A Report on KlimatFestivalen (Climate Festival) and Sommarforum (Summer Forum)

The program of these events is included in this report as background information for those who did not attend it, even though it is written in Swedish. The program went from Wednesday 9 to Sunday 11 August, but I was only able to participate from Friday evening onwards. The location and organizer was Jorden Vänners (Friends of the Earth) and Färnebo Folkhögskolan (Popular University), as previously organized as a summer program prior to the COVID years.

The program speaks for itself (for those who read Swedish).[[1]](#footnote-1) Worth mentioning is that it assembled about 40 participants and justice environmental and climate justice movements from different regions of Sweden and other countries, including a couple from Iran. It also included different generations, where I was most likely the oldest participant with 82 years of age (going to 83). There were other veteran activists like Stig Broqvist and his wife Lena. This mixed and diverse audience enabled a fruitful dialogue with the utmost respect. No wasting time with bla-bla-bla, as Greta Thunberg characterizes the typical speech of world and Swedish politicians and authorities, unable to raise to the great responsibility they hold to effectively address the global “boiling” catastrophe we face in our times. Neither was there ego-tripping nor sectarian ready-made answers to the severe problems nowadays threatening Humanity and the biosphere in the Anthropocene. The name of the game was to get to know each other in a safe environment, and to learn from each other, sharing methods and experiences. There was time for “being in nature” and for sharing culture, music, poetry and improvised theater.

Among the topics addressed, there was a session of how the movements works from a critical perspective to influence policy for example concerning deforestation and other. The issue of “greenwashing” was also discussed, in terms of its dangerous implications. There was time to watch documentary films like “Lät älven Leva” (Let the River Live!) on the Same (Sápki) struggle against the environmental damage associated with construction and extractivism in the Altaälven (in Northern Sweden). The meeting was not only to deepen our understanding of what is wrong with the current situation, but also with the question of what to do to “right the wrong” (!!!). In this respect, I was very impressed with the strategic thinking and corresponding actions, from the new movement “Ta tillbaka framtiden” (Let’s get back our future) by Veronika Österberg and Caroline Andrén, which reminded me of the Extinction Rebellion Movement. Maybe with a longer time strategic perspective.

Another big theme addressed had to do with food production, Eddie Olsson (Friends of the Earth) described the food chain system and related topics like sustainable agriculture, small family agriculture – and how to support them. On Saturday, we addressed the big phantoms: the fossil industry and their influential lobbies. Concrete illustrations were presented and shared by the movement previously alluded (let’s get back our future), for example, with a focus on their actions of civil disobedience in the oil installations in the Malmö harbor.

On the issue of energy, Jonathan Korsar lectured on taking power over energy at the local and global level, making a clear distinction between false and true climate solutions. Jonathan’s presentation made me recall a proposal he made years ago as a member of Friends of the Earth – Uppsala, about the need to weave all social movements and organizations in Uppsala along the lines of Uppsala Social Forum, between 2003 and 2010. Along similar thoughts, K.G. Hammar, Archbishop Emeritus of Sweden, whom we interviewed during the last Book Fair in Gothenburg 2022, suggested that it was time to articulate and make bridges between the over 100 organizations and movements dealing with environmental and climate justice issues. I fully share this viewpoint. During the years that Uppsala Social Forum was active, we closely cooperated with the Center for Environmental and Development Studies (CEMUS) at Uppsala University.

In the second stage of the Saturday morning program, Alban Grosdidier, from Friends of the Earth-Europe transported us to the European scene, about how to struggle effectively against corporate power - and their tricky manipulation of the legal system to escape responsibility for the destructive consequences of their productive activities on humans, the environment, climate, and on other sentient beings. Very pedagogical and creative strategy, demanding much patience, endurance and proactive thinking and action. After lunch, we were privileged to listen to Esmeralda Sjögren from Aurora, the organization of young people who took the Swedish state to court, because failing us with the Climate crisis. This happened against the background of similar legal actions in Holland, the U.S., and other countries of the world. As a side comment, these kind of encounters enables people to meet and network. For example, after inviting Esmeralda to join our activities of Fridays for the Future and Friends of the Earth in Uppsala, she accepted to visit us, for example, at our day of action on 15 September. She gave me her whereabouts, which I will bring next Monday to our local meeting. Another young participants (Daniel in Gävle), who might be in our local mailing list of Friends of the Earth, approached me to convey his wish to join our activities in Uppsala. It was particularly important to meet again with Stig Broqvist and Lena, his life companion. He volunteered to come to Uppsala to present his edited manual on How to Change the System – not the climate. But how? (Ändra systemet – inte klimatet, men hur?). We had in the past organized a videoconference with him (Friends of the Earth-Helsinborg) and with Alba (Bruised food movement in Uppsala) and Stephan from Naturskydsföreningen, also an active musician at our unfailing fantastic local music group linked to FFF, led by Detlev, every Friday from 3-5 pm at Forum Torget in Uppsala, for the past four years. Only two weeks after Greta started her memorable school strike for the future!

Humor was part of our time together during our encounter. In this vein, there was a satiric debate organized by Friends of the Earth (Lisa, Nicole and Sebastian) - on who wins the “Greenwash Price,” which was hilarious. The Swedish State won the award according to the majority of participants in the audience. After supper there was time for a magnificent program with local and national artists, including “Freya Heart” and an “Open Scene,” which engaged the spontaneous participation of some participants. Yes, humor, culture, art, poetry, and humor, are part of our human arsenal for the long fight ahead to save the planet from corporate greed! The program on Sunday morning addressed the important issues of synergic cooperation and convergence within and between the movements.

This conversation is bound to continue as well as the weaving of personal and organizational contacts. There was also a review of future events and activities, where I mentioned the Climate Existence Conference co-organized by CEMUS and the Sigtuna Foundation (August 16-18). This meeting was also a very inspiring, informative and provocative encounter, which in my view, very much complemented the more activist encounter described in previous lines. My feeling after both meetings is that now I can die in peace, fully cognizant that the struggle for “other possible worlds” will continue in the future, carried on by new generation of activists, nourished by the wisdom of the ages, and intercultural dialogue with remote cultures like, in our space, with the Sápki peoples living in the Northern region of the Nordic Countries and Russia.

Uppsala, 23 August 2023

Azril Bacal Roij, Friends of the Earth and FFF-Uppsala, CEMUS-affiliate

Program Klimatfestivalen och Sommarforum

Onsdag 9 augusti

15.30 Välkomstfika.

16.00 Lära känna varandra. Samarbete, fokus på trygga relationer - gemensamt språk för metoder. 16.00-17.30: Introduktionspass inför veckans samarbete ● Introduktion till Färnebo folkhögskola. Lars Igeland.

● Diskussion om hushållssysslor och andra praktiska aktiviteter ● Incheckning i mindre grupper

● Utveckling av gemensamma termer ● Genomgång av ämnen som ska behandlas under denna session

● Diskussion i mindre grupper om terminologi vi använder ● Gruppdiskussion om terminologi 18.00 Utflykt, middag och möjlighet till bad i Dalälven

Torsdag 10 augusti

09.00 Utflykt i Färnebofjärdens nationalpark och omgivande kalhyggen. ● Guidning i skogen. Maj-Lis Koivisto, Skogsgruppen i Hofors m. fl.

● Samtal: Hur jobbar rörelsen systemkritiskt med påverkan vad gäller skog och annat? Moderator: Lars Igeland, Färnebo folkhögskola.

13.00 Lunch i skogen, bad för den som vill.

15.00 Greenwashing - vad är det och varför är det farligt? Sebastian Mellgren, Jordens Vänner 16.30 Praktiska rummet - parallella workshops ● Film (Lars) ● Körsång (Lisa) ● Politiskt broderi (Ej ledare)

● Skrivande (Nicole)

18.00 Middag

19:00 Lisa från Jordens Vänners Klimatkör på scen

20:00 Låt älven Leva, film från 2023 om samisk kamp mot utbyggnaden av Altaälven. - Självorganiserat samtal

Fredag 11 augusti

09.00 Intro till strategiska samtal - Veronika Österberg och Caroline Andrén, Ta tillbaka framtiden 10.00 Praktiska workshops: Kultur mot greenwash: broderi, körsång, poesi, film.

12.00 Lunch

13.00 Lokal mat. Häng med till tillsammansodlingen. Samtal om Rekoringar, matvärn, företagsmakt, hur stötta småbönder? Eddie Olsson, Jordens Vänner med flera.

15.30 Fika, inkvartering för de som kommer nya till festivaldelen. 16.00 Hej och välkommen till de som anländer på fredagen. 16.30 Strategipass - Veronika Österberg och Caroline Andrén, Ta tillbaka framtiden

● Återkoppla till vad vi gjort tidigare

● Återkoppla till begrepp

18:00 Utflykt och middag

● Vi grillar vid Dalälven, ● Bad, umgänge ● Jam - ta med instrument ● Estradpoesi om klimat med Aaron Tuckey

Lördag 12 augusti

09.00 Välkommen, övning, förväntningar inför dagen.

09.30 Parallella workshops: ● Hur utmanar vi fossilindustrin? Ta tillbaka framtiden talar med utgångspunkt i sommarens aktioner mot Oljehamnen i Malmö.

● Makten över energin lokalt och globalt. Om falska klimatlösningar - och verkliga ! Jonathan Korsar, aktiv i arbetet för energigemenskaper.

10.30 Fika och återrapportering från grupperna

11.00 Bekämpa företagsmakt i EU. Alban Grosdidier, Jordens Vänner Europa

12.30 Lunch 13.30 Aurora, unga som stämmer staten om klimatet. Esmeralda Sjögren.

15.00 Vem vinner Greenwashpriset? - en satirisk debatt. Jordens Vänner. (Lisa, Nicole och Sebastian) 18.00 Middag 19.00 Festival med lokala och nationella artister

● Freya Heart

● Öppen scen

Söndag 13 augusti

09.00 Samarbete inom rörelsen

● Panelsamtal. Moderator: Caroline Andrén Med Aurora: Esmeralda Sjögren,Grönt Initiativ: Järva Mariam Jallow Tholozan , Jordens Vänner: Sebastian Mellgren, Ta tillbaka framtiden: Veronika Österberg

10.30 Fika 11.00 Samarbete inom rörelsen (Sarah/Carro & Lars)

● Diskutera vidare

● Knyta kontakter

● Redovisning av kommande event/aktiviteter 12.00 Lunch

● Avslutningstal (Irma Kjellström, TTF)

13.00 Hemresa: buss avgår 13.05 Några medverkade på Klimatfestivalen Sommarforum. Freya Heart är en svensk folkpop singer/songwriter. Genom åren har hon engagerat sig inom både dans, mindfulness, grönsaksodling, miljöfrågor och har nu hittat hem i musiken och låtskriveriet. Freya med sitt unika sound hämtar sin inspiration från indie-folk, coast-folk, soul, indie-rock och reggae. Genom musiken vill hon förmedla ett budskap om hopp och lyfta sina lyssnare.

Alban Grosdidier arbetar med klimatet på Europeiska Jordens Vänner. Han fokuserar på att avslöja olje- och gasindustrins metoder och hur de kan ställas ansvariga för sina brott mot mänskliga rättigheter, miljö och klimat. Alban kommer till Sverige för att vara med på klimatfestivalen i Österfärnebo.

Filmen Låt älven leva. 1978 beslutade Stortinget att bygga en damm i Alta-Kautokeinovassdraget, mitt i hjärtat av Sápmi. Kampen i Alta utvecklades till en uppgörelse mot den norska statens behandling av samerna. Mitt i det historiska dramat står Ester som under hela sitt liv förnekat sin samiska identitet. Filmen hade premiär i maj

1. Attached at the end of the report. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)