

**For Immediate Release –**

**IPCC support for “false solutions” denounced by climate justice activists.**

**13<sup>th</sup> April 2014** - Today, the IPCC Working Group on Mitigation of Climate Change released its Summary for Policy Makers” [1]. Climate, energy and social justice groups [2] commend the IPCC for clearly acknowledging the close link between economic growth and increased greenhouse gas emissions but warn that the report falls far short on translating this insight into meaningful, holistic and bold pathways to mitigation. They point to the disproportionate influence of economists, engineers and environmental managers, and a dearth of climate scientists, ecologists or other experts from key relevant disciplines in the group.

The groups are particularly concerned that large-scale bioenergy and biofuels, waste incineration, nuclear power and carbon capture and storage (CCS) are referred to as “low carbon” in mitigation models, despite concerns raised elsewhere that some of those technologies are risky, unproven and could actually make climate change worse [3]. They are also decry IPCC’s support for increased use of fossil gas over the next few decades [4] and by their endorsement of failed market mechanisms, including cap and trade [5].

Tom Kucharz, Ecologistas en Accion asked: “Why did IPCC include natural gas as climate mitigation, despite growing evidence that methane emissions make fracking as bad or worse for the climate even than coal? How can IPCC seriously consider nuclear power to be an acceptable choice even as we are facing the consequences of the Fukushima disaster? And how can they class waste as a climate-friendly fuel for incinerators and cement plants when it results in toxic air emissions and increases overall resource and such energy use? Such claims are indicative of the narrow obsession with carbon accounting that disregards planetary systems and biodiversity, human rights, public health and, even methane emissions in the case of natural gas.”

Rachel Smolker of Biofuelwatch and the Global Forest Coalition further elaborates: “The IPCC’s position on bioenergy is confused: They acknowledge concerns that large-scale bioenergy can increase emissions, destroy livelihoods and damage the environment. Yet they still class it as ‘low-carbon’ and even refer to bioenergy with carbon-capture and storage (BECCS) as a credible means of removing carbon from the atmosphere which they deem essential to meeting stabilization targets. It is a shame they put so much stock in something that would make things worse rather than better.”

Teresa Perez, World Rainforest Movement, adds: “The IPCC lists cap and trade and “Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation” (REDD) amongst potential policy solutions, in spite of the fact there is no convincing evidence at all that either have reduced emissions. Market mechanisms only lead to further privatization and land grabs - and leave our future to the whims of financiers.”

The groups call for a more holistic assessment of real climate change solutions, not more “Business As Usual” economic analyses that imply we should accept a dead planet, or the suffering of millions if it is “more affordable.” Real solutions must actually work. Also they must respect human rights and the rights of nature, protect the planetary systems on which continued human existence depends, put control over energy, food and water in the hand of accountable local stewards, fairly address overconsumption to meet basic needs for all, not just the greed of a wealthy few.

Achieving real mitigation requires breaking free from the oppressive pressures of a globalized economy and a deregulation programme that only serves the wealthy corporate elite while sacrificing people and the planet's ecosystems.

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**Notes:**

[1] This press release relates exclusively to the Summary Report for Policy Makers issued by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group 3, i.e. the Working Group on Climate Change Mitigation. The two other IPCC Working Groups – Working Group 1 on Physics of Climate change and Working Group 2 on Impacts, Adaptations and Mitigations of Climate Change, published their Summary Reports previously. Details of the IPCC Working Group 3 and a link to their Summary for Policy Makers can be found at <http://www.ipcc-wg3.de/>.

[2] List of Supporting Organisations:  
Biofuelwatch, Ecologistas en Accion, Econexus, ETC Group, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA), Global Forest Coalition, Global Justice Ecology Project, Rainforest Rescue/Salva la Selva, Sobrevivencia (Friends of the Earth Paraguay), Timberwatch, World Rainforest Movement

[3] For example, the Summary for Policymakers states on the one hand "*Low-carbon energy carriers include electricity, hydrogen and liquid biofuels in transport, electricity in buildings and electricity, heat, hydrogen and bioenergy in industry*", yet elsewhere it warns: "*Barriers to large-scale deployment of bioenergy include concerns about GHG emissions from land, food security, water resources, biodiversity conservation and livelihoods. The scientific debate about the overall climate impact related to land use competition effects of specific bioenergy pathways remains unresolved.*"

[4] Increased use of natural gas as an alternative to coal is described by IPCC as a way of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the short- to medium-term. The Summary Report fails to acknowledge that expanding natural gas use relies on fracking and that several scientific studies have shown that methane emissions linked to fracking can result in higher overall greenhouse gas emissions over the course of a century than those from coal (per unit of energy). See for example: <http://www.eeb.cornell.edu/howarth/web/Marcellus.html>

[5] The IPCC Summary Report refers to market mechanisms as policy solutions. Those include cap and trade and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) which can mean marketing carbon in forests as offsets to

polluters. The IPCC acknowledges that cap and trade has had 'limited success' so far, however, global carbon markets have in fact effectively collapsed and there is no evidence that cap and trade, or REDD, have resulted in any global emissions reductions. Nor have REDD schemes been demonstrated successful in protecting forests.