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Research article

Indigenous Festivals and Climate Sustainability in India: A Case Study of Cultural Practices and Performances

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Abstract

With the inadequacy of the Western frameworks in addressing climate change, there is a need to integrate indigenous knowledge systems into the global framework to harness climate sustainability. The historical marginalization of the indigenous people in India in the colonial era has continued through the present postcolonial era, leading to environmental exploitation and social dislocation of the Adivasis. This has resulted in a severance of the transmission of sustainable practices embedded in the tribal cultures into the global framework. Advocating for the integration of indigenous ecological wisdom into global strategies, this paper will highlight the significance of tribal festivals like 'Sarhul,' 'Baha,' and 'Kunde Habba' in reinforcing climate resilience. Indian tribal festivals have traditionally popularised sustainable practices and rituals to stay in harmony with nature, and the sacred sites located in the indigenous communities function as sites for rituals and festivals fostering ecological sustainability. This paper explores how tribal art forms like 'Warli' and 'Gond' art imbue communities with ecological consciousness and resilience, and through storytelling and artistic expressions, it raises awareness about climate issues and empowers communities to safeguard ecosystems vital for all life forms. This paper asserts that traditional performance cultures, manifested through rituals, dances, and art, serve as catalysts for sustainable practices, biodiversity conservation, and community resilience, and advocates for a recentring of the indigenous performances to resist Anthropocentric and Capitalocentric practices.

Keywords: Anthropocene, climate crisis, ecological sustainability, indigenous knowledge, tribal performances

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS **Climate Action, Life on Land**

Introduction

Climate change is a human-induced tragedy, where each individual retains the liberty to treat the global atmosphere as a convenient repository for refuse. Since the onset of the Industrial Revolution in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the atmospheric concentration of CO2 has

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surged by nearly 40 per cent, escalating from approximately 280 parts per million (ppm) to surpass 390 ppm (Harris, 2013, p. 14). Projections delineate a potential doubling of CO2 in the atmosphere by the middle of the current century, a threshold deemed perilous by experts, surpassing 350 ppm, deemed inescapably consequential for climate change. Despite CO2 emissions catapulting to an unprecedented scale of nearly 38 gigatons in 2023 from roughly 20 gigatons in 1990, and greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere surpassing the highest levels observed in the past 650,000 years, any discernible indicators of the urgently needed shift in the global trajectory of energy patterns remain elusive, as per the International Energy Agency (p. 14).

According to Jason Moore and Andreas Malm (2016), capitalism plays a pivotal role in the 'Capitalocene' in reshaping how we interact with the environment. The use of the term 'Capitalocene' emphasizes the need to understand specific historical and economic systems that have driven changes in our ecological impact. Naomi Klein in her book *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate* (2014) observes how in periods of tremendous stress, such as economic meltdowns, natural disasters, and wars, the "corporate interests systematically exploit these various forms of crisis to ram through policies that enrich a small elite- by lifting regulations, cutting social spending, and forcing large-scale privatizations of the public sphere" (A People's Shock section, para. 2), and how climate change will be no exception to this pattern. The imposition of standards by the global North, extolling resource-exploitative lifestyles as the epitome of 'development', gravely impacts the global South, where ecological realities centre around subsistence and survival, rendering these benchmarks ecologically unattainable and detrimental. Stephen Gardiner (2011) has described climate change as a "perfect moral storm", with "affluent nations and their rich citizens able to shape events at the expense of the world's poor, with current generations able to promote their interests over those of future generations, and with the world lacking a robust theory (or theories) to guide us out of the problem" (Harris, 2013, p. 4).

Over the centuries, the Indian tribal knowledge systems have constantly been eroded due to colonial and capitalist influences. The tribal knowledge and wisdom were systematically dismantled due to an epistemicide by the British imperialist forces, resulting in widespread cultural amnesia among indigenous communities. The destruction of learning institutions, libraries, and Eurocentric programming further perpetuated this erosion, persisting even after India gained political freedom from British rule. Against this background, the paper aims to look at Indian tribal festivals like 'Sarhul', 'Baha', and 'Kunde Habba' which help in preserving cultural diversity and maintaining the sustainability of the ecosystems. The practices and rituals associated with these festivals provide an insight into the deep ecological wisdom and ecosophical lifestyle embedded within tribal communities and the paper shall explore how a recentring of such traditional performance cultures can reinforce climate resilience and resist Anthropocentric and Capitalocentric practices.

The End of the Road: Inadequacy of the Western System

The upsurge of the climate crisis highlights the inadequacy of Western ideologies, knowledge systems, and methodologies in addressing this pressing issue, and Paul Harris in *What's Wrong*

with Climate Politics and How to Fix It (2013) observes that this shortfall is a consequence of the "cancer of Westphalia" (p. 12), where the Westphalian international system "encourages nations to fight for their narrow, short-term perceived interests and makes truly effective international cooperation on climate change extraordinarily difficult" (p. 12).

According to Boaventura De Sousa Santos (2016), "the global North seems to have little to teach the world" (p. 38) and "after five centuries of 'teaching' the world, the global North seems to have lost the capacity to learn from the experiences of the world" (p. 38). Colonisation led to a multitude of experiences and realities of people living in the colonial zone being cast aside or dismissed (p. 192). These realities, often marginalised or suppressed, lose their agency and visibility within the constructs of truth, legality, and societal norms set under the colonial framework. This spatial and conceptual separation, in turn, enabled the perpetuation of dominant narratives and power structures while simultaneously suppressing alternative perspectives and diverse forms of knowledge. The deliberate eradication of Indigenous knowledge, spiritual heritage, and territorial sovereignty, initiated by the European arrival in the New World centuries ago, epitomizes a form of epistemic violence. This violence, wielded by Western powers, redefined these lands as the Third World or Underdeveloped World. It operates through nuanced mechanisms, subtly embedded within education, religion, politics, social integration, and development initiatives. However, beneath this facade lies a more brutal facet, utilizing overtly violent methods such as corporal punishment, criminalization, lynching, and genocide. This calculated approach served not only to extend Western dominance but also to exploit both the tangible and intangible assets of oppressed communities, perpetuating a legacy of oppression and cultural obliteration that persists today.

In the post-independence era, India has continued to grapple with neocolonial influences on multiple fronts. Economically, multinational corporations and the mechanisms of globalization wield considerable power, impacting local industries and controlling vital resources. This economic control perpetuates a legacy of exploitation established during colonial times. Throughout this shift, triggered by colonisation, the tribal rituals, performances, and traditional ways of living were suppressed or assimilated into a Western framework, eroding the deep-rooted connections these communities shared with the nature around them. Post-independence, neocolonial dynamics continued to affect tribal lands.

Upamanyu Pablo Mukherjee in his book *Postcolonial Environments* (2010) states that "the 'post' in postcolonial marks not an end of colonialism, but an end of a particular mode of colonialism which then shifts its gears and evolves to another stage'' (p. 5), with that 'stage' being characterized by the neo-colonial milieu wherein both humans and non-human entities experience heightened levels of exploitation under the guise of globalisation and developmental initiatives. This evolved idea of 'post-colonialism' furnishes a clear perspective on how multinational corporations like the Coca-Cola Company would extract resources from nature, as seen in the village of Plachimada in Kerala in the early 2000s, and exploit the humans and non-humans in the name of globalization and development without claiming any responsibility upon themselves. Additionally, cultural imperialism, seen in media and consumerism, reinforces Western norms, influencing societal values and perpetuating a legacy of cultural subjugation. Large-scale industrialization, mining, and infrastructure development encroached upon tribal territories,

leading to deforestation, displacement, and exploitation of natural resources without adequate regard for environmental sustainability. Additionally, the imposition of mainstream education and societal norms led to the erosion of tribal languages, rituals, and performances. This disconnect disrupted the intergenerational transfer of knowledge on sustainable environmental practices that were intrinsic to their cultural heritage.

Ecologically Sustainable Cultural Practices in India

In neo-colonial post-Independence India, skyscrapers have mushroomed from ancestral village sites, concrete has entombed burial grounds, and superhighways have paved over ancient trade routes. The Adivasis are involved in a constant tussle to retain access to what remains of their homelands. For instance, the Forest Conservation Amendment Bill, which was passed by the Lok Sabha on July 26, 2023, seeks to redefine the legal definition of a 'forest' within the context of Indian law, narrowing down the scope of what qualifies as a 'forest' under the law and potentially excluding areas that were not previously categorized as such, even if they have ecological and environmental significance. As a result of this, about 40% of the Aravalli range and 95% of the Niyamgiri hill range would be significantly affected, with the latter being the home to the Dongria Kondh, a particularly vulnerable Tribal Group (Bilung, 2023, Forest Conservation Amendment Bill 2023 section, para. 6).

In India, sacred sites act as repositories of spiritual and ecological significance. These sites are revered by indigenous communities as they embody their cultural, religious and spiritual beliefs. Many of these sacred sites are located in ecologically rich areas, often serving as hubs of biodiversity. Tribal communities consider these sites as sacred, leading to a sense of responsibility and stewardship towards the natural environment. They often adopt sustainable practices to protect these areas, which indirectly helps in maintaining ecological balance and mitigating climate change effects. Rituals and traditions linked to these sites often promote sustainable use of natural resources. Practices like tree worship, water conservation rituals, or bans on hunting certain species contribute to the preservation of natural resources critical for ecological balance. The presence of sacred groves across India such as *Devrai* (Maharashtra), *Orans* (Rajasthan), *Sama* (Bihar), *Devban* (Himachal Pradesh), and *Kavu* (Kerala) helps in maintaining intact ecosystems crucial for carbon sequestration, nutrient recycling, topsoil preservation and biodiversity conservation that are essential for climate resilience.

Since the mid-1990s, a notable devotional trend called the Sarna movement has emerged among Jharkhandi women, centring around sacred groves with Sal trees. This movement was sparked by reported cases of divine possession, mainly involving women from the Oraon tribe. The possessions were manifested as ecstatic trances and the revered deity, known as Sarna Mata, is believed to inhabit these sacred groves. Borde and Jackman (2010) observes:

> This new religious movement has since spread to several other Adivasi communities in the Jharkhand region. The women believe themselves influenced in many profound ways by the ceremonies they conduct in the groves. Typically, these consist of a combination of communitarian worship, individual ritual performance and personal mystic experience. The

> women who participate in the communitarian sacred grove rituals have formed administrative bodies to look after the upkeep of the groves, the regulation of the ceremonies and the enforcement of informal codes of conduct. (p. 276)

The growing influence of this ecologically significant movement has led to biodiversity preservation and the reforestation of established sacred groves. As a consequence of this movement, various sacred sites have been sanctified and actively planted with young trees turning it into a flourishing ecosystem.

The weekly ceremony of the Sarna movement incorporates a profound ritual: the encircling of an earthen platform while offering rice grains, vermillion, and incense. A pivotal aspect involves women carrying pots of water during the circumambulation, pouring it over sacred bushes of holy basil at the centre of the grove. In ecological terms, this act is of great significance as they perceive the platform as a representation of the Earth itself and pouring water onto it symbolises a concerted effort to cool the Earth, which they believe is under threat due to escalating internal heat. This act embodies their commitment to combatting climate change, depicting a collective endeavour to mitigate the rising temperatures and preserve the planet's delicate balance.

The preservation of these sacred sites often fosters a sense of community cohesion. Communities come together to protect these areas, promoting collective action toward environmental conservation and resilience against climate change impacts. By preserving these sites and the ecosystems surrounding them, there is a direct contribution to mitigating climate change.

Traditional Festivals as Sustainable Practice in India

In order to mitigate the environmental impacts of colonialism and neocolonialism in India, there is a need to rethink, re-evaluate and re-negotiate the social, political and legal framework governing the country. Integrating the traditional ecological wisdom of the indigenous communities and their sustainable environmental practices into the current governing discourse is essential. In the realm of addressing climate change, the global outlook often agreed upon at national and international levels, such as setting emission limits and trading agreements, encounters a challenge during implementation across various local contexts. This approach, while encompassing broad mitigation strategies, tends to overlook the nuanced and context-specific aspects inherent in localized settings. The emphasis on a global perspective in climate change mitigation tends to sideline the significance of local specificity and situational factors crucial for effective implementation (Hulme, 2010). Achieving successful solutions requires the active participation and commitment of those responsible for implementing them, as emphasized by Ingram (2013). Indigenous communities possess invaluable, context-specific knowledge and resources, as noted by Dewulf et al. (2005) and Smith and Sharp (2012). Integrating the insights and resources from these communities can notably enhance the effectiveness of global-level interventions. By globally promoting and scaling up this knowledge, it holds enormous potential to effectively tackle climate change impacts through sustainable approaches. For example:

> The almost century-and-a-half traditional farming technique practised in the Kuttanad region of Kerala incorporates the use of bunds made from organic materials for farming

> below sea level and has been declared as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). (CEE, 2015, as cited in Priyadarshini and Abhilash, 2019, p. 2)

Any indigenous tradition within a community is essentially an experiential practice, "that has travelled through generations either orally or by way of demonstration and aided the continued sustenance of that community in the long run can be regarded as traditional and indigenous to that community" (Senanayake, 2006, as cited in Priyadarshini and Abhilash, 2019, p. 2). A region or country's biodiversity, ethnic makeup, religious practices, and linguistic variations embody its biocultural diversity, emphasizing the inseparable relationship "between nature and culture, and advocates the protection of one for the preservation of the other and vice versa" (p. 2). With the growing global acknowledgement of indigenous communities and the significance of their traditional knowledge, the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) emphasizes the importance of integrating indigenous wisdom with contemporary approaches in achieving effective environmental management. The traditional festivals revitalize indigenous knowledge and act as a valuable tool for managing natural resources and addressing the effects of climate change.

Indian Tribal Festivals and Its Role in Climate Resilience

Sarhul is one of the most significant tribal festivals celebrated across Jharkhand and is known by different names in different Adivasi communities, such as *Khaddi* in Oraon, *Ba* in Munda and Ho, and *Jonkar* in Khadiya community (Kunwer, 2020, p. 1). It is celebrated in the month of *Chait-Baisakh* and projected as an adivasis' *prakriti parv* (festival of nature) and the festival of flowers (pp. 1-2). The festival lasts for three days, starting from the third day of the *Chaitra,* the first month of the Hindu calendar. The tribals express reverence to the Sal tree, acknowledging its role in providing sustenance, water, shade, housing, livelihood, forecasting harvests and weather patterns and safeguarding against malevolent influences throughout the year.

Jharkhand is endowed with natural resources and forest covers. The abundance of natural resources has always attracted a great deal of business interests in the name of development in this globalized world. This invasion, under the guise of development and consequent uplifting of living conditions, results in large-scale exploitation of natural resources leading to an adverse impact on the flora and fauna of the state. This has proved a bane for the tribal population of Jharkhand who share a deep-rooted connection with nature. A Centre for Science and Environment report says, "The very people for whom Jharkhand was ostensibly created are now being sacrificed in the name of their state development" (Chakravorti, 2008, para. 4).

The Sarhul festival, observed across three days within the Santal community, embodies a rich tapestry of rituals which cultivate a sense of accountability towards the ecosystem, stressing the significance of conserving resources and sustaining balance with the environment. Commencing with *Pahil Upvass*, where elders fast while the youth engage in crab and fish catching, this day symbolizes the initiation of the agricultural season (Kunwer, 2020, p. 2). The act of digging the earth for crab-catching signifies a cautious beginning, linking agricultural activities explicitly to

the natural rhythms. During evening ceremonies, earthen pots are positioned near the revered Sal tree, commencing a practice aimed at gauging water levels—an essential procedure for predicting the forthcoming rainy season. The subsequent day witnesses a collective examination of water levels at sunrise, serving as a traditional forecast method and guiding prudent water usage and agricultural planning (p. 2). Rituals at the sacred grove involve offerings to the Sal tree, symbolic sacrifices, and ceremonies signifying unity and harmony with nature (Image 1). The festival's conclusion, marked by *Phoolkhonsi*, encompasses a community-wide visitation, symbolized by placing sal flowers on rooftops and exchanging blessings. These rituals intricately weave ecological awareness into the community fabric. They foster respect for natural cycles, prudent water management, and a deep reverence for trees while passing down ecological wisdom through cultural preservation, ensuring the perpetuation of sustainable traditions and a communal ethos of harmonious coexistence with the environment. Through these practices, Sarhul profoundly embeds ecological consciousness and responsible stewardship of nature within the Santal community's cultural tapestry.

Image 1: website- https://www.sarhulfestival.org/worship-of-sal-tree.html

The Sarhul festival in 2014 was marked by a clash between Adivasi individuals performing traditional rituals and authorities in Ranchi, showcasing the intersection of ritual practice, socio-political tensions, and the struggle for indigenous rights (p. 2). As the urban landscape expanded, traditional rituals like crab and fish catching faced restrictions due to the urbanization of once-rural areas. Government intervention halted the ritual practices, leading to protests, clashes, and a subsequent *lathi*-charge by the police. This incident, rooted in the clash between indigenous practices and state regulations, ignited a larger discourse regarding the exploitation of Adivasi communities in the guise of development. The confrontation at the ritual site became emblematic of the power struggle between religious sentiment, historical exploitation, and the assertion of indigenous memory, knowledge, and identity (p. 3). This clash epitomized a larger struggle for power dynamics within society, resonating with Karel Arnaut's notion that performance relates to societal power structures (Louis, 2000, as cited in Kunwer, 2020, p. 3). Subsequently, in 2015, the Department of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries attempted reconciliation by offering fish and crab for the ritual, reflecting a measure to accommodate traditional practices within evolving urban landscapes.

The city procession during the Sarhul festival serves as a continuation of ritual practices, fostering a sense of collective beliefs among diverse Adivasi communities. This ritual performance within Adivasi culture serves as a locus for knowledge production and discourse, embodying their customs and traditions. Elements like drumming create a musical backdrop that fosters participation and emotional resonance, reinforcing connections based on shared beliefs and values rather than mere ritual objects (p. 3). Many rituals involve offerings or practices that align with sustainable resource use. For instance, while sacrificing fowl or catching crab and fish, there is an inherent understanding of not overexploiting natural resources, ensuring their regeneration. Within these cultural performances lie inherent eco-centric elements, emphasizing harmony with nature and revering natural elements such as trees, rivers, and land. The rituals instil a deep sense of respect and stewardship for the environment, encouraging the preservation of local ecosystems. The collective nature of these rituals strengthens community resilience, offering a foundation for collaborative efforts in responding to climate-related challenges.

Baha is the second largest festival of the Santals after Sohrai, the harvest festival. Revered as their holiest celebration, it is annually observed during the Bengali month of *Falgun* (February-March). During this period, common trees like Mohuwa, Peepal, Mango, Polash, Neem, Sal, and Muringa bear new leaves, flowers or fruits. Santals believe that the trees enter a reproductive phase and refrain from cutting or plucking their buds, flowers, leaves, and branches to preserve their vitality and essence. Women do not use Sal flowers in their hair for decoration and trees are not cut for firewood at this time.

The Santals define their particular village in terms of their allegiance to a particular sacred grove, which they believe to be the abode of their supreme deity - the *Marangburu*. It is strictly prohibited to collect any portion of any variety of the trees, plants or grasses that are left standing or grown in the demarcated sacred grove. A similar prohibition is followed in the case of animals, birds or insects living within the *jahera* or the sacred grove (Image 2).

Image 2: website- https://www.santhaledisom.com/2014/09/baha-santali-festival.html

On the morning of the day of the ritual, the *godet* makes rounds, collecting a tribute of one fowl and a portion of Sera rice from every home in the village (Ali and Saadi, 2022, p. 77). The

yogamanjhi along with the young men of the village constructs four platforms with the help of the branches and twigs of Sal tree. "These platforms are considered as the temporary resting place of their deities. After building the platform the *yogmanjhi* leads the young men to the forest and collects the flowers of *sarjom*, *matkom*, *murut*, and *ichak*" (p. 77). During the evening, in the presence of the village council and the young men, the priests conduct rituals akin to those observed during the *ero sim* and *maghi sim* ceremonies. Throughout the ritual's duration, villagers are prohibited from harvesting honey from beehives, imbibing honey-like nectar from *murut* and *ichak* flowers, consuming *matkom* flowers, *loa* (fig) fruits, or any tender leaves. This prohibitory period lasts for fifteen days commencing from the first day of the new moon night of *Falgun* and ending on the full moon day when Baha festival takes place (p. 77).

The Santals adhere to a unique agricultural timeline shaped by their understanding of local ecology. Their agricultural year concludes in the month of *Poush* (December-January) but they refrain from commencing new activities until *Jaistha* (May-June) (p. 78). This hiatus aligns with their perception of a distinct agricultural season initiated by the *ero sim* ritual in *Asar* (June-July), marking the onset of the monsoon. This ritual, a communal event, precedes any agricultural endeavours, signalling a communal obligation for every village family to contribute and partake. Only post-*ero sim* can a Santal cultivate maize fields, transplant paddy, and attend to cattle grazing. This practice holds profound implications: premature soil upturning before monsoon onset risks moisture loss through evaporation, while early paddy transplantation may suffer from delayed rains. Neglecting cattle supervision could result in crop destruction for both the individual and fellow villagers. Hence, the Santals' agricultural activities are intricately tied to their ecological observations and communal rituals, ensuring optimal timing aligned with local climatic patterns to mitigate agricultural risks.

Kunde Habba, also known as the Bum festival, is an annual festival celebrated by the Yerava and Kuruba communities in Devarapura, South Kodagu. The Yeravas possess their distinct language, customs and traditions, worship nature and protect their land. Traditionally positioned at the lowest stratum among the jungle tribes of Coorg in the social hierarchy, they are acknowledged as custodians of the forests. During this festival, tribal men adopt an unrestricted demeanour, donning predominantly female attire, and partake in provocative dance routines and the use of abusive language directed towards their masters and deities. The festival spans three days, commencing at the *Devarakadu*, a sacred grove devoted to Lord Ayyapan and Goddess Bhadra Kali. Vijay et al. (2023) observe:

> The festival's origin myth tells the story of Ayyapan and Bhadra Kali betraying the tribal people, leading the latter to abuse the gods in revenge. The tribals dress up in costumes and hurl abusive songs (*Kunde* songs) at the gods, crossdressing and collecting money for their use. (p. 66)

Image 3: website- https://homegrown.co.in/homegrown-explore/kunde-habba-is-a-bizarre-celebration-of-the-obscene-vulgar

Historically, these tribes were the proprietors of the forests, yet with the advent of plantations, they were coerced into assuming roles as daily wage labourers. Promises made by Kodava plantation proprietors assuring them a respectable livelihood through diligent work and wages remained unfulfilled. Labour regulations were disregarded, resulting in meagre compensation for the tribes. Additionally, their lack of organization in labour unions, absence of support from political entities, and deprivation of governmental provisions for daily wages under labour laws compounded their challenges. Presently, they utilize the cultural platform of their festival to express dissent against the exploitation of their resources, land, cultural ethos, values, traditions, and bodies by Coorg's plantation owners. The ritualistic elements of cross-dressing and the use of provocative language are intrinsic to their sacred customs. This festival, recognized for its carnivalesque ambience, encompasses communal engagement in diverse activities such as feasting, dancing, imbibing, and the subversion of societal conventions. The festival has undergone cultural transformations, notably embracing a "crude" Mardi Gras-style cross-dressing (p. 66). Through the celebration and preservation of their culture and heritage, the indigenous community resists cultural assimilation, affirming their autonomy. This collective gathering challenges the hierarchical societal structure imposed by the planter class, embodying a form of resistance and solidarity.

This indigenous mode of resistance allows the subjugated tribal community to articulate their resistance and frustration, leading to catharsis, however transient. Though the festival's physical display and orality border on the obscene, it is not a vulgar manifestation of baser instincts. It is a raw and unrestricted form of non-violent resistance towards oppression, exploitation, and destruction of tribal land, tribal people, and tribal worldviews. The songs, dances and rituals act as a medium of protest against the neo-colonial extractivism and plundering of natural resources in the tribal lands. The vociferous revelries in the Kunde Habba festival bring people in unison

against the anthropocentric and capitalocentric exploitation of natural resources, especially in the indigenous communities.

Conclusion

The hubris of invincibility has left us in a precarious position, and in the face of the climate crisis and melting glaciers, we are on the verge of submergence. The extractivist tendencies and rampant Capitalocene predation continue unabated, with instances like the authorisation to conduct seismic testing in the Algoa-Outeniqua Basin off the South-East Coast of South Africa which would decimate the marine life of the surrounding ecology on one side, and the 'promise' of "118 governments to triple the world's renewable energy capacity by 2030 at the U.N.'s COP28 climate summit on the other" (Abnett et al., 2023, para. 2).

With the developed countries aiming to fight technology with technology in an attempt to abate the climate crisis, a recentring and decolonization of indigenous pieces of knowledge can provide alternative and sustainable solutions to the climate crisis. The traditional performance cultures of the global South as exemplified through the festival rituals, dances, songs, and art forms foster ecologically sustainable practices and help preserve ecosystems and habitats crucial for non-human lives, raise awareness about climate issues, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation through storytelling and other art forms, and build community cohesion and resilience through collective participation. At a time when "ecosystems are being scrambled… Large Earth systems are being pushed toward any number of tipping points, which can trigger cascades of further, runaway transformations that will irrevocably disrupt and diminish the entire biosphere" (Welz 2023), traditional performative components and customs, like indigenous festivals and rituals surrounding sacred sites, can yield ecological influence, promote environmental justice and formulate declarations advocating for the environmental welfare of the global South.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest.

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