Motion 4 – The environment

**Submitted by: Swansea University Socialist Students**

 *“…all progress in capitalistic agriculture is a progress in the art, not only of robbing the labourer, but of robbing the soil; all progress in increasing the fertility of the soil for a given time, is a progress towards ruining the lasting sources of that fertility.”*

*– Karl Marx, Capital vol 1*

1) Socialist Students recognises that the effects of climate change are one of the greatest threats to humanity of our current period

• Climate Change has already started. Pollution and man-made fluctuations in temperature have already caused irreparable damage to the world and has caused huge suffering. It offers a unique existential threat to the world and to all people. We believe the capitalist class, and their political representatives, have proven themselves to be unable to solve this issue.

2) Socialist Students acknowledges that climate change has arisen as a result of the capitalist system.

• We believe that when it comes to the Environment the Capitalist system is inherently destructive. 71% of Global Emissions are created by 100 of the largest companies and just 8 oil companies are responsible for more atmosphere pollution than the whole of the United States and the mining of Bitcoin, which utilises 1% of all electricity produced (some predictions have claimed that Bitcoin mining uses up the same amount of energy that is produced by Wind turbines upon a global level). These points demonstrate that it is the system of capitalism – and its insatiable pursuit of profits – that has destroyed the environment.

3) For the building of a mass movement of students and workers to transform society along socialist lines and end and reverse climate change

• The new Extinction Rebellion campaign has carried out direct action protests which have drawn attention to the issue of climate change, and reflects a growing mood amongst young people to fight against environmental destruction.

• However, despite these positives, we think that the movement to reverse climate change has to go further than just spontaneous direct actions to raise awareness of these issues. We believe that one of the major problems with current discourse around solving climate change is that it concentrates upon individual responsibility. This ignores that the majority of pollution is caused by large businesses – and therefore that mass collective action, which mobilises working class and young people, is the only solution to ending environmental destruction. Socialist Students stands for a socialist solution to the climate crisis – for the nationalisation of the companies responsible for climate change, as well as the banks and top FTSE 100 companies, under the democratic control and management of workers, students, and young people, to end climate change through the introduction of a green plan of production, green energy and jobs.

**4) Socialist Students supports fossil fuel divestment campaigns nationwide, especially the divestment of universities**

• **Universities across the UK invest money in fossil fuels, supporting and legitimising the widespread environmental damage caused by the fossil fuel industry in pursuit of profit. However, pressure from students has so far led to 69 UK universities committing to a divestment total of £11 billion, and momentum is continuing to grow. It is vital that Socialist Students support these campaigns to weaken the fossil fuel industry and stand in opposition to the capitalist funding of climate change.**