
[Bolivia: a peoples' conference on climate change - a forum for changing course](#)

Following the resounding and anticipated failure of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change held in Copenhagen in December 2009, the president of Bolivia, Evo Morales, has taken the initiative of calling another type of summit meeting in search of solutions. The World Peoples' Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth will be held from 19 to 22 April 2010, in the Bolivian city of Cochabamba (<http://cmpcc.org/>).

It is expected that some 10,000 people will attend, mainly members of social organizations and movements, although there will be official delegations from countries all over the world.

It will be possible to participate either personally or virtually in the 17 working groups organized for the event. Some of the groups are focused on classical issues such as "Forests," "Adaptation," "The Kyoto Protocol," "Funding." But there are other issues that surely reveal the intention of taking a different path from that followed so far by the Climate Change Convention in seeking solutions, such as "Dangers of carbon trading," "Climate debt," "Climate Justice Tribunal," "Referendum on Climate Change," "The Rights of Mother Earth," "Structural Causes."

Furthermore, there is a long list of self-organized events that reveal a wide diversity of confronting ways for addressing the problem. Critical analyses on the interests surrounding the commodification of nature are to be found, like those regarding forests in mechanisms such as REDD. There are those who state that we are facing a crisis of civilization and that we must seek alternative paradigms, defending the importance of peasant agriculture and food sovereignty as a way of addressing climate change, involving the very active participation of women as agents for proposals and change – in organizations such as the World March of Women, GenderCC, National Confederation of Peasant and Indigenous Women of Bolivia, Community Feminist Network, Movement of Peasant Women, National Association of Rural and Indigenous Women (ANAMURI), to name but a few.

This peoples' summit opens up the possibility for other voices and other proposals, silenced at official events, to be heard with greater force. The recent Climate Change Convention negotiations held in Bonn in April agreed that the new text for negotiation under discussion shall take into account proposals made before 26 April 2010. This means that there is time to include those arising from the Peoples' Conference.

This conference is a grass-roots meeting in a Latin American country, where the indigenous people have been bled and plundered for over 500 years by colonialism, neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism but that have also fought and won an incredible battle for water and for their dignity and that have put into government the first indigenous president of the continent. It is a significant venue to transform this climate crisis we have been sunk into by the prevailing western model of civilization, into an opportunity for change. A change that will return us to our roots, to harmony with Mother Nature, among the brothers and sisters who live on Her.

