

**Where have all the flowers gone?  
To the military-industrial complex, of course! Challenging militarism  
through environmentalism**

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*Abstract:*

While global leaders, scientists and citizens gather in various forums to decry and strategise around the impending climate crisis, one key pre-requisite for long-lasting global cooperation is ignored... peace.

Though intrinsically understood – and universally desired– peace as a concept has been relegated to the realm of the impossible – the unimaginable – and from an environmental campaign organisation perspective – unrealistic, unachievable and therefore unstrategic – an un-SMART goal!

Peace is a pre-cursor to “sustainability” - and “sustainability” is necessary for ongoing peace, yet the peace and environment movements and their associated legal and social networks seldom join forces to challenge the structures which impede them.

On a global level, we call for partnerships to tackle climate change, humanitarian and economic issues, yet the negotiations are premised upon the existence of 15,000 nuclear weapons in the hands of a few economic powerhouses. All dialogue sits upon the threat of the use of force.

Civil society’s call for sustainability cannot be achieved while nuclear weapons exist and where economies and psychologies of war are the norm.

On a local level we call for the protection of the Great Barrier Reef or creation of marine parks without challenging the military use of these environments. The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, permits military nuclear systems – ie weapons and nuclear ships thus allowing Australia to host some of the world’s largest military operations, US-AUS joint training in the GBRMP, Coral, Arafura and Timor Seas. Demilitarisation of these ecosystems is never explored.

While de-colonisation is gaining some acceptance (or understanding) dismantling the underlying economic and military structures are no-go zones for the environment movement.

Is the military sacrosanct? Is it just too hard? Or are people scared? What are the obstacles and opportunities associated with marrying anti-militarism with action for the environment?

*Keywords:* ecocide, environment, militarism, nuclear weapons, peace, sustainability.

**BIOGRAPHY**

Robin Taubenfeld is US-born Nuclear-Free campaigner with Friends of the Earth Brisbane and a recipient of a Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom’s Peacewomen Award 2016. 6 months in NT opposing the Jabiluka uranium mine helped Robin understand that uranium is as much a social justice as an environmental issue – in the broader picture, much more a political issue than an economic one. Since that time, Robin has spent much of her time attempting to make the links between peace, social justice and environmental issues, with a focus on – militarisation, nuclearisation and colonisation in Australia and the Pacific.