

## Kyoto, Copenhagen, Rio summits go up in Smoke

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international / environment / commentary

### Big Money Interests Sabotage Environmental initiatives Every Time

Rio+20 goes the same way -- FAILURE -- as all previous summits on the environment. The overriding singular reason is plain to see; the combined force of financial and corporate self-interest sabotage any hope of environmental pollution reform. The singular cause of failure for all these summits has at least been made plain to the world. Disproportionately wealthy minority elites, at great cost to the environment and global population, relentlessly pursue their own interests, and why shouldn't they?



By passively accepting Juliar Gillard's undemocratically IMPOSED Carbon Tax, to cite but one example, the population not only accepts the situation, it reinforces the mechanisms and social imbalances that promote continued inequities of wealth and position.

The Australian people are not required to wait for the next election to reclaim their democratic rights; the people are able to FORCE Gillard to repeal this unwanted -- and ineffective for the intended purpose -- IMPOSED, crucifying, Carbon Tax.

Nevertheless, one major benefit has issued from all these failed summits and that is the very clear identification of the causative factor for all the failures -- the cause now stands out like dog's balls and I could put it no better than it already has by George Monbiot in his recent *Guardian* report:

*"These summits have failed for the same reason that the banks have failed. Political systems that were supposed to represent everyone now return governments of millionaires, financed by and acting on behalf of billionaires.*

*The past 20 years have been a billionaires' banquet. At the behest of corporations and the ultra-rich, governments have removed the constraining decencies "the laws and regulations" which prevent one person from destroying another. To expect governments funded and appointed by this class to protect the biosphere and defend the poor is like expecting a lion to live on 'gazpacho' [cold vegetable soup.]"*

We are now confronted with a few hard realities, the verified existence of unrepresentative, puppet politicians/governments and the mega-wealthy plutocratic elites these governments serve. We are

also confronted by social inadequacy, the reality that WE allowed minority interests to skew the system to their huge advantage and to our great disadvantage -- inequities and disparities today rival any experienced by any society since recorded history began. Today, debt-strapped citizen slaves subsist or barely keep their heads above water while the executive class of rogue insiders and criminals live it up like there's 'no tomorrow!'

We should also be aware that the first step to any reform or constructive change is first identifying the problems -- in this case, puppet politicians and disproportionately wealthy/powerful elites.

The plutocrat problem is easily solved by relieving them of their immense wealth and other ill-gotten gains and ensuring that the circumstances that created such huge disparities no longer exist. Now what to do with lying, bought, thoroughly corrupt, puppet politicians? They are easily convicted under existing laws including treason for serving foreign Transnational interests rather than the people/sovereign nations they are supposed to represent.

In the case of Australia that would condemn every PM since Whitlam, especially Hawke, Keating, Howard, Rudd and Gillard -- the nation has never seen such treasonous, unrepresentative, sell-out leaders.

The people are not required to observe protocols/laws when criminal and treasonous forces have hijacked their governments and national wealth, they are only required to rectify the problem and take steps to ensure that it doesn't happen again. All clearly corrupt current and previous leaders should be arrested, held to account and HANGED, as the punishment must proportionately fit the crime and there are few greater crimes than compromising entire nations! Corrupt, puppet politicians must be dealt with in the harshest possible manner.

National wealth should be equitably distributed throughout society, a nation's wealth rightfully belongs to all the people all of the time, not rapacious multi-national Corporations. Yawning social disparities and absurd differences in incomes today have dis-empowered the democratic majority and empowered an unrepresentative criminal minority; however, this INTOLERABLE situation is easily remedied!

Report from the Herald Sun follows:

**It's not too late to ditch the tax, Julia**

by Terry McCrann

IT'S still not too late to abandon your carbon tax madness. Your tax promises to be the single most destructive thing that any government in Australian history has ever done.

It is almost beyond comprehension that our government would embrace a policy that is designed to hurt every single Australian - making everyone pay more for their power, and deliberately destroying jobs.

This is a tax that attacks the very foundations of our economy, directly undermines our national prosperity, will destroy businesses and jobs and send them overseas.

All, to absolutely no point, as you should be finding out right now in Rio de Janeiro.

Nothing could be more certain than the tax will have to be dumped at some point in our future - when we wake from the nightmare. When the damage it is doing will become so

painfully obvious.

It would be much, much better, even at this late stage, if you stopped it before it started.

I know it is pointless to ask you to do that in the overall national interest, for the 22 million Australians who are going to be badly hurt by the tax. Even those being "compensated".

Our sister paper The Australian has calculated that every single Australian will pay an extra \$450 a year from July 1, just for electricity, because of the tax and the various other so-called green energy schemes.

That's an extra \$1800 a year for a family of four. Just to keep the lights on and to run the appliances.

Yes, the carbon tax is only part of that. But it's the part that YOU chose to add to all household and business bills. And that figure does not include all the other costs that Australians will have to pay as the tax oozes into the price of everything.

Yes, unlike the GST, the tax feeds into the price of everything. Even the cost of going to the doctor. Going to school. Everything.

Instead, ditch the tax.

Or forever be known as the prime minister who promised not to have a carbon tax, in a last desperate devious attempt to win an election; and then within days, promised the Greens a carbon tax in a last desperate, devious attempt to cling to power.

Right now you are nearing the end of your "Pointlessness Tour".

It started in Brisbane last week with the meandering aimlessness of your so-called Economic Forum.

Remember? The Forum? It's already been forgotten by everyone else.

You then jetted off to the Los Cabos beachside resort in Mexico for the equally aimless G20 talkfest.

Smooching with President Obama and, not quite so much, with Chancellor Merkel makes for a nice break from Canberra in winter.

But really? What exactly was achieved? Has the slaughter in Syria been stopped? The European debt mess fixed?

You are finishing the Tour at Rio+20 in Brazil, where 50,000 or more delegates will celebrate 20 years of sustainable resource-guzzling, carbon dioxide-spewing lavish conferences in luxury resorts.

Why not make it your "Awakening Tour"?

G20 and Rio+20 should combine to teach you that the world remains a difficult and

perilous place. They should teach you that everyone, everyone, acts in their own narrow perceived self-interest.

Rio+20 confirmed that there was zero prospect of getting co-ordinated, committed global action to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide.

That's the supposed purpose of your carbon tax - the world's highest carbon tax; the only one that taxes right across the entire economy.

Every resource-guzzling, carbon dioxide-spewing conference from Copenhagen three years ago to Rio this week has shown there is no way the big emitters - China, the US, Russia and India - are going to agree to cut their emissions.

You can believe the reality of the massive new coal-fired power stations that China is building - and which we are building new coal mines to supply.

Or you can continue to pretend to believe the fantasies of your Climate Change Minister Greg Combet that a very hard-nosed China is going to impose the same pointless costs on its citizens that Australia has done.

A prime minister who went to Los Cabos and Rio de Janeiro with her eyes and mind open, could come back with only one conclusion, and only one possible policy intent.

That it is going to be a cold and challenging world out there. Australia has to support the industries on which our incomes and jobs are built, not attack them with a punitive tax.

The first thing such a prime minister would do on her return to Australia would be to ditch the tax.

It's now become at best just a crazy money go-round. The tax will raise about 20-25 per cent as much as the GST.

Then most of it is being returned to households to "compensate" them for higher costs; except it won't be enough to do that. And the rest goes to big emitters so they won't be immediately driven out of business.

The tax is intended to be forever, and to increase year after year. But the compensation won't.

The tax will be most vicious and most destructive yet asked of the hundreds of thousands of small and medium businesses that provide most of the jobs in Australia.

They don't get a cent of compensation; yet they will have to pay the savage electricity price rises, and also the costs of the tax as it feeds into the prices of everything else they buy.

How many businesses and jobs will be destroyed?

Just when we are being urged to become more productive, the tax targets the very basis of industry productivity - cheap, plentiful and reliable power.

Former Telstra boss Ziggy Switkowski has asked: If the carbon tax is the answer, what is the question?

Yes, Prime Minister, what exactly was the question?

Was it: give me a tax that is crazy, punishingly destructive and utterly pointless, all at once?

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<http://tinyurl.com/7uokg5o>

George Monbiot's full story from the The Guardian:

### **Rio 2012: it's a make-or-break summit. Just like they told us at Rio 1992**

*World leaders at Earth summits seem more interested in protecting the interests of plutocratic elites than our environment.*

Worn down by hope. That's the predicament of those who have sought to defend the earth's living systems. Every time governments meet to discuss the environmental crisis, we are told that this is the "make or break summit", on which the future of the world depends. The talks might have failed before, but this time the light of reason will descend upon the world.

We know it's rubbish, but we allow our hopes to be raised, only to witness 190 nations arguing through the night over the use of the subjunctive in paragraph 286. We know that at the end of this process the UN secretary general, whose job obliges him to talk nonsense in an impressive number of languages, will explain that the unresolved issues (namely all of them) will be settled at next year's summit. Yet still we hope for something better.

This week's earth summit in Rio de Janeiro is a ghost of the glad, confident meeting 20 years ago. By now, the leaders who gathered in the same city in 1992 told us, the world's environmental problems were to have been solved. But all they have generated is more meetings, which will continue until the delegates, surrounded by rising waters, have eaten the last rare dove, exquisitely presented with an olive leaf roulade. The biosphere that world leaders promised to protect is in a far worse state than it was 20 years ago. Is it not time to recognise that they have failed?

These summits have failed for the same reason that the banks have failed. Political systems that were supposed to represent everyone now return governments of millionaires, financed by and acting on behalf of billionaires. The past 20 years have been a billionaires' banquet. At the behest of corporations and the ultra-rich, governments have removed the constraining decencies "the laws and regulations" which prevent one person from destroying another. To expect governments funded and appointed by this class to protect the biosphere and defend the poor is like expecting a lion to live on gazpacho.

You have only to see the way the United States has savaged the Earth summit's draft

declaration to grasp the scale of this problem. The word "equitable", the US insists, must be cleansed from the text. So must any mention of the right to food, water, health, the rule of law, gender equality and women's empowerment. So must a clear target of preventing two degrees of global warming. So must a commitment to change "unsustainable consumption and production patterns", and to decouple economic growth from the use of natural resources.

Most significantly, the US delegation demands the removal of many of the foundations agreed by a Republican president in Rio in 1992. In particular, it has set out to purge all mention of the core principle of that Earth summit: common but differentiated responsibilities. This means that while all countries should strive to protect the world's resources, those with the most money and who have done the most damage should play a greater part.

This is the government, remember, not of George W Bush but of Barack Obama. The paranoid, petty, unilateralist sabotage of international agreements continues uninterrupted. To see Obama backtracking on the commitments made by Bush the elder 20 years ago is to see the extent to which a tiny group of plutocrats has asserted its grip on policy.

While the destructive impact of the US in Rio is greater than that of any other nation, this does not excuse our own failures. The British government prepared for the Earth summit by wrecking both our own Climate Change Act and the European energy efficiency directive. David Cameron will not be attending the Earth summit. Nor will Ed Davey, the energy and climate change secretary (which is probably a blessing, as he's totally useless).

Needless to say, Cameron, with other absentees such as Obama and Angela Merkel, are attending the G20 summit in Mexico, which takes place immediately before Rio. Another tenet of the 1992 summit "that economic and environmental issues should not be treated in isolation" goes up in smoke.

The environmental crisis cannot be addressed by the emissaries of billionaires. It is the system that needs to be challenged, not the individual decisions it makes. In this respect the struggle to protect the biosphere is the same as the struggle for redistribution, for the protection of workers' rights, for an enabling state, for equality before the law.

So this is the great question of our age: where is everyone? The monster social movements of the 19th century and first 80 years of the 20th have gone, and nothing has replaced them. Those of us who still contest unwarranted power find our footsteps echoing through cavernous halls once thronged by multitudes. When a few hundred people do make a stand "as the Occupy campers have done" the rest of the nation just waits for them to achieve the kind of change that requires the sustained work of millions.

Without mass movements, without the kind of confrontation required to revitalise democracy, everything of value is deleted from the political text. But we do not mobilise, perhaps because we are endlessly seduced by hope. Hope is the rope from which we all hang.

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<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/jun/18/rio-2012-earth-summit-protect-elites>

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Cleaves Alternative News. <http://cleaves.zapto.org/news/story-3329.html>