

The Mask of European Greenwashing

Extinction Rebellion Berlin

The so-called “Maya Train” megaproject in Southern Mexico represents a perfect storm of everything that is worth fighting against in this world. Perhaps most evident is the immense destruction it will bring to one of the last unspoiled natural areas in the country, a complex ecosystem home to hundreds of animal and plant species, some of which are already threatened of extinction. This goes hand in hand with the threat to indigenous people living in the regions affected, from Yucatán to Chiapas, who have been protecting that nature for centuries, often paying with their lives. After resisting centuries of oppression and discrimination, if the “Maya Train” goes ahead as planned they could be violently displaced from their homes and robbed of their livelihoods and way of life, without even being properly consulted, as is their right.

Such structural violence and inherent racism materialise in infrastructure megaprojects like this, which will have the double effect of stealing land from indigenous communities and serving as a concrete and deliberate barrier to stop migrants directed towards the USA. To make matters worse, the militarisation of the project is a clear intimidation attempt at the expenses of human right defenders and Zapatista groups in the region. In this way, the Mexican State shows its intolerance of any opposition to a consumeristic-extractivist model which benefits first and foremost the ultrarich and Western corporations, to the detriment of people and ecosystems. Among such multinational companies, Deutsche Bahn stands to gain millions from this destructive project, actively endangering biodiversity while claiming to be a “green” and “sustainable” business.

We are sick and tired of the hypocrisy of European corporations, putting up a mask of greenwashing while they continue to exploit the Global South for profits and natural resources. This is by no means an isolated instance, but rather part of a wider pattern of economic imperialism that is making use of globalisation to perpetuate colonialism by other means, all the while bringing forth the destruction of our precious planet. It’s time to get loud in expressing our support of the indigenous communities who are fighting the greed and insanity, as well as holding bad faith actors like Deutsche Bahn accountable. Environmental justice can only be achieved by breaking the cycle of global exploitation of people and nature: as such, neo-colonialist, extractivist megaprojects like the “Maya Train” must be stopped.

