

Globalization:

Environmental Effects of Globalization

Although often phrased in terms of social and economic justice, globalization has profound negative impacts on the natural environment. International environmental group [Friends of the Earth](#) explains the problem:

"Whilst a certain degree of international trade may be inevitable and even desirable, healthy and sustainable local economies and communities are the key to meeting people's basic needs. However, they are being undermined by the current trade liberalisation process in many ways. Serious social and environmental impacts include:

- a failure to account for environmental and social degradation;
- a potential reduction in environmental and social standards;
- specialisation which increases monocultures and decreases diversity;
- environmental damage caused by long-distance transport;
- export-oriented growth which exacerbates all of the above;
- incompatibility with some environmental protection measures;
- increasing inequality between rich and poor countries, rich and poor people, and women and men, all of which also exacerbate poverty and environmental degradation.

The current world trade system is characterised by a range of activities/phenomena that make it

Organizations

[Friends of the Earth International \(FOEI\)](#)

[Center for International Environmental Law \(CIEL\)](#)

Resources

[FOEI - Citizens' Guide to Trade, Environment and Sustainability - Environmental and Social Impacts of Free Trade](#)

[FOEI - Trade, Environment and Sustainability Programme](#)

[Principles for Environmentally Responsible Trade](#) - a coalition of environmental groups created a simple set of guidelines

Action / Campaigns

[Project Underground - World Bank: Chad-Cameroon Oil Pipeline](#)

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environmentally and socially damaging."

- Friends of the Earth [\[source\]](#)

For more information on this and other issues,
visit [Friends of the Earth](#) on the Internet.

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Globalization:

IMF / World Bank Development Issues

The IMF and World Bank have come under fire in recent years for contributing to the endemic poverty that exists in the developing world. Debt payments force countries to abandon much-needed social welfare programs. In addition, the IMF and World Bank force privatization of everything from energy to water to education to health care, and often fund projects that destroy local ecosystems. [50 Years is Enough](#), the U.S. Network for Global Economic Justice, says the following about the IMF and World Bank:

"Many poor countries must devote huge portions of their national budgets to paying back foreign creditors -- often for loans that were made to or for dictators, wasteful military spending or boondoggle projects. The poor countries of sub-Saharan Africa, for example, owe more than \$200 billion in foreign debt -- three times more than they earn annually in exports. About 20 percent of sub-Saharan African countries' export income (not counting South Africa) goes to service foreign debt.

A huge part of poor country economies must be devoted to producing goods for export - with the resultant income sent back out of the economy and not available for domestic use, including for such important domestic needs as healthcare, education and infrastructure.

[...]

The IMF and the World Bank should use their existing resources to fully cancel the debts owed them by the poorest countries -- without any structural adjustment conditions attached. This is something they are perfectly able to do, as Harvard Professor Jeffrey Sachs and many others have shown."

- 50 Years Is Enough [\[source\]](#)

For more information about this and other issues, visit [50 Years Is Enough](#) on the Internet.

Organizations

[50 Years is Enough](#)

- U.S Network for Global Economic Justice

[September30.org](#)

- site for the IMF / World Bank protests that occurred during their annual meetings between September 28 and October 4, 2001 in Washington D.C.

[Global Exchange](#)

- a nonprofit "striving to increase global awareness among the US public while building international partnerships around the world."

[Jubilee Plus](#)

- successor to Jubilee 2000 drop the debt campaign

Resources

General

[Global Exchange](#)

- [World Bank / IMF page](#)

[Global Exchange - World Bank /](#)

[IMF factsheet](#)

[Global Exchange - Ten Ways to Democratize the Global Economy](#)

[50 Years is Enough - World Bank/IMF Factsheets](#)

[Essential Information - Multinational Monitor](#)

[Friends of the Earth International Financial Institutions page](#)

[Drop the Debt - short-term successor to Jubilee 2000](#)

IMF

[Global Exchange - Top Ten Reasons to Oppose the IMF](#)

Action / Campaigns

[World Bank Bonds Boycott](#)

- see also links and resources section, which includes 'Global South campaigns against WB policies/projects'

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Globalization:

Sweatshop Labor

Sweatshop labor has caught the public eye as several large-scale anti-sweatshop campaigns have risen to prominence in the U.S. [Global Exchange](#), a non-profit organization that strives "to increase global awareness among the US public while building international partnerships around the world," illustrates the realities of sweatshops and the anti-sweatshop movement:

"Contrary to what many would like to believe, sweatshops are not working for the people of developing nations. In many cases, sweatshop workers, employed by large multinational corporations, are trapped in a system of modern day indentured servitude comparable to slavery and denied basic human freedoms like the right to join a union, attend religious services, quit or marry. Menial wages and reports of physical abuse in addition are typical of a new economic world order in which the poor are getting poorer and the rich growing richer.

The anti-sweatshop movement strives to eliminate these poor conditions in garment and shoe factories by pressuring companies to disclose the location of factories, pay workers a living wage, allow independent monitoring of factories and ensure workers the right to organize in independent unions. Did you know...

- Cambodian garment workers make \$40 a month sewing clothes for Gap, Inc. They are requesting a living wage of \$60 a month to meet their families' basic human needs such as food, clothing, shelter and education. Is this too much to ask from a company worth \$28 billion, whose CEO Millard Drexler made over \$39 million in 2000?
- Asian immigrant women in Saipan, a U.S. territory, work

Organizations

Global Exchange

- a nonprofit "striving to increase global awareness among the US public while building international partnerships around the world."

United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS)

Sweatshop Watch

Corp Watch

- "CorpWatch works to hold corporations accountable on issues of human rights, labor rights and environmental justice"

Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE)

Resources

General

Global Exchange - Global Economy

- sweatshop information

Global Exchange - Anti-Sweatshop Links page

- includes history of sweatshops, international and American groups working against sweatshops, other anti-sweatshop campaigns, governmental resources, news articles and reports

Sweatshop Watch - Sweatshop FAQ

CorpWatch Sweatshop page

- a definition of sweatshops, news, reports, backgrounders, related NGO links

Behind the Label

- a multimedia news magazine that covers stories about sweatshops and the global clothing industry

UNITE - Stop Sweatshops Campaign

under a system of indentured servitude. Many of the 45,000 workers live in unsanitary barracks behind barbed wire where they sew clothes 12 hours a day, seven days a week for retailers like The Gap, J.C. Penney, Levi's, Abercrombie and Fitch, and The Limited.

- Child labor is rampant in Tehuacan, the jean capital of Mexico. Workers there make so little that families are forced to send their children to the garment factories rather than to school.

- Starbucks is the largest retailer of gourmet coffee in the country, yet they pay their coffee growers poverty prices. In Guatemala, less than 4 percent of the coffee plantations even have schools.

- In China, most people make less than \$1 a day. Most factories where toys are made in China do not allow independent trade unions."

- Global Exchange [\[source\]](#)

For more information on this and other related issues, visit [Global Exchange](#) on the Internet.

Action / Campaigns

[Sweatshop Watch](#)

- [What Can You Do?](#)

- a summary of different, simple actions that citizens can take to help eliminate sweatshops

[UNITE - Consumer Guide to Decent Clothes](#)

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Globalization:

Trade Issues WTO/NAFTA/FTAA:

Recent large-scale protests have brought global attention to the undemocratic processes of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA). In the words of [Global Exchange](#):

"International trade agreements such as NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) and GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) were written by representatives of large corporations and they function in the interests of large corporations.

For example, detailed studies by Public Citizen and other watchdog groups have shown that in the seven years of NAFTA, transnational corporations from the three signing countries (Canada, USA, Mexico) have benefited while the middle classes and working classes of these countries have suffered. More jobs have been lost due to NAFTA than have been created.

Several decades of the GATT have lowered corporate taxes by the trillions of dollars, thus helping to bankrupt governments around the world and make them dependent on borrowing from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the private banks. This indebtedness then gives immense policy influence to the bankers, who are mainly interested in the money cycle not the life cycle."

- [Global Exchange](#) [\[source\]](#)

For more information on this and other related issues, visit [Global Exchange](#) on the Internet.

Organizations

Corp Watch

- CorpWatch's mission from its website: "CorpWatch counters corporate-led globalization through education and activism. We work to foster democratic control over corporations by building grassroots globalization--a diverse movement for human rights, labor rights and environmental justice." [\[source\]](#)

Global Exchange

- organization devoted to promoting environmental, political and social justice

Alliance for Sustainable Jobs and the Environment

Quebec 2001 Peoples' Summit

- the site of the alternative summit to the April 2001 Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, Canada

Resources

General

CorpWatch

- [Globalization and Corporate Rule](#)

CorpWatch

- [Trade and Investment Agreements](#)

Global Exchange

- [Free Trade Agreements page](#)

FTAA

Hemispheric Social Alliance

- a network of organizations from across the Americas that develop alternatives to the FTAA (site primarily in Spanish)

[Global Trade Watch - FTAA page](#)

[Global Exchange - FTAA page](#)

[Global Exchange - Top Ten Reasons to Oppose the FTAA](#)

page

WTO/GATT

[CorpWatch - Who Owns the WTO?](#)

[Global Trade Watch - WTO page](#)

[Global Exchange - WTO page](#)

NAFTA

[Global Trade Watch - NAFTA page](#)

Action / Campaigns

[Global Trade Watch - 9 Steps You Can Take to Defeat Fast Track](#)

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