PLURIVERS

Plurivers #1 — Décoloniser le changement climatique

# Climate Action at the Speed of Consent

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*My name is Kyle and I live in Michigan, in Potawatomi homelands. I am an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. In response to Indigenous leaders' requests to investigate environmental change, I started off nearly two decades ago organizing within Tribal nations in the Great Lakes region to enhance Tribal climate change planning. In so doing, I developed relationships with folks everywhere who have collectively enacted a movement for Indigenous climate justice. Across thousands of places, the movement has demonstrated that Indigenous people have studied climate change for generations and that colonialism is a historic and ongoing cause of climate-induced harms. It's been crystal clear that respect for Indigenous rights and freedoms, especially Indigenous self-determination in their homelands, is among the very fastest of routes to mitigating climate change. My own projects have focused on the following areas: moral and political issues concerning climate policy and Indigenous peoples; Indigenous climate planning, education, and conflict mediation; the ethics of cooperative relationships between Indigenous peoples and science organizations; and problems of Indigenous justice in public and academic discussions of food sovereignty, environmental justice, and "the Anthropocene." Philosophically, I am learning about kinship-based systems as solutions to address climate change. While my roots are in organizing at Tribal scales, recently I've engaged in the development and implementation of some of the new U.S. policies on climate and energy, environmental justice and Indigenous rights, serving in roles for the U.S. White House, State Department, National Academies, and others. I have been working with numerous Tribes and community-based organizations to ensure their success in accessing the new or expanded federal programs. I also teach at the University of Michigan. For the future, I hold out the desire to return to my roots as a local organizer and that I'll continue to be a land steward where I live.*

## Climate change or consent change?

1 I'm going to share some information from publications I've been reading. These publications have a lot to convey about the relationship between Indigenous peoples' consent and the speed of progress toward stopping the climate change crises. My point is that certain dimensions of "climate crises" are perhaps instead "consent crises." Recognizing that there are "consent crises," as opposed to simply "climate crises," bears important lessons about what types of climate action can expeditiously stop the most dangerous impacts of climate change.

2 Before moving on to make this point, I'd like to just take a pause and write about my intended meanings of Indigenous peoples, climate action, and consent.

## Indigenous peoples

3 "Indigenous peoples" is a concept used, in my understanding, for the advocacy of certain rights and protections. Indigenous peoples are communities, groups, and populations who, for generations, exercised self-determination and self-governance in their homelands. Their self-determination and self-governance have been unjustly curtailed by nation states, private corporations, militaries, and other entities through myriad forms of oppression. The forms of oppression are, namely, industrial capitalism, racism, patriarchy, ableism, and colonialism.

4 The undermining of Indigenous self-determination and selfgovernment has caused widespread abuse and harm, including forced assimilation, gender-based and sexual violence, environmental degradation, war and violent conflict, economic deprivation, and political suppression. Indigenous peoples are those communities, groups, and populations who seek to assert rights and protections that can mitigate and end oppression within situations that remain dominated by nation states and powerful entities like multinational corporations and multilateral funders.

5 Indigenous communities, groups, and populations often refer to themselves as "peoples," "nations" or other collective entities to signal their status as holders of rights to self-determination and self-governance in opposition to colonial oppression.

## Climate action

6 For me, "climate action" refers to measures that people in large or small groups can take. The goal of the measures is to stop the causal mechanisms through which intersecting forms of oppression destabilize the climate system. Colonialism, for example, has intersected with capitalism and patriarchy to create incentives for mining businesses to violently and nonconsensually dispossess Indigenous peoples of their territories for the purpose of supplying raw resources to the fossil fuel energy sector that fuels high emissions of greenhouse gases.

7 The products of industries facilitated by oppression destabilize the climate system in ways that produce harm, violence and injustice, and deter social movements from intervening to curb dangerous environmental impacts. Climate action is about stopping the oppression that empowers dirty industries that pollute and produce greenhouse gases, damage resilient ecosystems, and bar Indigenous peoples and people of diverse groups from participating in politics, economic and environmental decision making, science, and education.

8 It's not accidental which persons, plants, animals, fungi, and ecosystems have already suffered and face the most risks from climate change. They are the ones from communities, peoples, cultures, and groups that have already borne the brunt of discrimination from the aforementioned forms of oppression. Climate change has, for the most part, been present and part of such forms of oppression. Studies show widely that Indigenous peoples, for example, endure some of the most severe climate change impacts and risks.[1]

## Meanings of consent

9 "Consent" refers to Indigenous peoples' freedoms and unfettered capacities to make decisions about how to conserve, protect, dwell in, energize, and foster sustenance within their lands. Indigenous concepts and practices of land tenure, sovereignty, self-governance, and stewardship are powerful expressions of Indigenous consent.

10 For example, when an Indigenous people chooses to restore its traditions of burning landscapes as one way to protect biodiversity, they are enriching their cultures and economies that depend on that biodiversity. They are enacting their own trustworthy knowledge systems to do so, and making decisions about what other forms of knowledge and education are needed to shore up their conservation into the future and inspire generations.

11 In so doing, they are mobilizing their own community's talents and desires, demonstrating distinctness in how they conserve biodiversity, which expresses their political self-determination and their ingenuity in preparing for climate change, fostering locally controlled food production and trade, and creating environmental conditions that support the health of humans and nonhumans sharing in participation in an ecosystem. This is a small example of Indigenous consent in practice, and its many benefits.

[1]Justin Farrell, Paul Berne Burow, Kathryn Mcconnell, Jude Bayham, Kyle Whyte, and Gal Koss, "Effects of Land Dispossession and Forced Migration on Indigenous Peoples in North America," *Science* 374 (6567) (2021).

12 Consent is also codified as a right, such as the right to free, prior, and informed consent that's now enshrined in various schedules of human rights and international and national policies. For example, certain mining and energy companies seek to extract resources in Indigenous territories, taking advantage of regulatory systems in certain nations that furnish few if any opportunities for Indigenous peoples to engage with these corporate proponents.

13 The right to consent states that Indigenous peoples have the power to be at the table, to influence decision making, and, in its strongest form, to veto plans that they understand to be unsafe, risky, and contrary to their values. Proponents of risky land use plans and technologies have the corresponding obligation to respect Indigenous peoples' voices and knowledge, refrain from impending Indigenous influence, and honor Indigenous expressions of veto.

14 Many Indigenous cultures have diverse traditions of consent making with the non-human world that go beyond consent as a mere right. For example, diverse Anishinaabe/Neshnabé peoples have treaty-making, clan, and subsistence traditions that have complex consent relationships with plants, animals, water, ecosystems, and other elements and dimensions of the environment.[2]

15 It's not accidental that consent is an extremely critical topic for Indigenous peoples everywhere in the world when it comes to the issue of climate change. For the majority of people who identify as "Indigenous peoples" today, the colonization of their lands by settlers and other colonists, especially but not limited to European nations, violated their consent. That is, Indigenous groups did not, by their willful accord, give permission for their lands to be occupied and governed by the different waves of colonists that have culminated in the establishment of nation states.

16 It was the violation of Indigenous consent to their lands that made it possible for nations to industrialize at a pace so rapid that the economies of some nations were able to destabilize the global climate system. Climate change is about what happens on peoples' lands, and many people, including Indigenous peoples, did not consent to the industrial, colonial, and capitalist land use patterns that ramped up the growth of the technologies that are behind human-caused climate change.

## Indigenous peoples, climate action, and consent

17 Climate action and consent certainly have many relationships. I'll now move to focus on what the publications I mentioned at the beginning communicate about consent and climate action. I'll then transition toward a discussion of "consent crisis" as opposed to "climate crisis." My point at the end of the essay is that the cultivation of relationships of consent elevates Indigenous peoples' capacities to stop dangerous climate change. At the same time, given the compounded denial of consent over centuries of oppression, it'll take intense commitment to cultivate relationships of consent.

## Recent publications on climate action and consent

18 Some recent publications convey relationships between Indigenous consent and climate action. I'd like to consider three such publications.

[2]See Leanne Simpson, "Looking after Gdoo-naaganinaa: Precolonial Nishnaabeg diplomatic and treaty relationships," *Wicazo Sa Review*, 23 (2) (2008): 29–42; Heidi Bohaker, "'Nindoodemag': The Significance of Algonquian Kinship Networks in the Eastern Great Lakes Region, 1600–1701," *The William and Mary Quarterly,* 63 (1) (2006): 23–52; Alan Theodore Ojiig Corbière, "Anishinaabe Treaty-making in the 18th-and-19th-century Northern Great Lakes: From Shared Meanings to Epistemological Chasms," PhD Dissertation, York University, Canada (2009); Aimée Craft, "Giving and Receiving Life from Anishinaabe Nibi Inaakonigewin (Our Water Law) Research," in *Methodological Challenges in Nature-culture and Environmental History Research*, ed. Jocelyn Thorpe, Stephanie Rutherford, and L. Anders Sandberg (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 125–39; Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, "Respect, Responsibility, and Renewal: The Foundations of Anishinaabe Treaty Making with the United States and Canada,"*American Indian Culture and Research Journal,* 34 (2) (2010): 145–64; Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark,"Marked by Fire: Anishinaabe Articulations of Nationhood in Treaty Making with the United States and Canada," *The American Indian Quarterly,* 36 (2) (2012): 119–49.

19 The Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) is an organization that includes 150 rights-holding organizations that are "dedicated to advancing the forestland and resource rights of Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, local communities, and women from these communities." In a recent policy brief called the *Significance of Community-Held Territories in 24 Countries*[3] *to Global Climate*, RRI in collaboration with Woodwell Climate Research Center and Rainforest Foundation US write the following:

> 20 Our findings indicate that Indigenous Peoples, Afro-Descendant Peoples, and local communities customarily hold and use at least 958 million hectares (mha) of land in the 24 reviewed countries but have legally recognized rights to less than half of this area (447 mha). Their lands are estimated to store at least 253.5 Gigatons of Carbon (GtC), playing a vital role in the maintenance of globally significant greenhouse gas sinks and reservoirs. However, the majority of this carbon (52 percent, or 130.6 GtC) is stored in community-held lands and territories that have yet to be legally recognized.[4]

21 In the context of these 24 countries in the Americas, Africa and Asia, recognition and respect for Indigenous consent to how to steward their own lands would have a tremendous impact on stopping the worst impacts of climate change. Failure to respect Indigenous consent means that these territories are at risk for development projects that will harm and displace Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendant peoples and local communities, and will contribute to exacerbating dangerous climate change.

22 In the U.S., the Biden Administration and the Congress has enacted larger than ever funds to support Tribal nations' adoption of renewable energy. An article published by *Bloomberg* states that "the Inflation Reduction Act included about $106 billion in grants, loans, and other forms of financial assistance that Native American tribes are eligible to tap to mitigate the impacts of climate change and adopt green technologies.[5] As the U.S. recognizes Tribal nations as sovereigns, there is the opportunity that they could emerge as leaders in the energy transition to renewable energy, changing the face of energy infrastructure in the per-capita polluter of carbon-based emissions, the U.S.

23 However, the article, as well as working groups I've been part of about Tribal renewable energy through Biden Administration policies and funds, have lifted up problems with the transfer of wealth. In these discussions, what keeps being made apparent is that Tribes likely cannot easily access the funding unless they have energy projects that are already fully developed (i.e., "shovel ready" projects). The funding is often for only short periods of time without a plan for long term funding needs. Tribal self-governance and administration continue to be determined largely by U.S. standards, which can create requirements and federal funding applications that Tribes do not have the capacity to orchestrate and manage.

24 Tribal nations did not consent to this type of intercourse between them and the U.S., which includes the requirements for accessing funds. These conditions prevent Tribal nations from moving forward with renewable energy plans, quickly or at all. Ironically, from what I've learned, the Tribal nations in the best position to access such funds are ones often with a history of fossil fuel infrastructure in their territories.

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[3]The countries are Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Honduras, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, Brazil, Chad, Cameroon, Gabon, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Central African Republic, and Indonesia.

[4]Rights and Resources Initiative, Woodwell Climate Research Center, and Rainforest Foundation U.S., *Significance of Community-Held Territories in 24 Countries to Global Climate* (Washington DC: USA Rights and Resources Initiative, 2021).

[5]Naureen Malik, "Clean Energy Could Rival Gaming as Economic Engine for US Tribes," *Bloomberg*, August 16, 2003, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-08-16/clean-energy-could-rival-gaming-as-economic-engine-for-us-tribes

25 The Indigenous Environmental Network and Indigenous Climate Action, important organizations advocating for Indigenous environmental justice globally, and Oil Change International, published a report in 2021 called *Indigenous Resistance against Carbon*. The report states the following:

> 26 [W]e reveal that Indigenous resistance has stopped or delayed greenhouse gas pollution equivalent to at least one-quarter of annual U.S. and Canadian emissions. The report highlights and analyzes 26 Indigenous frontline struggles in the past decade against a variety of fossil fuel projects across Turtle Island over all stages of the fossil fuel development chain. Our analysis reveals that Indigenous resistance to carbon over the past decade has stopped projects equivalent to 400 new coal-fired power plants, or roughly 345 million new passenger vehicles. Additionally, Indigenous resistance has helped shift public debate around fossil fuels and Indigenous Rights, while averting lock-in of carbon-intensive projects.[6]

27 One of the takeaways of the report is that Indigenous resistance to fossil fuel dependency is a struggle to protect Indigenous consent to their territories. The report has a section on consent that states that "Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a specific right pertaining to Indigenous Peoples that is recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It allows Indigenous Peoples to give or withhold consent to a project that may affect them or their territories."[7]

28 I interpret the information in this report as suggesting a potential implication. Were Indigenous consent *actually* respected, the impacts of Indigenous climate mitigation would be more wide ranging. For in worlds in which Indigenous consent is honored, Indigenous collective resistance would not be required to transition away from fossil fuel dependency.

29 In each of these publications, the speed by which Indigenous peoples can enact their own solutions to climate change is a function of their consent. That is, the degree to which dominant actors—especially nation states, corporations, and large non-profits—respect Indigenous peoples' consent affects the degree to which Indigenous peoples can exercise leading solutions to climate change.

30 In the first publication, Indigenous consent is critical for immediate protection of major greenhouse gas sinks and reserves. In the second publication and discussion, Indigenous consent to how energy programs and technologies will be administered on their lands will empower Tribal nations to manage billions of U.S. dollars in renewable energy investments. In the third publication, Indigenous struggles to secure their consent to development in their own territories has ended many dangerous fossil-fuel projects.

31 The implication I draw from these publications and this discussion is that respect for Indigenous peoples' consent—from land tenure to sovereignty—is an immediate solution to ending fossil fuel dependence and transitioning to renewable energy. It's important to consider what it means for climate change mitigation to operate at the speed of consent.

## What is the speed of consent?

32 I've been in some rooms where business, scientific, and government leaders expressed concern that respecting environmental justice will slow down efforts to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate climate change. When I inquired further in those rooms about what "slow down"

[6]Indigenous Environmental Network, Oil Change International, and Indigenous Climate Action, *Indigenous Resistance Against Carbon* (Washington DC, USA: Oil Change International: 2021), available at https://www.ienearth.org/indigenous-resistance-against-carbon/

[7]*Ibid.*, p. 3.

means, it turns out the concern centered on consent—whether or not the word consent itself was invoked.

33 The leaders conveyed how Indigenous resistance to large-scale wind and solar power, carbon capture and storage, dams, and hydrogen projects will impose financial, legal, and political burdens on these projects that will lead to their implementation being slowed or completely stopped. I've also seen some different research proposals out there that would explore the relationship between carbon reduction and environmental justice, the flawed idea being that there must be some type of tradeoff. That is, the tradeoff is that "more" environmental or climate justice means "less" mitigation of climate change.

34 The speed of consent can be thought of in a lot of ways. The most rudimentary way is the way just discussed. That is, consent is a check on any force for climate mitigation. Consent can stop that force from achieving its end. This notion of consent treats it as an isolated, ahistorical moment. It is a moment where one or more parties seek to do what it takes to mitigate climate change—harnessing all of the industrial, patriarchal, ableist, capitalist, and colonial powers that be. When they go to implement the "much needed projects," the requirement for Indigenous and local community consent presents a potential barrier to project completion.

35 In cases where energy projects will increase air pollution, fossil fuel reliance (for example, numerous types of carbon capture) and new pipelines, and will degrade landscapes and fail to share profits fairly, I know some scientists who have stated that Indigenous peoples should simply shoulder that burden because "it's for the sake of the planet."

36 But consent is not a mere act that happens in a moment and whose speed is primarily a function of how much it slows certain types of industrial projects. Not only is this assumption about consent ethnocentric, but it treats consent as an impediment without considering it as a possible solution—a solution that could occur at varying speeds.

37 Regarding climate change, I'm going to double back on some points I made earlier in this essay. Consent actually has deep connections to the origin of what many people everywhere are calling "the" climate crisis or climate crises. The reason why industrial causes of human-caused climate change were able to rapidly grow in their emissions, unchecked, was because colonial nations, using exploitative forms of capitalism, patriarchy, ableism and colonization, violated the consent of people on whose lands fossil fuel infrastructure was established. Land left, land grabs, and the seizure and destruction of Indigenous and diverse communities' cultivated ecosystems drove the quick rise of high carbon footprint economics.

38 Colonialism and patriarchy, among other things, are forms of consent denial, where they seek to generate institutions that make it impossible for colonized populations to consent to anything affects their bodies, territories, cultures, knowledge, and institutions. Entire traditions of international consent, consent-based diplomacy, and consent relations with non-humans and ecosystems were ended or severely curtailed during the most recent centuries. This has resulted in circumstances in which Indigenous peoples and diverse communities do not have access to respectful consent-based relationships with the parties seeking to launch industrial solutions to climate change, such as the aforementioned climate mitigation strategies.

39 Based on my understanding, I think that many Indigenous persons have long, deep memories of the violence, suffering, and harm caused by the erosion of consent that has occurred over the course of successive generations. The struggles that many Indigenous peoples face today are traceable to abuses of Indigenous consent over education, the structures of families and parenthood, the well-being of women and non-binary persons, intergenerational care, conservation, environmental protection, energy, building and infrastructure, living spaces, travel and migration, and economic development.

40 The tenacity it takes to engage in Indigenous advocacy then, when faced with the myriad of problems that many of our communities endure today, is an experience of time that—along

one dimension—is an experience of time. Along one dimension of time, it's an experience of the enduring long hall of redressing decades and centuries of abuses and desecration of consent relationships. Indigenous advocacy, including the organizing, movement generation, leadership, and infrastructure and institution building it takes, squares up to chip away at a heavy burden. It's the heavy burden of compounded consent violations. And I'm just discussing one dimension of time here as it relates to a certain form of consent.

41 In terms of climate change mitigation, I certainly don't experience consent in the same way that someone at the World Bank, or Exxon, a carbon capture research center, or the White House does. Rather, I see disrespect for consent as a major cause of dangerous climate change and a major cause of other risks, harms, and violence. Historically, colonists, capitalists, ableists, and patriarchs were addicted to doing things without respecting the consent of those affected. While I understand that many more people are increasingly wanting to halt addiction to fossil fuels, I have not seen a similar effort to halt the addiction to consent violation.

42 But if consent was unlocked as a solution, action to curb dangerous climate change could be swifter. Indigenous peoples could restore their rights and freedoms to consent over their own lands, putting abrupt ends to fossil fuel enterprises. They could fix administrative hurdles and directly protect their territories from development projects that are financially exploitative and that maintain fossil fuel dependency.

43 There are slow and fast forms of consent, then. But to speak of fast and slow is to orient oneself first around some understanding of timing, and then see where consent fits within that understanding.

## Kinship is simultaneously the quickest and the slowest

44 There are different types of "timings" of consent. By "timing," I just mean how one experiences consent as part of their bonds with living beings and the environment. Bonds are the emotional connections and commitments to behave in certain ways. Within one's experience, diverse emotions—such as love, fear, siblinghood, superiority, humility, and anger, among others—characterize one's emotive investment in connections with diverse beings, entities, flows, and systems. These connections, in turn, are linked with one's commitments, that is, one's senses of what entities have rights, what relationships require nurturing and cultivation, when or if fierceness is morally acceptable toward some in service of community defense, and to whom one has responsibilities for and accountability to, among other commitments. I will use timing here to convey the idea that the type of coordination (timing) in a society relates to the time it takes and the means it uses to be responsive to change, disruption, and input.

45 The focus here will be on the timing of consent through emotional connections and commitments of kinship. For the sake of this essay, kinship bonds are particular relationships to living beings and the environment that serve a crucial purpose. When one exercises their kinship with others, they are maintaining relationships that have an elevated function in fostering the moral animacy of a society to respond in the best ways to all that is happening around it and all that impacts its members. Bonds that serve this function must be very powerful. They include trust, reciprocity, and consent—consent being the focus of this writing.

46 A society whose connective fibers are woven with kinship bonds are ones that can collectively respond to crises without having to fall back onto hierarchical mechanisms that produce injustice. Forest carbon sequestration is considered a solution to mitigate climate change. Of course, sequestration will take place in territories stewarded by Indigenous peoples and diverse local communities with their own knowledge and social, economic, cultural, and political traditions.

47 Given the lack of bonds of kinship, including those bonds that respect rights to consent, reciprocal financial arrangements, and trustworthy behavior (for instance, transparency and accountability), it's not immediately possible for Indigenous peoples, local communities, private

industry, non-profits, nation state, and multilateral agencies (for example, the World Bank) to instantiate forest carbon sequestration collaboratively, cooperatively, justly, fairly, and equitably.

48 For Indigenous peoples, where there's an absence of kinship bonds, some nation states, corporations, and non-governmental organizations fall back on the historic injustice of there being little or no laws and norms respecting Indigenous consent, reciprocity, and trust their own lands. They simply implement forest carbon sequestration in ways that displace Indigenous communities, fail to provide benefits to Indigenous rights-holders, exacerbate ongoing territorial conflicts (including violent ones), and degrade the biodiversity required for Indigenous sustenance—all of which further perpetrate injustice against Indigenous peoples.

49 Had colonialism and other forms of oppression not destroyed or blocked the cultivations of kinship bonds, a different scenario could manifest. It would be possible to harness the mitigation potential of Indigenous stewarded territories, in full consensual and equal partnership with Indigenous peoples, without having to fall back on hierarchy to make some proposed "solution" happen.

50 So, when faced with crisis, there are lots of ways that kinship bonds disappear from consideration. One way is through the questions that get asked that intend to establish some type of orientation on crises and potential solutions. There are different questions that can be asked, each with its own timing. I find myself often in situations where the predominant question being asked is "what do we do?". For me, this question seems to focus on determining what actions or measures must be taken to reduce the crisis. It pushes me to think about the acts themselves. When confronted with the feasibility of the actions, I then rely on the back of the napkin analyses to figure out the numbers.

51 For example, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stated confidently in 2018 that carbon capture, utilization, and storage is "technically proven at various scales" to produce 75–90% reductions in worldwide $C0^2$ emissions.[8] This theoretical analysis did not consider the actual implementation and engineering of the technologies, including increases in air pollution, reliance on fossil fuel energy, and other infrastructure (new pipelines) required to transit and store removed carbon.

52 Yet the IPCC's simply stating the claims in 2018 excited governments, industry, and NGOs to begin plans to implement carbon capture technologies, most of which will be hosted by communities that are already overburdened by the very technologies that require their carbon emissions to be captured. The only possible way to experiment with the implementation of technologies which have so little-known facts about them is to ignore the consent of the potential host communities.

53 The IPCC did not consider climate change solutions by thinking about the pace of consent. Rather, a bare assumption about the impacts of a technology was fed into a set of other factors that would produce philosophical ideas about climate change mitigation. But had consent been the focus of theoretical exercises, a different dimension would have been revealed. Since consent involves knowledge of on the ground conditions and the relationships needed to make things happen, the engineering, law, politics, health risks, and environmental threats of carbon capture would have been featured, along with all other solutions and business-as-usual assumptions.

54 So, once I ask, "what do we do?", I start entertaining solution ideas without any accountability to existing or needed kinship bonds, such as consent, that are required for any proposal to really be a practical solution. Once a theoretical idea is conceived and a back of the napkin calculation performed, I then form an initial commitment to that "solution." The invocation of

[8] Mark Z. Jacobson, "The health and climate impacts of carbon capture and direct air capture," *Energy & Environmental Science*, 12 (12) (2019): 3567–74, citing the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5C* (IPCC: 2018).

"we" in the question obscures that I've only thought about the idea in relation to the interests of those who share the same privileges and climate risks and in relation to my interpretation of what's at stake for Indigenous peoples and diverse communities throughout the world who I haven't a relationship with—at all.

55 My commitment, and the invocation of "we," creates a situation where I start working through the practicality of the "solution" by assuming that today's unjust conditions are the major boundaries, barriers, opportunities, and pathways governing implementation. Something like community consent, then, becomes a "challenge" that could block implementation of a "solution" idea. And if respecting consent is conceived as quashing the prospect of implementing carbon forest sequestration or carbon capture technologies, then perhaps I must devolve into ignoring consent in the name of the interests of and benefits for the "we."

56 I wonder if there are better questions out there. What if instead of asking about what to do, I asked instead: "What's the status of the relationships that will be needed to address the crisis?" If talking about climate change, this question would point me to whether consent and other important kinship bonds are in place at sufficient levels to be able to motivate swift and genuine solutions to crises.

57 Asking this question moves directly to the heart of whether there are relationships in place to get done the type of drastic measures needed to respond to violence and disruption. Is there enough trust? Is there enough consent? Is there enough reciprocity? Do these, and other qualities of relationships, exist in coordination with one another?

58 The second question would push me to consider whether I am part of clusters and networks of relationships that are capable of acting suitably in the face of crisis. But, of course, my reasoning may change here as I investigate the question. If it turns out that relationships of consent, for example, do not exist sufficiently for coordinated action, then there is a deeper crisis of consent existing apart from the climate crisis. Each parallel and subsequent crisis will maintain and perhaps worsen the consent crisis because the more dominant actors keep violating consent and failing to repair consent relationships. Some of these consent relationships have been compromised for centuries.

59 Each crisis question suggests different ways of understanding the speed of addressing problems. But how is fast or slow understood? For people whose exercise of national and capitalistic self-determination has been violent and harmful to others, perhaps there is always the temptation to understand matters through the domineering idea of "give us one more chance to make things right." The speed of action is a mirage, it's no different from someone who does wrong and too hastily moves to make up for it.

60 Climate action at the speed of consent is, then, a strategy that involves both slowing down and speeding up. Climate change mitigation will be slow when the relationships are not in place—including consent relationships—to foster the mobilization needed to end fossil fuel dependency and engage in non-exploitative economic transactions. Generations of violations of kinship bonds, including trust, reciprocity and consent, will take time to reconcile, restore, and create anew, depending on the time and place.

61 I've discussed widely in other venues that the endeavor to repair or establish new kinship relationships will take longer to achieve than any of the windows for climate action that are presented to us by scientific assessments and policy recommendations. Kinship, when lost or absent, cannot typically be fostered immediately, just as is the case with our everyday kinship relationships with friends, family, and our closest colleagues. Once we have them, we move together in lockstep. But it took us a long time to develop those relationships to get to that point.

62 On this way of understanding kinship, people do need to consider their choices in what climate action they lend their energy and advocacy to. They can support the ending of the consent crisis, which will directly address climate-related violence and injustice against Indigenous peoples

and other groups, and will also nurture relationships of consent that will be critical for diverse struggles beyond climate change, including for health, economic, gender, environmental, food, and intergenerational justice.

63 Or people can choose to support policies and technologies that are unproven in their reduction of greenhouse gas emissions or that rely on implementation mechanisms, such as new markets, that are also unproven. These unproven policies and technologies can only be implemented within the various "windows for climate action" if the consent of Indigenous peoples and diverse communities are violated.

64 Though highly unlikely, even if such false solutions to climate change achieved certain emissions reduction or climate mitigation goals, the beneficiaries would be privileged persons and nations, as Indigenous peoples, among others, would suffer the acute local and regional impacts of the increases in air pollution, dirty supply chains, displacement, economic inequalities, and ecological destruction for new infrastructure.

65 In this essay, I want to add more to this discussion about an additional dimension of understanding whether kinship is fast or slow in its efficacy for climate action. This line of reasoning goes something like this. When people enact kinship to address climate change, people are acting on the understanding that climate change is causally rooted in crises of consent and kinship. Then acting to foster kinship is perhaps the fastest thing that one can do. Immediately respecting Indigenous rights to consent in their own territories would enact a quick reduction in fossil fuel emissions from those dirty industries that are currently exploiting Indigenous territories and are taking advantage of the normality of Indigenous rights violations to keep doing business in ways that fail to swiftly engage in climate action.

66 Given this last point and returning to the publications that I started with, I claim that there's a fast kinship solution that can advance climate action. But everyone needs to come to the table to furnish this solution in practice. If dominant parties would respect Indigenous consent, the studies and data available show that there would be an immediate curbing of many causes of climate change, and there could be the beginnings of a correction in climate leadership that would involve Indigenous peoples leading more prominently in protecting carbon sinks, conserving biodiversity, and hosting renewable energy.

67 Indigenous peoples could take leadership positions and make decisions about climate and energy that are not under duress. For in the past, various opportunities for Indigenous participation in policy and regulation were designed by nations and industry to pressure Indigenous peoples toward getting involved in mining and other extractive industries.

68 Climate at the speed of consent means moving away from ahistorical, linear timings of consent. Instead, consent is embraced in its history relating to climate change, its experience for people of communities who have been subjected to generations of desecration of their consent, and the implications of how respect for consent supports Indigenous land tenure, sovereignty, self–governance, and stewardship.

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