

# Bolivia Climate Primers: Northern Fixes and Southern Realities

## PRIMER ONE MITIGATION AND BOLIVIA



# CONTENTS

---

**ABOUT THE SERIES** 3

**INTRODUCTION** 4

**MITIGATION IN THE GLOBAL NORTH** 4

*Major responsibility for mitigation rests on countries of the global North – but how to reduce emissions in the face of corporate power?* 4

*Corporate power doesn't like mitigation, which is why they have created mechanisms like REDD, CDM, carbon markets, and tech fixes.* 8

**MITIGATION IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH** 11

*The Global South has responsibility to mitigate, but this doesn't detract from Northern responsibility, and requires support and participation from the global North.* 11

**CONCLUSION** 13

**ENDNOTES** 14

 **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

Written and researched by:  
Rebecca Hollender

Edited by:  
Maddy Ryle

Layout & cover photo by:  
Anders Vang Nielsen

Accompanying [glossary](#) by:  
Carey Averbook

A publication from:

 **the democracycenter**

[www.democracyctr.org](http://www.democracyctr.org)

## LICENSE

---

This work is made available under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 4.0 International](#) license.



Please accredit The Democracy Center.

## ABOUT THE SERIES

---

The Democracy Center has a long history of working to help citizens understand and influence the issues that affect their lives. As we have deepened our work on climate over the last few years, we have focused our efforts on three key areas: supporting climate activists to be more strategic, lifting up narratives on climate change from ground zero, and providing reports and analysis on the climate crisis.

While our strategy work aims to help citizens have more impact when they take action, we also recognize that it is vital for activists and others to be informed of the issues they wish to influence in order to build effective strategies.

The policy debates around climate change can often seem overwhelming, especially to newcomers to the subject. Its all-permeating nature as an issue which affects everything and everyone is matched by the exceptional depth of complexity and technicality of the debates around it. Getting to grips with the different issues, dynamics and perspectives at play in terms of the 'global North'/'global South' (or 'developed/developing world', or 'rich/poor nations') is also crucial to understanding these debates, and can be especially daunting. Bolivia – as a resource-limited country on the coalface of climate impacts, which has also taken quite a strong, often alternative, public stance in climate negotiations – makes an interesting and instructive test case for exploring this nexus of issues further.

To help citizens to understand the key debates and what they look like from a global Southern perspective, former Democracy Center researcher and climate negotiator Rebecca Hollender has written this set of three Bolivia Climate Primers. These '101s' seek to help anyone who is interested get a better grasp of the basics of current policies and proposals on the table around mitigation, adaptation and climate finance, and what implications they have for Bolivia. We hope that you will find these useful, whether you are an activist, a student, a researcher, or just generally interested in the subject.

*This first primer – Mitigation and Bolivia – considers some of the key mitigations policies being proposed and where Bolivia sits in those conversations. It also looks at potential areas for collaboration between activists in Bolivia and the global North.*

*(To see the Democracy Center's full range of work on climate issues visit the [Climate and Democracy](#) pages of our website.)*

## INTRODUCTION

---

Whether humans can effectively mitigate greenhouse gas emissions is a deciding factor for the future of the planet, making mitigation the most universally important and urgent conversation related to climate change. Its outcome is relevant to all humans and species, and is a key example of how decisions taken in one place have resounding effects across the globe. The following section sets out the aspects of the ongoing climate change mitigation conversations that are most relevant to Bolivia. It outlines key points in the North-South debate around mitigation and showcases some opportunities for Northern and Southern climate change movements to work together to strengthen mutually beneficial advocacy strategies in favor of strict mitigation policies.

## MITIGATION IN THE GLOBAL NORTH

---

As a country that contributes only .097% to global climate change emissions<sup>1</sup>, yet ranks among the most vulnerable to their climactic impacts,<sup>2ii</sup> Bolivia has a right to speak up about mitigation policies in the global North. While many national-level Northern mitigation measures (like public transportation and sustainable building initiatives) may be beyond Bolivia's scope, conversations around curbing the biggest global emission sources are not.

» Major responsibility for mitigation rests on countries of the global North – but how to reduce emissions in the face of corporate power?

Regardless of historical responsibility, [UNFCCC-ranking](#) (Annex 1 or not), or whose definition of “developing” or “industrialized” is used, it is the urgent responsibility of the current top-emitting countries to mitigate. Now.

Despite decades-long efforts, agreement still has not been reached about how to mitigate the greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change. Illogically, although we have ever-increasing access to scientific expertise, information about causes, future implications, and proposals to halt climate change, greenhouse gas emissions [continue to rise](#).

---

1 Based on IPCC estimations for 1990 and national inventories of GHGs for 1990 for Bolivia Plan Quinquenal del Programa Nacional de Cambios Climáticos, according to Forest Carbon Partnership.

2 David Wheeler's [vulnerability index](#) measures risk relating to three key climate-related problems faced by nations worldwide: extreme weather, sea level rise, and agricultural productivity loss. Out of 233 countries, Bolivia was ranked 21st in 2008 and is predicted to be the 12th most susceptible country to extreme weather by 2013.

The trend of rising emissions, despite being in blatant contradiction to the best interests of humanity and the planet, is sustained by underlying power structures that allow the biggest emitters to dodge their responsibility to mitigate.

The powerful industries and corporate interests who would be hardest hit by emission regulations have developed sophisticated tactics to delay and/or block these policies. It is only by understanding, revealing, and dismantling these tactics that the mitigation impasse can be overcome.

Hundreds of citizen advocacy campaigns around the world are developing new strategies to pressure corporations and the political systems that protect them to take action on climate change. Also, progressive policy makers seek to establish top-down regulations on big-emitting industries at national levels. Countries like Bolivia, among the most vulnerable to climate change, can engage in the debates at both of these levels. The campaigns outlined in the following pages provide possible entry points for Bolivians to participate in putting pressure on the highest emitters, as well as openings to build broader North-South strategies and mutual support.

*(Please see the [Democracy Center's report on climate movement strategies around COP20 and beyond](#) for more thinking on these issues.)*

### **Leave fossil fuels underground and change the energy matrix – the 350.org approach**

Currently there is a flurry of activism campaigns targeting the most heavily emitting industry: the fossil fuel extraction industry. The burning of fossil fuels accounts for the large majority of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere.<sup>iii</sup> It is not that oil and gas companies are directly responsible for all fossil fuel emissions - this occurs across a range of sectors from energy, transport, agriculture, manufacturing, to housing and beyond.

However, the fossil fuel extraction companies are among the most powerful players in the current geopolitical landscape and form the backbone of the global economy. These companies and their subsidiaries exert an incredible influence over the broader fossil fuel industry from the time that raw materials leave the ground to the moment carbon emissions enter the atmosphere. They have their hand in everything from pricing, sale and distribution to access, use and regulation. Also, among the wealthiest entities on the planet<sup>iv</sup>, they are important investors, form powerful lobbies, and many of their decisions have far-reaching consequences that touch on almost every human economic activity.

Unfortunately for the planet, it is not in the fossil fuel companies' best interest to cut off their life source and stop doing what they do. Despite the enormous opportunity that these companies have to lead the development of alternative, clean energy sources, they are programmed to do what's best for their short-term profit margin. Their unwillingness to change is proven by the failure of years of moral leverage from activists and policy makers. Not only have fossil

fuel companies abandoned most of their investments in alternative energy sources,<sup>3</sup> they have heightened the race for exploration and ownership of every untouched fossil-fuel reserve. It was once unthinkable to exploit unconventional reserves like shale and tar sands due to the technical and economic barriers, not to mention the environmental consequences. In terms of contributions to climate change, the additional energy and materials needed to produce unconventional fuels gives them a bigger carbon footprint than traditional oil, gas, and coal.<sup>v</sup> However, as global energy demands continue to grow, exploration and investment in unconventional fuels is booming. Business in fossil fuels is just too good to quit (and in times of geopolitical insecurity industry lobbyists and the politicians they influence are successfully wielding the 'national energy security' card as a way of gaining political support for more investment in unconventional).

The most visible campaigns against fossil fuel companies aim at pressuring companies and governments to leave unburned fuel reserves in the ground. The leader of the "[Fossil Free Movement](#)" campaign, 350.org founder Bill McKibben, uses the latest data to explain that unless we leave between 75-80% of known fossil fuel reserve holdings in the ground, we are guaranteed to exceed the internationally agreed temperature increase limit of 2°C. Staying within this "carbon budget," will require that it no longer be profitable for corporations and companies to exploit their reserves - unlikely given that they value at \$27 trillion.<sup>vi</sup>

The strategies behind the Fossil Free Movement and similar campaigns are varied, and not without criticism. For example, college campuses, environmental organizations, US cities and public institutions are being pressured to divest from fossil fuel companies, thereby limiting the flow of capital to these companies. While dozens of campuses have signed on and hundreds been targeted, concerns have been raised about the effectiveness of divestment as a strategy. Skeptics point out that divesting in one place does not prevent stocks from being purchased in another place (think China, India, and Brazil), putting into question the effectiveness of the strategy.<sup>vii</sup> Others doubt the clout of endowments to change the face of global energy.

Another divestment strategy casts doubt on the long-term financial stability and value of fossil fuel companies, claiming that their public value is based on a "carbon bubble" of unburned reserves that will burst if and when global emissions regulations enter into force.<sup>viii</sup> The idea is to encourage fossil fuel companies to diversify their activities and investments by expanding into sustainable realms such as renewable energy research and infrastructure. However, the "if and when" argument is weak, at best, given the recent track record of the UNFCCC negotiations and general inaction on mitigation globally. While this strategy has generated concern from some important actors like HSBC, Citibank and Standard and Poor's, Wall Street remains unfazed.<sup>ix</sup>

---

3 "Around the turn of the century, for instance, BP made a brief attempt to restyle itself as "Beyond Petroleum," adapting a logo that looked like the sun and sticking solar panels on some of its gas stations. But its investments in alternative energy were never more than a tiny fraction of its budget for hydrocarbon exploration, and after a few years, many of those were wound down as new CEOs insisted on returning to the company's "core business." In December, BP finally closed its solar division. Shell shut down its solar and wind efforts in 2009." McKibben

A third strategy is through protests, letter writing, and other forms of political pressure on leaders to block further development of non-conventional and conventional fossil fuels. Examples include the protest movements against fracking, the Keystone XL pipeline, mountain top coal mining, etc. The Keystone protests have been criticized for merely attempting to stall and ultimately block pipeline construction, when the real focus should be to leave Canadian tar sands underground permanently. Critics say that while protesters in the US focus on preventing pipeline construction, investors have made sure that extensive rail systems are poised to carry tar sands oil to market.<sup>x</sup>

The above critiques of mitigation advocacy strategies in the Global North are not intended to suggest that Northern climate justice movements are misguided in their efforts, but rather demonstrate the immense challenge of confronting the most powerful entities on the planet. These challenges illustrate the importance of giving a role to the global South, even in battles fought on Northern fields.

#### **Other large-scale mitigation policies like the Carbon Fee (James Hansen), Sanders-Boxer bill**

In addition to these bottom-up campaign approaches, policy proposals are drawing attention in the US, designed to promote cross-sector mitigation and to restrict unbridled corporate power. One proposal, the [Sanders-Boxer bill](#), challenges Obama to make good on his promise to curb emissions during his second term.

Among other measures, the Sanders-Boxer bill proposes a carbon fee, championed by retired NASA climatologist James Hansen, which would stop allowing corporations to dump carbon and methane into the atmosphere for free. The idea behind the fee is to drive up the price of carbon emissions so that it is no longer profitable to extract remaining fossil fuel reserves. The fee would permanently increase the cost of emitting carbon, unlike in carbon markets where prices fluctuate, undermining the goal of emissions reduction.<sup>xi</sup>

Under the Sanders-Boxer bill, the revenue generated from the carbon fee (\$1.2 trillion in the first 10 years) would be largely (60%) redistributed equally among US residents to offset predicted increases in energy costs resulting from the bill. Other destinations (40%) include sustainable energy investments, clean-energy job training, and even deficit reduction.<sup>xii</sup> The bill would encompass 85% of US emission sources and promises 80% emission reductions by 2050. Such reductions are important on a global level, making the success of such legislation important to concerned citizens around the world, including Bolivians. However, environmentalists say that the bill does not go far enough in targeting corporations and rich elites for their disproportional contribution to emissions. Instead, they call for a 100% publicly distributed rebate from the carbon fee so that low and middle-income energy consumers do not bear the brunt of rising energy prices, thus creating real incentives for corporations to turn to clean energy.<sup>xiii</sup>

However, if the past is any predictor of the present, passing such a bill won't be easy. The Sanders-Boxer bill is likely to face strong opposition from Republicans and the fossil fuel lobby.

In 2009 a cap-and-trade bill, backed by a seemingly flawless strategy and a strong bipartisan coalition, fizzled in the US House of Representatives, leaving supporters dumbfounded (ibid.).<sup>4</sup> International civil society involvement may be the only way to generate the visibility and political pressure necessary for Sanders-Boxer to be written into law. Other similar fee/tax-based international initiatives for climate change mitigation and finance include regional taxes on aviation fuel (partially adopted by the European Union), proposals for a global financial transaction tax (commonly known as the Tobin Tax), and other “polluter-pays” schemes, some of which are examined in Primer Three – Climate Finance. Again, political will is a key impediment to the success of such proposals.

» Corporate power doesn’t like mitigation, which is why they have created mechanisms like REDD, CDM, carbon markets, and tech fixes.

The concerns surrounding the Sanders-Boxer Bill reflect the extensive debate over which policy model will result not only in emission reductions, but also in the systemic changes necessary to address the structural causes of climate change – changes which corporations are arming themselves to resist. Taking a look at the failure of market-based mechanisms exposes the expert tactics developed by private interests to evade responsibility and convert mitigation into a profitable venture.

Carbon markets, including emissions trading and offsets, were originally designed and promoted to provide cost-efficient ways for countries, companies, and regions to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Offset mechanisms like the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) promised climate mitigation at the same time as financing sustainable development in the Global South. The logic of carbon offsets allows polluting entities to offset their emissions in one part of the world (either through forest conservation in the case of REDD or renewable energy and infrastructure projects in the case of CDM) that reduce predicted greenhouse gas emissions elsewhere. Since the conservation and renewable energy projects typically take place in the Global South, they are seen as playing a dual role in financing sustainable development in countries with scarce economic resources. For example, CDM projects aim to finance sustainable development, technology transfer, and mitigation by allowing Northern companies to offset their emissions at home through subsidized investments in projects abroad that on paper reduce global emissions. REDD can be used to refer to any project which tries to improve the condition of forests in order to reduce destruction and the release of carbon emissions. However, most of the focus and momentum in REDD has been towards linking forests to carbon markets.

### Why CDM, REDD and other market fixes don’t work

A growing body of literature documents the failure of REDD and CDM to effectively reduce emissions and outlines a series of devastating environmental and social consequences. Critics

---

<sup>4</sup> The Sanders-Boxers Bill has not yet been presented to congress.



target the design, strategy, and implementation of these mechanisms, linking them to questionable practices by corporations and governments to turn mitigation finance into a profitable endeavor, at the expense of communities and the environment.<sup>xiv</sup> The following critiques illustrate some critical flaws:

- While both CDM and REDD are mechanisms that were developed under the internationally negotiated UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, aspects of both mechanisms are still highly contentious and others have yet to be formally resolved. In addition to the UN-sanctioned mechanisms, “voluntary” carbon offset projects involve a wide range of trading relationships and voluntary standards that are entirely unregulated. Both regulated and unregulated offset mechanisms have been accused of lax compliance with social and environmental standards and safeguards (where they exist), political manipulation of carbon pricing under emissions trading schemes, and the prevalence of top-down, technically complex legal processes that exclude local actors.<sup>xv</sup>
- Neither CDM nor REDD address the root causes of climate change. REDD does not target the main drivers of deforestation: the global demand for beef, soy, and wood, and the resulting increase in political and economic power of large-scale agriculture, timber, and other industries who rely on these inputs for production. Similarly, CDM does not target the current capitalist model of production, consumption, and energy use that drives greenhouse gas emissions, but rather relocates the emissions source.
- Both CDM and REDD shift mitigation responsibility to the Global South, despite the minimal contributions of developing countries to current and historical emissions (with the obvious exception of China, which has become the current top emitter globally, and other emerging economies like Brazil and India).
- Private financing through carbon-market mechanisms, including CDM, make up the majority of global climate financing. As of October 2012, there were 4,700 CDM projects registered and another 247 are seeking registration.<sup>xvi</sup> Eighteen percent of CDM projects exist in Latin America alone.<sup>xvii</sup> However, in spite of UN regulatory guidelines, most of these projects have been developed in middle income countries and less than 1% are located in least developed countries.<sup>xviii</sup>
- Due to loopholes in CDM regulations and deliberate manipulation by project developers, CDM projects do not result in net emissions reductions or sustainability benefits. In many cases, local populations have been harmed or displaced by CDM projects, with no mechanism to register formal complaints. Given that CDM channels private finance, many details are drawn up in private, without community participation or third-party monitoring. The end result is that local communities lose access and control over land and resources in the name of bogus mitigation actions that draw on existing technology and provide additional subsidies to companies engaging in pollution and deforestation.<sup>xix</sup>

- Numerous cases of REDD implementation have resulted in the replacement of primary forest with “carbon-efficient” monoculture plantations or intensive agricultural practices. Local testimonies also tell of communities being prohibited from accessing the forest resources they depend on so that an international corporation can earn profitable forest conservation offsets in order to continue polluting at home. There is indication that the financial incentives provided by REDD also fuels land speculation and [land grabs](#).<sup>xx</sup>
- As market practices come under closer scrutiny from climate justice activists, private investors are promoting a new series of technological fixes which aim to mitigate the amount of atmospheric greenhouse gas without having to change emission rates.<sup>5</sup> Private investors and corporations stand to profit from intellectual property rights for what many civil society groups have labeled as “false solutions” due to their unknown and/or adverse environmental and social consequences.<sup>xxi</sup>

In addition to the above critiques about the CDM and REDD, other [Green Economy](#) mechanisms that promote commercialization of natural resources and ecosystem services (create additional carbon markets, subsidize biofuels, etc.) are opposed by environmental and social justice movements around the world.

### **Despite the growing body of literature, Southern criticism of market-based mechanisms remains invisible in Northern media**

Despite the growing body of literature and accompanying protest movements against market-based mitigation mechanisms, Southern criticism of carbon markets remains invisible in the Northern media. Until now, civil society actions on this issue have focused on calling for safeguards on carbon market mechanisms in official climate change negotiation spaces and the rejection of markets and other “false solutions” in alternative summit venues. More needs to be done to bring Southern voices to popular media sources in the North to expose the abuses of this system and subsequent impacts in the South. This provides another important opportunity for Northern and Southern climate activists to mutually support each other, in this case by amplifying Southern voices in order to help leverage Northern countries to back down from these damaging and ineffective strategies.

In Bolivia, carbon market offset mechanisms have yet to arrive (despite various projects to prepare communities for REDD), mainly due to the government’s strict anti-market stance.<sup>xxii</sup> Given this situation, it would be good to see Bolivia taking a watchdog role on the arrival of climate change finance under the guise of REDD and CDM projects. Primer Three in this series, on Climate Change Finance, will examine this issue in greater detail.

---

<sup>5</sup> Technological “false solutions” include industrial bioenergy, GMOs, synthetic biology, agro fuels, and geoengineering.

## MITIGATION IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

» The Global South has responsibility to mitigate, but this doesn't detract from Northern responsibility, and requires support and participation from the global North.

A common impasse at the UNFCCC negotiations stems from the irresolvable debate between Northern and Southern countries over the mitigation responsibilities of Southern countries. Inappropriate offset mechanisms (as mentioned above) already threaten to place an unfair amount of mitigation burden onto Southern countries. Also, as climate change progresses, there is the risk that Northern countries will use their increased spending on adaptation and prevention measures as one more excuse to evade mitigation (See Climate Change Adaptation and Finance sections of this series), putting yet more mitigation burden on the South.

All countries have a responsibility to mitigate in accordance with the amount of greenhouse gasses that they emit. However, the impasse between North and South on mitigation responsibility can no longer delay the urgent need for the highest emitters to curb their emissions. While it is true that the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) either already rank among the current highest emitters (China is first and India is third) or are poised to increase in rank in the near future<sup>xxiii</sup>, it is unacceptable for historical emitters to continue using this as a stall tactic to reduce their own emissions. Also, due to a mix of historical responsibility on the part of the North and diminished capabilities of countries like Bolivia, mitigation in many Southern countries will require support and participation from the North.

In addition to finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building support, mitigation in the Global South will depend on global dedication to and collaboration on a new development model. The need for changes in the energy matrix, patterns of production and consumption, and overall development priorities are being taken up in discussions around Alternatives to Development. Alternatives to Development proposals such as post-extractivism, Buen Vivir, and solidarity economics are being elaborated in the Global South along with other myriad alternative approaches towards sustainability, self-sufficiency, and independence that are already taking place on a local scale around the world.<sup>xxiv</sup>

### **In the Global South, mitigation revolves around curbing deforestation**

While mitigation in the Global North means stopping the dumping of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, mitigation in the Global South revolves around curbing deforestation. Globally, the forestry and agricultural sectors combined make up over one third of greenhouse gas emissions. In Bolivia, eighty percent of carbon dioxide emissions stem from changes in land use and deforestation, putting its per capita emissions at the level of [OECD](#) countries and giving it one of the highest deforestation rates in the world.<sup>xxv</sup> However, very few of the drivers of this deforestation rest within the country.

According to a 2010 report by the National Climate Change Program (PNCC),<sup>xxvi</sup> the overwhelming majority of deforestation is due to the continual invasion by the agro-industrial complex for the export of commodity crops, driven by the global boom in soy prices. Another less significant driver is the exportation of wood (exports to China increased 200% from 2000-2010 and represented 30% of all wood exports in 2010).<sup>xxvii</sup>

The increase in the physical and political presence of foreign agro-industries in Bolivia has been exponential in the past 10 years and the impacts have been detrimental. The Forestry Authority in Bolivia (ABT) blames the majority of forest fires that devastate large swathes of Bolivian Amazon every year on agro-industry burning. These yearly burnings, which “accidentally” get out of control, result in the rapid encroachment of new, cultivated lands, on once forested lands.<sup>xxviii</sup> In addition to the negative impacts on the environment, small-holder and communal land ownership, food security and sovereignty, Bolivia’s agro-industry boom has resulted in political manipulation by this growing corporate lobby. Their political power was demonstrated in 2010 when they persuaded the Bolivian government, behind closed doors, to pass a law opening the country to genetically modified organisms, prohibited in Bolivia’s constitution.<sup>xxix</sup> As with many transnational corporations the world over, the agro-industry lobby in Bolivia uses its power to evade any profit-reducing measure.

The expansion of agro-industry with its consequent deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions is not confined to Bolivia. This powerful industry is the key driver of deforestation in all of the Global South, not to mention its role in land-grabbing, and the new wave of unsustainable mitigation tech-fixes referred to above. The power tactics employed by these corporations are similar the world over, and Bolivian civil society could usefully identify these corporate actors and their strategies, then collaborate with existing North–South efforts to demand that they assume significant mitigation responsibility.<sup>6</sup>

### **What mitigation looks like currently in Bolivia. *REDD+ and Joint Mitigation and Adaptation Mechanism for the Integral and Sustainable Management of Forests***

In order to evade their responsibility in Southern climate change mitigation, the biggest emitting countries and corporations have devised [REDD+](#), a complicated [UNFCCC](#)-approved program to finance forest conservation without having to change current deforestation trends. Technically, REDD+ can be used to refer to any project which tries to improve the condition of forests in order to reduce destruction and the release of carbon emissions. However, most focus and momentum has been towards linking forests to carbon markets.

Despite having US\$4.4m from UNREDD to achieve “REDD+ readiness,” Bolivia opposes REDD+ because of its market-based funding mechanism. Bolivia’s concerns about REDD echo the hundreds of stories from the Global South on the ways in which REDD+ excludes local populations from forest management, and reduces forests to their instrumental role in mitigation and their

<sup>6</sup> One of the most prominent, global movements linking North-South activism against agro-industry and land grabbing is the Via Campesina. They are also active in Bolivia. [www.viacampesina.org](http://www.viacampesina.org).

value as a commercial commodity.<sup>xxx</sup> Bolivia also accuses REDD+ of transferring undue mitigation responsibility from Northern to Southern countries and overlooking the real drivers of deforestation and subsequent emissions outlined above.

As an alternative, Bolivia has submitted a new proposal to the UNFCCC, the Joint Mitigation and Adaptation Mechanism for the Integral and Sustainable Management of Forests.<sup>xxxi</sup> The focus of the Joint Mechanism is to address mitigation and adaptation through integral forest management, poverty alleviation, development objectives, and strengthening local institutions and indigenous groups. The main difference in Bolivia's proposal is that funding for forest mitigation efforts be provided by the Northern countries responsible for climate change.

It is nearly impossible that Bolivia's proposal would derail REDD+, with its vast private backing and profit-making opportunities. However, the proposal has drawn attention to some of the flaws and dangers of REDD+. Bolivia's proposal has also contributed to the North-South debate on developing alternatives to market-based mechanisms and keeping the focus of mitigation responsibility on the biggest emitters, not on Southern countries and forest communities.

## CONCLUSION

---

Mitigation is the most urgent area in which action must be taken on climate change, and as this section pointed out, affords numerous opportunities for North-South cooperation in climate change activism. Yet, mitigation is increasingly sidelined by Northern countries and powerful fossil fuel corporations and other industrial interests. As part of their toolkit to avoid changing their impossible emission patterns, these actors look to adaptation strategies and technological and financial fixes in the hopes of maintaining their economic baselines and status quo emissions. The following section on Adaptation will examine the ways in which high emitting actors use adaptation as a way to escape mitigation responsibility, at the same time as dodging responsibility to pay their climate debt to countries and communities who are already suffering the impacts of climate change.

## ENDNOTES

- i [http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/sites/fcp/files/Documents/tagged/Bolivia\\_R\\_PIN\\_Annex\\_II\\_Country\\_Experience.pdf](http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/sites/fcp/files/Documents/tagged/Bolivia_R_PIN_Annex_II_Country_Experience.pdf)
- ii [http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/1424759\\_file\\_Wheeler\\_Quantifying\\_Vulnerability\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/1424759_file_Wheeler_Quantifying_Vulnerability_FINAL.pdf)
- iii [IPCC \(2007\). Climate Change 2007: Mitigation of Climate Change. Contribution of Working Group III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#). B. Metz, O.R. Davidson, P.R. Bosch, R. Dave, L.A. Meyer (eds). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA.
- iv <http://www.globaltrends.com/images/stories/corporate%20clout%20the%20worlds%20100%20largest%20economic%20entities.pdf>
- v [http://cdn.intechopen.com/pdfs/32346/InTech-Exploitation\\_of\\_unconventional\\_fossil\\_fuels\\_enhanced\\_greenhouse\\_gas\\_emissions.pdf](http://cdn.intechopen.com/pdfs/32346/InTech-Exploitation_of_unconventional_fossil_fuels_enhanced_greenhouse_gas_emissions.pdf)
- vi <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/global-warmings-terrifying-new-math-20120719?print=true>
- vii <http://www.alternet.org/environment/desperate-search-strategy-defeat-climate-change>
- viii <http://www.carbontracker.org/carbonbubble>
- ix <http://news.yahoo.com/college-fossil-fuel-divestment-movement-builds-173849305.html>
- x <http://www.counterpunch.org/2013/04/12/keystone-xl-the-art-of-ngo-discourse/>
- xi <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-05-23/climate-scientist-hansen-turns-activist-advocates-fee-on-carbon-pollution.html>
- xii <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/is-congress-finally-moving-on-climate-change-20130214>
- xiii <http://www.zcommunications.org/whats-in-the-boxer-sanders-climate-change-bill-by-steve-ramey>  
 Benton-Connell, Kylie, "Off the Market: Bolivian Forests and Struggles over Climate Change," The Democracy Center, August 2011. Available from: <http://democracyctr.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Off-the-market-DC-REDD-full-report-english-final-fixed.pdf>  
 Fern, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace International, and The Rainforest Foundation, "REDD+ and Carbon Markets: Ten Myths Exploded," Policy brief., June 2011. Available from: [http://www.rightsandresources.org/documents/files/doc\\_2410.pdf](http://www.rightsandresources.org/documents/files/doc_2410.pdf)  
 Reddy, Trusha, "Governing Climate Finance: Critical Perspectives from Africa, Latin America and Asia," Institute for Security Studies, September 2010.
- xiv Carbon Market Watch "Intro to the CDM," published on Carbon Market Watch Website, accessed May 2014 from <http://carbonmarketwatch.org/learn-about-carbon-markets/intro-to-the-cdm/>
- xv Ibid.
- xvi Reddy, Trusha, "Governing Climate Finance: Critical Perspectives from Africa, Latin America and Asia," Institute for Security Studies, September 2010.
- xvii Overseas Development Institute, "What are carbon markets?," Infosheet published by ODI, accessed May 2014. Available from: <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/6088.pdf>
- xviii Carbon Market Watch "Intro to the CDM," published on Carbon Market Watch Website, accessed May 2014 from <http://carbonmarketwatch.org/learn-about-carbon-markets/intro-to-the-cdm/>
- xix Global Justice Ecology Project, "Indigenous People and Allies call for a Moratorium on REDD+," Global Justice Ecology Project, 2011. Available from <http://globaljusticeecology.org/indigenous-peoples-and-allies-call-for-a-moratorium-on-redd/>

- xx Focus on the Global South, "Climate Space Rethinking Strategies to Fight for our Future," Focus on the Global South, 2013. Available from <http://focusweb.org/content/open-call-join-climate-space-world-social-forum-tunisia>
- xxi <http://democracyctr.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Off-the-market-DC-REDD-full-report-english-final-fixed.pdf>
- xxii [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2306688](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2306688)
- xxiii Hollender, Rebecca (2014) "Post-Growth in the Global South: The Emergence of Alternatives to Development in Latin America," Working Paper.
- xxiv [http://www.panda.org/who\\_we\\_are/wwf\\_offices/bolivia/our\\_work/climate/climate\\_change\\_bolivia/causes/](http://www.panda.org/who_we_are/wwf_offices/bolivia/our_work/climate/climate_change_bolivia/causes/)
- xxv PNUD (2008), Ministerio de Desarrollo Sostenible (2005); Programa Nacional de Cambios Climáticos (2010). Plantilla de Propuesta para la Preparación de Readiness (R-PP). Fondo Cooperativo para el Carbono de los Bosques (FCPF).
- xxvi Urioste, Andrea. Deforestación en Bolivia, una Amenaza Mayor al Cambio Climático, Fundación Friedrich Ebert, Septiembre 2010.
- xxvii <http://eju.tv/2010/08/abt-anuncia-reversin-de-tierras-a-responsables-de-incendios-forestales/>
- xxviii [www.ftierra.org](http://www.ftierra.org)
- xxix <http://democracyctr.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Off-the-market-DC-REDD-full-report-english-final-fixed.pdf>
- xxx <http://www.redd-monitor.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/JOINT-MITIGATION-2.pdf>

**the**  
**democracycenter**

[www.democracyctr.org](http://www.democracyctr.org)