

Defining Planet Repairs: INOSAAR Perspectives

Purpose of this Document

- To establish a working conceptual framework for Planet Repairs, including a short definition, based on our Principles of Participation.
- To identify relevant supporting literature relating to environmental justice and other important background frameworks and histories.
- To identify our INOSAAR approach in order to be clear on how we can intervene, as and when needed.
- To use this document as preparation for: 1. working with the Green Party of England and Wales (GPEW) on the COP26 paper (with Harpreet Kaur Paul); 2. the Ghana-based workshops in April 2022 funded through the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

Questions

- How can we use current debates around environmental justice (such as those in the build up to the COP26, Glasgow, UK) to promote the need for reparations and reparatory justice?
- How can we provide a reparatory justice framework to key concepts such as 'loss and damage' and the effects of 'maladaptation'?
- How do we support existing movements, such as the Climate Vulnerable Forum, through platforms such as the GPEW?

COP26

The INOSAAR has been asked to participate in putting together a paper on behalf of the GPEW. Molly Scott Cato (GPEW) has written a brief document to get this process started. She outlines one potential way forward for the GPEW to engage with the upcoming COP26 (Glasgow, UK). This is based on the need to recognize the importance of the concept of loss and damage (see below) at the COP26 and provide a potential solution through 'climate finance'. As a preliminary starting point, she writes that:

'At the COP we need:

- a financing facility to deliver public climate financing and new and innovative sources of financing to address loss and damage
- Immediate debt relief – for indebted countries who face the current climate emergency
- Loss and Damage must be listed as a permanent COP agenda item
- Commitment to a Loss and Damage Gap Report'

At a more general level, her overarching aim is to ensure that reparations are discussed at COP26. In our discussion (Scott Cato, Kaur Paul, Frith, Ainslie, Minnot, Letsae, Sealey-Huggins), we discussed various purposes for the paper, including how it will feed into Global

Greens and how the GPEW will use it to support existing claims that are not being fully recognized by the COP (such as loss and damage, see below). ‘Loss and damage’ was viewed as the vehicle that could convey the bringing together of climate and racial justice. Rather than focusing on climate finance, the paper’s purpose is to provide:

1. a rhetorical intervention on the behalf of the Greens to ensure that people are talking about reparatory justice
2. a means of bridging the links between systemic racism and climate justice. It was in this sense that I thought it would be useful to introduce the concept of Planet Repairs at a conceptual level.

We asked how we could engage with existing demands and seek consultation with relevant groups, such as the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the Stop the Maangamizi: We Charge Genocide/Ecocide campaign, i.e. how the paper can support what is already out there, while also identifying gaps that need to be addressed.

A useful document supporting the need for a justice-based approach to addressing the climate emergency, i.e. one that links the current climate emergency to the history, legacies and continuities of enslavement, colonialism and neo-colonialism, is Kaur Paul’s Common-Wealth Report: ‘Towards Reparative Climate Justice: From Crises to Liberation’.¹ In this document, she outlines a series of recommendations, including the need to: redistribute the responsibility of climate financing; cancel debt; abolishing the strings attached to aid and loans; reimagining trade rules; transforming the company/work place; and assessing and addressing the needs of countries and communities (in which she includes the need for cultural reparations).

Historical Context: The Principles of Environmental Justice

In 1991, the ‘First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit’ (Washington DC, 24–27 October) drafted and adopted 17 principles of environmental justice. This event welcomed people from all fifty states, as well as from Puerto Rico, Chile, Mexico and the Marshall Islands. It served to challenge white-centred conceptualizations of the environment and environmental protection as a byword for remote wildernesses and pristine nature. As one of the co-convenors of the Summit, Dana Alston, wrote, this four-day event was about setting ‘in motion a process of redefining environmental issues in their own terms [in reference to ‘people of color’]’. It was about reaffirming ‘their traditional connection to and respect for the natural world’ and providing space ‘to speak for themselves on some of the most critical issues of our times’. Rather than being seen as separate issues, ‘the environment is woven into an overall framework and understanding of social, racial, and economic justice. The definitions that emerge from the environmental justice movement led by people of color are deeply rooted in culture and spirituality, and encompass all aspects of daily life—where we live, work, and play. This broad understanding of the environment is a context within which to address a variety of questions about militarism and defense, religious freedom and cultural survival, energy and sustainable

¹ Harpreet Kaur Paul, ‘Towards Reparative Climate Justice: From Crises to Liberation’, 12 April 2021’, Common-Wealth, <https://www.common-wealth.co.uk/reports/towards-reparative-climate-justice-from-crises-to-liberations> (accessed 19 April 2021). See also Harpreet Kaur Paul, ‘Can We Go Green Without Plundering the Global South?’, 1 December 2020, <https://novaramedia.com/2020/12/01/can-we-go-green-without-plundering-the-global-south/> (accessed 19 April 2021).

development, transportation and housing, land and sovereignty rights, self-determination, and employment.’²

Their opening statement recognizes that in order ‘to build a national and international movement of all peoples of color to fight the destruction and taking of our lands and communities’ we need to ‘re-establish our spiritual interdependence to the sacredness of our Mother Earth; to respect and celebrate each of our cultures, languages and beliefs about the natural world and our roles in healing ourselves; to ensure environmental justice; to promote economic alternatives which would contribute to the development of environmentally safe livelihoods; and, to secure our political, economic and cultural liberation that has been denied for over 500 years of colonization and oppression, resulting in the poisoning of our communities and land and the genocide of our peoples.’³ The Principles expand upon each of these key areas, including: the importance of ecological interdependence; mutual respect and anti-discrimination; renewability and sustainability; protection against, and reparations for, loss and damage; accountability; sovereignty and self-determination; a rejection of military and other forced occupation; education; and green consumerism. As a framework, it refers to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on Genocide.

Key Terms

Adaptation

According to United Nations Climate Change, ‘Adaptation refers to adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts. It refers to changes in processes, practices, and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change. In simple terms, countries and communities need to develop adaptation solution and implement action to respond to the impacts of climate change that are already happening, as well as prepare for future impacts.’⁴

Maladaptation

Maladaptation is when climate change adaptation actions backfire and have the opposite of the intended effect – increasing vulnerability rather than decreasing it. There are three ways that this can happen:

1. Adaptation interventions can reinforce existing inequalities in the distribution of decision-making authority. ‘More commonly, adaptation policies fail to alter the

² Dana Alston, ‘The Summit: Transforming a Movement’, <https://www.reimaginerpe.org/20years/alston> (accessed 13 April 2021).

³ ‘The Principles of Environmental Justice’, First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, 24–27 October 1991, <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/ej-principles.pdf> (accessed 13 April 2021).

⁴ United Nations Climate Change, ‘What do adaptation to climate change and climate resilience mean?’, <https://unfccc.int/topics/adaptation-and-resilience/the-big-picture/what-do-adaptation-to-climate-change-and-climate-resilience-mean#:~:text=Adaptation%20refers%20to%20adjustments%20in,opportunities%20associated%20with%20climate%20change.> (accessed 13 April 2021).

social and political dynamics that have produced different levels of vulnerability patterns in the first place. Even adaptation processes specifically aiming to foster participation and social inclusion can entrench, rather than challenge, existing power relations – the rules and relationships in society that determine whose voice is heard and whose decisions count.⁵

2. 'Aid projects can have negative impacts elsewhere and this is also true for adaptation projects.'⁶
3. 'When projects create new sources of vulnerability. In focusing on short-term change, some adaptation efforts inadvertently introduce longer-term risks.'⁷

Schipper et al. conclude that 'Developed countries, who have benefited the most from industrialising their economies, have a moral obligation to address both the causes of climate change and vulnerability to it.'⁸

Loss and Damage

The term 'loss and damage' refers to the need to acknowledge the impact of human-induced climate change and occurs when climate impacts exceed 'the adaptive capacity of countries, communities and ecosystems'.⁹ The term first emerged in 1991 when 'the Alliance of Small Island States called for a mechanism that would compensate countries affected by sea level rise. Over time, more and more vulnerable countries realized that they too are affected by climate change that is beyond their coping capacities.'¹⁰ This concept has since gained wider support and in 2014 (at COP19) a body was set up to deal specifically with loss and damage, called the 'Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (WIM)'.¹¹ As Saleemul Huq states, what is important about the concept of loss and damage is that it is 'different from adaptation to climate change and also different from natural climatic and weather events. Hence, it deserves to be addressed at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations.'¹² One of key priorities is dealing with people who are being displaced as a

⁵ Lisa Schipper, Morgan Scoville-Simonds, Katherine Vicent et al., 'Why avoiding climate change "maladaptation" is vital', 10 February 2021, https://www.carbonbrief.org/guest-post-why-avoiding-climate-change-maladaptation-is-vital?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210211&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Dailyhttps://www.carbonbrief.org/guest-post-why-avoiding-climate-change-maladaptation-is-vital?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210211&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily (accessed 13 April 2021).

⁶ Schipper et al.

⁷ Schipper et al.

⁸ Schipper et al.

⁹ Climate Analytics, 'Loss and Damage', [https://climateanalytics.org/briefings/loss-and-damage/#:~:text=Loss%20and%20Damage%20%E2%80%93%20which%20means,Developed%20Countries%20\(LDCs\)](https://climateanalytics.org/briefings/loss-and-damage/#:~:text=Loss%20and%20Damage%20%E2%80%93%20which%20means,Developed%20Countries%20(LDCs)). (accessed 13 April 2021).

¹⁰ Climate Analytics.

¹¹ United Nations Climate Change, 'Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (WIM)', <https://unfccc.int/topics/adaptation-and-resilience/workstreams/loss-and-damage-ld/warsaw-international-mechanism-for-loss-and-damage-associated-with-climate-change-impacts-wim> (accessed 13 April 2021).

result of human-induced climate change, becoming climate refugees or migrants. It has also become a thorny issue 'as the developed countries refused to acknowledge it in fear of becoming open to claims of liability and compensation.'¹³

In the last COP25 (Madrid, Spain), 'vulnerable developing countries joined together to put forward two key demands on tackling loss and damage, under the previously agreed WIM. The first demand was to set up a technical advisory body under the UNFCCC to provide scientific and technical advice to countries being affected by loss and damage due to human induced climate change. The second, much more contentious, demand, was for the developed countries to provide funding to the developing countries suffering from loss and damage, which went beyond adaptation as well as insurance.' While the first demand was agreed upon, leading to the creation of a new Santiago Network on Loss and Damage (SNLD), the second was not. While the first point still needs to be fleshed out in terms of how to advise on technical solutions to loss and damage, the second point is no longer part of the official negotiating agenda for COP26 and therefore 'it will need to be discussed and tackled at a political, rather than negotiating, level'. The current chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum is PM Sheikh Hasina (Bangladesh) 'who have recently decided to push for a political outcome on loss and damage at COP26, particularly on funding beyond adaptation and even insurance.'

Ecocide

At the current time of writing, there is no legal definition of this term. However, following on from the work of the Stop the Ecocide Foundation, a group of lawyers are now drafting a legal definition of ecocide 'as a potential international crime that could sit alongside war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity'.¹⁴ 'If the definition is supported, it is hoped that it would ultimately be inserted by an amendment into the Statute of the ICC'. The working definition of ecocide provided by Polly Higgins (founder of the Stop the Ecocide Foundation) is 'Ecocide is extensive loss, damage or destruction of ecosystems of a given territory(ies)... such that the peaceful enjoyment of the inhabitants has been or will be severely diminished.'¹⁵

Importantly, the term ecocide has been actively used by the Stop the Maangamizi: We Charge Genocide/Ecocide campaign since 2001 (see below for Maangamizi). In using the word genocide and ecocide, they recognize both the need to define the crime of African enslavement and people trafficking as a crime against humanity (a genocidal holocaust) and the interconnections between the symbiotic harms committed against people and the environment through the system of enslavement, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Reparatory justice therefore refers to people as connected to the world/environment; or there is no climate justice without racial justice.

¹² Saleemul Huq, 'Dealing with Loss and Damage in COP26', *Climate Vulnerable Forum*, <https://thecvf.org/ourvoice/blog/dealing-with-loss-and-damage-in-cop26/> (accessed 13 April 2021).

¹³ Huq.

¹⁴ Catherine Baksi, 'Work begins on legal definition of "ecocide"', *The Law Society Gazette*, 30 November 2020, <https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/law/work-begins-on-legal-definition-of-ecocide/5106604.article> (accessed 13 April 2021).

¹⁵ Stop Ecocide, 'FAQs – Ecocide and the Law', <https://www.stopecocide.earth/faqs-ecocide-the-law> (accessed 13 April 2021).

Debt cancellation

Lidy Nacpil refers to the major issue of debt servicing and the constraints that it puts on public services/social protection in the Global South. It is not only a straightjacket, but it also an injustice that 'sits upon the historical, social, and ecological debts owed to the peoples of the South, since colonialism, and they [illegitimate or odious debts] form the major bases for our call for reparations.'¹⁶ She talks about the vicious cycle of indebtedness and borrowing that entraps countries within the Global South and the failure of international financial institutions to provide an adequate response to this situation. She also notes that debts are 'owed' not only to official creditors (which can be cancelled/covered/suspended for example through the G20), but also to private lenders. There is therefore a need for 'deeper, wider cancelation (and not just suspension) of public debt payments for a much bigger number of countries and for a longer period of at least 4 years as an immediate response to the pandemic and the economic crisis, and in addition for decisive steps to be taken for more comprehensive and lasting solutions to the debt problem'. This is about redefining the meaning of debt from the perspectives of peoples of the Global South and showing how repayments/permanent debt crisis is being 'prioritized over vital needs such as basic services and economic policies that promote social justice, address poverty and inequality, build climate resilience and address loss and damage associated with climate change harms'. It is about fully recognizing the conditionalities attached to these loans and how they are leading to harmful practices and odious debts ('a sovereign debt incurred without the consent of the people and not benefiting the people' that 'should not be transferable to a successor government, especially if creditors are aware of these facts in advance'¹⁷) that do not benefit the people, but are being paid using peoples' money. It also about fully recognizing that debts are interlinked with 'a long history of colonial and neo-colonial plunder of the resources and wealth of the South' (perhaps the key example here being Haiti). She summarizes as one in which countries in the Global South are 'incapable of generating wealth – much of our countries' wealth – natural resources as well as wealth generated by our hardworking people – leave our countries in the form of illicit financial flows, capital flight, profit repatriation, interest payments on unsustainable and illegitimate debts, losses from underpriced exports and overpriced imports and unfair trade relations' and that this system 'requires structural reparations for Southern nations'. What is therefore needed is 'not just debt cancelation but reparations, for the historical social, economic, ecological and climate debt owed to our people'.

Maangamizi

(Taken from the REPAIRS article written by Nicki and Esther, 2021) 'Among some UK reparations activists, the word used to define [...the] harm is *Maangamizi*. As Maulana Karenga explains, this is a Kiswahili term that refers to the Holocaust of chattel, colonial and neo-colonial forms of enslavement.¹⁸ It is derived from the verb -angamiza, which means to

¹⁶ Lidy Nacpil, 'Debt Cancellation and Reparations: Southern Movement Perspectives', <https://global-gnd.com/debt/#colonial-debt-and-reparations> (accessed 19 April 2021).

¹⁷ Michael Cremer and Seema Jayachandran, 'Odious Debt', International Monetary Fund, June 2002, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2002/06/kremer.htm> (accessed 19 April 2021).

¹⁸ Maulana Karenga, 'The Ethics of Reparations: Engaging the Holocaust of Enslavement,' The National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA) Convention, Baton Rouge, LA, 22-23 juin 2001,

cause destruction and to utterly destroy, and thus carries with it a sense of intentionality. The 'a' prefix suggests an amplified destruction and thus speaks to the massive nature of these crimes against humanity. In response, reparations are not just orientated towards, or concerned by, the crimes committed in the past. Rather, they are needed to address the present-day continuum of harms that joins the dots between chattel enslavement, colonialism and neo-colonialism, including the devastating effects that exploitation has had on our planet. The call to 'Stop the Maangamizi' is therefore one that seeks to recognize the origins of the crimes, link them to contemporary manifestations and find solutions that begin with stopping the identified harms.

Envisioning this repair means imagining a new equitable, multipolar and pluriversal world order, which PARCOE refers to as *Ubuntu*.¹⁹ In this new world order, African peoples are no longer subject to dehumanization, Afriphobia and discrimination within white supremacist structures. The use of the term 'white supremacy' here does not simply refer to the extremist belief in the superiority of 'white' people, but its structures are understood (in critical race theory) as contributing to a social system in which people racialized as white continue to enjoy structural advantages (or privilege) over other ethnicities despite the existence of formal legal equality. In response, *systemic* global change is required to, for example, redistribute ill-gotten wealth and resources, as well as cultural capital, and end extractivism by placing the need for Planet Repairs at the very heart of the reparative process. The restoration of African sovereignty is also required to address the destructive effects that chattel enslavement through to recolonization have had on African people's power. For PARCOE, this means creating a Pan-African Government of People's Power, known as *Maatubuntumandla*. This would act as the sovereign authority over a Pan-African Union of Communities that would integrate African people of the continent and in the Diaspora in their own polity of *Maatubuntuman* as a global superpower.²⁰ This Pan-Africanist, internationalist, transgenerational and intersectional vision is what guides the UK contingent of the ISMAR.²¹

The Need for a 'Decolonial Ecology'

As Chaillou, Malcom and Roblin state, 'Environmental destruction and social oppression have always gone hand in hand. Colonialism and slavery are deeply connected to the ongoing ecological crisis, so to address it, Europe's whitewashed past must be recast and the demands of the colonized taken seriously.'²² As Malcom points out, there is a tendency where the environment is concerned to reach for technocratic solutions to problems that

<http://ncobra.org/resources/pdf/Karenga%20-THE%20ETHICS%20OF%20REPARATIONS.pdf> (consulté le 6 novembre 2020).

¹⁹ Ubuntu (Ubuntu+dunia) is a combined Nguni and Kiswahili word which means a Multipolar World of Global Justice.

²⁰ Coined from the conjunction of 'Maat' (the holistic justice concept from Kemet, Ancient Egypt) with 'Ubuntu' (the Bantu concept of the communion of humanity from Southern Africa) and 'Oman' (the Akan concept of egalitarian polity from West Africa), *Maatubuntuman* promotes the concept of a global African polity ('Oman'), which is an organic embodiment of 'Maat', and therefore practices 'Ubuntu' in relation to her own citizens and the entirety of Humanity, Mother Earth and the Universe.

²¹ Nicola Frith and Esther Stanford-Xosei, 'Militantisme et demandes de réparations au Royaume-Uni : une voie panafricaine vers des « réparations planétaires » (« Planet Repairs »)' (accepted for publication, 2021).

²² Aurore Chaillou, Ferdinand Malcom, Louise Roblin, 'Why we need a decolonial ecology', 22 June 2020, <https://www.eurozine.com/why-we-need-a-decolonial-ecology/> (accessed 13 April 2021).

are social and rooted in centuries of inequality that can be traced back to colonialism and enslavement. In his book, *Une Écologie Décoloniale* (2019) he notes that the acceleration in environmental degradation 'comes from a certain way of inhabiting the earth, from some believing themselves entitled to appropriate the earth for the benefit of a few', epitomised by colonization and plantation economies. As he states, 'While colonization and slavery were also driven by capitalist rationales, these processes were above all based on a colonial worldview that invented a hierarchy between races and different lands of the globe', meaning that lands beyond Europe were subordinated to Europe. He terms this 'colonial habitation' in reference to 'a violent way of inhabiting the earth, subjugating lands, humans, and non-humans to the desires of the colonizer.'

He points out that people who have been racialized are being continuously written out of the environmental narrative. He refers, for example, to the anti-slavery revolts as a form of 'resistance to this colonial habitation. Marronage – the escape of slaves from plantations – is central to my work because it's another way of inhabiting. Maroons do more than resist slavery: they adopt a different relationship with the earth and non-humans.' But instead of valorizing that knowledge, people who have been colonized are largely ignored, while the belief is perpetuated that 'that racialized people are not interested in the environment'. He says that 'since 1492, there have already been collapses, and many communities have already proposed alternative relationships with the world. Their voice has not been heard, at least in the environmentalist movement.' The exclusion of these voices means that 'a myth is perpetuated' which is that environmentalism is only being driven by Whites from the Global North. This creates a 'double divide': first by separating current environmental concerns from the history of colonialism [in order to evade responsibility]; and second by ignoring and devalorizing the experiences, knowledges and voices of those are being most adversely affected as a result of human-induced climate change.

What is needed then is to be able 'to think about social justice, the fight against racism, and the preservation of ecosystems together'. This is where the concept of Planet Repairs could usefully come in. Rather than being dominated by Euro-centric and Western-centric worldviews, and moving beyond a facile exoticization and romanticization of non-Western points of view, we need to understand other ways of relating to and being in the world. Malcom mentions the usefulness of the word 'ecocide' as a way of creating 'an intergenerational fabric (we connect our actions to the lives of our children, we take responsibility for our legacy, we negotiate that of our parents)', but also notes that this is often thought about only 'in environmentalist terms, rather than social and political ones'. Instead, we need to understand that 'destruction was possible thanks to the exploitation of indigenous peoples', which today 'means recognizing these peoples' need for justice, as well as demands for slavery reparations.' In other words, our definition of ecocide should be driven by the Stop the Maangamizi Campaign that has always brought and thought together ecocide and genocide through the concept of the Maangamizi itself.

Defining Planet Repairs

Esther Stanford-Xosei and Nicki Frith discussed the meaning of Planet Repairs via email in relation to an article they have co-written for REPAIRS. The definition they provided was as follows.

Planet Repairs refers to the need to proceed from a standpoint of pluriversality that highlights the nexus of reparatory, environmental and cognitive justice in articulating the need to repair holistically our relationship with, and inseparability from, the earth, environment and the pluriverse. It means giving due recognition to Indigenous knowledges in contrast with western-centric Enlightenment ideals that separated humanity from nature and devalored Indigenous systems of knowledge in order to justify exploitation for capital accumulation.

Our discussion included the following points:

- That Planet Repairs is part of a holistic approach to reparation, which includes our relationship with, and inseparability from, the earth and environment.
- That this relationship — the separation of humanity from nature — is also in urgent need of repair and reconnection
- That the systems of African enslavement and colonialism occurred in parallel with Enlightenment thinking, which created a western-centric system of labour exploitation and capital accumulation that separated the human from nature.
- That Planet Repairs points to the disastrous effects of that separation that affect the Global South to a far greater extent than the Global North, requiring first and foremost a stop to the harm and then a process of holistic repair.
- That repairing this relationship means ensuring that human beings do not think they are at liberty to do anything that pleases them within and beyond the planet.
- That there are principles in Afrikan and other Indigenous cultures that everything in nature has legal personality reverence, so repair involves restoring this equilibrium and building upon it into eternity, which is the basis of MA'AT.

Dr Maulana Karenga provides guidance by way of further elaboration. He puts forward the argument that the ethical dimension is the first and most fundamental dimension of the reparations issue. He teaches that in the *Husia*, the sacred text of ancient Egypt, there is an Afrikan concept of restoration, i.e., healing and repairing the world that is appropriate in discussing our struggle to advance the cause of reparations. This concept is *serudj* which is part of a phrase *serudj-ta*, which Karenga states means 'to repair and heal the world making it more beautiful and beneficial than it was before'.

Accordingly, he asserts that this is an ongoing moral obligation in the Kawaida (Maatian) ethical tradition and is expressed in the following terms:

1. to raise up that which is in ruins;
2. to repair that which is damaged;
3. to rejoin that which is severed;
4. to replenish that which is depleted;
5. to strengthen that which is weakened;
6. to set right that which is wrong; and
7. to make flourish that which is insecure and undeveloped.

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