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**GLAWCAL  
COMMENT #191**

**CAPITALISM AND THE ENVIRON-  
MENT**

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*Based on*

**Toni Ruuska "Capitalism and the ab-  
solute contradiction in the Anthro-  
cene"**



**gLAWcal**  
Global Law Initiatives for Sustainable Development

## A gLAWcal comment on Toni Ruuska "Capitalism and the absolute contradiction in the Anthropocene" in Pasi Heikkurinen (Ed.) Sustainability and Peaceful Coexistence for the Anthropocene.

edy of capitalism-in-nature, in this respect, in the past and in the present is and has seemingly been the fact that the capitalist economic structure cannot change the way it treats its environment. In this respect, it certainly is important to focus the attention on these issues along with the aim of finding alternative ways beyond capitalism.

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Humanity seems to be a dominating geological force of our time. In this article, three characteristics of this phenomenon are highlighted: first, the amount of people on this planet has surged – humans inhabit more land; secondly, humans have created technologies that cause far greater damage than ever before; thirdly, the dominating economic structure, capitalism, according to Magdoff and Foster, neither knows nor accepts limits to its expansion. What is extremely important in this chapter is the concept of capitalism; it seems to expand its scope in order to circulate and accumulate capital and, as a consequence, recreate itself. Given this, there is a sort of juxtaposition between capitalism and our natural resources, the planet in other words. What needs to be considered is that these resources are finite and clearly not in line with the auto-reproducing nature of capitalism. The basis of capitalism, after all, is the concept of converting yesterday's profit into capital. Chapter 4 is particularly focused on capitalism in the Anthropocene, including some eco-Marxist and neo-Marxist referements. What I find extremely interesting among the conclusions is the idea of the tragedy of capitalism-in-nature in the sense that capitalism cannot change the way it treats its environment. They seem to be two diametrically opposed concepts. In the author's opinion, every kind of environmental awareness should be matched with a strong opposition towards capitalism. In his opinion, capitalism constitutes the hard core of the current human-caused ecological crisis. The trag-

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