of Indigenous spirituality and ceremonies, possession of sacred objects, and songs and traditions, with no corrective action taken by the American government until the Religious Freedom Act of 1978 as cited on the U.S. Government Information website.

As Gaza experiences one of the most horrific genocides in modern history with almost 30,000 people killed since Israel's war strikes began in October according to PBS, 2.2 million people are in crisis or worse levels of food insecurity, and 576,600 people face catastrophic hunger and starvation in Gaza as cited by the UN World Food Programme. Islamic Relief Worldwide states, "On the internationally recognized 5-phase scale used to classify food crises, more than half a million people in Gaza – a quarter of the entire population – are now believed to be at the most severe Phase 5 'catastrophic' level, meaning a high risk of mass starvation and death."

The fact that these unspeakable humanitarian and environmental atrocities are being allowed to happen anywhere is a threat to all of us everywhere! As Samira Homerang Saunders, a researcher at the Centre for Climate Crime and Climate Justice at Queen Mary, University of London cited, "War creates a toxic biosphere . . . In 2013, the head of Oncology at Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza said he expected the cancer rates to double within five years after Israel used uranium in the 2008-2009 war. He referred to that campaign as an 'environmental catastrophe'." The West Bank in Palestine has had its share of strikes from Israeli forces also, but with the last being in December of 2023, it's clear that Gaza is being disproportionately targeted.

A 2017 census reported Gaza's total population to be 590,481 people. That means almost a quarter of Gaza's population has been systematically wiped out. A haunting echo of America's original sins, as over 10,000 Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee, Seminole, and other Native American nations died on the Trail of Tears forced removal according to the National Parks Service. Just a fraction of the American government's total colonization body count.

***"As was our fate as Indigenous people of Turtle Island, Palestinian children and families will now have an unspeakable intergenerational trauma, and deep spiritual and psychological wounds to heal from. Along with a long and painful road back to sustainability and security in any sense."***

As was our fate as Indigenous people of Turtle Island, Palestinian children and families will now have an unspeakable intergenerational trauma, and deep spiritual and psychological wounds to heal from. Along with a long and painful road back to sustainability and security in any sense. It is unimaginable that environmental and ecological healing will happen any time soon for the Palestinian people until there is a permanent ceasefire and a two-state solution in motion. Not "in talks" or "on the table," but actual movement in an existing infrastructure that provides the Palestinian people a life of thriving with dignity, opportunity, and its own economic and ecological security. Ethnic cleansing and the genocide of the Indigenous people of Palestine can not be a part of that path forward.

If we've learned nothing else from the past 500 years of colonization here on Turtle Island, we know that when we lose Indigenous knowledge and ways of life, the world loses a part of itself. Ways of living, caring for, and preserving land, songs, stories, traditions, and the essence of a people is the irreconcilable price of genocide. The world needs all of us. The environment needs all of us. What we do today really does impact the next seven generations, especially if what we're creating to pass down to them is intergenerational trauma, nationalist and spiritual insanity, and the idea that any life is more important than another.

**About the author:**

**Hailed as "an example of possibility for people living with HIV" by the Advocate Magazine, two-time Native American Music Award Nominee and Cherokee two-spirit musician, Tony Enos celebrates 16 years as a singer/songwriter/producer/entertainer/activist and writer with the release of his 6th studio album "Indestructible," now available everywhere. The Kennedy Center performer and United States U=U ambassador continues to foster love, unity, and awareness in all that he does. Empowering the resilience of the human spirit through the medicine of music.**

# Super Bowl's Impact on Native Nations and the Environment

BY JEN DEERINWATER




*From left to right: Amanda Blackhorse from the Navajo Nation; Gaylene Crouser from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe; Rhonda LeValdo from Pueblo of Acoma; Fawn Douglas from Las the Southern Paiute Tribe, at The Nuwu Art Gallery + Community Center, in "Las Vegas", where the press conference was held. Photo credit: Acee Agoyo, February 11, 2024*

In a remarkable display of extravagance, a whopping 882 private jets flew into Southern Paiute land ("Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S.") for the most recent Super Bowl featuring the San Francisco 49ers and the Kansas City Chiefs. This marked the second-highest influx of private jets for a Super Bowl, following last year's game in Arizona, where 931 private jets took flight.

According to a 2021 study conducted by the Transport and Environment Organization, the climate impact of aviation is fast growing. The report highlights a startling statistic: a mere 1% of individuals bear responsibility for a staggering 50% of global aviation emissions, particularly concerning the emissions generated by short-distance flights. Similarly, Greenpeace reported that a lone private jet journey generates approximately ten times the CO2 emissions per person compared to an average commercial flight.

There are 28 federally recognized tribal nations and communities in "Nevada." The legacy of colonialism has left many Native lands polluted or suffering from the climate crisis. The 2023 Super Bowl was held on the lands of the O'odham and Piipaash ("Phoenix, Arizona, U.S."), where part of the Navajo Nation's reservation resides.

Not too far from the buzz of the Super Bowl, tribal nations are dealing with serious environmental problems because of colonialism. Take




*During the press conference in "Las Vegas", Native people explained how the use of Native-themed mascots is demeaning, perpetuates stereotypes of Native people, and falls in line with mass cultural appropriation. Photo credit: Acee Agoyo, February 11, 2024*

the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe in "Nevada", for instance. They're facing a drought caused by a dam built by the government, which means less water. The Truckee River used to get its water from melted snow, but with temperatures going up, there's less snow, and less water is flowing downstream to the tribe.

On Western Shoshone lands, in "Nevada", it's believed that over 900 nuclear bombs were detonated. In "Arizona", where part of the Navajo Nation reservation is located, there's a severe water crisis. According to the Navajo Water Project, 30% of reservation residents lack access to running water. In the Supreme Court case, *Arizona v. Navajo Nation*, the court ruled that despite the Navajo Treaty of 1868 guaranteeing the Navajo rights to their lands, resources, and sovereignty, they aren't entitled to area water resources. Instead, the state governments in the region have legal authority to utilize the water for themselves.

The environmental impact of Super Bowl LVIII was compounded by troubling instances of anti-Native racism, particularly concerning the use of Native mascots and the controversial "chop" gesture associated with the Kansas City team. This gesture, resembling chopping with a tomahawk, has faced criticism from Native communities nationwide, who have consistently urged an end to such racist portrayals.

In response, Not in Our Honor convened a press conference at the Nuwu Art Gallery, followed by a protest outside the Super Bowl venue. Rhonda LeValdo, representing the Acoma tribe, referred to the event as the "genocide bowl" during the press briefing, highlighting the grave consequences of perpetuating harmful stereotypes. Local advocates echoed these concerns, calling for the immediate retirement of the Kansas City Chiefs' name and logo. Their stance reflects a broader movement aimed at addressing racism in sports.




*Native American groups asked, during a press conference held in "Las Vegas", for the abolishment of the "big drum" at home events, the "tomahawk chop" chant at all sports venues, and any Native American appropriation that occurs in football stadium. Photo credit: Acee Agoyo, February 11, 2024*

**About the author:**

Jen Deerinwater, Founding Executive Director of Crushing Colonialism, is a bisexual, Two-Spirit, multiply-disabled citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and an award-winning journalist and organizer who covers the myriad of issues Jen's communities face with an intersectional lens.

DECOLONIZED BEATZ

# Creatively and Collectively Resisting Climate Destructors

*Through Indigenous resistance, communities have collectively unified to pursue climate justice for a healed Mother Earth.*

**BY STEPH VIERA**




*A group of people blocks a major downtown "Los Angeles" intersection crosswalk while holding a long horizontal banner, to protest climate disaster financiers. Photo credit: Steph Viera, November 25, 2022*

Indigenous communities within and around so-called "North America" have experienced the severe detriment of our homelands, on and off reservations for generations because of extractive industries. Many generations of Indigenous people today have not known Mother Earth without her suffering from climate disaster. As rightful stewards of the land, Indigenous communities lead one another to climate justice through various tactics, creatively, and collectively through art.

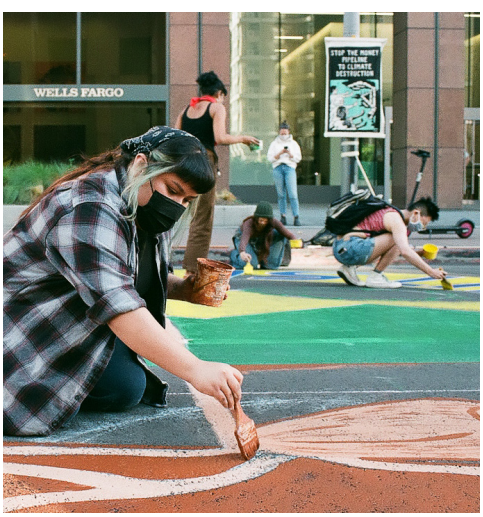
During 2021 and 2022 thousands of Indigenous people and allies took to the streets of urban communities like "Los Angeles" and "San Francisco, California" to call out large climate disaster financiers like BlackRock and Wells Fargo due to their hands in funding the destruction of Indigenous land.

About the author:

Steph Viera (they/he), is Diné and Salvadorian born and raised in Los Angeles, California. They are a Two-Spirit writer, photographer, media organizer, and storyteller with a deep commitment to aid in the intentional storytelling of Indigenous people behind the camera, highlighting the reconnecting, multi-racial, queer, and urban Indigenous communities. In addition to their role as Associate Producer at NDN Collective, they have also hosted several healing spaces dedicated to Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ people.



*A woman paints a street of "Los Angeles" along several people, with the buildings of BlackRock and Wells Fargo surrounding them. Photo credit: Steph Viera, November 25, 2022*




*During 2021 and 2022 thousands of Indigenous people and allies took to the streets of urban communities like "Los Angeles" to call out large climate disaster financiers. Photo credit: Steph Viera, November 25, 2022*




*A poster of a medicine wheel lies across a "Los Angeles" crosswalk at sunset. Photo credit: Steph Viera, November 25, 2022*

*Protestors lay near the street mural they painted in "Los Angeles" to call out large climate disaster financiers. Photo credit: Steph Viera, November 25, 2022*






*A poster that reads, "BlackRock, Banks, and Biden: Stop Setting Our World On Fire, Defund Climate Chaos" stands tied to a tree near BlackRock headquarters, in "Los Angeles". Photo credit: Steph Viera, November 25, 2022*

DECOLONIZED BEATZ

# Healing Justice is Climate Justice

*In a powerful collaboration, grassroots organizations Sacred Earth Solar and No More Silence are joining forces to empower Indigenous communities in so-called "Canada" toward a future of collective power and healing justice.*

**BY SERENA MENDIZABAL, AUDREY HUNTLEY, MELINA LABOUCAN-MASSIMO, AND TERRI MONTURE**

At the heart of this collaboration lies the recognition that healing justice is essential not only for addressing the historical traumas inflicted upon Indigenous peoples but also for combating the environmental injustices that threaten their lands and ways of life. Indigenous communities across so-called "Canada" continue to bear the brunt of the devastating impacts of climate change, from the loss of traditional territories to the degradation of vital ecosystems. As stewards of the land, their struggles for justice are intertwined with the fight against environmental degradation.

Sacred Earth Solar and No More Silence, an Indigenous-led organization based in Tkaronto ("Toronto, Ontario, Canada"), understand that true justice cannot be achieved without addressing the root causes of these interconnected crises. By centering healing as a fundamental component of their work, they aim to cultivate resilience and resistance within Indigenous communities while advocating for systemic change on a broader scale. Healing justice acknowledges the deep wounds inflicted by colonialism and reclaims traditional practices as a means of healing and empowerment.

Together, projects like the Hummingbird Lodge saw Sacred Earth Solar and No More Silence joining forces to install a 7.2-kilowatt on-grid solar system with sixteen panels. This initiative provided No More Silence with a safe space where 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, survivors of gender-based violence, individuals with disabilities, and MMIWG2S families could participate in traditional healing ceremonies and reconnect with their cultural roots. The lodge prioritizes disability justice as well by being fully accessible to individuals using mobility devices.

Since installing the solar energy system, No More Silence leaders have shared with Sacred Earth Solar that they now generate surplus electricity to fully power their building. Their electricity costs have plummeted by over 95%, allowing them to redirect funds toward supporting Indigenous families, including those in Tkaronto's ("Toronto, Ontario, Canada") urban Indigenous community.

"My family has a long tradition of serving in the community, and before my dad passed he gave his blessing to have the lodge here, finding the idea of a community healing space important," said Terri Monture, a member of No More Silence who offered the use of farmland at her home on Six Nations of the Grand River for the lodge.

"He would have loved seeing the solar array built, he had long talked about doing it at the house to better prepare our household for climate change, and this makes me proud that we were able to place the lodge here and have the solar array power it."

The Hummingbird Lodge now hosts the Strawberry Ceremony, a national day of action honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, Trans, and Two-Spirit individuals. It has been a source of support for the Laboucan family as they navigate the healing process following the tragic death of Bella Laboucan-Mclean. Bella was discovered deceased on the mezzanine level of a downtown condo building in Tkaronto ("Toronto, Ontario, Canada")

Melina Laboucan-Massimo, Bella's sister, felt the support No More Silence provides and wanted to help. As the Founder of Sacred Earth Solar, Melina, and her organization focused on empowering frontline Indigenous communities with climate solutions. This shared mission led to the establishment of a formal partnership between Sacred Earth Solar and No More Silence. Together, they collaborated to provide clean, accessible electricity for the Hummingbird Healing Lodge. Now, the lodge is equipped with heating, lights, a kettle, and electrical outlets for year-round ceremonies, and is open to urban Indigenous peoples who cannot access ceremonial spaces in the city.

When Indigenous peoples have access to healing, they can reclaim decolonial practices for justice. The systems causing harm to Indigenous women, 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, and our lands, waters, and climate are intertwined. To safeguard our home territories, Indigenous peoples need access to healing, resources, and support. This ensures that we do not perpetuate further harm while striving for sovereignty and climate justice.



*Bella Laboucan-Mclean's mother and aunt, alongside Terri Monture from No More Silence and Wanda Whitebird before their family's ceremony in the Hummingbird Lodge, in Six Nations of the Grand River. Photo credit: Audrey Huntley, Fall 2023*



*Audrey Huntley from No More Silence, Serena Mendizabal from Sacred Earth Solar, and solar installer Mike from Solar Associates installing the solar panels for the Hummingbird Lodge. Photo credit: Audrey Huntley, Fall 2023*




*Melina Laboucan-Massimo and the Laboucan-Mclean family gather in the Hummingbird Lodge gathering space before their family's ceremony for Bella. Photo credit: Audrey Huntley, Fall 2023*



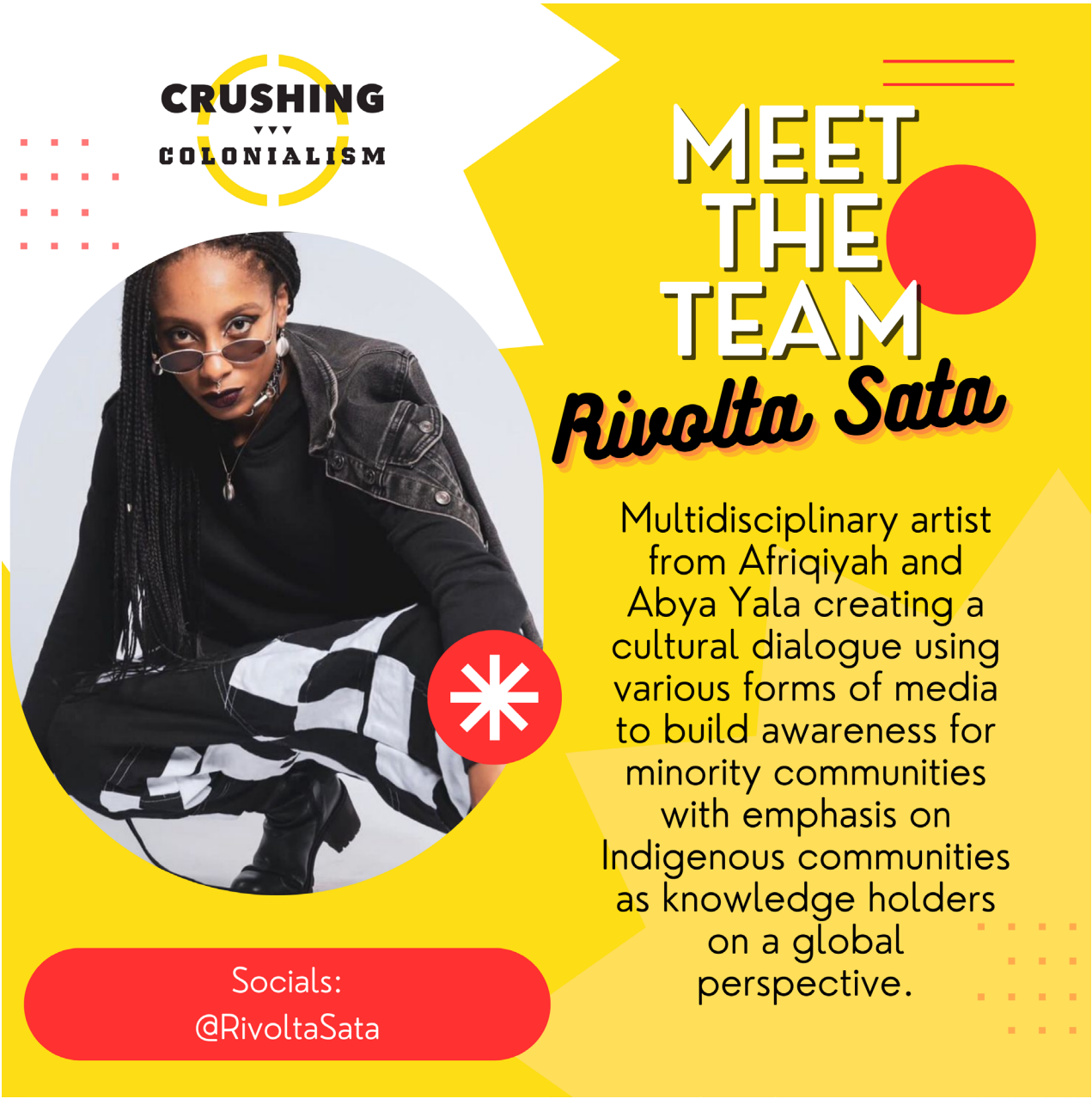
*Tkaronto ("Toronto, Ontario, Canada") Indigenous community members and members of No More Silence gather for the ceremony in the Hummingbird Lodge with Wanda Whitebird. Photo credit: Audrey Huntley, Summer 2023*

# Rivolta Sata

We welcome the newest member of our Decolonized Beatz Indigenous World Pride planning council, Rivolta Sata, representing the lands known as Africa.

**Rivolta Sata** is a multidisciplinary artist from Afriqiyah and Abya Yala creating a cultural dialogue using various forms of media to build awareness for minority communities, emphasizing Indigenous communities as knowledge holders from a global perspective.

They focus on cultural preservation, eco-accountability, and de-colonization in the mind spirit, and body, taking a look at systems of change and ancestral memory as a form of dance and body movement for healing and grieving daily life, past transgressions and violence inflicted through centers of mis-education and our government systems.



DECOLONIZED BEATZ

# CALL FOR PROPOSALS: Indiqiqueer Workshop Series

**DUE DATE: MAY 31, 2024**

**Eligibility:**

International Indigenous Two-Spirit LGBTQIA+ Youth Communities

**Workshop Description:**

Led by Theo Cuthand and Fallon Simard, this workshop series will teach aspiring Indigenous Two-Spirit LGBTQIA+ youth (up to 25 years of age) how to make a video which will be screened in 2025 at Decolonized Beatz Indigenous World Pride in "Washington, DC, USA". The training program will take four months with one, two-hour session per month. This teaching approach ensures students will have time for studio and practice work. Participants will receive $500 USD for completing the workshop series.

**Proposal Requirements:**

1. **Introduction**
   a. Introduction to who you are - your community and where you come from (200-300 words maximum). All countries are eligible, but please let us know where you are from and what your preferred language is so we can ensure the appropriate translators are available.
2. **Experience in Video Work**
   a. Highlight your background in video (200-500 words maximum)
3. **Video Pitch**
   a. What will your video project be? (200-500 words maximum)
4. **Other comments**
   a. Anything else you would like the teachers to know?
5. **Submission Requirements**
   a. Proposal
   b. Email submissions with the project title in the subject line to: tjcuthand@gmail.com & ithrowbigrocks@gmail.com
   c. Due by end of day May 31, 2024

# Recommendations

In each edition, we aim to share content recommendations curated exclusively by Indigenous creators, enhancing the depth of our discussions on our featured articles. This selection promises an insightful exploration of Native communities, offering a unique and authentic perspective that resonates with their cultural heritage and lived experiences.

In this edition, YSM offers a curated selection of documentaries sourced from a diverse array of voices, ranging from Indigenous filmmakers to prominent environmental organizations and news projects. These documentaries provide valuable insights into the reality and perspectives surrounding fishmeal production and international presence in fishing within Western African waters.

**New Boats by Lansana Mansaray**
**Is China's fishing fleet taking all of West Africa's fish? By the BBC News**
**Bottom Trawling is precipitating the collapse of Senegal's artisanal fisheries by the Environmental Justice Foundation**

# The Imperative of Indigenous Voices in Africa's Climate Action

*Reflections on the Africa Climate Summit 2023.*

**BY ISABEL MARÍA RIOFRÍO MIRANDA**

In the face of escalating climate crises, the Africa Climate Summit of 2023 stood as a pivotal moment for the continent to converge, deliberate, and act upon the urgent climate challenges. Hosted in Nairobi, Kenya, this summit brought together leaders, policymakers, scientists, and grassroots activists to address the multifaceted dimensions of climate change and chart a sustainable pathway forward. However, amidst the high-level discussions and policy formulations, one crucial aspect emerged as central to any effective climate strategy – the inclusion and amplification of Indigenous voices.

Indigenous communities across Africa have long been stewards of their lands, possessing invaluable traditional knowledge and sustainable practices that have sustained ecosystems for generations. Despite this, they remain disproportionately impacted by climate change due to marginalization, land dispossession, and lack of recognition of their rights. The Africa Climate Summit recognized the imperative of integrating Indigenous perspectives into climate action, acknowledging their unique insights and solutions.

At the heart of Indigenous wisdom lies a profound understanding of the interconnectedness between humans and nature. Traditional practices such as rotational grazing, agroforestry, and water management techniques demonstrate a holistic approach to land stewardship that promotes resilience in the face of environmental perturbations. By incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems into climate policies, nations can tap into a wealth of adaptive strategies that are both effective and culturally appropriate.

Moreover, Indigenous communities serve as frontline defenders of biodiversity-rich ecosystems, safeguarding vital carbon sinks such as forests, wetlands, and grasslands. Their traditional territories often coincide with areas of high ecological significance, making their conservation efforts critical in mitigating climate change. Recognizing and supporting Indigenous land rights is therefore paramount in preserving these vital carbon reservoirs and enhancing overall climate resilience.

The Africa Climate Summit underscored the need for inclusive governance structures that empower Indigenous peoples to participate in decision-making processes. By ensuring their full and effective participation, countries can harness the collective wisdom of Indigenous communities and foster partnerships based on mutual respect and trust. Furthermore, the summit highlighted the importance of securing land tenure rights for Indigenous peoples and safeguarding their territories from encroachment and exploitation.

However, despite the recognition of Indigenous knowledge and rights at the Africa Climate Summit, significant challenges persist in translating rhetoric into action. Indigenous communities continue to face systemic barriers to participation and representation in climate governance processes. Limited access to resources, language barriers, and power imbalances often marginalize their voices, hindering the development of inclusive and equitable climate policies.

To address these challenges, it is imperative to prioritize the empowerment of Indigenous peoples through capacity building, resource allocation, and institutional support. This entails investing in education and training programs that strengthen Indigenous leadership and enhance their ability to engage effectively in climate negotiations. Moreover, governments must commit to upholding the rights of Indigenous peoples as enshrined in international frameworks such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

In addition to the insights gleaned from the Africa Climate Summit, other sources further underscore the pivotal role of Indigenous knowledge in climate resilience. A study published in the journal Nature Sustainability found that Indigenous land management practices can significantly enhance carbon sequestration and biodiversity conservation. Similarly, research by the World Resources Institute highlights the importance of integrating Indigenous perspectives into climate policies to ensure their relevance and effectiveness on the ground.

The Africa Climate Summit of 2023 served as a wake-up call for the urgent need to center Indigenous voices in climate action. By recognizing their traditional knowledge, protecting their land rights, and fostering inclusive governance structures, countries can harness the full potential of Indigenous communities in addressing the climate crisis. As we strive to build a more resilient and sustainable future, let us heed the wisdom of those who have lived in harmony with nature for centuries, for their voices are indispensable in shaping our collective response to the defining challenge of our time.

# Upholding Indigenous Rights, A Vital Aspect of Asia's Climate Fight

**BY ISABEL MARÍA RIOFRÍO MIRANDA**

In the ongoing battle against climate change, the voices of Indigenous peoples across Asia are calling for greater recognition, participation, and respect in climate action initiatives. A recent article published by The Philippine Star sheds light on the pressing need to amplify Indigenous perspectives in environmental governance and policy-making processes. As nations grapple with the escalating impacts of climate change, it is imperative to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of Indigenous communities and prioritize their rights and knowledge in shaping sustainable solutions.

Indigenous peoples have long been custodians of their lands, possessing rich traditional knowledge and sustainable practices that have sustained ecosystems for centuries. However, their rights and contributions are often overlooked or marginalized in mainstream climate discussions and decision-making forums. The article underscores the importance of rectifying this imbalance by ensuring that Indigenous voices are not only heard but also actively incorporated into climate policies and initiatives.

One of the key demands highlighted in the article is the need for greater participation of Indigenous representatives in national and international climate negotiations. Indigenous peoples possess unique insights into local ecosystems and climate dynamics, making their perspectives invaluable in crafting contextually appropriate adaptation and mitigation strategies. By fostering meaningful partnerships with Indigenous communities, governments can tap into a wealth of traditional knowledge and leverage their expertise in implementing effective climate actions.

Moreover, the article emphasizes the importance of upholding Indigenous rights, particularly concerning land tenure and resource management. Across Asia, Indigenous territories often overlap with areas of high ecological significance, including forests, wetlands, and biodiversity hotspots. Recognizing and respecting Indigenous land rights is not only a matter of justice but also a strategic imperative for biodiversity conservation and climate resilience. Ensuring secure land tenure for Indigenous communities is crucial in safeguarding these vital ecosystems and enhancing their capacity to adapt to climate change impacts.

A study published in the journal Environmental Science & Policy found that Indigenous land management practices can contribute to carbon sequestration and enhance ecosystem resilience in the face of climate change. Similarly, research by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) highlights the vital role of Indigenous peoples in biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management.

As countries strive to implement ambitious climate goals and transition to low-carbon economies, it is essential to center Indigenous perspectives and elevate their voices in decision-making processes. By recognizing the inherent connection between Indigenous rights, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience, nations can forge inclusive and equitable pathways toward a more sustainable future for all.



*A young fisherman runs with freshly caught product from the wooden fishing pirogues pulling up to the beach of Sanyang, in Kartong. Photo credit: Abubacar Fofana, February 22, 2024*


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CRUSHINGCOLONIALISM.ORG

As a non-profit organization (501c3 in the "U.S."), your donations go directly to our small but growing organization, as well as helping us to produce high-quality, free news for Indigenous communities and allies around the world. Please consider contributing today at CrushingColonialism.org