

A LITTLE BOOK OF INSURGENT PLANNING

Stories of collective action in hard times



INSURGENT PLANNING

Insurgent planning is a form of planning that occurs when governments break the social contract and fail to act in the public good. Developed by activists and academics, particularly in the Global South, it involves communities and citizens setting their own agendas, implementing their own actions, and not waiting for elected representatives, or other powerbrokers, to act on their behalf.

As illustrated in this 'little book', insurgent planning is already happening in disadvantaged, dispossessed and marginalised communities all over the world.

As global systems breakdown and resources dwindle, more and more people and places will experience the loss of amenity and basic needs – food, water, shelter etc. For those in the affluent, individualised west, we must learn to see ourselves in the lives of others – those already dwelling in collapse, on the peripheries and in the margins. Not out of fear and despair, but because there is much to learn and much to do – there is planning and action, even in the most desperate of circumstances, to ease the intensifying localised impacts of global collapse.

Insurgent planning is central to the Planned Collapse (pp.12-13) prioritised by [Just Collapse](#) – an activist platform dedicated to socio-ecological justice in the face of inevitable and irreversible global collapse.

Key terms

Justice	- <i>fairness and equity within socio-ecological systems and interactions.</i>
Collapse	- <i>the fall of a socio-ecological system characterized by the loss of complexity, structure, and order.</i>
Planning	- <i>the process of identifying actions required to achieve an outcome.</i>
Insurgent citizenship	- <i>citizenship that is not sanctioned by the state.</i>

THE INSURGENT CITIZEN

Millions of people are already struggling and displaced globally. Numbers are rising rapidly. In a changing climate and collapsing world the notion of citizenship must be redefined.

As more and more people struggle to meet basic needs, those in power may deliberately turn a blind eye or adopt hostile tactics. For struggling communities to act for their own interests, a different understanding of citizenship is required – one that is neither dependent on sanction from the state nor 'blood and soil' connections between geographical places and rights.

The insurgent citizen demands a more equitable and just distribution of rights.

Disclaimer

In this 'little book', we have selected examples from mostly urban places – of communities experiencing hardship and taking action for basic needs. These stories are important in the context of collapse, as over half the world's population now lives in towns and cities. There are also many stories of struggles for socio-ecological justice in remote or wild places that deserve a 'little book' of their own.

Our examples are taken from academic papers, except for one based on personal experience in Tasmania. We acknowledge that our understanding of events and the communities involved is partial and that other perspectives and insights likely exist. We welcome feedback, ideas, and other examples of insurgent planning on our Blog.

ACTION TAKE AWAYS

Existing networks and organisations are key. Taking action through insurgent planning will likely be more effective and sustainable if it comes from existing groups and organisations. In parts of the world yet to feel the grimmer end of collapse, this can include organisations that are not yet collapse aware or accepting, but can respond and adapt as circumstances change. Building connections with these in your local community may be challenging, but remember that these will be the people you will be collapsing with. Check out the [Country Women's Association](#) as an example of an organisation that has the capacity to evolve and respond in collapse.

Large well-funded NGOs are compromised. Unlike more nimble local groups, large NGOs are limited when acting in the best interests of communities and places facing inevitable collapse. Their dependency on donations and grants means that they are compromised. If they tell the truth about the nature and severity of our predicament, they risk losing funding and their supporter base as many people are desperate not to believe the worst. Check out [Greenpeace](#) as an example of corporate greenwashing and hopium.

Re-localisation does not mean isolation. The collapse of global systems will see a contraction of supply chains, transport networks, and communications. Through this radical re-localisation, communities will become increasingly dependent on local environments and people. This does

not necessarily mean working in isolation as insurgent planning can work best when connections are established and maintained with other places. For an example of how to organise yourself as a 'node in a network', check out [Solaris](#) – a network of mutual aid and solidarity which begins in your direct neighbourhood.

Justice, rights, and practical outcomes are partial and relative. Collapse is the consequence of overshoot – using and abusing of the Earth, mainly by the affluent west, way beyond the capacity of natural systems and processes to replenish and recover. In this context, any gains made through insurgent planning will be partial and relative as collapsing systems cannot support rebuilding or regenerating new communities and societies. Instead, we must learn to plan and act during descent and decline, and accept that progressive aspirations need to be re-thought. Check out [A #JustCollapse. WTF?](#) for more details.

Easing the impacts of collapse does not make things easy. Insurgent planning is useful for equipping communities to respond meaningfully to the impacts of collapse and other adverse circumstances. It does not bring about 'system change' or revolution; it cannot stop collapse, and it does not 'fix' the horrors and decay that are coming for us all. Even if our descent is eased, it will not be easy. We do what we can, where we can within the grim reality of extreme overshoot. Check out [Sri Lanka](#) as an example of real-time collapse.

VILLAS OF BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

Bastia, T. and Bressán, J.M. (2018) Between a guest and an okupa: Migration and the making of insurgent citizenship in Buenos Aires' informal settlement. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 50(1): 31-50.

Buenos Aires – a city of almost 3 million people – has a long history of migration and informal settlements. Such settlements, known as *villas*, are part of the fabric of the city and are home to people from many different places who have moved in pursuit of opportunities or been displaced through economic downturns. Almost 1.4 million people live in the over 1000 *villas* of Buenos Aires.

Government interventions have granted legal access to education, health, housing, and work for migrants, but access to basic rights – the rights of full citizens – remain limited. Many work in garment sweatshops or on unregulated building sites. Many do not possess the finances or history to access formal housing. With no stable employment and no adequate housing, they live in the *villas*.

The *villas* and their residents have been blamed and vilified for a range of malfeasance – adding to their economic and social exclusion.

The response

For decades, residents of the *villas* have taken collective action demanding formal recognition of property rights and the provision of basic services from government. Some initiatives are local in focus, like soup kitchens, and others are networked to other places and regions and have a broader political agenda.

While many formal NGOs in the city act for the rights of different groups based on ethnicity irrespective of socio-economic status, collective action in

the *villas* is based on class and place. There are times when the *villas* have had to act in opposition to the NGOs as a way of addressing basic needs and living standards.

In December 2010, 13,000 people peacefully occupied Parque Indoamericano in the south of Buenos Aires. For the *villas*, they demanded a housing improvement plan that had been promised by government years earlier. Tensions grew as some NGOs became active in demobilising and undermining the occupation of the park. The NGOs took the position that those occupying the park and living in the *villas* were guests in the city, not citizens and that they should be grateful for what they had. The residents of the *villas*, on the other hand, were embracing the role of insurgent citizens – active, political citizens who address issues and raise claims to government for basic rights.

Refuse to be made a second-class citizen! Seize power! Take action and claim your rights to a Just Collapse!

Image: Parque Indoamericano



COBBS CREEK IN WEST PHILADELPHIA, UNITED STATES

Brownlow, A. (2011) Between rights and responsibilities: Insurgent performance in an invisible landscape. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 43: 1268-1286.

Cobbs Creek is a predominantly Africa American neighbourhood in west Philadelphia. From the 1970s Cobbs Creek was an epicentre of black political activism and community organisation – the civil rights movement, Black Panthers and MOVE. More recently it has become a place characterised by high unemployment, vacant and undervalued housing, pockets of poverty, and violent crime. It has suffered systematic and racialized political neglect that has created distrust and disempowered the community.

This includes active, and passive, exclusion of residents from the management and restoration of local parkland. Through time, once a hive of social and political activity, Cobbs Creek Park had become neglected and under-resourced by local authorities, and a place of violence and vice within the community.

In this atmosphere of neglect, for decades Cobb Creek residents had chosen not to engage with their local park and chose, instead, to withhold the free community labour often drawn upon by governments for park revitalisation projects.

The response

Then, over a five-year period, residents made a change. In unprecedented numbers and with a high level of collective commitment, they chose to volunteer their time and labour for the restoration of Cobbs Creek Park. They did this, not because it was part of the governments' agenda or as an environmental response, but on their own terms.

Residents reclaimed the Park as their own space and in the process exposed racialized injustice and re-enacted a sense of community. In other words, they took insurgent action and reinstated a scene of citizenship and belonging.

Act on your own terms! Claim your rights as a community - take what's yours!

'The City of Philadelphia will move in and take away our history. The University of Pennsylvania is moving in and will take it away. They are eyeing [our] community [for gentrification] ... [The community] has never been coordinated. We're on different pages but we have the same agenda taking back the park... By saving the park we'll be able to save the community.'
Local resident



Image source: Cobbs Creek Community Environmental Centre

FAVELAS IN RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

Cruz, G., van Loyen, C. and Sánchez, F. (2021) Culture, territory and action: The Providência favela's response to Covid-19. *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development* 13(3): 481-495.

Friendly, A. (2020) Insurgent planning in pandemic times: The Case of Rio de Janeiro. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 46(1): 115-125.

There are more than 1000 favelas within Rio de Janeiro – informal and largely poor communities that are the legacy of marginalisation, evictions and poverty. These communities are largely excluded from the formally planning of the city. Many places have only limited access to drinking water, the quality of housing contributes to the spread of diseases, and insecure employment is the norm. Many are dominated by drug gangs and exposed to police violence.

When the Covid pandemic began, the favelas of Rio de Janeiro were hit hard. Their informal nature and pre-existing vulnerabilities exacerbated the impacts of the pandemic. This was further compounded by government inaction and misdirection.

Although the favelas can be described as informal settlements, or even slums, they continue to evolve internal structures and arrangements of their own, independent of government. In the Providência favela, for example, prior to the pandemic there were organisations working from within the favela on arts, culture, tourism, de-stigmatisation, and rising awareness of the area's history in relation to slavery.

The response

In response to the impacts of the pandemic and government failure, a committee was formed comprising local groups and networks, the SOS Providência – Região Portuária Emergency Committee. To minimise the impacts of the virus on the Providência favela, and fill the gap left by government authorities, they initiated education campaigns, supported residents in accessing financial support, and monitored the occurrence and spread of the virus. The latter included teams going door-to-door during isolation periods to ascertain the needs and well-being of each household.

Supplies of food, fuel and medical essentials were systematically distributed, and handwashing stations installed.

'...the government says something... And we say the opposite, because the people who come see that the reality at a time like this, is to deal with hunger, with the lack of money to pay rent, with the lack of documentation to apply for basic income, with the lack of food, with illness, in short, with numerous problems'. Local resident

The effectiveness of this response was underpinned by organisations and networks that existed prior to the pandemic though had not previously focused on health, and to the continuous evolution of these organisations and networks in response to changing circumstances. In the Complexo da Maré – a favela with a population of 140,000 residents – a similar group formed from existing organisations and networks that had previously worked on countering human rights violations and advancing social justice. This group, as one resident describes, was able *'to reach people that the government does not reach ... because [the government] doesn't look at the favela and the periphery as if they were citizens by right'.*

All humans have the right to human rights! Resist oppression through the power of collective action!



Image source: [Aljezeera](#)

REPUBLIC OF BURYATIA, RUSSIA

Sweet, E.L. and Chakars, M. (2010) Identity, culture, land, and language: Stories of insurgent planning in the Republic of Buryatia, Russia. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 30(2): 198-209.

Indigenous peoples in Russia, as in many parts of the world, continue to be encroached upon by centralised decision-making concerning land, culture, and economic development. This includes the Buryats, peoples of Mongolia who, for centuries, have inhabited the area around the east-west trade routes. Their culture is diverse and informed by both traditional shamanic practices and the influence of Buddhism.

Although granted a significant level of autonomy in the early 19th century, immigration into the region in the 20th century placed pressure on their land and culture. Self-rule was dissolved, and land confiscated by regional authorities. Following World War II, there were high levels of education and professional attainment by Buryat in the region, though this did not equate to a return to self-rule, and the number of people speaking the traditional language plummeted in favour of Russian.

The response

In the post-Soviet period, the Buryat have continued to push for their rights and freedom. Most recently, there have been concerted efforts to revive cultural events, relearn the language, and resist the amalgamation of land and territory by the centralised authorities that further threatens the

connections and claims of the Buryat to their land. The 'Young Scholars', for example, is a group of educated Buryat under the age of 40, who carry out a range of cultural and protest activities targeting centralised reforms that threaten their culture – street protest, letter writing, news coverage and language education initiatives. These and other activities, such as shamanic ceremonies, have been disrupted by the authorities.

The Buryat continue to adapt their diverse and dynamic culture in this resistance. They choose to use the Russian language at times – appropriating the power of this language for their own ends and not to meet the expectations of integration held by authorities.

Defy assimilation! Defend cultural diversity by taking common action!

Sagaalga – translated, White Month – is a Buryat Buddhist festival marking the beginning of the New Year and the coming of spring. Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)



LOS PLATANITOS IN SANTO DOMINGO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Sletto, B. (2021) Informal landscapes and the performative placing of insurgent planning. *Planning Theory* 20(2): 157-174.

The informal settlement of *Los Platanitos* is a legacy of 1980's economic reform and rural-urban migration. In response to a lack of affordable housing, new residents constructed homes on unwanted land along the city's creeks, in steep canyons, and along the two major rivers.

Los Platanitos is built on informal landfill in the floodplains of one of these rivers. The homes are made of salvaged materials – empty oil barrels, discarded plywood, and sheets of metal. The waterway has become an open sewer that is prone to flooding, and the government provides few services to the area. The area and its residents are characterised by government and planners as 'pathological' and 'squatters' who participate in crime and denigrating the local environment.

The response

Residents of *Los Platanitos* have long acted to protect and sustain their community. An alternative economy has developed that includes communal labour, barter systems, and lending. When state-run slum and environment improvement initiatives have acted to further disadvantage and marginalise some residents, these have been challenged and opposed.

In an otherwise male dominated environment, initiatives have also

empowered women. The women's group, *Mujeres Unidas*, contributes to the local economy and a sense of community through a vermicomposting project. This project converts household waste through worm composting to create a source of income, while also addressing the problem of disposing of this waste because of a lack of government waste collection.

Many women in the community also grow and use plants to maintain the cultural skills and practices of plant-based healing. In fact, there are 96 types of plants grown in *Los Platanitos* by 90% of households – some for food, others for decoration and many for medical purposes. These plants and gardening practices form part of the communities adaptation, and resilience, to economic, environmental and social risks, and acts to emotionally sustain individuals and the community by helping to maintain a sense of place and belonging.

Make a home and fight to keep it! Empower women! Grow your own!

Image source: [Project Canada](#)



THE INDIGNADOS, SPAIN

García-Lamarca, M. (2017) From occupying plazas to recuperating housing: Insurgent practices in Spain. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 41(1): 37-53.

In 2011, for six weeks, tens of thousands of people occupied city plazas across Spain calling for 'REAL democracy now!' and proclaiming 'We are not merchandise in the hands of bankers and politicians.' These *indignados* (indignant ones) were responding to and critiquing the power of the political and financial class.

Following the occupation, numerous autonomous neighbourhood assemblies were formed as a means on progressing localised projects and responses. This included groups focusing on housing rights such as the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (PAH, or Platform for Mortgage-affected People) which has now expanded across Spain. Housing is one of the most urgent social issues in this country with hundreds of thousands of households forced to stop paying mortgages and facing eviction due to unemployment, illness and unaffordable repayment increases. Many of those affected joined PAH and initiated responses such as actively preventing evictions, taking back empty bank-owned houses for re-occupation by evicted or homeless families, and tackling what has been described as a 'mortgage scam' that left households to repay debts for life following eviction.

Established in 2009, by 2016, PAH had successfully blocked over 2000 evictions across the country. Part of this success is based on working with affected households to diminish the guilt and shame associated with debt and loss of housing, and foregrounding the structural, rather than individual reasons, why this loss has taken place. In this, disempowered evictees become insurgent citizens. This empowerment also frames the taking back of empty bank-owned houses, exemplified by the catchcry, 'take and do instead of ask and wait'. Up to 2016, 2500 people have been rehoused this way with about 50 buildings retaken.

Organise! Take power! Don't let big money steal your future!

'They call it democracy and it is not'. [Image source](#)



NAIROBI, KENYA

Butcher, S. and Frediani, A.A. (2014) Insurgent citizenship practices: The case of Muungano wa Wanavijiji in Nairobi, Kenya. *City* 18(2): 119-133.

In Nairobi, 60% of the city population resides in just 5% of the city area. These are predominantly poor and informal settlements with no sanitation, electricity, water, or infrastructure. Some facilities are provided informally, but charges can be excessive, exceeding those for formal settlements. This lack of security is compounded by informal land sales and leasing. Landlords, for example, can assert ownership and collect rent with no formal recognition of actual ownership, and tenants can be left vulnerable to eviction if this ownership is contested. In these informal settlements, residents have few legal rights or recourse under Kenyan law.

The response

Muungano wa Wanavijiji is a federation of the urban poor established in the 1990s. It has over 25,000 members across nine Kenyan cities. Three strategies shape successful outcomes of the *Muungano* – all based on developing and sustaining a sense of insurgent citizenship, and acknowledging the complexities of achieving shared, collective goals: Creating collective, insurgent identities; acting from a position of disadvantage and marginality; and establishing strategic partnerships for wider change as well as immediate tangible outcomes.

Kambimoto is one informal community of around 270 households that is at high risk of fire due to its high density and unsafe building materials. *Muungano* worked in initiating a trial to upgrade 34 of these homes as a means of improving well-being, housing rights and a sense of empowerment. In the process of selecting which homes would be upgraded, disputes emerged. Landlords – who were also local residents – were concerned about losing ownership of their multiple properties. Tenants were concerned about on-going and long-term housing insecurity. Protracted negotiations resulted in the allocation of one housing plot per household, regardless of prior claims to multiple structures. Landlords relinquished their claims to multiple properties in this process, achieving a

more formalised tenure for tenants. As of 2014, 70 homes had been upgraded.

Kosovo is another informal community and its 6000 residents had no formal access to water. A black market run by informal militias was supplying water to residents by illegally tapping a supply provided by the Kenyan Water Company. The prices charged by the militias were prohibitively high for many. So *Muungano* partnered with the Kenyan Water Company with the aim of securing a formalised fairly priced water supply. This proved complicated due to piping water through an informal occupied land, disputes over land ownership, and the risk of the system being hijacked by the militias. As negotiations stalled, *Muungano* led the construction of an example of water infrastructure – the community insurgently dug pipe trenches with hook-ups for each home. This demonstration of community planning eventually convinced the Water Company to support a flexible system in which residents built and managed connections to the main street-level piping.

Take action for health, home and hygiene! Plumb your own!

Image source: [Muungano wa Wanavijiji](#)



STYX VALLEY AND TARKINE IN TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

Tasmania is a small island state in the southeast of Australia with extensive tracts of wild country and oldgrowth forest. Forty percent of the state is protected from logging, mining and development. Much of this lies within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA). However, the boundaries of this and other conservation areas tend to exclude places desirable for logging and mining, even if these include threatened ecosystems, endangered species, unique geomorphology, and other socio-ecological values.

The Tasmanian State Government has long supported new dams, mines, clear-felling and woodchipping in these areas. This has been strongly opposed by environmental and community groups with some success. For example, in 1982, after years of lobbying, legal action, and a huge disruptive blockade, the Franklin River was saved from damming and protected as part of the TWWHA. However, these gains are set against the backdrop of on-going ecological destruction and exploitation in places like the Styx Valley – home to the world’s tallest flowering plants, and the Tarkine – an extensive tract of temperate rainforest.

The response

Groups and individuals have worked for decades to protect both the Styx and the Tarkine. In the early 2000s, the Wilderness Society adopted a new approach. They effectively took ownership of government-controlled land designated for logging. They built walking tracks, installed toilets, and sign-posted outstanding features – towering trees, massive cut stumps, stark clear-felled coupes, picturesque glades, and swimming holes. One tree was decorated and became the world’s tallest Christmas tree. The areas were ‘opened’ to the public with pamphlets promoting self-drive tours, and regular bus tours. Thousands of visitors came and, in combination with protest actions and lobbying, some places received protection. The fight for the remaining forests and wild places continues.

Don’t ask permission! Be a force for nature! Just do it!

Image source: [The Wilderness Society](#)



A #PLANNEDCOLLAPSE. WTF?

'Planning' and 'collapse' are not normally two words that would work together. In these unprecedented times, we explain not only how they do work together but how, in combination, they redefine the parameters of political struggle and activism, and how people can begin work for a planned collapse.

Developed during a period of history marked by the ideal of progress, planning now faces a crisis. We have been in overshoot for 50 years. Driven largely by wealthy nations, we are using and consuming more, through extraction, production, land clearing and industrial agriculture, than the planet can replenish each year. At the same time, we are emitting, wasting, and polluting more than the planet can effectively process. Overshoot thereby diminishes the productive capacity, and the carrying capacity, of our biosphere.

Earth's climate and ecological systems are collapsing, and as they go, so too, inevitably, does global modern techno-industrial civilization. While some might proclaim this inevitability, 'good news', the reality is that life on earth will not benefit from this eventuality.

Global modern techno-industrial civilisation is dependent on fossil fuels, enabling eight billion people to inhabit the earth. If fossil fuel use stops, there is no viable, alternative way of feeding so many. Perversely, atmospheric pollution from fossil fuel use also protects us from some global warming. Removing these pollutants would result in a rise in global temperature. We collapse if we continue using fossil fuels. We collapse if we don't.

Understanding the inevitability of collapse demands that instead of planning on the up, we must learn to plan on the down.

Planning rules and regulations are, for many people, their only experience of planning. Planning is also about setting agendas and identifying actions to meet these agendas. Industrialization and market-based economies do not, intuitively, create habitable places. Despite the 'invisible hand of the market,'

over one billion people live in slums or informal settlements, while others are homeless and seeking refuge. Production and consumption not only can cause harm to immediate environments but can also export negative impacts to other places. In response to the uninhabitable places created by global industrial civilisation, modern western planning sets agendas for developing places that are more liveable, sustainable, and/or profitable.

Insurgent planning is a form of planning that occurs when governments break the social contract and fail to act in the public good. Developed by activists and academics, particularly in the Global South, insurgent planning turns modern western planning on its head. Typically, professional planners identify and set agendas on behalf of government. Conversely, insurgent planning does not rely on governments for decision-making and action. Instead, communities and citizens exert and extend power by setting their own agendas and implementing their own actions. They do not wait for elected representatives, or other powerbrokers, to act on their behalf. They act outside of formal processes and structures to achieve more equitable outcomes. By nature, insurgent planning is not sanctioned by government.



For example, in South Africa, the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign resisted forced eviction of informal communities along a highway that linked Cape Town's international airport to the city. Comprised of residents and organisers from poor townships, this Campaign demanded rights to shelter and basic services. Actions included,

'...informal negotiations with the agents of forced eviction to ignore or postpone its implementation, ...capacity building and creating their own data about the plight of evicted or threatened families, ...operating weekly soup kitchens to feed children, ...defiant collective actions such as reconnection of disconnected services by so-called 'struggle plumbers and electricians' and relocation of evicted families back into their housing units, ...mass mobilizations and protests, sit-ins, and land invasions – as well as the use of courts and legal claims' (Miraftab, 2009).

Climate action and environmentalism tend to be based on a gross misconception – that government is, invariably, the central decision-maker. Because of this, green agendas have evolved to align with the agendas of government, namely by adopting an 'infinite growth on a finite planet' mentality – be this 'green' growth or 'sustainable' growth. As collapse does not 'fit' within a growth paradigm, collapse is not – cannot – be part of these agendas. Insurgent planning, however, can accommodate collapse because communities and citizens set their own agendas and act irrespective of government and other established power structures.

Through insurgent planning, governments still have a role to play, but this role is defined by the agenda of insurgent communities and citizens, not the other way round. Communities, for example, may be able to locally plan and act for food security. Larger scale issues, however, will likely need to be acted on by government, such as the decommissioning of nuclear power plants – these pose a toxic risk following societal collapse and decommissioning requires significant technical expertise and resources.

By failing to act decisively on the climate/ecological crisis, governments and other powerbrokers, have violated the social contract. This means, as

part of an insurgent planning agenda, they can also be held to account for their inaction.

Setting an insurgent agenda can take some time. It starts with a community or group working to establish a shared vision, goals and objectives, as part of a strategic plan. The Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign, for example, shared a vision of access for all to shelter and basic services. To meet these shared objectives, actions are then identified. In Cape Town, this included disruptive actions, as well as utilising existing structures such as the legal system.

As collapse unfolds, plans and actions will need to adapt and change. The reality is that what makes sense today may not make sense in the future. Importantly, insurgent planning within collapse comes with a sober appreciation that, in the end, there will be no 'win'. After 50 years of overshoot, no amount of human agency can turn collapse around, and we can only do what we can do. In understanding that although death will surely come for us all, today is not that day, and there is plenty yet to fight for on the way down.

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Miraftab, F. (2020) Insurgency and juxtacity in the age of urban divides. *Urban Forum* 31:433–441.

Toilet Wars

Fighting for their right for adequate sanitation, the poor in Cape Town townships have taken decisive action. Bureaucratic terminology describing the lack of toilets as a 'service delivery backlog' acted to obscure the rights and demands of citizens. In response, residents 'cracked the shits' – slinging poo in an international airport terminal and at the mayor's house, and lining up in their hundreds to use the toilets in wealthy suburbs.

Crack the shits! And, good luck out there!