



A Just Transition is a Post-Extractive Transition

Prepared for - *Turning Down the Heat: Can We Mine Our Way Out of the Climate Crisis?*

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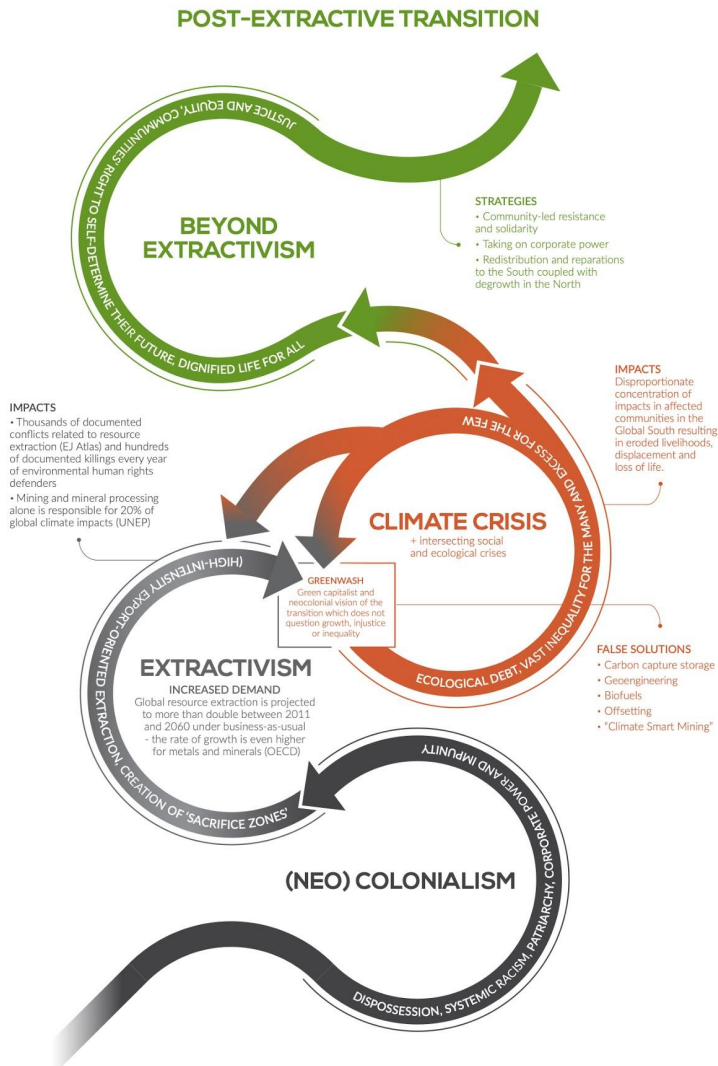
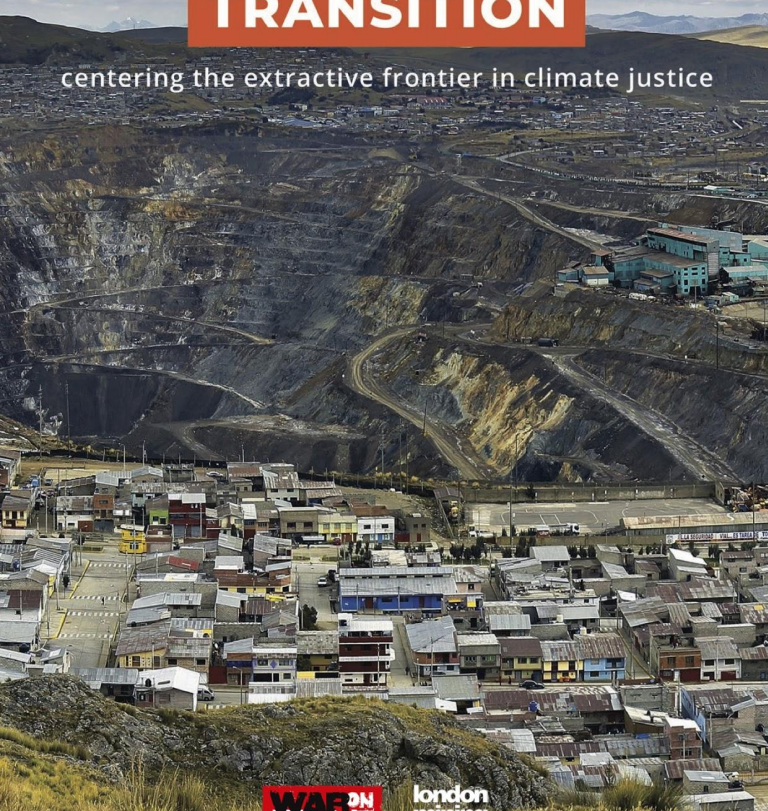
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Current - Earthworks

Former - War on Want / London Mining Network

A JUST(ICE) TRANSITION IS A POST-EXTRACTIVE TRANSITION

centering the extractive frontier in climate justice



The Report

waronwant.org/sites/default/files/Post-Extractivist_Transition_WEB_0.pdf



The thesis

The vision of the transition dominant in the Global North threatens to **reproduce the colonial and capitalist power relations that led to the climate crisis;**

This is because **justice and equity** are not at the heart of this vision of the transition, and because **economic growth remains unquestioned** as a universal value;

That this can be understood in **metal mining in particular, and the extractivist model more broadly;** and

That the world's biggest mining, energy and automotive companies are benefiting from **greenwashed PR** by positioning themselves as key actors in the transition - with the complicity of international financial and multilateral institutions, northern NGOs and states.



A quick recap of the issues

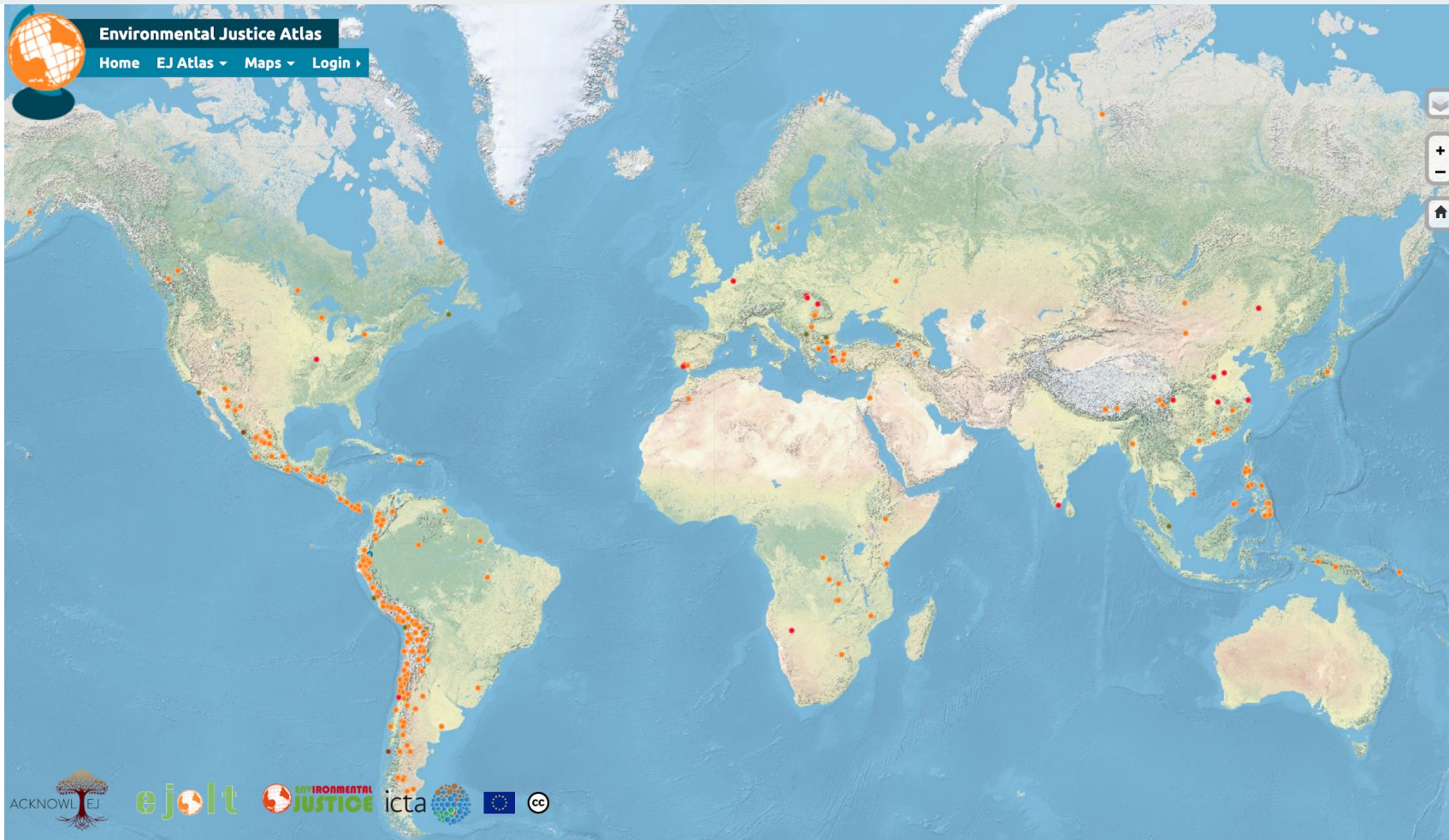
- Indefinite growth and persistent inequality drive the expansion of extractivism
- This worsens and creates new socio-environmental conflicts, and contributes substantially to the global ecological crisis
- The minerals-transition nexus is just one poignant example of a much broader phenomenon and a series of contradictions

UTS-ISF report for Earthworks - projected demand

Table 11: Cumulative demand from renewable energy and storage by 2050 in the 1.5 degree scenario

	tonnes		% of reserves		% of resources	
	Total demand	Lowest scenario	Total demand	Lowest scenario	Total demand	Lowest scenario
Aluminium	513,866,476	443,140,185	2%	1%	1%	1%
Cadmium	18,105	11,317	4%	2%	0%	0%
Cobalt	30,067,291	9,585,532	423%	135%	120%	38%
Copper	139,539,959	101,093,179	18%	13%	4%	3%
Dysprosium	1,073,070	210,142	19%	12%	11%	7%
Gallium	2,462	1,332	2%	1%	0%	0%
Indium	7,660	4,243	51%	28%	16%	9%
Lithium	44,861,515	13,811,115	280%	86%	85%	26%
Manganese	98,446,129	31,384,886	14%	5%	0%	0%
Neodymium	92,338	1,704,713	13%	8%	7%	5%
Nickel	100,628,432	32,080,611	136%	43%	77%	25%
Selenium	11,216	7,081	11%	7%	7%	4%
Silver	276,917	152,974	52%	29%	21%	12%
Tellurium	23,181	13,074	75%	42%	48%	27%

EJ Atlas - Copper, Silver, Lithium + REE conflicts





Some broad directions to head in (will revisit)

- Reduce metal demand while redistributing energy access and equity
- Hold corporations to account, internalize their externalities, and limit their power
- Work in solidarity with frontline communities



The discursive threat seems to be much greater than the material threat (for the time being)



Greenwashing, political will, investment trends

The **mining industry is attracting investment and justifying new projects** by citing projected critical metals demand and framing itself as a key actor in the transition

New narratives emerging... WEF's Global Battery Alliance, WB's Climate-Smart Mining, and even 'progressive' governments are repackaging old, thoroughly contested narratives to promote and justify new mining projects



Greenwashing based on deceptive claims

Much of the metal demand being cited to justify the expansion of metal mining is not that closely tied to renewable energy technologies.

This is broadly true for iron and aluminum, and to a less extent for copper, which are used overwhelmingly in construction and other sectors - including very damaging and unnecessary industries, such as the arms trade.



Greenwash based on unjust, materially improbable assumptions

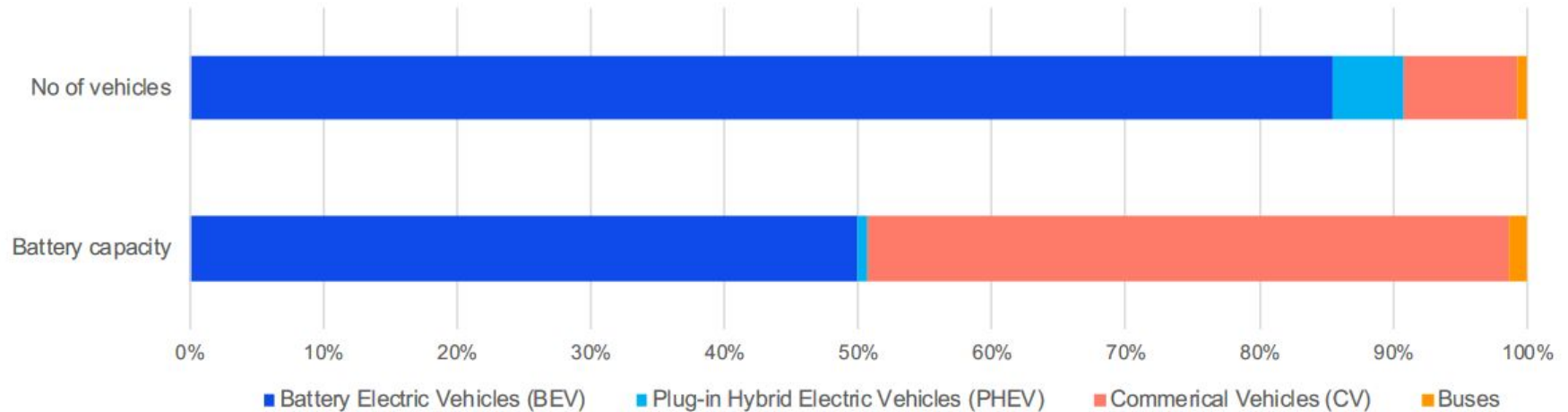
The projected demand for key 'battery metals' - cobalt, lithium and nickel, is driven by assumptions that are unjust and unsustainable.

Such as the ambition to produce an estimated one billion, largely private, electric vehicles by 2050.

Such ambitions reflect the inequalities and ideology of growth which led to the climate crisis, rather than the demands to provide energy access and public transit.

Public Transit plays a very minor role in driving projected battery demand

Figure 5: Share of vehicles and total battery capacity between vehicle types in 2050



Source: UTS-ISF report prepared for Earthworks



Beyond extractivism for a just(ice) transition

Call into **question the gospel of 'eco-efficiency' and the role of indefinite economic growth** in the Global North, to allow for redistribution

Alternative strategies for material procurement from secondary sources, improvements in design for less mineral-intensive tech, substitution and other strategies to **reduce primary demand**

Above all, **stand in solidarity with affected communities**, who often at great risk, are resisting new mining efforts around the world and leading the way beyond extractivism



Directions for policy and action?

'Non-reformist reforms' that can be translated into policy

Limiting Corporate Power

- Global Campaign to Reclaim Peoples' Sovereignty, Dismantle Corporate Power and Stop Impunity - Binding Treaty on Transnationals and Human Rights
- Stop ISDS campaign

Internalizing Externalities

- Climate Damages Tax - make polluters and the financial system pay for its harm
- Implementation of a rigorous Global Standard on Tailings Management
- A broader and more rigorous version of the EU's WEEE Directive



Continued

Reducing demand while increasing energy access and equity

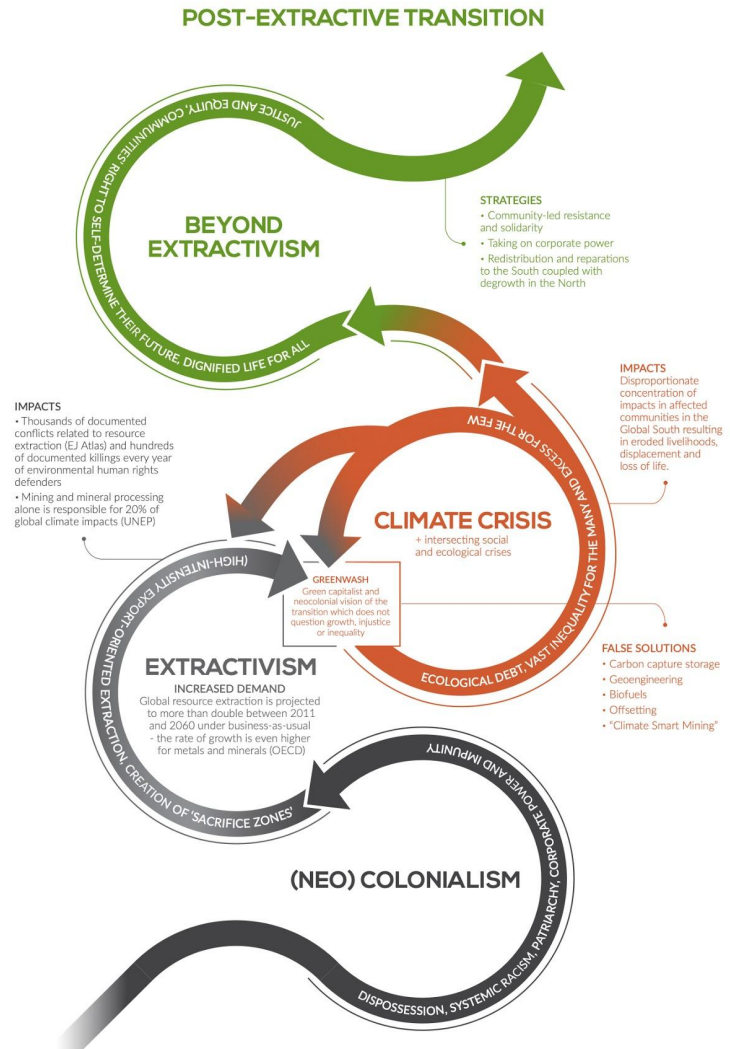
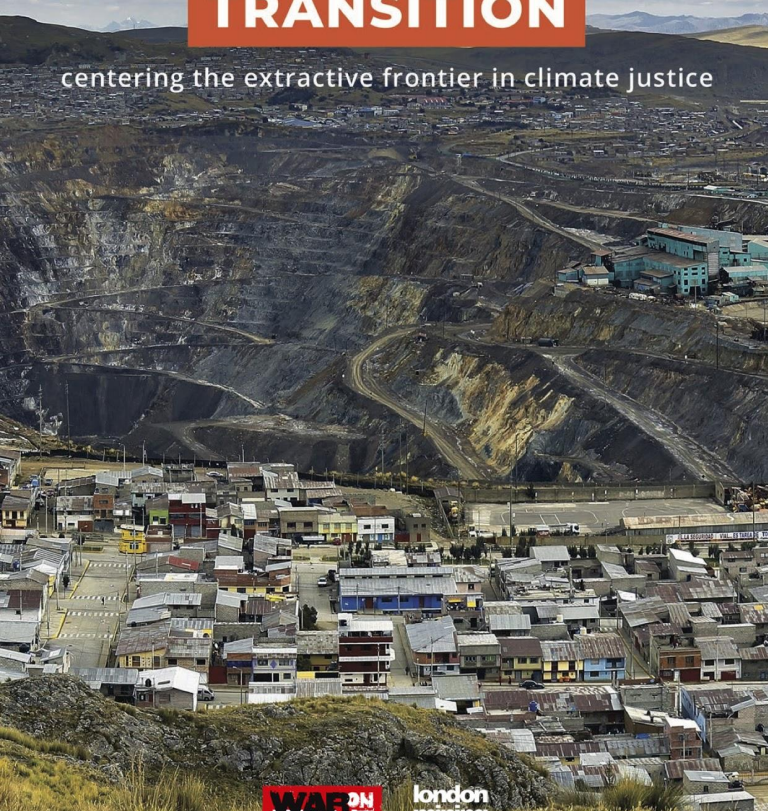
- Free or highly-accessible public transit
- Labour's proposal to bring the UK's national grid back into public ownership while ensuring access for all, decentralizing management and decarbonising
- Secondary sourcing - urban mining, need to better account for above-ground stocks in the waste stream and built environment
- Resource cap in Northern countries (currently a coalition working at the EU level)

Frontline Solidarity

- Right to Say No to Mining Campaign in South Africa and the Popular Consultation in Colombia
- Center frontlines voices and visions in organizing and solidarity work, example: LMN
- Ensure space and conditions for non-extractivist livelihoods

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