

# YOUNG

**Friends of the Earth Europe**

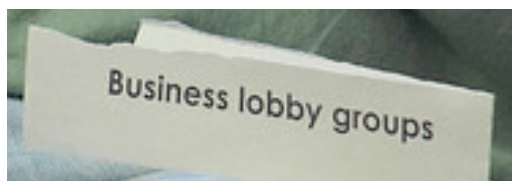


# ACTION **BIO+20** PACK

This June 20-22, world leaders and UN agencies will be meeting in Rio to discuss our future. To challenge the influence of big business and the false solutions being promoted as 'green', communities and groups across the world are speaking up for the 99%, and a truly sustainable economy.

Young Friends of the Earth Europe is getting involved - read on and join us!

# RIO+20: A CORPORATE VISION OF GREEN ECONOMY



## What is Rio+20?

The UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) will be a gathering of world leaders, UN agencies and other interested parties in Rio de Janeiro to respond to the continued destruction of climate and environment. Marking its twentieth anniversary, the summit promises to acknowledge that environmental protection and development are inseparable, and claims to work in a democratic and transparent manner to reach international agreement in addressing the ever-increasing threat of ecological collapse. The summit from June 20-22, will focus on the idea of building a 'green economy' - although exactly what is meant by both 'green' and 'economy' remains vague and threatens to be hijacked for the benefit of big business.

**Rio is likely to be a battle-ground between two visions: the corporate 'green economy' and truly sustainable development which puts people before profit.**

Despite the official UN rhetoric, expectations for Rio+20 are low. In the the past, these negotiations have been far from democratic and lacked transparency – the agenda often being hijacked by corporate representatives and the short-term interests of the governments of rich industrialised countries.

During negotiations, delegates will build on and discuss a document currently called the 'Zero Draft', which outlines the summit's declarations. While this draft contains some positive points (such as reaffirming the human right to food and water), it does not cement any practical solutions. Even worse, it describes the 'green economy' as a system which would lead to an even greater corporate takeover of our planet, by giving banks and companies the power to

commodify nature. Big business has been invited to Rio to advise the UN and act as a 'corporate shepherd' of our shared resources.



To challenge the corporate 'green economy', communities and campaigning groups are challenging the big-business rhetoric and calling for environmental justice - meaning equal access for everyone to the world's resources. Rather than handing even more power to the corporate 1%, people across the world should be empowered, while we transfer to an economy which is not based on mass-consumption, and addresses needs instead.

# WHAT'S AT STAKE?



The way Rio is discussing a 'green economy' is meant to sound like a positive thing - but in reality it means that big business and the financial sector are allowed even greater control over our common resources. They argue that only by putting a price on nature and turning them into tradable products can we 'value' and protect the environment.



To put it bluntly, the corporate vision of a 'green economy' amounts to selling nature by claiming that only by turning forests, rivers and species into property can we protect them. It essentially

equates things like clean water and species survival, with money that can be put into a bank, traded, sold and speculated on.

While these solutions can sound very rational and clever, they lead to scenarios where countries and companies who can afford to pay can continue trashing the planet. Even worse, it means that common goods – such as climate, forests, and common land – are handed to profit-driven firms, while communities are forced to pay for access to previously common resources.

The corporate 'green economy' takes us further away from environmental justice

## ALTERNATIVES

Instead of handing the safety of our planet to corporations and banks while turning our common resources into private property, people should have the power to determine their own development. This is why we are calling for the UN to live up to its democratic credentials by putting an end to corporate dominance and handing power back to communities (Friends of the Earth International has released a [statement](#) your group can endorse). A truly sustainable economy would see our environment (including the climate) protected through strong regulation, and the democratization of our food and energy systems.



# TAKING ACTION: WHAT YOU CAN DO

## Speak Up for Environmental Justice

Luckily, the corporate version of the green economy is not the only option we have - there are alternatives. To challenge the power of big business and question their attempts to 'green the economy', campaigning and community groups will be planning actions, events and briefings for Rio+20. As Young Friends of the Earth Europe, we have a special interest in speaking up for the world's youth – who will have to bear the brunt of a trashed planet, and face losing access to shared resources altogether.



**ACTION  
DAYS**

**Join us and take action!**

Between the 5th - 22nd June, no matter where you are in the world, be part of a wider movement towards a truly sustainable future!

## Tell us about your action

If you plan to take part in a Young Friends of the Earth action from 5th - 22nd June, [contact us](#) to tell us what you plan, when and where. We'll then publish this information on a special page of the YFoEE website.

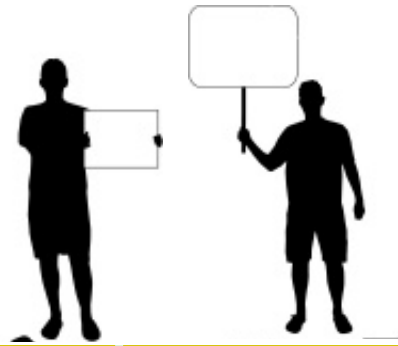
Once you've finished your action please send us photographs and a short summary (1-2 paragraphs) of what you did, where you were and how many people you were, and what response you got to your action.

We'll celebrate your action stories on the [YFoEE Rio page](#) and we'll make a short action report.



**If you need a little help getting started, see below our action ideas to help you along the way...**

# ACTION IDEAS



Take action with your YFoE group between the 5th - 22nd June!

Send us pictures and news from your action so that we can share them on the YFoEE website

## Easy and Quick

**SUPPORT THE STATEMENT**  
Friends of the Earth International has issued a statement opposing the corporate capture of the UN. Groups can read and endorse it by signing up to it here: <http://www.foei.org/en/get-involved/take-action/end-un-corporate-capture>

**PHOTO MESSAGE**  
Get a bit of cardboard, make a banner that sends your message and submit the picture to the YFoEE website - we'll collect RIO+20 messages from all over Europe

**SEND A LETTER**  
Find out who is representing your country at the UN conferences - and send them a letter with your demands .

## Take Some Planning



**VISIT THE BANKS**  
Banks and corporates love to seem green - that's how they're able to pretend to want a 'green economy'. Why not expose them? You could put a label on their product or hang a poster outside their offices, headquarters or shops. Take a picture of your action!



## Challenging

**STREET THEATRE**  
To highlight the true meaning 'green economy', you could do a bit of street theatre - like dressing up as bankers and auctioning away a forests and people's drinking water. If you do it in the street where there are a lot of people passing by, you can get their attention and hand out flyers. Take a picture or a short movie of the action. See [here](#) for some inspiration.



**MESSAGES!** Some suggestions for what you to put on your banners, posters, stickers...

- Recapture the UN!
- The 'Green Economy' agenda is a smokescreen for the same old 'greed' economy
- Life is not for sale
- The Future we want needs System Change
- Our Cimate is not Your Business

Or download some spoof Rio slogans [here](#)

Find out more about Rio+20, the 'green economy', and its alternatives

Friends of the Earth International:

[Rio+20 overview](#) and recent Rio-[press release](#)

La Via Campesina (International Peasant Movement):

Outline Rio+20 in their [call for action](#), and have plenty of materials on [corporate capture](#), and [climate change and agrofuels](#)

World Development Movement:

[Briefing](#) for activists

Danny Chivers, New Internationalists:

[Interview and article](#)

ETC Group

[Who will control the green economy?](#) Report

**Any Questions? Want to get more involved?  
Get in Touch!**

Contact us if you'd like more information, or if you plan to run an action. If you're planning an action, tell us what you plan, when and where.

Email: [youngfoe@foeeurope.org](mailto:youngfoe@foeeurope.org)

We will publish all the actions on the YFoEE Rio pages, so make sure you share the link with your networks: [www.youngfoee.org](http://www.youngfoee.org)



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