

Please circulate widely! This caravan has received political support from the OWINFS network!

From Trade to Climate Caravan
Transport, Protest, and Action around and between the
7th WTO Ministerial in Geneva and the COP15 in Copenhagen

We invite representatives from: indigenous, fisher folk, and peasants movements, from women and gender organisations, from affected communities that suffer from climate change or climate programs, from different southern groups active in the climate justice networking process, from initiatives which resist displacement and land grab, monoculture and agro-fuels, free trade regimes and neoliberal policies, and from all movements which struggle for food sovereignty, dignity for all peoples, climate justice, reparations for the ecological debt, a socially acceptable energy transition and alternative energy use and production.

To join us on: a 12-18 day caravan with 60 representatives of popular movements worldwide. The caravan starts with 5 days of action in Geneva during the WTO Ministerial to decry the WTO's blocking of real solutions to climate change: the return of small-scale farming, food sovereignty as well as decentralised energy sovereignty, guaranteeing the rights of forest peoples against the forces of deforestation, and the suspension of the intellectual property rights for renewable and climate change mitigation technology for developing countries.

On December 3 the caravans depart Geneva for a 5 day trip across Europe to speak and protest on the links between trade liberalization and climate change through cities such as Paris, Brussels, Berlin and Hamburg.

On December 9 the caravans arrive in Copenhagen in time for the Conference on Ecological Debt, and caravaners join other activities during the Copenhagen Climate Talks, including OWINFS proposed workshops on Trade and Climate Change.

If you want to come: Please contact the Caravan Planning Group IMMEDIATELY at havaria@gmx.de. We encourage participants to look for funding through Klima Forum and other sources.

We are also looking for funding to support participant travel and would greatly appreciate any support we can get from OWINFS members! Contact Juergen at havaria@gmx.de or the OWINFS Program Coordinator at verda.cook@gmail.com if your group can provide support to this initiative.

In solidarity,

The Caravan Planning Group

More information on the From Trade to Climate Caravan:

1) The Caravan:

The idea of a Trade and Climate Caravan came up at the last preparation meeting of the network Climate Justice Action (CJA) in Copenhagen in June this year. Many groups that are active in the network Climate Justice Now! (CJN), as well as the anti-free trade campaign “Our World is Not for Sale” (OWINFS), support the Caravan. A European preparatory group has started to spread invitations and has invited the international networks to send representatives of grassroots social movements .

2) Why link Trade and Climate?

A critical analysis of the official preparation process towards COP15 shows that the climate talks are all about trade and investment: trading of emission certificates, offsets causing landgrabs due to the spread of agrofuel-monoculture, “clean technology” investments like hydroelectric mega-dams that lead to massive displacement, and so on. At the same time, the WTO “free” trade agenda not only encourages these disastrous “solutions”, it also blocks many urgently needed real solutions: the return of small-scale farming (which produces massively less greenhouse gases than agrobusiness), food sovereignty as well as decentralised energy sovereignty, guaranteeing the rights of forest peoples against the forces of deforestation, and the suspension of the intellectual property rights of renewable and climate change mitigation technology for developing countries.

The link between a new round of WTO trade talks and the COP15-climate negotiations strategically shows two things: a) in the name of climate protection and emission reduction the global elite is intending to push the WTO process further towards intensifying trade in environmental services, emissions and offset-markets and investments in green technology, huge energy projects, and natural habitats; b) the ruling elite means to use the environmental cover of the UN-climate talks to continue business as usual: extending the hold of the transnational monopolies on the vital resources of agriculture, forests and energy, guaranteeing their profits through state subsidies, plundering the resources of the Global South to continue Northern excess consumption and waste and above all, avoid the inevitable questioning of the current model of production, overconsumption and profit.

The From Trade to Climate Caravan invites you to participate in public events, demonstrations and non-violent direct actions in Geneva and on the route to Copenhagen to strengthen an alternative agenda for social change and climate justice. Because a powerful presence of the world-wide grassroots resistance at both of these summits is vital for the visibility of resistance against the green-washing of this catastrophic and oppressive system, to force real change!

3) Dates and Activities of the Caravan:

It is important that Southern representatives of the South reach Geneva by November 24 or 25 to speak in nearby French and Swiss cities, in order to mobilise for the WTO demonstrations. Before the Ministerial, a large demonstration on Saturday November 28 will be held in the streets of Geneva. That event should not happen without a strong voice from oppositional voices from the Global South. On Sunday November 29 there will be workshops all day to exchange between activists from around the world. And of course, the presence of representatives of grassroots-movements from the South in the actions during the WTO ministerial (Nov 30 – Dec 2) in Geneva will be even more vital.

The WTO summit will end Dec 2, which leaves one week for travel to Copenhagen. In the cities where the Caravan will stop, you can expect a variety of public speeches and events, demonstrations and actions, meetings and exchanges. Until now there was positive response by six cities which will host the caravan and we will visit them by two different routes (in probably one bus for each route), starting from Geneva on Dec. 3:

Geneva – Paris – Northern France – Brussels – Hamburg

Geneva – Freiburg – Cologne – Berlin – Hamburg

Hamburg is the city where the two routes come together again on December 8 and proceed by joint

travel to Copenhagen on December 9.

We want to invite you to give your opinion about what you prefer to do in the cities where the caravan will stop. Here are some proposals:

- public speeches to present struggles that relate to free-trade and climate change
- smaller workshops to talk about case studies and local resistance
- symbolic actions in front of economical or political relevant buildings
- direct actions like visits at offices, factories and proclaiming an alternative agenda
- exchange with local groups and European initiatives for active networking
- talks with parliamentarians (although we organise the caravan without collaboration with political parties we can arrange meetings with politicians if you want)

In Copenhagen we will arrive on December 9. The COP15 will already have started but the period of counter-activities and protest that is relevant for the international mobilisation starts on the following day. Jubilee South and other networks call for a Conference on Ecological Debt which will start Dec 10 and to which caravan-participants can join and contribute. With the central demonstration on December 12 the days of actions against COP15 will start. In the following days different thematic action days (e.g. on agriculture, migration, production) will take place and need contribution by strong movements.

The network for grassroots mobilisation, Climate Justice Action (CJA), supports the caravan and is the platform on which many different social movements and activist-groups are coming together for common actions. The main action that this network is organising and calling for is a mass march "Reclaim power! Push for Climate Justice" on one of the most important days of the conference. This action will announce openly that we propose to take over the UN-conference for one day in order to present an alternative peoples' climate agenda in the halls of the conference venue. We will march to the conference venue and push non-violently as far as we can go. If we finally cannot enter, we will call on friendly delegates to declare their sympathy with our agenda by coming out to join us in a Peoples' Climate Assembly. We are committed to this determined action in order to force the media's and the world's attention on this alternative agenda from below.

The days of action will finish December 18th, although the official COP15-negotiations may possibly continue if no deal is reached by then or perhaps there will be no deal reached at this meeting. In any case, in the days before we can have some influence on where the process will stand after the official end of the COP15.

We realise that it is difficult for many to leave their local responsibilities for such a long program (up to 3 weeks), but these are two very important political moments, and the Caravan itself will be an extraordinary opportunity for representatives of social movements worldwide to know each other. It will also be a high profile event across Europe, hopefully imposing another, Southern perspective on the question of climate change.

4) Registration and Cooperation:

Please register with Juergen of the Caravan Planning Group at havaria@gmx.de.

We also ask all people that are interested to participate in the caravan to register at Klimaforum: <http://www.klimaforum09.org/Registration,5?lang=da>

Klimaforum will provide a central space to meet during the Copenhagen talks and a program to which representatives of civil society organisations and social movements are asked to contribute so that during the COP15 elements of an alternative agenda on climate justice can reach out to the public and the media, and a variety of resistance against the existing oppressive and exploitative system, can be presented.

We invite you to give your opinion about the concept and contents of the caravan. You will have the opportunity to present both the struggles you are in and the demands you have, but also the conditions and expectations for networking and exchange, for joint resistance and cooperation to fight for an alternative agenda at the climate talks. And for a just economic and political system where all can live together in dignity and freedom. Please send us at least some introduction to your struggles and local resistance, your concerns with climate, and the other topics your movement is working in. Maybe you have information on what you think there should be in an alternative agenda, and proposals for the caravan and its contents. You are very welcomed so send this to havaria@gmx.de