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Climate Change as a challenge for Democracy, Peace and Justice

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Abstracts

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Measures against climate change along the three principal dimensions of the sustainability philosophy: Social, Environmental and Economic (SEE)

Irrespective of the debate that climate change is natural or anthropogenic (or a combination of the two), the undisputed fact is that it is occurring and there is growing evidence of it is accelerating beyond estimations, for which one prime driver has been ever escalating carbon emissions. Furthermore, climate change impacts the fundamentals of society in both numerous and far-reaching ways because climate change is widely multi-disciplinary and internal-sectoral. Subsequently, this necessitates to devise multi- and inter-faceted measures to decelerate climate change, reverting it to its original speed of natural course which the humankind/society can better cope with. In this regard, there is limited studies on how to dovetail various sectors of society so that climate change can be tackled on various fronts via more integrated approaches and yet simultaneously addressing the three principal dimensions of the sustainability philosophy – Social, Environmental and Economic (SEE). In this context, the study innovatively presents an inter-sectoral concept as follows: In the waste sector, the sustainable waste hierarchy is a fundamental benchmark, according to which, landfilling is the least preferred option and waste-to-energy is relatively more preferred option (i.e. incineration). On the other hand, the transport sector is the second largest energy consumer amounting to 25% of the total global energy production. Transport can be categorized into three main types which are terrestrial, aviation, and maritime. Among these three types, waste-to-energy is more practically feasible in the maritime transport – a kind of on-board waste incineration to propel maritime vessels and power on-board built environments. Thus, killing two birds (transport and waste) with one stone (energy). In addition, specifically from the perspective of climate change, this study also captures 'simultaneous implications' of social acceptability, environmental fidelity and economic viability in relation to the innovative transport-waste-energy nexus (WET).

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Assessment of the Potential to Expand the Remit of Climate Change Litigation in India

In spite of a well-developed environmental jurisprudence, primarily developed through judicial pronouncements, climate change litigation has been negligible in India and largely ineffective. Current scholarly views, such as the work by Jacqueline Peel and Jolene Lin on climate litigation in the Global South, have tried to expand the remit by enlarging the definition of what can constitute a climate change litigation. However, even with this expanded definition, the number of cases remains low and the view of scholars continues to be that climate change claims will remain peripheral in India. This is a concern, as given the high vulnerability of India to climate change climate change litigation is a crucial tool for citizens to address this situation. Based on a review of the current litigation and their outcomes (including the matters where climate change is a peripheral issue), a probable reason for this is that the courts in India being adjudicatory forums are reactive in approach and therefore willing to address claims only where a tangible loss or violation can be proved. This implies that the remedy, through the means of litigation can be provided only after the occurrence of an event, which is an issue in respect of climate change. Thus, securing an appropriate remedy for future actions or adaptation mechanisms remains highly improbable. With this background, the aim of my research is to assess, what is the potential likelihood of a climate change claim succeeding by basing it on a bouquet of rights, such as (i) the right to life, freedom and livelihood recognized explicitly within the Constitution; (ii) right to clear air, water and environment recognised through rights jurisprudence; and (iii) statutory rights of women, children and animals, rather than basing it primarily or solely on a climate change stand point.

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Urgenda vs. Juliana: Lessons for Future Climate Change Litigation Cases

Climate change litigation cases have been increasing in the last couple of decades due to the activism of different international and national organizations seeking to combat global warming. These actors and in the wake of the complexities surrounding global actions and the failure of global efforts, have sought filing lawsuits before domestic courts as a new strategy. The objective is to have a ruling that obliges a given state to take concrete measures for combating global warming by for instance either applying already existing climate change rules, amending the regulations or adopting new laws to that end. The common purpose of all the lawsuits filed has been the long-term intentions of the claimants to create a shift in the society towards alternative energy sources, eliminating Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and generally ensuring a clean environment while balancing human activities with the need to protect and preserve the planet. The majority of climate change litigations in particular the first few years and until now have not been successful as judges refused to explicitly or implicitly provide any acknowledgement of the claimants rightful cause despite the existing scientific proof of the negative impact of global warming not only on the planet but on the population worldwide. Hence, the attempts that were made often resulted in the judges dismissing the cases. Nonetheless, a slow shift has started to occur in recent years where many judges due to their awareness of climate change and their activist role have begun providing rulings that acknowledge directly or indirectly the catastrophic impact of global warming. The degree to which a judge ruled in favour of climate change activists and the potential consequences emerging from such rulings depend upon the domestic legal system, society's acceptance of climate change and existing regulations as well as current legal doctrines and judicial jurisprudence and traditions. This was the case in the recent couple of judgements emanating from Dutch and United States (US) courts concerning claims made

by climate activists and civil society organizations requesting the state to shift its policies on this matter and acknowledge the existence of a human right to a healthy climate. The decisions made in both cases reveal how judges ruled considering the specificities of each domestic legal system. The Dutch case (Urgenda) was as great success and a milestone in climate change litigations upon which future cases can build given that it was the first case in which a judge requests the government to step up its GHG emissions reduction targets. The US case (Juliana) despite the failure of the plaintiffs in their quest as the judge dismissed their claims also represents an achievement but to a lesser degree as the judge in this case had expressly acknowledged the severity of climate change, the role of US government in causing it and the need for actions. In this context, this article is seeking to answer the following question: What lessons could be learned from the success of Urgenda and the failure of Juliana for future climate change litigation cases? The article will highlight after comparing both cases two factors that led to different outcomes: the specificities of the claims made by the foundation Urgenda and the importance of judicial activism.

To that end, the article will analyse both cases to make the argument mentioned below. The author will first provide an overview of the background and court decision in the Urgenda case while later on they will analyse the court's decision. Then, the author will also examine the background and court decision in the Juliana case and then proceed to conducting similar analysis. The article after that will discuss the two findings observed as a result of analysing and comparing both cases: the implication of having a specific request made to the government and the importance of judicial activism. The author will then conclude with the significance of both judgements to future climate change litigation cases.

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Climate Activists in the Courts: Why American Judges Disagree About Standing - Three Studies Regarding the Limits and Possibilities of Climate Governance

This project uses approaches in political science and law to gain new insights about the role of climate change litigation in global climate governance. Drawing on theories of democracy, rights and judicial attitudes, the project analyses arguments that American judges provide for and against granting activist plaintiffs legal standing.

Two studies show contingent tensions between substantive climate goals, on the one hand, and overarching goals of global governance, on the other. A third study shows how the judicial attitudes of judges affect their argumentation in activist climate cases.

The first study identifies a conflict between the substantive interest in reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, on the one hand, and the procedural value of separation of powers, on the other. The conflict arises when judges put forth the separation ideal as one of division rather than balancing.

The second study identifies a conflict between the substantive interest in reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, on the one hand, and a human rights approach, on the other. The conflict arises when judges employ a strictly individualist, rather than a more communitarian, conception of rights.

The third study of the project studies the role of argumentation as judges – with differentjudicial attitudes – justify their decisions. It is shown that judges who grant standing argue similarly, while judges who reject standing differ in their arguments, depending on judicial attitude. Judges who grant standing mainly seem to use a human rights argument, employing a more communitarian conception of rights, regardless of who appointed them. Republican-appointed judges who reject standing mainly seem to use a separation of powers argument, employing the ideal of division, while Democrat-appointed judges who reject standing rather seem to use a human rights argument, employing a strictly individualist conception of rights.

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Towards climate resilient peace: a degrowth and intersectional approach to positive peace

How can peace be climate resilient? How can peace and environmental sustainability be advanced simultaneously? To address these questions, I develop a new conceptual and theoretical framework for approaching positive peace through degrowth. Much of the traditional literature on and practical approaches to peace is tied to economic growth, yet increasing evidence indicates that continued growth is not possible within climate limitations. Climate change has highlighted environmental limits and social challenges including rising inequalities, indicating limitations of the current growth model. Research shows that even decoupling or "green growth" scenarios, as for example incorporated in the Sustainable Development Goals, may be potentially infeasible. In light of this, I suggest that our conceptualization of peace must address both socio-economic and environmental aspects.

Against this backdrop, I reconceptualize positive peace through a lens of intersectionality, highlighting that peace depends on the negation of structural harms experienced at the intersection of political and social identities. In relation to this, I make a theoretical argument that degrowth presents social and ecological opportunities to disrupt structural violence when meeting climate challenges. I discuss three key aspects of degrowth – redistribution, reprioritized care economies, and global equity – as opportunities to foster peace in a changing climate. Based on these arguments, this paper deepens our understanding of positive peace and opens a new theoretical pathway for linking degrowth to peace, fostering wellbeing as well as climate resilience. This framework contributes a new approach to climate resilient peace that addresses challenges of both social and environmental sustainability.

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How to Write Histories of the Unsustainable Society?

During the 2010s a group of French historians have established a new school of environmental history. It is central to their approach that the failures of currently dominating economic and social systems to adequately take into account the natural systems that our societies depend upon are not the result of a long history of ignorance about those natural systems. The failures are instead to be understood as the result of a history of specific instances of marginalization of ecological critiques and alternatives at different times. This perspective differs from more conventional, widely popularized, historical narratives that often center on the discovery of 'the environment' in the post-war world, and a gradual 'awakening' to an environmental consciousness. The stakes of this historiographical critique are high, since historical narratives inform how we understand the current situation of a mounting climate crisis, and where our focus should be in trying to address it. Are we on the trajectory of the ever-rising environmental consciousness; or have such environmental consciousness and critique rather been continuously undermined and blocked? This approach emphasizes the alternatives and roads-not-taken in the histories of our current crisis, but also the mechanisms of marginalization of environmental critique. In the paper, I discuss this school of history and some of its findings, and what it suggests for our understanding of climate change as a political and societal problem, and how climate change should be addressed.

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Support demographics for "Extinction Rebellion" and the "School Strike for Climate Change" within the United Kingdom

During 2019, there was increasing alarm amongst civil society about the impacts of climate change. This is demonstrated by the mass protests of campaigns such as "Extinction Rebellion" and "School Strike for Climate Change" against the government on a lack of action in combatting climate change. To understand the level of support for the different types of protests, a survey for this research provided to different Facebook groups and targeted emails between May and August 2019. Amongst a total of 1,700 respondents it was found that the majority were overall supportive of "Extinction Rebellion". In addition, it was found that there was also a majority of support for the children striking for climate change and the mass civil disobedience that "Extinction Rebellion" called for in London in April 2019, though at varying levels across the demographic. However, respondents were generally not willing to themselves join future "Extinction Rebellion" protests. Women, younger people and left-leaning voters were more likely to support these two types of protests. There is a suggestion from this type of response that significant numbers of people may be ready for an escalation of non-violent action that could force change in the systemic and structural determinants of crises. This input will weigh these findings against an expanded understanding of the nature of societal engagement in climate and related disaster risk reduction. In addition, the monitoring of the demographic composition of climate protests helps to assess the nature of likely reactions and resistance to the content of COP26 being hosted in the UK in November 2021.

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The 'Deliberative Turn' in Environmental Politics: A Critical Approach

Both scholars and activists have, in recent years, championed the potential for deliberative processes, such as citizens' assemblies, to ameliorate the challenge of taking radical action to address environmental threats while maintaining democratic consent within nation-states.1 The argument is often summarised with the mantra 'more democracy, not less'.

This paper will critically examine the arguments advanced in favour of deliberative processes, arguing for greater reflection on the limits of such processes and specificity on the role they should play in relation to environmental policy. The paper will examine both theoretical arguments on the topic and empirical evidence from recent practical examples, such as the recent climate citizens' assemblies in France, Ireland and the UK. It will focus predominantly on developments in the UK but address broader arguments as well.

The paper will suggest that there needs to be more delineation between the general benefits offered by deliberative processes in political systems and its role as a 'solution' to environmental policy challenges, greater realism about the cultural shifts which would be required in political systems for deliberative processes to make 'zero-sum' decisions, and more detail as to the 'democratic problem' which deliberative processes supposedly solve.

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The Climate Policy Issues of 151 American Cities: An Explorative Text-based Approach

Cities are playing an increasingly larger role in climate governance due to the excessive share of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions derived from urban environments. The policy vacuum left by the US federal government has created an opportunity for American cities to tackle climate change as they think best. This has led them to take very different strategies. I rely on a computer-assisted quantitative text analysis method to explore and analyze 4966 self-reported climate policies of the Carbon Disclosure Project's (CDP) from 151 American cities during 2012-2019. First, the study examines the type of issues cities engage in their climate policies and their content. Second, I analyze the explanatory factors that are associated with the climate policy issues: partisanship, public opinion and structural factors. The findings contribute to the active literature on urban climate policies and shed light on the way cities describe their climate policies and the covariates of issues in climate policies. Moreover, the study encourages the fruitful use of quantitative text analysis methods in climate policy research, especially when dealing with large corpora of documents produced by local bureaucratic agents who are influenced by both organizational and political pressures.

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Orchestration in Global Adaptation Governance: The Case of Indigenous Communities

The 2015 Paris Agreement represented a shift in many aspects, including the mainstream of climate change adaptation as a global issue. A burgeoning literature investigating this shift has focused on the global state-led actions in adaptation matters ever since. More research is needed in relation to how those traditional actors also engage with and steer non-state actors' participation in global adaptation governance. This chapter then maps the orchestration of the participation of a specific type of non-state actor, namely indigenous peoples, in adaptation governance. The representation of indigenous peoples in global adaptation governance is critical to operationalising actions with better-informed approaches, materialised in the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in adaptation actions. In doing so, the article builds upon orchestration research (also an emerging field), to answer the following questions: a) what are the mechanisms through which IOs orchestrate the participation of indigenous peoples? b) which actors do IOs orchestrate to facilitate the participation of indigenous peoples in adaptation governance? and c) what are the challenges that orchestration needs to consider in addition to endorsing participation? The chapter discusses two major mechanisms to bolster indigenous peoples' adaptation and participation - funding and orchestration of representatives -, which are employed to uncover the actors involved in the participation processes of indigenous peoples. This research is meant to further discuss, within the research fields of global adaptation governance and orchestration, the progress and challenges of political actions regarding adaptation, such as consolidating legitimacy, strengthening effective representation and promoting justice.

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A Climate of War or Peace? Forecasting the Effect of Drought on Local Conflict Dynamics

A recent wave of studies on the security implications of climate change suggests that climatic variability has already increased the likelihood of conflict in the past and is expected to have even a higher destabilizing impact in the future. Although a considerable research effort has targeted the mechanisms connecting climatic changes to the likelihood of conflict, the majority of quantitative studies so far have focused on either the onset or the incidence of violence, to the detriment of assessing the role of climate shocks in enduring conflict dynamics. In the present study, I investigate how climate variability, proxied by drought, will affect the local dynamics of fighting and identify a set of mechanisms that may link climatic shocks to local conflict escalation or de-escalation. On the one hand, droughts may escalate ongoing conflicts by lowering the opportunity cost of fighting, exacerbating pre-existing grievances, and/or or triggering looting over increasingly scarce resources. On the other, the occurrence of a drought may contribute to de-escalate violence, to the extent that climate-induced livelihood deterioration and resource deprivation may incentivize collective solidarity and boost cooperation to efficiently manage scant resources and thereby increase the chances of survival. To this end, I build on the on the framework of the Violence Early-Warning System(ViEWS - Hegre et al., 2019) and test out-of-sample how drought contributes to predict violence escalation in Africa.