

Basic Income in an Age of the Anthropocene  
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Memorandum “Basic income as a necessary  
component of a socio-ecological  
transformation and key element for climate  
justice”

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# Overview

- Problems raised by the Concept of the Anthropocene
- The Early Anthropocene: Necessity of Periodization
- La problématique of Climate Justice
- Social and Ecological Transformation
- Implication and Strategy of Basic Income

# Problems raised by the Concept of the Anthropocene

## Paradox of the Concept

- The Anthropocene Epoch is an unofficial unit of geological time, used to describe the most recent period in Earth's history when human activity started to have a significant impact on the planet's climate and ecosystems
- Breakdown of the environment that has been a feasible condition and a setting for so-called human civilization
- Crossing the planetary boundaries including climate change

# The Early Anthropocene: Necessity of Periodization

## 1) Significance of the early Anthropocene

We enter into new geological epoch so that we cannot return to Holocene

## 2) Geological time and human time are on the different scale

Notwithstanding we should try to figure out the way to build and maintain an habitable planet

# La problématique of Climate Justice

- Climate Crisis and Environmental Breakdown affecting human beings differentially
- Climate Crisis and Environmental Breakdown precipitated and devastated by Social System
- Founded and aggravating inequality:
- We can call it Capitalism
- Extractive, Rentier or Cannibal Capitalism

# Climate Injustice as the Problem of System 1

- Capitalism seeking unlimited profit and accumulation promotes and is based upon inequality
- Capitalism not only exploits so called economic fields but also expropriates and dominates various sectors that are its outsides and foundation
- One of objects of expropriation and domination is so called Nature
- Source of Input in the process of production and sink absorbing the wastes from the process

# Climate Injustice as the Problem of System 2

- That capital expropriates the nature means dispossessing the base of livelihood of people in that nature;
- Eroding the base of life of humanity globally
- Lots of separation made by capital hinder the common effort,
- Erosion of state or political community by capital hamper the democratic and autonomous decision by the members of society

# Socio-ecological Transformation

- Necessity of System Change to realize Climate Justice securing sustainable and good life for all including non-human beings
- Concept of Transformation also pointing to the urgency of tasks



# Implication of Basic Income as Common Wealth Dividend 1

- Aims of BI: Reducing Inequality, Securing Dignity and Freedom and Participation
- Archery Range of BI as Common Wealth Dividend:  
Changing the established (Re)distribution System  
Raising questions about the dominant property system  
and Trying to shift it

# Implication of Basic Income as Common Wealth Dividend 2

- Participating in the process of decision-making toward transformation
- Transition to environment-friendly life
- Promoting various economic activities
- Goals of economy is not growth itself but livelihood

# Socio-ecological Transformation and Basic Income

- Necessary and key element in the transformation
- Positioning BI in the arrangement of other policies and institutions

Thank you!

Basic income as a necessary  
component of a socio-ecological  
transformation and key element for  
climate justice

- Global warming and the ongoing exploitation and destruction of nature are caused by the prevailing mode of production and life. It disregards nature in its inherent value, uses it as a mere resource. However, this way of production and life also destroys the basis of humankind's existence and impairs the quality of life of many people, present and future generations. A fundamental societal transformation of the way of production and life is therefore necessary for the survival of humankind.

- Not only our home planet is being destabilized, but also societies, regions and countries. Socially and ecologically unjust conditions prevail globally, which have denied and continue to deny many people a life in an intact environment and their fair and adequate share of global social and natural wealth, including our children and our children's children. Particularly affected are those who were disadvantaged in the past and are disadvantaged now, and without a real change of course will be even more affected by the ecological consequences and climate change – the countries of the global South and the poorer people who have contributed almost nothing to climate change.

## Societal transformation, a necessity for survival, as socio-ecological transformation

- A societal transformation that is necessary for survival and that is to lead to a socially and ecologically sustainable way of production and life must, for the reasons mentioned, end up to a socially and ecologically just world and society. Likewise, climate justice demands that the extent of climate change must be minimized equally for all and that the consequences of climate change be borne by the polluters. Also from this point of view, the design of a socially and ecologically just world and society is a categorical imperative of a socio-ecological transformation: social justice and ecological justice are two sides of the same coin that must be realized simultaneously.



## A fundamental change in values is necessary

- One cause of the ecologically disastrous production and consumption based on it is a fatal, ultimately profit- and return-oriented growth ideology: poverty and social inequalities should and would be overcome with an increase in the consummation of natural resources and the destruction of nature, according to the narrative of the prevailing politics. However, the overexploitation of nature and its destruction went and goes hand in hand with the economic exploitation of people, the economic exploitation and blackmail of poorer countries by richer countries, by corporations and shareholders.

- A socio-ecological transformation must be oriented towards the needs of all people as well as towards fundamental ecological requirements – and must stop climate change immediately. Care for people and care for nature belong together. These are sustainable values, not the accumulation of superfluous goods to maintain the prevailing system of production and consumption.

## Basic income as a necessary component of a socio-ecological transformation and key element for climate justice

- A socio-ecological transformation must – and here we fully agree with the scientists and experts of the latest report to the Club of Rome – enable all people, including future generations, to live in an intact environment and at the same time grant them a socially just share of the wealth of society and nature. For this reason alone, it must be a democratically and sustainably designed transformation.

- This perspective leads to the question of how all people can be granted a fair and adequate share of social and natural wealth. We are of the opinion – also in agreement with the scientists and experts of the recent report to the Club of Rome – that a basic income for all people is a form of this allocation. It must necessarily be accompanied by a radical redistribution of income and wealth from the upper to the lower and middle strata of society. Or as the 238 academics from Europe stated in an open letter: To solve social problems, we do not need further growth. What we need is a fairer distribution of the income and wealth we already have. It is already enough for everyone.

- Initially, the basic income can also be co-financed by taxing unecological or climate-damaging production and consumption. The revenues from these taxes are returned to all members of society with the basic income. This not only curbs climate-damaging production, but also redistributes wealth from top to bottom, since the richer consume unecologically and are responsible for high climate-damaging emissions. Likewise, a fundamental redistribution into the public budget opens up great scope for public investment in ecologically sustainable production and services, in which all members of society become co-owners: Surpluses from this production would then also be used to co-finance the basic income. The co-ownership of all would also promote the democratic shaping of production and services by all members of society.

- In a global perspective, in order to build basic income systems in poorer countries, there must be a (re)distribution from richer countries and global corporations to countries made poor by them – as well as for building a socially and ecologically sustainable society and economy in these countries.

- In order to achieve a major ecological impact, the basic income must at least secure the basic needs and participation of each and every individual in the respective society. Only then can the consent to the ideology of growth and the individual economic compulsion to gainful employment be overcome. Only then can we expect broad support for the necessary departure from ecologically disastrous production and consumption. Only then can fears of the necessary change be minimized and at the same time the advantages of ecologically and socially sustainable production and lifestyles be anticipated.

- Only if the basic income secures everyone's existence and social participation will it also enable the economically blackmail-free democratic shaping of public affairs by the people. This is because the political pressure for economic growth and job creations, no matter how ecologically disastrous they are, is greatly weakened.



- Only if basic income secures the existence and social participation of all people is broad democratic participation of all in shaping the socio-ecological transformation possible.
- Only if the basic income secures livelihood and social participation, will it also enable working people to radically reduce their working hours or prevent working hours from being extended out of necessity. With a basic income that ensures the livelihood and social participation of all, everyone can pursue diverse, time-consuming and self-determined social, caring, cultural, artistic and political activities beyond individual economic necessities. For a socio-ecological transformation aims at a socialization beyond ecologically disastrous productivism and individual consumerism - and it also has to.

- Basic income is one of the necessary components of a global, national and regional policy mix for socio-ecological transformation. This includes, for example, the development of an ecologically sustainable economy oriented towards the common good worldwide, the debt relief of poor countries, fair and democratic global trade and financial relations, the development of public and social infrastructure and services including sufficient health care for all, the emancipation of women, the strengthening of women's rights and the gender-equitable division of labor as well as the democratization of the economy and society in all areas. These and other things are necessary components of a socio-ecological transformation, including a policy to stop climate change and overcome the climate crisis.

- These are all good reasons for the basic income movement, the ecological movement, the feminist movement and other social movements to join their forces. Let's fight together for a world in which all people can live a good life on a healthy planet.

“The dominant economic model is destabilizing societies. And the planet.

It is time for change.” <https://www.earth4all.life/>

It is time for a basic income, too!

# Memorandum supported by Organisations

