Turning the World Upside Down: Carnivalesque, Eco-Humour and Environmental Critique in Rohan Chakravarty's *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* and *Pugmarks and Carbon Footprint*

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Abstract

This research situates Rohan Chakravarty's *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* and *Pugmarks and Carbon Footprints* within a rigorous interdisciplinary framework, synthesizing Mikhail Bakhtin's Carnivalesque, Arne Naess's Deep Ecology, and edutainment. It addresses a salient lacuna in ecocritical scholarship: the marginalization of graphic satire as a formidable mode of environmental thought. The study contends that "green humour" functions as a sophisticated ecocritical strategy and a radical form of eco-activism. By leveraging Bakhtinian mechanisms—specifically hierarchy reversal and the de-crowning of anthropocentric authority—Chakravarty exposes systemic hypocrisies in global conservation. Through the lens of edutainment, the analysis demonstrates how complex data is translated into an accessible affective register, bypassing "environmental fatigue" to foster ethical engagement. Ultimately, the subversive laughter of the carnival serves as a regenerative force, affirming Deep Ecology principles and transforming existential despair into a resilient public environmental consciousness.

Introduction

Climate change and animal-related issues are frequently addressed as separate concerns in dominant media narratives and policy frameworks, despite their deep structural entanglement. Empirical research demonstrates that animal husbandry is a major contributor to environmental degradation, accounting for nearly 26% of total anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and thus playing a significant role in accelerating climate change (Poore and Nemecek 2018). The IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Land (2019) further reinforces this connection by indicating that plant-based diets can substantially reduce emissions when compared to diets

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Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 Vol. 26:1 January 2026
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reliant on animal products, although political and ideological resistance continues to impede recognition of the animal agriculture sector's responsibility in the climate crisis (Lahsen 2017). Simultaneously, large-scale land-use change driven by agricultural expansion has placed terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems under severe pressure, with approximately one million species currently facing the threat of extinction (S. Díaz et al. 2019). Climate change compounds this biodiversity crisis by disrupting essential ecological processes such as pollination and carbon storage carried out by birds, insects, and small mammals (Schmitz et al. 2018). In response to the difficulty of communicating these interconnected crises, climate fiction has emerged within ecocriticism as a critical narrative mode capable of rendering complex environmental realities more legible and affectively resonant. Scholars such as Buell (2001), Heise (2008), and Ghosh (2016) advocate narrative frameworks that foreground global interdependence and eco-cosmopolitan environmentalism in order to address the uneven risks posed by climate change. Situated within this literary and visual tradition, Rohan Chakravarty's climate change comic books *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* (2021) and *Pugmarks and Carbon Footprint* (2023), disseminated through digital platforms such as Instagram, offers a satirical yet incisive engagement with ecological breakdown. By foregrounding animals as central figures, the comics articulate climate change through their symbolic resonance, ecological vulnerability, and material agency, thereby reframing environmental degradation as a multispecies crisis and establishing a critical space for rethinking human–animal relations in the Anthropocene.

There is an urgent need for effective conservation communication, particularly because wildlife and ecological crises lack the visibility mechanisms available to celebrities or politicians, who can manufacture controversies or media spectacles to remain in public attention. Nonhuman lives and ecosystems, by contrast, cannot speak, perform, or compete within attention-driven media economies. This communicative gap necessitates creative intermediaries who can translate ecological urgency into accessible public discourse. Artists such as Rohan Chakravarty function as such spokespersons by mobilizing humour, satire, and anthropomorphism to give animals a public voice. As environmental communication scholars argue, conservation narratives gain traction when they are emotionally engaging and culturally resonant rather than purely informational (Nisbet, 2009). Chakravarty's comics exemplify this approach by transforming animals into witty commentators on their own precarity, thereby sustaining visibility for conservation issues without resorting to sensationalism. In doing so, his work demonstrates how creative mediation can counter the structural invisibility of wildlife within contemporary media cultures and reframe conservation as a matter of shared ethical and social responsibility with light and humorous mood which he terms "Green Humour".

Rohan Chakravarty received the prestigious first prize from The United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) and the French Government for his climate change illustrations and is also well recognized by Sanctuary Nature Foundation for his work which promotes wildlife and conservation through cartoons. He defines "Green Humour" as a form of environmental communication that uses humour as an entry point into conservation discourse, rather than as an end in itself. For Chakravarty, humour functions as a strategic, non-preachy mode of engagement that simplifies complex ecological issues without diluting their seriousness. In his introduction to *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* (2021), he explains that animals in his comics contribute to conservation in three key ways: they convey environmental messages

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without sounding moralistic, remove scientific jargon to make information more accessible and memorable, and cultivate curiosity and respect for the natural world among readers (Chakravarty, 2021, p. 12). Thus, green humour, in Chakravarty's formulation, is educational, affective, and relational. It relies on irony, satire, and anthropomorphised animal voices to critique anthropocentric development models and environmental mismanagement while fostering empathy toward non-human life. Rather than invoking fear or guilt, green humour seeks to reframe ecological crises through wit, enabling readers to engage with issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and human–animal conflict in ways that are emotionally sustainable and cognitively accessible. Importantly, this humour does not trivialise environmental damage; instead, it opens up imaginative and ethical space for coexistence, responsibility, and ecological awareness grounded in everyday understanding.

As creative mediators of environmental discourse, many writers and visual artists tend to privilege charismatic or "flagship" species—such as tigers, lions, or birds—while overlooking the less visible yet foundational components of ecological systems. Although numerous cartoons address wildlife conservation, they often do so with limited engagement with scientific accuracy. A recurring example is the casual juxtaposition of polar bears and penguins within the same visual frame, despite their inhabiting opposite poles. Chakravarty, while exercising artistic freedom in his cartoons, remains attentive to ecological and biological correctness and consciously avoids distorting scientific realities. This careful negotiation between factual rigour and comic expression renders his practice both intellectually demanding and aesthetically compelling, as it sustains humour without compromising scientific integrity.

Green Humour for a Greying Planet (2021) and *Pugmarks and Carbon Footprints* (2023) can be productively situated within the Indian tradition of the comics digest or pocket book, albeit with significant formal and ideological revisions. Structurally, the book resembles anthology-based magazines such as *Tinkle* or *Chandamama* in its compilation of short, self-contained comic strips that permit non-linear, episodic reading and encourage circulation across age groups, reinforcing what Indian comics scholars identify as a "family read" culture rather than a collectible artefact (Nayar, 2006). This accessibility can be understood through Scott McCloud's assertion that comics function through "amplification through simplification," a process that enables complex ideas to be communicated to broader audiences without dependence on specialized knowledge (McCloud, 1993). However, Chakravarty repurposes this familiar digest format toward explicitly ecological and political ends. Unlike the escapist or moral-didactic orientation of traditional digests, *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* mobilizes satire and humour as tools of environmental critique, aligning with Hillary Chute's argument that comics are particularly adept at addressing urgent social issues through the interplay of visual economy and narrative immediacy (Chute, 2016). In this sense, Chakravarty's comic book may be read as an Anthropocene reworking of the Indian digest form, retaining its mass appeal and portability while transforming it into a medium for ecological pedagogy, activism, and critique of anthropocentric development paradigms. The comics form possesses distinctive formal and affective qualities that make it especially effective for activist purposes, where capturing attention, communicating a cause, and eliciting emotional engagement are central objectives. In an interview discussed by comics scholar Dominic Davies (2017, 2–3), artist Kate Evans emphasizes several strengths of the medium, particularly its immediacy and accessibility. She notes that comics allow readers to identify

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closely with characters, internalize the textual voice as their own, and respond to emotions expressed visually through gestures and facial cues. Evans further argues that comics, the static art medium are particularly apt for narrating experiences of trauma, especially when anonymity is necessary, since names and physical features can be altered while still presenting figures that remain recognisably human. Additionally, the narrative flexibility of comics enables the careful incorporation of humour, which helps mitigate the emotional heaviness of difficult subject matter (Davies 2017, 2–3). Humour, irony, and satire thus function as prominent rhetorical devices within comics, as illustrated in Furmark's introductory example. In this context, satire may be understood as a "work of art which uses humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticise prevailing immorality or foolishness, esp. as a form of social or political commentary" (Oxford English Dictionary). Irony, similarly, is described by the Oxford Dictionary as "the funny or strange aspect of a situation that is very different from what you expect" (https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com)

 Rohan Chakravarty's *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* (2021) and *Pugmarks and Carbon Footprint* (2023) is an anthology that brings together animal-centric comic strips circulated across multiple platforms between 2012 and 2020. The collection employs satire as a critical device to question dominant models of development that rely on a paternalistic ethic of stewardship, instead advocating forms of interspecies sociality that are reciprocal, enduring, and resilient. Several strips are shaped by the context of the coronavirus pandemic, using it as a lens to foreground the dangers of wildlife trade and the broader ecological disruptions that follow. While the cartoons consistently critique human-induced environmental destruction, they also register moments of respect toward humans, particularly those engaged in conservation work. Within the narrative universe of the comics, wildlife conservationists, field biologists, herpetologists, and ornithologists are represented by animal characters as protectors of specific species. Rohan Chakravarty's works reject the Cartesian assumption of animals' "lack of speech," and grant them voice, memory, and narrative agency. Chakravarty's animal characters, as products of transculturation, talk about man-made changes in human terms and propose the relevance of biodiversity by putting humans in the object position. The volume brings together a thoughtfully curated collection of Chakravarty's cartoons, organised thematically around aspects of the natural environment, including Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, Amphibians, Invertebrates, Underwater Life, and Flora. Alongside these biological categories, the book also addresses broader concerns such as Man–Animal Conflict, Climate Change, Ecological Balance, Wildlife Science, and Conservation, foregrounding the ethical and ecological responsibilities that shape contemporary human–nature relations. In the section titled Nature and Governance, Chakravarty critically interrogates state-led environmental decision-making, highlighting policy failures while occasionally acknowledging instances of effective intervention. Meanwhile, the comics grouped under Nature and Us draw lessons from ecological processes that can inform more sustainable human practices, albeit conveyed with an irreverent humour that underscores the complexity and occasional risk inherent in adopting such models.

Anthropocene discourse has conventionally privileged human cognition, treating animals as non-thinking entities while attributing exclusive intellectual and moral capacity to humans. This assumption is unsettled by the notion of animal transculturation, which recognises animals as agents capable of articulating their own forms of presence and meaning, in alignment with

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animal cognition research and critical animal studies. Grounded in the idea of adaptation within shared habitats, this approach reconfigures interspecies relations by dismantling entrenched dichotomies rooted in human instinct, language, and stewardship. Within this framework, the graphic novel emerges as a particularly effective medium due to its multimodality and narrative range, enabling engagement with issues of industrialisation, urbanisation, globalisation, and anthropocentric environmental intervention. Indian graphic novels, in particular, draw upon "both Indian and non-Indian visual cultural utterances to add extra layers of meaning to the narrative" (Sarma 2018), thereby operating across cultural registers and inviting analysis beyond rigid "local, national and global cultural spaces" (Sarma 2018). This paper, therefore, draws on the inclusive reach of the Indian graphic novel to foreground ecological debates articulated from an animal-centred perspective.

This paper situates "Green Humour" within an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that brings together Bakhtin's concept of the carnivalesque, Arne Naess's deep ecology, and edutainment to address a critical gap in ecocritical scholarship—namely, the sustained neglect of humour and cartoons as serious modes of environmental thought. While ecocriticism has traditionally privileged tragic, realist, or solemn narrative forms to represent ecological crisis, this emphasis has often side-lined comic modes that mobilize laughter, irony, and satire as forms of resistance and pedagogy. Drawing on Bakhtin, carnivalesque humour is understood here as a subversive force that temporarily suspends hierarchical binaries—human/animal, authority/subaltern, culture/nature—thereby enabling non-human voices to speak back and exposing the absurdity of anthropocentric governance. This carnivalesque inversion resonates with deep ecology's challenge to human exceptionalism, as articulated by Naess, by foregrounding the intrinsic value of non-human life and emphasizing relational, rather than instrumental, ecological ethics. The paper advances the central argument that green humour functions as an ecocritical strategy and a mode of eco-activism, translating complex scientific knowledge into accessible narratives through edutainment, where education and entertainment coalesce without diluting ecological urgency. In doing so, it contributes to environmental education and communication by engaging affect—laughter, irony, care, and discomfort—as a crucial pedagogical register. Building on scholarship that emphasizes the role of affect in environmental learning, this framework recognizes humour not as a distraction from ecological seriousness, but as a productive affective tool that fosters engagement, mitigates despair, and opens dialogic spaces for imagining alternative ecological futures. It argues that the Carnivalesque provides the essential analytical "how", offering a rigorous lens to examine structural mechanisms of subversion such as the de-crowning of human authority and the use of the "wise fool" to dismantle anthropocentric governance. This theoretical engine drives edutainment and eco-activism, which provide the "why" by explaining the pedagogical and political intent behind comic reversals that temporarily suspend hierarchical binaries like human/animal and culture/nature. By utilizing the "Low" medium of cartoons to communicate Deep Ecology principles—specifically Naess's challenge to human exceptionalism and the foregrounding of intrinsic non-human value—the paper justifies humour as a sophisticated site of resistance that bypasses the exclusionary "Official Seriousness" of traditional nature writing. Consequently, these concepts bridge the gap between abstract philosophy and social impact, engaging affect—laughter, irony, care, and discomfort—as a crucial pedagogical register that fosters engagement and mitigates despair. Ultimately, the framework recognizes green humour not as a distraction from ecological urgency, but as a productive affective tool that strips away

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the "mask" of the human ego to transform climate anxiety into a regenerative mode of activist engagement and effective environmental education.

Humour and Edutainment

Recent scholarship in environmental education has increasingly foregrounded affective and emotional responses to ecological crisis—such as grief, solastalgia, anxiety, hope, care, and empathy—yet humour has remained comparatively marginal within this discourse. As several reviews indicate, humour has appeared only intermittently, often as a secondary pedagogical strategy in outdoor education (Hoad, Deed, and Lugg 2013), as a brief methodological note in environmental pedagogy (McKenzie et al. 2010; Publicover et al. 2018; Russell 2019), or within discussions of Indigenous approaches to environmental learning (Cole 2012; Korteweg, Gonzalez, and Guillet 2010; Lowan-Trudeau 2019). This relative absence is striking, given humour's long-standing cultural role in mediating difficult knowledge and fostering emotional engagement. The emergence of a dedicated scholarly focus on humour therefore signals a critical expansion of environmental education beyond predominantly sombre or crisis-driven affective registers (Ojala 2022; Pihkala 2020).

In contrast, humour has attracted sustained attention within climate change communication studies, though with ambivalent conclusions. A growing body of research has examined how humour functions in public messaging about climate change (Anderson and Becker 2018; Boykoff and Osnes 2019; Chandler, Osnes, and Boykoff 2020; Osnes, Boykoff, and Chandler 2019; Skurka, Niederdeppe, and Nabi 2019). Kaltenbacher and Drews's review of this literature underscores this tension, noting that while some studies suggest humour can trivialize environmental issues or weaken credibility, others demonstrate heightened engagement, awareness, and even behavioural intention. As they observe, "it is currently unclear whether using humor in environmental communication is doing more harm than good" (Kaltenbacher and Drews 2020, 718). This uncertainty suggests that humour's effectiveness depends heavily on form, context, audience, and medium, rather than being inherently beneficial or detrimental.

More recent interventions, however, increasingly frame humour as a mode of environmental activism and participatory pedagogy. Scholars analyzing comics and visual satire have shown how humour can operate as "comic activism," particularly in relation to climate justice and gender (Nordenstam and Wictoran 2022). Studies of student-led climate strikes further reveal how humorous placards and wordplay—such as "fossil fools" (Hee et al. 2022, 7)—enable young activists to critique political inaction while communicating effectively within peer cultures through "humor styles that appeal to their particular age group, such as satire and nihilism" (Hee et al. 2022, 16). Similarly, collaborative projects between journalists and comedians addressing environmental toxicity demonstrate that humour can prompt audiences to seek deeper understanding; participants reported that comedic framing encouraged them to ask questions and engage more critically with complex ecological issues (Chattoo and Green-Barber 2021). Collectively, these studies reposition humour not as a distraction from environmental seriousness, but as a culturally powerful medium for eco-consciousness, dialogue, and action. Scholarly work on eco-comedy foregrounds its capacity to function as a catalyst for transformation rather than mere entertainment. As Geo Takach (2022) argues, humour and environmentalism intersect through two core imperatives: the critique of

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entrenched "business-as-usual" practices and the creation of imaginative openings for more sustainable futures. Situated within a broader genealogy of social movement practices, humour has repeatedly operated as a form of resistance across diverse political contexts because of its ability to "speak truth to power," unsettle authority, and undermine dominant norms (Hart 2007; Sørensen 2013). Feminist, peace, and environmental movements, in particular, have mobilised satire, performance, and creative humour to confront injustice, draw public attention, and energise collective forms of resistance (Branagan 2007; Frey 2021; Roy 2007).

Beyond its oppositional force, humour also carries significant affective and relational value within activist and educational settings. Research demonstrates that humour can strengthen solidarity, alleviate emotional exhaustion, and support collective care, thereby sustaining long-term engagement in social and environmental movements (Bore et al. 2017; Curnow et al. 2021). Studies of youth climate activism reveal how sarcastic or "snarky" humour enables participants to express frustration, disrupt problematic hierarchies, and politicise identities, particularly feminist consciousness, while simultaneously operating as an informal pedagogical practice that facilitates social learning (Curnow et al. 2021). Such scholarship challenges the assumption that humour distracts from serious concerns, instead positioning it as an emotionally resonant and pedagogically effective mode of engagement. At the same time, scholars consistently caution against the uncritical deployment of humour. Humour has been characterised as a "double-edged sword" (Meyers 2000), capable of trivialising structural injustices, reinforcing prejudice, or excluding audiences when cultural knowledge and positionality are uneven (Jones and McGloin 2016; Rossing 2016). Discomfort, misinterpretation, and emotional resistance—particularly in contexts shaped by colonialism, racism, or ecological violence—present genuine pedagogical challenges (Goebel 2018). Nevertheless, the prevailing view across this body of scholarship is that, when employed reflexively and with care, humour remains a powerful and legitimate tool. As underscored by recent interdisciplinary work, humour is increasingly recognised as a viable framework within environmental education, ecocriticism, and public pedagogy, capable of engaging difficult ecological realities without diminishing their gravity (Takach 2022; Kaltenbacher and Drews 2020)

Rohan Chakravarty's Green Humour as Edutainment and Eco-Activism

Education plays a vital role in creating awareness among people and its effect depends on how knowledge is being transferred. There are different ways to learn things if the learning or teaching is done using an appropriate and creative model then its effectiveness might increase because it asks for active participation of learner than just being a passive listener. If some picture is kept before us we try to make some meaning out of it and this interpretation would be different by different individual. Edutainment is one such creative way of learning things, it is "termed as educational entertainment or entertainment- education, is entertainment designed to educate and attract people's attention in entertaining ways" (Zhu Feyue). The first way that is used to teach children is the picture book as it would not made them feel burden of learning and seeing pictures is a kind of fun to them and this fun learning is applicable to all the people as it seems light and gives a ground to have an active participation in learning or knowing

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things. Our brain reacts actively to pictures or any art forms, this makes edutainment an effective way of learning. We read all the ways to make our environment clean and sustainable in books, newspaper and magazines but when we see all those paintings on the walls while moving through city that impacts differently. When any government tries to create awareness in their citizens they took pictorial representation as their tool for example, we all see the slogans like "Jal hi Jeevan h" "betti bachao betti padhao", "Save Earth" and many others and it remains in our mind for a longer period of time. So edutainment is effective and also easy method to learn things and comics work in the same manner. In a very light and humorous ways it present before us the grave and grosteque realities of our surroundings.

Analysis through Carnivalesque Inversion and Deep Ecology

In Bakhtin's view of carnival folk humor, medieval festivities gain significance primarily in relation to the laughter they evoke from the people-"carnival is the people's second life organized on the basis of laughter" (Bakhtin 1984, p.8) . The theory of carnivalesque subverts the hierarchies and there is a reversal of roles. King becomes fools, the low becomes high. Green humor extends this inversion by allowing the reversal of roles between human and non-human. Humans are mocked at by the animals and nature is presented as ironic, retaliatory and it also mocks human and their actions towards the environment. According to Bhakhtin there is existence of two worlds one that is officially governed and the other where orders are not followed by the people and the official are debunked through "a continual shift from top to bottom, from front to rear, numerous parodies and travesties, humiliations, profanations, comic crownings and uncrownings" (11). This presence of second world allowed a place where voices of all are heard. This carnival of visuals allow to "have a new outlook on the world, to realize the relative nature of all that exists, and to enter a completely new order of things". In the same manner the comics of Rohan Chakrabarty allows this subversion of the existing dominant world where human beings are allowed to make the rules of the non-humans. Through his text Chakraborty gave the voice and rationale to the non- humans, and humans are presented as arrogant, pretentious and irrational. The grotesque presentation of the world permits the boundary between the worlds drawn in different way than what natural boundary permits. Green humor presented in a carnivalesque manner provides a ground for activism towards environment conservation and sustainability of the Earth. He did this through visual representation of the hurting animals and nature because of the Anthropogenic activities. His representation of dialogues between human- non human is not less than a carnival as here we see a place where the hierarchies of species is being subverted and animals are the one with rationale and reasons. There are several panels in this comic where animals are presented in dire need of help and they appeal to the government and those working towards nature conservation and sustainability. Their habitat are being destroyed in name of development and making things look aesthetics as on pg 135 of *Carbon Footprints'* there goes a conversation between two frogs who talk about how anthropogenic activities hamper the lives and habitats of these species. The frog says it wants "to let India know that unplanned development threatens my habitat" and also suggest that there is no need of "U-Turn" on developments rather there is just need of "NEWT-TURN". Newt is an amphibian and it has been deliberately used to suggest that human definitely needs to take a turn but this time this turn should be toward the activism for the habitats and lives of other species. This comic is full of such presentation where different

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species of animals and plants appeal for help from the human who with time has become more and more ignorant towards their environment.

Representation of non-human through comics by giving them voice also is an act of activism towards nature and animal conservation done in manner of edutainment which refers to education in form of entertainment. The reader does not feel boredom rather it kind of lightens the mood seeing animal speak. When non –human things of nature are allowed to speak they no longer remain something passive just in the background rather they make us see our activities that neglect their presence in the environment. Comics through its visual presentation shows how anthropogenic activities that cause climate change makes not the forest, sea and river vulnerable but also throw the animals thriving in these habitat to verge of exploitation and extinction. The role reversal of human and non –human being allows the animals to scrutinize human action and see the impacts from their point of view. Through his comic Chakrabarty has pointed towards the action that are being taken by government on national and International level to foster the challenge of climate change and its effect on the lives of different species. He mocks the COP summit that happens to discuss the problems related to climate change but what makes the headlines is what was menu for COP neglecting the real issue.

Figure 1,2,3: From *The UNFCCC carnival*, by Rohan Chakravarty, 2023, Pugmarks and Carbon Footprint Green Humour for a Greying Planet (p. 84,83,85). Copyright © Rohan Chakravarty 2023.

For an instance, on page 85 there are two panels one which is "UNFCCC COP-26 Glasgow menu" and just below that there is panel presents a "severe drought and feminine" in Madagascar but it remained unattained and the panel reads "Madagascar's climate change driven famine menu". He also talks about the concern of this summit only with the developed and rich countries as on page 83 presents how leaders from different parts of the world enter with uneven burden of different issues like "Climate change, floods social injustices livelihood

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loss, heritage loss biodiversity loss" on the other hand some are with minimal burden of "The 1.5°C challenge" (p 83). There are two panels one that is about COP -24 , it shows how the committee is not much concerned about the "humanitarian crises across the developing world" as they react just "hmm" but the next panel is about COP-26 which declares "IPCC code RED" because at COP-26 Countries like India and China did not just agreed to the agreements like total "phasing out coal" (BBC) of coal rather they stood against the uneven burden given to the developing countries in name of climate actions and negotiations.

Rohan Chakravarty's *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* functions as a contemporary site of Bakhtinian "Carnivalesque", where the rigid hierarchies of the Anthropocene are systematically inverted through a robust culture of laughter. By granting sophisticated narrative agency to the non-human—be it a cynical polar bear or a sarcastic dung beetle—Chakravarty orchestrates a "world-upside-down" logic that de-crowns humanity from its self-appointed position as the rational master of the biosphere. In this graphic space, the "Official Seriousness" of environmental policy and corporate greenwashing is subjected to radical profanation. The animal protagonists act as the Bakhtinian "wise fools," utilizing sharp, parodic wit to expose the absurdity of industrial progress, thereby transforming the existential dread of ecological collapse into a communal, liberating laughter that challenges the hegemony of the "grey" industrial status quo.

Furthermore, Chakravarty employs "grotesque realism" to ground the reader in the visceral, biological reality of the natural world, moving away from the sanitized, majestic portrayals typical of traditional wildlife media. By emphasizing the "lower bodily stratum" of the ecosystem—focusing on scavenging, excretion, and decay—the work dismantles the artificial barrier between the "civilized" human observer and the "raw" environment. This aesthetic choice aligns with the Bakhtinian notion of the grotesque body as a site of both destruction and regeneration. Through a multifaceted "heteroglossia", where scientific taxonomy clashes with pop-culture vernacular and street slang, *Green Humour* creates a polyphonic dialogue that democratizes ecological discourse. The comic medium thus serves as a "safety valve", where the ambivalent laughter generated does not merely provide escapism, but acts as a regenerative force, allowing the reader to navigate the trauma of a greying planet while reclaiming a sense of subversive agency against institutional inertia.

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Figure 4,5: *Role reversal of human and non-humans*, by Rohan Chakravarty, 2023, **Pugmarks and Carbon Footprint (p. 172, 175). Copyright © Rohan Chakravarty 2023.**

Green Humour for a Greying Planet (2021) and *Pugmarks and Carbon Footprint* (2023) serve as carnival of different species where they humorously make fun of the ideological society of human which follows several rules and regulations in order to make the Earth more sustainable and equitable. Both the volumes make fun of the government policies and their representation of development rather doing anything for real development. In *Pugmarks and Carbon Footprint* (2023 on pg 172 we find a river appealing to the government of India to save it from dying and it is in dire need of "emergency surgery" (Chakravarty 172) but the rational human from parliament just add some objects to make it look beautiful from outside rather than taking some action towards preventing water pollution. The comic through anthropomorphized animals mock how in present time every normal thing are being posted but nobody talks about the actual problems existing in the society. There is presentation of skulk of foxes saying "guys, guys, guys! Can we just for once not rip our meal apart and Instagram it while it's still intact?" (175). It questions the human intellect of being the most reasonable being on Earth while educating them how to be more responsible towards the other species and non-human things which are existing with us.
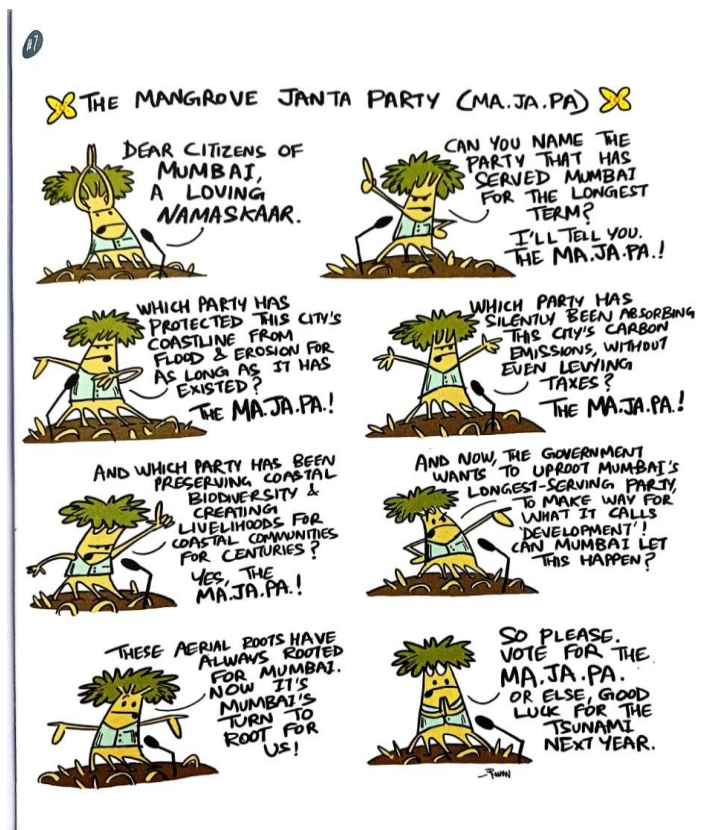
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Figure 6: From *The mangrove janta party (MA.JA.PA.)*, by Rohan Chakravarty, 2021, Green Humour for a Greying Planet (p. 165). Copyright © Rohan Chakravarty 2021.

In this panel, Rohan Chakravarty anthropomorphizes a mangrove tree as a political candidate for the fictional "MA.JA.PA." party to satirize the neglect of natural infrastructure in urban planning. By adopting the rhetoric of a campaign trail, the mangrove highlights its unpaid services—such as carbon sequestration and flood protection—contrasting them against the destructive nature of human "development". The strip concludes with a dark-humoured warning of a future tsunami, effectively shifting the tone from political parody to urgent ecological survival. Here, Bakhtinian "world-upside-down" logic structures the visual and verbal narrative, to orchestrate a radical reversal of socio-political hierarchies through an ecocritical lens. By anthropomorphizing a mangrove tree as a political candidate, Chakravarty utilizes the "wise fool" trope to deliver a scathing critique of human "progress" and the "Official Seriousness" of urban development. This "de-crowning" of human authority is achieved through "profanation", where the sacred language of democratic elections—manifested in the parodic acronym MA.JA.PA.—is used to highlight the intrinsic value of ecosystem services that exist outside of human capital and tax structures. The panel exemplifies "ecological heteroglossia" by seamlessly blending high-level scientific concepts like "aerial roots" and "carbon emissions" with the low-brow rhetoric of a political campaign, thereby democratizing conservation discourse and challenging the anthropocentric monopoly on speech. Furthermore, the transition from the persuasive tone of the "loving Namaskaar" to the dark, marketplace humour of the final panel's tsunami threat serves as a "safety valve", utilizing ambivalent laughter as a "Carnivalesque weapon". This strategy strips away the "mask" of human ego to reveal the existential necessity of preserving the city's ancient, non-human infrastructure, ultimately positioning the comic as a tool for ecological resistance.

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Figure 7: *Satirical comic panel critiquing climate change denial and political*, by Rohan Chakravarty, 2021, Green Humour for a Greying Planet (p. 197). Copyright © Rohan Chakravarty 2021.

In the panel set in the Arctic, the carnivalesque inversion operates through the satirical staging of climate denial as political spectacle. The human political figure occupies a podium of authority, yet this authority is systematically hollowed out through exaggerated rhetoric, repetition, and slapstick humiliation. The speech balloons mimic media soundbites—references to "NBC News," "global warming," and withdrawal from climate agreements—thereby exposing the performative emptiness of official discourse. Bakhtin's *official seriousness* is rendered grotesque as the speaker's body becomes the site of ridicule: his confident proclamations are abruptly interrupted by physical collapse into ice and water, visually enacting the failure of anthropocentric control over nature. This bodily degradation aligns with grotesque realism, where the elevated figure is brought low, reminding the reader of material vulnerability rather than ideological dominance. The Arctic setting intensifies this inversion by positioning a non-human witness—the penguin—as a silent yet morally grounded observer. While the human voice monopolizes speech through denial and self-congratulation, ecological reality intrudes without words, culminating in the blunt declaration "It just had to

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be done!" The humour emerges not from wit alone but from the clash between rhetoric and material consequence: climate change is dismissed verbally while simultaneously enacted visually through melting ice and instability. This disjunction produces carnivalesque laughter that is ambivalent rather than light-hearted, exposing the absurdity of climate skepticism by allowing nature itself to deliver the punchline. The panel thus mobilizes humour as ecological pedagogy, where laughter dismantles political arrogance and re-centres the non-human world as the ultimate arbiter of truth, beyond media narratives and state authority.
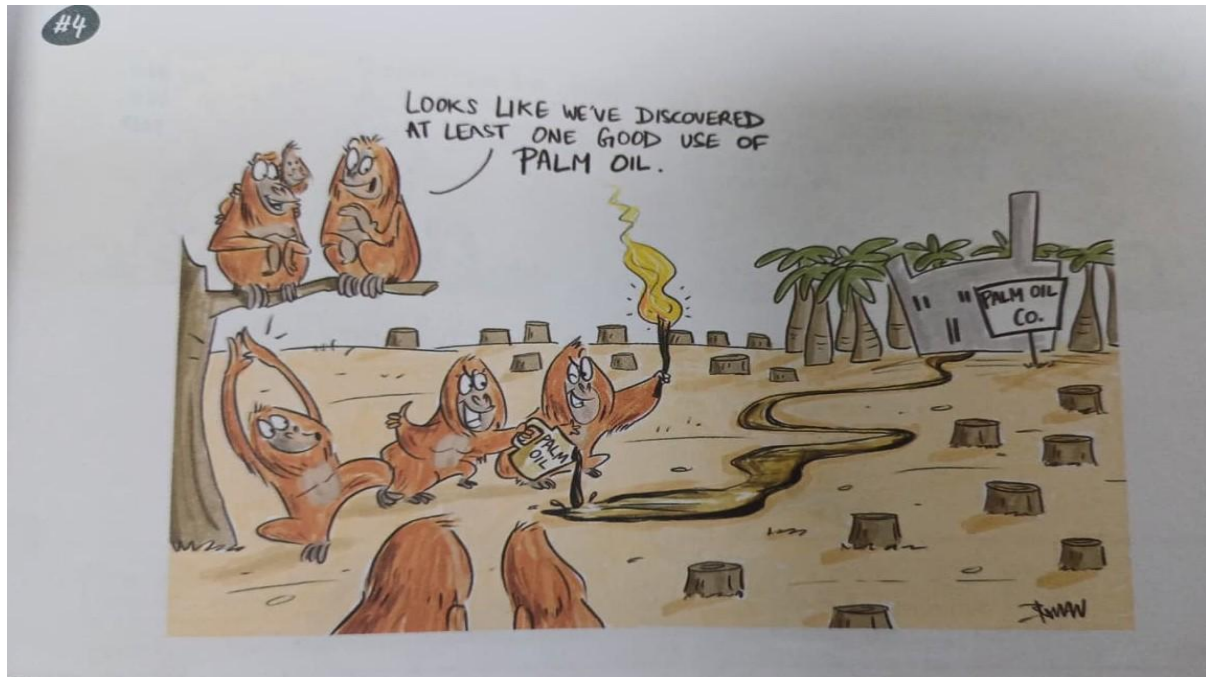

Figure 8: *Panel depicting deforestation and palm oil exploitation*, by **Rohan Chakravarty, 2021, Green Humour for a Greying Planet (p. 41). Copyright © Rohan Chakravarty 2021.**

In this panel, the narrative leverages Bakhtinian carnivalesque through an ecocritical lens to illustrate a violent reversal of environmental exploitation. By depicting orangutans—traditionally the passive victims of deforestation—as active agents of arson targeting a "Palm Oil Co." facility, the panel orchestrates a radical reversal of hierarchies where the "lower" animal kingdom actively sabotages the "higher" human industrial machine. This subversion is centered on the wise fool trope, as the orangutan's satirical dialogue regarding the "one good use of palm oil" provides a scathing critique of the industry responsible for its displacement. This act constitutes a profound de-crowning of corporate authority, stripping away the "Official Seriousness" of commercial expansion by meeting it with the raw, grotesque realism of destruction. The juxtaposition of the industry's own product being used for its annihilation functions as a form of profanation, turning the tools of human capital against the structures of power. Ultimately, this visual strategy serves as a safety valve, using ambivalent, dark laughter to grant the reader a sense of catharsis while positioning the animals not as bumbling characters, but as a symbolic vanguard of ecological resistance.

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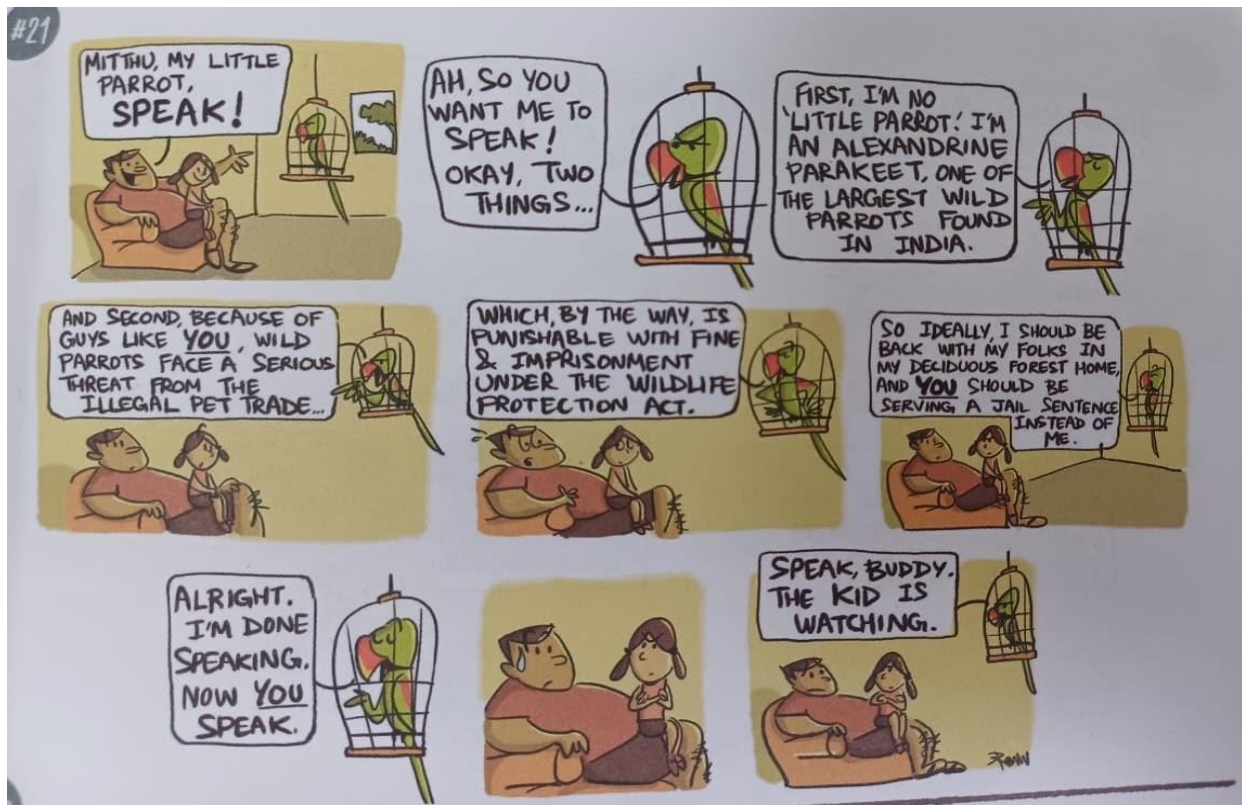
Figure 9: The comic *Panel* deploys satirical role reversal to critique the illegal pet trade, granting the captive parakeet juridical and ecological voice to expose human entitlement, wildlife criminality, and ethical failure, by Rohan Chakravarty, 2021, Green Humour for a Greying Planet (p. 41). Copyright © Rohan Chakravarty 2021.

This comic strip depicts a pet owner attempting to make his caged parrot, "Mithu", speak for a child's entertainment. The parrot subverts expectations by delivering a detailed lecture on its true species identity, the illegality of its captivity under the Wildlife Protection Act, and the moral failure of the owner. The sequence concludes with the owner's stunned silence, effectively shifting the tone from domestic amusement to a serious indictment of the illegal wildlife trade.

In this comic strip titled "#21", the narrative continues to employ a Bakhtinian carnivalesque lens to critique the exploitation of wildlife. By portraying a caged Alexandrine parakeet that suddenly speaks with an articulate, authoritative voice, the panel orchestrates a radical reversal of hierarchies where the traditionally silenced and dominated "animal" becomes the moral instructor to its human "owner". This constitutes a profound de-crowning of human authority, as the bird systematically dismantles the owner's condescending domesticity by citing the "Wildlife Protection Act" and its own status as one of the largest wild parrots in India.

The parakeet's outspoken monologue represents a form of profanation, bringing the "High" legal and ethical standards down to the "Low" level of a domestic parlor game. This interaction exemplifies ecological heteroglossia by blending scientific taxonomy and legalistic jargon with the vernacular of a pet owner. Furthermore, the final panel, showing the owner's stunned

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silence, serves as a "safety valve", utilizing ambivalent laughter to grant the reader catharsis through the mockery of human ignorance. By revealing the bird's intellectual depth and rightful place in a "forest home", the visual strategy strips away the "mask" of harmless pet ownership to highlight the criminality of the illegal pet trade, ultimately positioning the comic as a tool for ecological resistance.
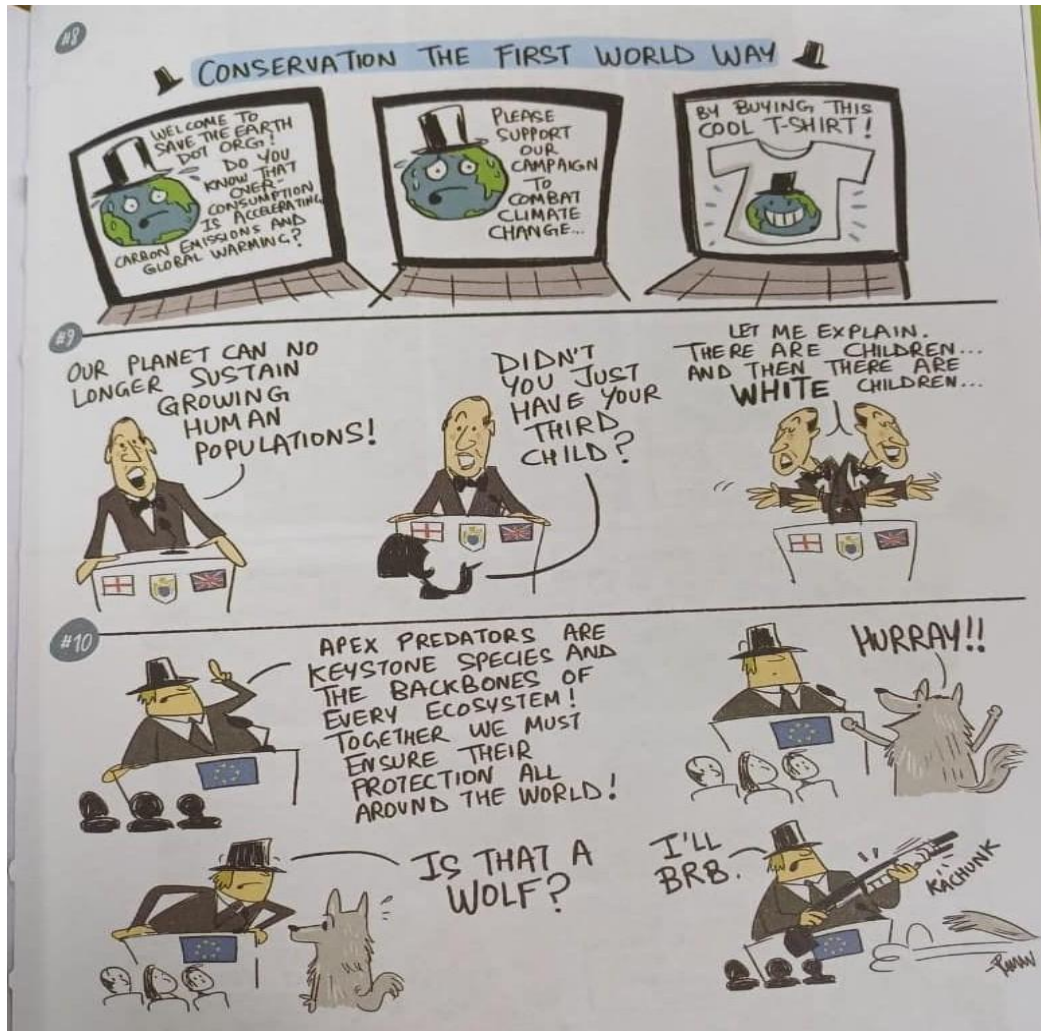

Figure 10: *The comic panel satirizes neoliberal conservation and Western hypocrisy by exposing how environmental rhetoric, population control discourse, and wildlife protection are selectively applied, commodified, and violently contradicted by underlying power, race, and profit structures* **by Rohan Chakravarty, 2021, Green Humour for a Greying Planet (p. 197). Copyright © Rohan Chakravarty 2021.**

This sequence satirizes "First World" conservation methods by illustrating the contradictions between global environmental rhetoric and actual practice. It mocks consumerist activism, hypocritical population control arguments, and the disconnect between praising "keystone species" in theory while fearing them in reality. The comic concludes with a dark reminder of
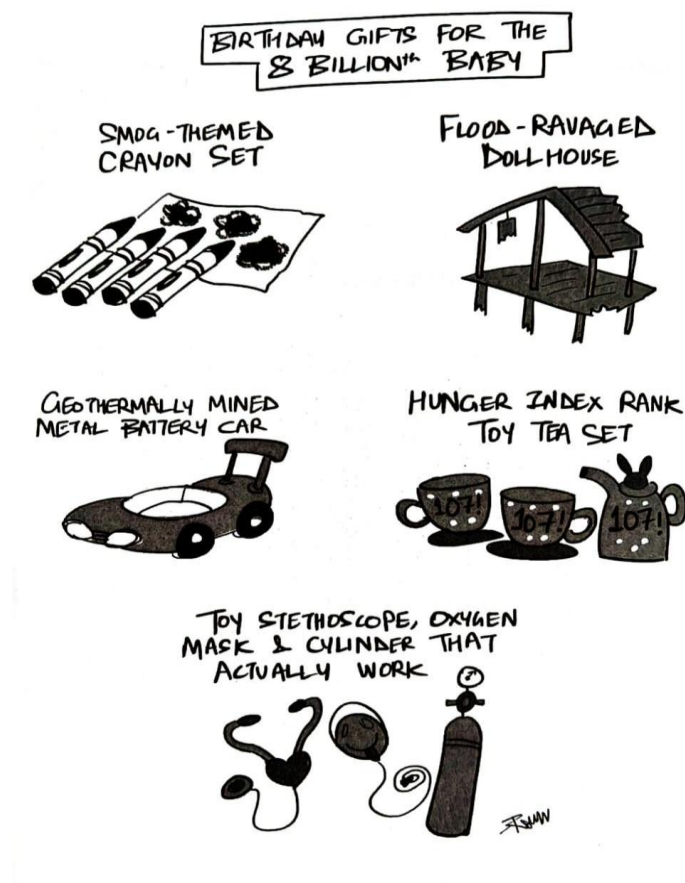
how quickly "official" protection can turn into violent exclusion when wildlife inconveniences human comfort.

In the panel involving various conservation critiques, the narrative employs a Bakhtinian carnivalesque lens to expose the hypocrisies of "First World" environmentalism. By depicting high-ranking human figures—from corporate organizations to global summit speakers—as bumbling or self-contradictory, the panel orchestrates a radical reversal of hierarchies where the "official truth" of Western conservation is revealed to be a performance of "official seriousness". This constitutes a profound de-crowning of institutional authority, as the comic highlights the absurdity of combating climate change through the consumption of "cool t-shirts" or preaching population control while personally ignoring such mandates.

The interactions, particularly the wolf's enthusiastic response to being called a "keystone species" only to be met with a shotgun, represent a form of profanation. This brings the "High discourse of apex predator protection down to the "Low" reality of human fear and reactive violence. The panel exemplifies ecological heteroglossia by clashing the sanitized language of international NGOs with the visceral, dark humor of the literal "kachunk" of a weapon. Furthermore, these sequences serve as a "safety valve", utilizing ambivalent laughter to grant the reader catharsis through the mockery of systemic hypocrisy. By stripping away the "mask" of humanitarian altruism to reveal underlying racism and corporate greed, the visual strategy ultimately positions the comic as a tool for ecological resistance against neo-colonial conservation models.

Unlike shallow environmentalism, which seeks to preserve nature solely for human utility, Deep Ecology posits that all living beings possess intrinsic value regardless of their usefulness to human needs. This philosophy aligns with the comic's rejection of anthropocentrism, as it systematically centers "marginal" species—such as insects, amphibians, and lesser-known flora—challenging the traditional "charismatic megafauna" bias. By giving these organisms a voice and agency, the comics move beyond a stewardship model toward a radical ethic of coexistence, where human dominance is replaced by ecological interdependence. The synergy between Deep Ecology and the Carnivalesque is particularly evident in the following ways- The comics employ satire to dismantle the hierarchy that places humans at the apex, granting non-human life the right to mock and critique human folly. Instead of presenting nature as a distant object to be managed, the panels emphasize the interconnectedness of all life forms, illustrating that human well-being is inseparable from the health of the ecosystem. By portraying animals as "wise fools" who expose the absurdity of extractivist industries—such as palm oil or illegal wildlife trade—the work validates the intrinsic rights of the wild over economic capital.

Ultimately, using Deep Ecology as a lens reveals that *Green Humour* is not merely a collection of jokes about nature, but a sustained philosophical inquiry into responsibility and governance. By engaging the reader's affect through laughter, the comics foster a deep ecological consciousness that encourages the imagining of alternative futures where humanity functions as a plain member and citizen of the biotic community rather than its conqueror.

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Figure 11: *Bridging the gap between scientific truth and tangible reality*, **by Rohan Chakravarty, 2023, Pugmarks and Carbon Footprint (p. 158). Copyright © Rohan Chakravarty 2023.**

This comic strips titled "Birthday gifts for the 8 billion[th] baby" humorously presents that our activities shall leave a tempered and destructed world for the generations to come and to make them aware of what they are going to get when they grow up they would be presented with gifts that will, let them know about their present surrounding. Usually new born are given gifts that are delightful filled of colours and joy and which seems pleasant but in coming future children will get toys that would made them aware of their surroundings through toys like "flood-ravaged dollhouse", "smog-themed crayon set" and even the toys working like actual oxygen cylinder.

This strip works like a way of educating and creating awareness in the population who are ignorant towards their action which might enhance the already hampered and "greying planet".

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Figure 12: *An appeal from endangered species*, **by Rohan Chakravarty, 2023, Pugmarks and Carbon Footprint (p. 158). Copyright © Rohan Chakravarty 2023.**

This strip presents how in the name of developments habitats of a varieties of species are being destructed sometimes in name of construction, urbanisation and sometimes in name of "mega –tourism project" since these animals cannot speak for themselves they are being marginalized. This strips describes the destruction of "Loktak lake" in Manipur which serves not only habitats for the various species but also provides livelihood to the communities who depends on the lake for "fishing, agriculture and eco-tourism". In this strip we find a an antlered Deer saying to human "your apathy is raising a lot of brows" here brows are the (Sangai) from Manipur which are endangered animal.The carnivalesque humour allows the endangered species to have voice and confront human for their action and this role reversal once again revealed the irrationalitity of human behaviour towards those existing together with them.

Conclusion

This paper reiterates the ecological and pedagogical significance of humour as a critical yet under-theorized mode of environmental communication, and foregrounds popular culture—particularly comics—as a serious and consequential site of environmental thought. Through sustained irony, satire, and visual storytelling, *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* and *Pugmarks and Carbon Footprints* implicitly interrogate the communicative ethics of humour itself by asking whether laughter can educate without trivialising ecological crisis, and whether humour can coexist with urgency, grief, and environmental loss. The analysis demonstrates

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that, rather than offering escapism, Chakravarty's green humour sustains attention, reflection, and ethical engagement in a context marked by ecological fatigue. Drawing on Bakhtin's carnivalesque, the paper has shown how these comics dismantle anthropocentric hierarchies through role reversals in which animals speak, mock, and question human authority, while governance structures, development rhetoric, and extractivist logics are rendered absurd. At the same time, the cartoons exemplify edutainment by translating complex ecological science into accessible and memorable narratives without sacrificing factual rigor, thereby positioning humour as a pedagogical strategy rather than a dilution of seriousness. Grounded in deep ecological thought, the work affirms the intrinsic value of non-human life by foregrounding marginal species and ecological interdependence, resisting stewardship models and charismatic megafauna bias. Ultimately, the paper argues that humour in *Green Humour* operates as an affective catalyst—activating curiosity, empathy, and reflective laughter—to cultivate ecological awareness and sustain public engagement, demonstrating that humour is not antithetical to environmental responsibility but integral to its articulation in the contemporary ecological crisis.

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