

Defining energy sovereignty

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Energy sovereignty is the right of conscious individuals, communities and peoples to make their own decisions on energy generation, distribution and consumption in a way that is appropriate within their ecological, social, economic and cultural circumstances, provided that these do not affect others negatively.

In a period of indignation from the abuse of power by an oligarchy, society demands a new wave of democracy in the energy world (as in other spheres). If sovereignty refers to power, energy sovereignty refers to where power resides in energy affairs. Facing an approach such as state sovereignty, based on the legitimacy of States even if they have been co-opted by extractive elites, peoples' sovereignty defends the right of individuals, communities and peoples to decide on the issues which affect them and to do politics on a daily basis. The energy sovereignty to which we refer distances itself from border defence and the interests aligned with those of the elites, denounces a culture that promotes delegating decisions to the assumed neutrality of experts, their technocratic planning and decision making from the top. Furthermore, it opposes the exclusion of traditional knowledge, active participation of citizens and co-responsibility.

Inspired by the definition of food sovereignty of La Vía Campesina, energy sovereignty could be defined as the right of conscious individuals, communities and peoples to make their own decisions on energy generation, distribution and consumption in a way that is appropriate within their ecological, social, economic and cultural circumstances, provided that these do not affect others negatively. Each person and each community has the right to the amount and type of energy necessary to sustain itself and its

group, and the necessary resources to sustain it, provided it does not externalise negative environmental, social or economic impacts. In conclusion, it does not generate anti-cooperation.

In the same way, state sovereignty refers to energy independence and security as the use of an undetermined quantity of resources that are considered necessary to keep domestic economies running at full power (satisfying all types of consumption without consideration


originated in oligopoly.

Furthermore, reaching energy sovereignty means that communities can decide on energy matters without interference and servitude like those required by fiduciary duty, the requirement to increase profits and satisfy shareholders to which private enterprises are currently tied and which is fruit of the commodification of Energy. To prioritize the people's control over a common such as energy it is necessary to go beyond the dilemma between the public and private sector, a logic from which all other viewpoints are excluded.

On the contrary, structures and economic actors should be promoted that liberate us from the aforementioned servitude and permit the population to make their own decisions freely and among equals following the example of current cooperatives which commercialize energy.

Energy sovereignty (of the peoples) is also a concept that defends the sovereignty of all communities. Consequently, respecting the energy sovereignty of all peoples [implies] involves saving and rationalizing the use of common resources so as not to interfere negatively in the energy sovereignty of other communities nor in that of future generations by creating environmental problems (such as climate change or generation of highly radioactive residue), or by 'resource grabbing', or war.

For this it is necessary to relocate the processes of energy generation and distribution in a double sense: physically bringing this closer to the area of use as well as facilitating the participation of the people in the decision making process.

Energy sovereignty is the path towards social empowerment that will transform the structures of oligopoly and create new realities from below, by those at the bottom for those at the bottom. In energy too. 



(Catalan Network for Energy Sovereignty)

of its origin), while for peoples' sovereignty, energy sovereignty means that all people have the right to access energies in decent conditions and in sufficient and equal amount. While the 'culture of experts' tries to improve the public's 'energy literacy', (Energy understood as an abstract entity, homogenous, to be speculated upon) via a vertical, hierarchical and one-directional learning process. From the standpoint of energy sovereignty, it is understood that 'energy' is a complex reality, multidimensional and asymmetric and the perspectives of all the agents affected must be considered. In consequence, it is necessary to de-monopolize speculation and to generate an extended community of equals formed by all those who wish to begin a dialogue and decide. Members would provide their facts, which include essential knowledge, so as to provide the energies necessary to satisfy the people. It would refer to certain and diverse energies, distinct of the commodified Energy

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