

**EnJust Conference 2024**  
**Environmental Justice in the Age of Planetary  
Peril: Concepts, Agencies, Mobilizations**

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Abstract Book

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## **Infrastructures of violence: Lützerath, Dannenröder Forest and the climate justice movement**

Anderl, Felix<sup>1</sup>; Haudenschild, Daniel<sup>2</sup>; Stühlen, Christin<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>University of Kassel

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### **Abstract:**

The climate justice movement's mobilization against mega-infrastructure projects has a long tradition. Resistance against mega-infrastructure projects is exemplified in the Global North by the conflicts over lignite mining in Lützerath and the A49 motorway cutting through the Dannenröder Forest in Germany. These projects have become places of social conflict and strategic hubs for movement politics. The article discusses the intertwined mobilizing role of mega-infrastructure projects for the climate justice movement and their destructive infrastructural violence. On the one hand, these projects operate through infrastructural violence, which harbor a destructive force for living beings, the environment and the climate. On the other hand, the projects are legitimized through hegemonic narratives of 'development', 'progress' and 'modernization'. Within this field of tension, those projects can create crystallization points for protest that is fed by their (violent) materiality and their ambiguous symbolism. Sites of infrastructural violence thereby can also become points of contact for transnational solidarities: by opening windows of opportunity for a materialized practice that makes solidarity more than a lofty ideal. This article uses two illustrations to show the extent of this ambiguity. Building on observations from resistance against mega-infrastructure projects, we thus offer a theoretical argument about the dialectical character of their inherent destruction and the conditions under which this character can be exploited for mobilization.

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## **Voice, Space, Time and Knowledge: A Recognition Justice Framework for Evaluating Legal Empowerment under EU Climate Law**

Anderson, Rosanna<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tilburg University

### **Abstract:**

My research seeks to examine to what degree EU climate law substantively and procedurally empowers individuals and NGOs and to what extent this empowerment creates a site of climate justice. Accordingly, my research focuses on conceptualising climate justice in the internal European Union context and applying this to EU climate law. I focus on keystone climate laws (predominately the European Climate Law and Governance Regulation) as well as sector specific climate laws, predominately the recent Critical Raw Materials Act, and the acceleration measures under the Renewable Energy Directive. After developing a theoretical framework drawing on Amartya Sen's concept of imperfect justice and Nancy Fraser's concept of recognition justice, I have drawn out four key criteria which cover key areas of intersection between law and climate justice: voice, time, space and knowledge.

Despite the centrality of questions of justice to climate change, there is, at times, a sense of unease about applying normative justice criteria to EU law. As a result, there has been relatively little internal and mainstream legal engagement with broader questions of climate justice, with focus largely limited to narrow aspects of the 'just transition' and 'energy transition'. My research aims to highlight recognition and corrective justice aspects within the law which risk being undertheorised and overlooked at the EU level. This research therefore aims at both normalising normative approaches to the EU legal framework, as well as providing weight to movements calling for reform and empowerment related the EU's approach to climate change.



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## Reconfiguring energy grids for energy justice? The case of Hamburg's energy grid re-municipalization

Arifi, Blea<sup>1</sup>; Späth, Philipp<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Freiburg University

### Abstract:

Under contemporary conditions of multiple crises, with increasing recognition of the urgent need to decarbonize energy systems, heterogeneous initiatives to transition (urban) energy systems to renewable sources have emerged in many places across the globe. In such situations, it is often contested among involved actors how to appropriately balance between, on one hand, the urgency to shift away from unsustainable configurations as quickly as possible, and, on the other hand, the need to keep risks low and burdens to economic entities like utilities, grid operators and private households bearable. How can e.g. a city administration come to an agreement with civil society organizations on a just pathway to full decarbonization of a cities' energy supplies? And how could, in particular, civil society organisations and research organisations mutually benefit from collaborations on this topic?

We discuss such possibilities against the background of a concrete example: in Hamburg, Germany, energy politics have been shaped very explicitly around justice issues - for the last 20 years now. There has been a particularly intense and explicit debate in this city state about what it takes for a justice-oriented development of the energy grids. In a public referendum, the citizens finally voted for a buying back of the energy grids into municipal hands - as a precondition for, i.a. a quicker uptake of renewable energy, and fair tariffs. Following this vote, new formats had to be established for joint deliberations on what speed of decarbonization is technically, economically, organisationally and politically feasible with regard to particular elements of the cities' energy infrastructure. Particularly the reconfiguration of Hamburg's district heat infrastructure along locally articulated justice imperatives has resulted in new corporatist forms of energy governance, which are not fully inclusive, but achieved a crucial shift in orientation - making recent energy political decisions not only reflect diverse perspectives and forms of knowledge, but importantly also speeded up decarbonization efforts as far as possible.

Drawing on roughly a dozen interviews, conducted with actors involved in Hamburg's energy politics, in the context of the project Reconfiguring Energy for Social Equity (ReSET), we describe how actors perceived the benefits and challenges of collaboration across different institutional logics, and cautiously abstract from the individual case in order to provide inspirations for actors who aim at a collective rethinking of environmental justice in other places.

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## No Climate Justice without Rights of Nature - The Los Cedros Law Suit

Ax, Christine<sup>1</sup>; Behrend, Bettina<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Netzwerk Rechte der Natur

### **Abstract:**

Climate justice needs rights of nature

Climate crisis, Pollution and Biodiversity are two sides of the same coin: their impact of climate change on nature is profound. The right to life and the restoration of nature is a key prerequisite for climate protection. The fight to preserve nature as a habitat (for the human and the more-than-human existence) and the fight for justice (especially) in the regions with the greatest biodiversity go hand in hand. In some South American countries like Ecuador and Bolivia, the rights of nature are one of the most important weapons in the fight against extractive policies and the associated fueling of climate change.

But the rights of nature are more than a political discourse - they are a challenge to the deep structure of how we think, feel and perceive. The rights of nature have a transformative content and core that can bring people together and create common ground. Today, the discourse on the rights of nature is inter- and transdisciplinary and has more and more allies in the juridical world, in politics, education and in art and culture. It is a holistic approach that inspires and moves lawyers, philosophers and economists (likewise). It is increasingly taking on the character of a new enlightenment. But this time the inspiration comes from the (social and ecological movements and the indigenous peoples of the) global South. This development could be interpreted as both: an overcoming and a completion of the Enlightenment. For just as the Declaration of Human Rights subsequently led finally to the end of the right to own slaves and (to) the recognition of women as legal subjects, it is in the logic of this development that the liberation of nature (from being a mere object of human interests) and its protection from exploitation and destruction is next on the agenda. It is more than only uplifting the juridical status of nature: It contributes to overcoming colonial thinking and will be the end to all colonial thinking and the idea of white supremacy.

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## Assessing Climate Agency. Societal processes as drivers of decarbonization

Aykut, Stefan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

### Abstract:

Germany has set itself ambitious targets for attaining climate neutrality until 2045. The scope, depth and speed of this intended transformation confront politics and researchers alike with highly complex problems of political steering and social coordination. However, although societal dynamics are essential for such a transformation, they are hardly ever systematically captured in research to date. In particular, there is a lack of methodology for analysing and summarising relevant social processes that would allow assessing the extent to which the deep and rapid decarbonisation of an economy like Germany's appears not only technically and economically possible, but also plausible from a social and political perspective.

The paper presents, operationalizes and applies an assessment framework for the societal dynamics of Germany's low-carbon transformation. The framework draws on the methodology of the *Hamburg Climate Futures Outlook* (Stammer et al. 2021; Engels et al. 2023) and the recently published *Klimawende Ausblick 2024* (Aykut et al. 2024). It complements existing approaches that use techno-economic models, examine sociotechnical transition pathways, or identify social tipping points, by placing the focus on 12 societal processes that act as potential *social drivers* of deep decarbonization. The method consists in retracing the historical dynamics of these processes, examining relevant context conditions that promote or inhibit these dynamics, and analyzing possible effects of the driver on deep decarbonization, and on other forms of climate-related agency. The paper shows how this approach allows assessing the social plausibility of a shift to climate neutrality, but also how it provides novel methodological tools to account for the emergence of new agencies in the form of youth movements or strategic litigation networks, and to conceptualize their contribution to a low-carbon transformation.

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## Mirani-e-Movement: Environmental Justice Activism or Displacement

Baloch, Granaz<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz

### **Abstract:**

This work is activist intervention of the Mirani-e-Movement in Balochistan, Pakistan, where indigenous people protested and engaged in hunger strikes between 2000-2006 against the construction of the Dam. Utilizing the case study of the Mirani Dam, it highlights how the local community excluded vulnerable social groups in decision-making processes. It examines the downstream impact of the dam, including the degradation of forests and the loss of livelihoods including fishermen. Furthermore, it discusses the devastating impact of the flood that occurred due to the dam's construction and the government's failure to provide compensation to affected families.

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## Partnerships for “just transition” policies: making sense of a burgeoning field of international climate cooperation through an environmental justice lens

Banerjee, Aparajita<sup>1</sup>; Bauer, Steffen<sup>1</sup>; Faus-Onbargi, Alexia<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract:

Amounting to an outstanding manifestation of environmental injustice, global climate policy is way off track from reaching its central objectives “to avoid dangerous climate change” (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) by “efforts to halt global warming at 1.5°C” (Paris Agreement). To make matters worse, geopolitical turbulences and multiple crises render the required turnaround in multilateral climate governance unlikely in this ‘age of planetary peril’. Against this bleak backdrop, a turn towards partnership approaches seeks to mobilize momentum and to advance ‘just transition’ pathways in rich societies and poor societies alike. Indeed, bi- and plurilateral as well as multi-stakeholder partnerships are mushrooming as seemingly promising complements to multilateral climate policy. With ‘just transition’ serving as a common denominator for many of these partnerships, their proponents typically imply for the respective policies to advance at the same time climate-friendly energy transitions and just policy outcomes (or to at least avoid inequitable ones). Living up to such promises on structurally unjust playing fields at national as well as international levels is a paramount challenge at the best of times. Failing to deliver on these promises even risks exacerbating the lack of trust that pervades international climate cooperation and undermines societal ownership already. Hence, this conference paper asks whether, when and how a variety of ‘just transition’ partnerships can be expected to make a difference for better or for worse. To this end, it synthesizes academic research as well as science-policy discussions conducted in the ‘Justice and Allocation’ workstream of recent Earth System Governance conferences (2022-2024) through an environmental justice lens. This synthesis discussion is further underpinned by a review of the burgeoning academic and public policy literature that addresses the empirical reality of ‘just transition’ partnerships and that has been published since the adoption of the ‘Glasgow Climate Pact’ by the UN climate change conference COP26 in 2021.

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## Environmental and Gender Justice within the Doughnut

Bauriedl, Sybille<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Integrative Geography, Europa-Universität Flensburg

### Abstract:

Climate change is not gender-neutral, but has gender-differentiated causes and effects. Gender analyses are therefore central for a knowledge production on climate justices and to responses to climate crises that do not exacerbate existing injustices. Nevertheless, it is not a standard perspective to connect gender justice and climate justice (Jafry 2019). Current studies on climate justice and sustainable futures integrate class, poverty, race, ethnicity, but not gender in the same way. And gender researchers often stay away from climate issues, presumably for fear of falling into the dangerous essentialist trap that the ecofeminist link between the oppression of women and the exploitation of nature entails (Terry 2009).

In this paper, I will combine the analytical perspective of feminist political ecology (Elmhirst 2015) with the normative perspective of the doughnut economy (Raworth 2012) to explain the need for a more nuanced knowledge of the causes of climate crises and the feasibility of climate action. I will focus on practices of care for climate in cities in industrialized countries.

The doughnut economy debate on "safe and just space" has opened up a new perspective for the transformation debate, which promotes the normative goal of so-called "strong sustainability": economic action should take place within the framework of a sustainable social foundation and planetary boundaries. The contribution discusses the way in which an intersectional perspective and, in particular, gender justice is taken into account in this approach, or how it could be explicitly integrated.

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- Tahseen Jafry (Hg.) (2019): Routledge Handbook of Climate Justice. London: Routledge.  
Terry, Geraldine (Hg.) (2009): Climate Change and Gender Justice. Warwickshire: Oxfam.  
Elmhirst, Rebecca 2015: Feminist Political Ecology. In: [Tom Perreault](#), [Gavin Bridge](#), [James McCarthy](#) (eds): The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology. London. S. 519-530.  
Raworth, Kate (2012): [A Safe and Just Space for Humanity: Can We Live within the Doughnut?](#) Oxfam.

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## Towards a political ecology of ocean justice

Bercht, Anna Lena<sup>1</sup>; Hein, Jonas<sup>2</sup>; Klepp, Silja<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Geography, Kiel University

<sup>2</sup>German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)

### Abstract:

In recent decades, relationships between humans and their marine environments have witnessed a profound transformation marked by the destruction of marine ecosystems, decline of fish abundance and an increasing prevalence of ocean privatization initiatives. We argue that in this context, normative justice perspectives become increasingly important. An ocean justice perspective can contribute to a critical analysis of the effects of privatization, large-scale coastal infrastructure, declining fish stocks and lack of capital, and can facilitate the (re)politicization of these debates. While marine governance is often framed in a technical way and appears apolitical, ocean justice puts questions of social exclusion and inclusion and access to coastal and marine resources centre stage. Our contribution builds on three qualitative case studies across Europe (Lofoten, Sicily and the Elbe estuary) to investigate the ability of different actors to access and benefit from the ocean and how this relates to claims for ocean justice. We show that when investigating ocean justice, it is of crucial importance to focus on the (re)configuration of power relations, access mechanisms and translocal dimensions of justice. Our cases illustrate that the power relations in which privatization processes and access relations are embedded determine whether injustices can be transmuted into justice claims. Having rights does not always translate into benefits.

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## Discordant Polyrythms: Applying Rhythmicity to Explore the Nexus on Water and Climate Injustices

Betancur Alarcón, Laura<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Humboldt University Berlin

### Abstract:

More frequent and intensified climate extremes lead to unevenly distributed impacts on water provision across diverse societal groups. Under techno-managerial narratives, water scarcity and insecurities can be naturalized as a mere consequence of extreme events instead of outcomes of complex political, economic, and governance processes. At the same time, seeking decarbonization or climate adaptation goals, the promotion of water-based 'climate solutions' – such as hydropower dams- can overshadow other effects.

How can we foster a nuanced understanding of climate-driven impacts in water crises? Building on recent conceptual developments in critical water and infrastructure studies, I suggest the generative potential of thinking through *rhythms* – as Henri Lefebvre (2004) proposes- for unpacking the colliding temporalities in the nexus between water, energy, and climate.

My conceptual insights draw on empirical evidence from two regions with large hydropower dams in the Magdalena River Basin in Colombia. Combining ethnographic research with streamflow and energy data analysis, I explain the *resonances* and *dissonances* among the *rhythms* of river-based livelihoods, electricity generation, and streamflow variation. By looking at everyday temporalities, I expose how specific temporal practices of the energy companies and the national market transform experiences around droughts, which currently are presented by policy and media narratives as only exacerbated by the lack of precipitation. Overall, I discuss the potential of applying rhythms as conceptual lenses to braid an agenda on the intersection of climate and water justice.



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## Transdisciplinary Tools for Environmental Justice: The 'Sticky Bits' in Research Collaboration

Bopp, Judith<sup>1</sup>; Féaux de la Croix, Jeanne<sup>2</sup>; Hendawy, Mennatullah<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Rachel Carson Center LMU Munich

<sup>2</sup>Tübingen University

<sup>3</sup>Technical University of Munich / Impact Circles Berlin

### Abstract:

Forms of transdisciplinary collaboration are a hugely promising avenue in striving towards environmental justice. At the same time, these modes of work usually present complex challenges in setting collective goals, power-sharing and everyday interactions between highly diverse collaborators. How can we successfully co-produce knowledge and action with diverse groups, such as citizens affected by water pollution, natural scientists modelling climate change, policy-makers negotiating agricultural policy, or artists highlighting species extinctions?

Based on our workshop “Transdisciplinary tools FOR Environmental Justice” held at the Environmental Justice conference at University of Bern in September 2022, we suggest a follow-up session to bring to the table the 'sticky bits', and analyse the difficult moments in collaborative processes. In an atmosphere of trust, the proposed session will create a moment of discussion for peers to share the challenging realities of collaborative practice, their moments of doubt, difficulty or conflict.

We invite academic and non-academic participants experienced in transdisciplinary and collaborative research and those interested in trying it out. The session will be held as an open forum. We welcome contact in advance with potential participants. All are free to bring issues they would like to discuss with the group.

Participants will take away a sustained reflection on TD principles and on-the-ground practice for environmental justice. We also think of the session as a potential kick-off for a peer-coaching series where invited expert commentators will share a learning moment from their own practice, and then advise on the issues that are raised from concrete experiences in the peer group.

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## **The right to sustainable development vs. the right to a healthy environment: a step backward or a useful complementarity?**

Boshoff, Elsabé<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, Oslo University

### **Abstract:**

Human rights-based approaches to environmental justice are advantageous in that they allow for the voices of those directly affected by, and most vulnerable to, environmental impacts to be placed central to decision-making about the environment. This paper draws on the case study of Ethiopia, which provides in its Constitution for both a right to live in a healthy environment (RHE) and a right to sustainable development (RtSD). Ethiopian courts have since 2022 for the first time found violations of the constitutional RHE in five separate cases. These were all straight-forward pollution cases relating for example to sewage leakage and waste dumping sites, and are therefore clear-cut violations of the RHE.

However, Ethiopia also faces multidimensional environmental challenges, including deforestation, mega-agricultural activities, the building of dams, mining, etc. These projects pose a more complex challenge for RHE litigation, as they are usually backed by powerful political actors and are often pushed through without or with only rubber-stamped environmental impact assessments. Opposing such projects on environmental grounds was historically, and even today is often viewed as “anti-development”.

Drawing on primary legal sources, literature review and interviews conducted with constitutional and environmental experts in Ethiopia, this paper argues that these kinds of cases are the next frontier for environmental litigation in Ethiopia. Arguably, the state could use arguments around development needs to trump the RHE in these types of cases. This paper unpacks whether emphasising a RtSD would be a step backwards from the successful recognition of the RHE in that, as some critics argue, the concept of sustainable development has been captured by a neoliberal agenda that sidelines ecological integrity and social justice, or if it might add crucial entitlements for communities to respond to decisions by the government to prioritise economic development over ecological integrity and human wellbeing.

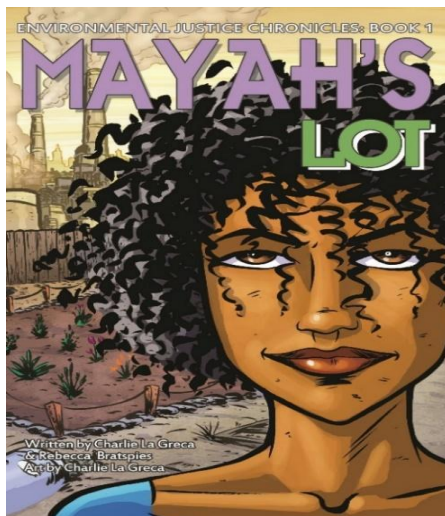
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**Art as Environmental Advocacy:  
Youth Empowerment and Environmental Justice**

Bratspies, Rebecca<sup>1</sup>; La Greca Velasco, Charlie<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>CUNY School of Law

**Abstract:**



*“Environmental Justice, I bet you don’t even know what that means...I had no idea that it actually affects every one of us. That is until it came to my home”*

So begins [Mayah’s Lot](#), the EPA award-winning environmental justice graphic novel. Set in the fictional town of Forestville, the book tells the story of a young girl who organizes her urban neighbors to self-advocate for environmental justice. Readers learn alongside Mayah as she practices community science, prepares public testimony, and builds a coalition for change. *Mayah’s Lot* has been used in classrooms around the world—with lesson plans ranging from those appropriate for elementary school students to those aimed at graduate students.

This intervention will model the creative process behind the *Mayah’s Lot* environmental justice workshops and show how participants might replicate or expand on this process. Through active collaboration with the artist, participants will create their own environmental justice villain (or hero) and will strategize about how to defeat or vindicate it.

The intervention will provide practical information about how the book project began, emphasizing its collaborative roots and chronicling how *Mayah’s Lot* has been used to teach basic civics to thousands of students, to build a social advocacy network, and to cultivate a new generation of urban environmental leaders not only attuned to environmental justice but also equipped with skills to navigate legal and regulatory systems. It will trace the project from one comic to a [three-volume series](#), a [video](#), a curriculum, and an affiliated UN project about environmental defenders ([The Earth Defenders](#)).

This intervention will demonstrate the power of nontraditional tools for bringing scholarly messages to a generation steeped in a more visual and interactive way of learning. It will open a conversation about using the arts to build bridges between scholarly social research and community activism for climate justice, environmental justice, and a just transition. And it will focus on how to open conversations about what kind of a society we want to have—asking what justice means for overburdened communities and offering models for social change.

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## Lifelines of Resistance? An Infrastructural Lens on Resource Extractivism and Resistance in Global South-North Comparison

Bröckling, Micha<sup>1</sup>; Flemmer, Riccarda<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Tübingen

### Abstract:

Road blockades, occupation of mining pits and sabotage of energy infrastructure are employed by communities and movements in the Global North and South to articulate resistance and exert pressure on governments or corporations to reconsider resource extractivism. The concept of extractivism, originating from critical Latin American thought, has prominence as a critique of “global extractivism”, which represents an unsustainable development model reliant on the excessive exploitation of our planet’s natural resources. Despite substantial interdisciplinary research, there has been limited scholarly exploration of how infrastructure serves as a mechanism for grassroots political change. Academic discourse reflects a dichotomy regarding infrastructure: one perspective regards it as indispensable for societal progress and development, a viewpoint often espoused in Global History and mainstream Development Studies. This perspective is further supported by literature in Political Science and Terrorism Studies, which portray disruptions of critical infrastructure as potential security threats. Conversely, critical analyses from Political Ecology and Human Geography depict infrastructure as a destructive force perpetuating violence against both people and nature, sustaining colonial and anthropocentric power structures between Global South and North and between humans and nature. In contrast, a third aspect is that infrastructure can be appropriated as a medium for symbolic and political contestation, embodying a relational ontology that interweaves local and global dynamics. This paper aims to contribute to this literature by establishing a foundation for a research agenda that investigates how the outlined three aspects of infrastructure sustain and potentially may transform global Extractivism.

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## Irrigation Infrastructures, State Authority and Climate Crisis in Northern Kurdistan

Çayli, Eray<sup>1</sup>; Mirhanoglu, Adnan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

### Abstract:

Launched in the 1970s, Turkey's Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) proclaims to address the Kurdish question through economic development, involving 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric powerplants on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. This ongoing initiative seeks to cover 46% of planned irrigation canal areas. Ample scholarship exists on GAP's adverse effects (e.g., village inundation, water deprivation for small farmers, and soil/nutrient loss). Examining the Qoser/Kızıltepe plain, we discuss impacts in areas where GAP is anticipated but not yet implemented and where laws issued in the name of environmental protection imbricate with infrastructures that monopolize access to water and energy. Engaging with recent theorizations of infrastructural violence and biopolitics, we reveal how GAP transforms water into a coveted resource essential for land vitality and how this transformation intersects with histories of non-Muslim genocide, the quest for Kurdish autonomy, and its suppression. GAP's violence, we argue, is reducible neither to quantifiably rationalizable issues like productivity or consumption nor to the singular foci on life and death that characterize biopolitical frameworks. We reconceptualize infrastructural violence and biopolitics as a question of autonomy and self-determination, asking on whose terms protection of, access to, and relations between land and water are understood and acted upon.

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## **Environmental Justice for whom? - Living with flood risks in the Topo Chico hill slopes in Monterrey, Mexico**

Chavez-Rodriguez, Libertad<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>CIESAS Center for Research and Advanced Studies in Social Anthropology, Mexico

### **Abstract:**

This paper presents empirical results of a project on differentiated social vulnerability to hydro-meteorological hazards in the city of Monterrey, Mexico, with focus on issues of risk perception and coping, adaptation, and survival practices to recurrent floods in the context of urban sprawl, exacerbated by climate change impacts.

Through ethnographic work conducted from March to August in 2022 in 3 neighborhoods located in areas prone to recurrent flooding, surface runoff, and waterlogging, I am particularly interested in discussing the role of attachment to place in household decision-making and in forms of individual and community resistance and collective organization in the search for environmental justice at the community level.

Working from an intersectional perspective of environmental justice, I argue that environmental injustices exist in practice in relation to exclusions of gender, class or socio-economic status, racial and ethnic discrimination, age, physical and mental capacities; gender as one of the most transcendent aspects, as it intersects with all other forms of social difference and inequality (i.e. Intersectionality). The rationale is that populations with lower socio-economic status are those who are often exposed to a higher risk of socio-spatial segregation and unfair access to infrastructure, goods, and services; they are also excluded from decision-making processes and social participation. Once these communities and individuals are exposed to environmental injustices, other vulnerabilities and inequalities are bound to follow.

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## Exploring Alternative Economies of the Coca Leaf: A Path Towards a Just and Peaceful Transition - A Case Study of the Association of Indigenous Councils of Northern Cauca, Colombia

Crespo, Felipe<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Humboldt University Berlin

### Abstract:

Research on the nexus between deforestation as a driver for climate change and coca leaf cultivation for drug trafficking in Colombia has been limited, with most studies focusing on regions of agriculture frontier expansion (UNODC, 2015; Sarmiento, et al. 2024). This relationship is rooted in how the global market dynamics of the cocaine industry shape the value chains of coca leaf in these regions, significantly impacting the livelihoods of local communities (Gutiérrez-Sanín, 2021). The framework of socio-ecological transformations (Gudynas, 2011; Svampa, 2019) capture the interplay between present societal practices and the challenges of attaining climate objectives for decarbonized economies. This process not only aims for a transition that is just (Martínez, 2023) but also, in the case of Colombia, seeks to achieve a lasting and sustainable peace in the territories (Ide, 2021). Decades of the war on drugs have disproportionately targeted the weakest links in the coca value chain, namely indigenous people, and coca-growing peasants (Gil, 2023). The Colombian national drug policy for 2023-2033 has adopted a different approach, focusing on providing support for productive projects to communities reliant on coca leaf cultivation, albeit within the framework of substituting illegalized economies (Min Justicia, 2023). In the case of the Nasa indigenous people and their territories in Northern Cauca, they have faced profound challenges due to armed conflict and drug trafficking, yet they have also demonstrated remarkable resilience through historical resistance (CODACOP, 2023). Over the years, they have actively pursued the development of alternative coca leaf economies (Ramírez, 2020), recognizing the economic value and cultural significance of such initiatives, which also influence broader economic decisions (Zelizer, 2010). These endeavors present opportunities to move away from narco-deforestation practices and instead become catalysts for just and peaceful transitions.

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## Quo Vadis Europa?

### Die Klimakrise und die Transformation in Deutschland und Europa

Dombrowski, Barbara<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>@fotografie barbara dombrowski

#### **Abstract:**

Im Rahmen meiner aktuellen Klimaarbeit „Quo Vadis, Europa?\_Klimakrise und Transformation“ möchte ich mich den transformativen Möglichkeiten der nachhaltigen Land-und Forstwirtschaft und der Moore widmen.

Im ersten Teil von „Quo Vadis, Europa?“ habe ich mich mit Dystopien beschäftigt, der Zunahme klimabedingter Folgeschäden durch fossile Energien, Starkregenereignisse, Dürren oder Brände, die uns zeigen wohin wir uns in der Klimakrise in Europa bewegen. Die Abbildung und Darstellung von Krisen führt in der Regel jedoch nicht zur Ermunterung des Betrachters die eigenen Handlungen zu hinterfragen, sondern eher dazu sich verängstigen und verunsichern zu lassen. Jedoch ist in einem journalistischen und wissenschaftlichen Kontext die Dokumentation und Darstellung dieser Ereignisse von einer zeitgeschichtlichen Relevanz.

Meinen Ansatz aus der Arbeit „Tropic Ice“, Menschen mit Landschaften zu kombinieren, führe ich in der neuen Arbeit „Quo Vadis, Europa?“ fort, wohingegen sich die Landschaften in abstrakten und kleinteiligen Strukturen manifestieren und auf vergangene Katastrophen verweisen. Dadurch gebe ich den portraitierten Menschen mehr Raum.

Im zweiten Teil der Arbeit „Quo Vadis, Europa?“ möchte ich mich nun mit Utopien auseinandersetzen - den Lösungen für eine nachhaltige Zukunft im Kontext der Klimakrise, ein achtsameres Miteinander der Menschen untereinander und der Menschen in ihrer Beziehung zur Natur.

Ich interessiere mich für Möglichkeiten der Behebung jahrhundertealter Strukturen, die die Menschen in der Vergangenheit für sinnvoll und ihren Vorstellungen von Wachstum als gerechtfertigt erachtet haben. Die Klimakrise hat uns an einen Punkt gebracht, diese Modelle neu zu bewerten.

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## Gender Perspectives on Nuclear Justice

Dannenberg, Janina<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

### Abstract:

Since the inception of the nuclear era, nuclear weapons have posed a severe threat to global security and have already caused significant harm to people and the environment. An example of this is the legacy of nuclear testing. The majority of the tests took place in remote areas under the colonial control of nuclear powers, with indigenous peoples and other social or political minorities being the most affected. Even decades after the tests, survivors face cancers and reproductive abnormalities, the intergenerational trauma of resettlement, and the physical destruction of their sources of livelihood.

The notion of nuclear justice emphasizes lived experiences and the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. It inspires struggles for criminal liability, reparation, and truth in the pursuit of reconciliation and is essential for global efforts toward nuclear disarmament.

In my contribution, I introduce the very broad discourse on gender in relation to nuclear justice. This discourse ranges from sex-segregated analyses of sensitivity to radiation, to the roles of women and queer individuals in nuclear justice movements, and includes questions regarding epistemological power based on recurring patterns of devaluation through naturalization and feminization. Viewed collectively, the conceptualizations of gender within these discussions are far from congruent, with each possessing its own legitimacy. I typify these conceptualizations by relating them to different academic trends and waves of social movements. Furthermore, I connect gender-related issues and demands to existing frameworks of environmental justice, thereby inquiring into questions of distribution, recognition, and procedural justice.

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## The Political Ecology of Green Hydrogen: Tracing the Gospel of Green Tech from German and EU Capital to Namibian Grounded Experiences

Ernstson, Henrik<sup>1</sup>; Rischer, Maximilian<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>KTH Royal Institute of Technology

### Abstract:

Infrastructural projects to realize the industry-led low-emission energy transition are commonly framed in a positive light by governments around the world. The prospect of human extinction due to global warming, which emerges from historical patterns of combined and highly uneven energy extraction, is raised to a moral dictum that invites us all to join in the gospel of “green tech.” From that unison embrace that aligns capital that needs to be activated and governments that need to show action, a techno-optimistic rush is generated that prepares the ground for grand projects and solutions at a scale. The case of green hydrogen has been configured as one of those silver bullets to remedy our multiple global and planetary malaise.

This paper focuses on how European capital has envisioned and configured a large-scale infrastructure project to produce green hydrogen in Namibia. In that regard, one data set was gathered during 2023 and focused on tracing how German, British, and EU capital in the form of investors, consultancies and state agencies have coordinated with the Namibian state to envision the “Hyphen” project planned for a National Park in Namibia. The second data set is based on a three-month ethnographic fieldwork stay in Namibia in 2024 including interviews, participatory observation, and field notes taking that crucially help to ground and contextualize the socio-economic and ecological impacts of green hydrogen production against its positive spin.

Following the political ecological framework of the socioecological fix, the preliminary findings strongly indicate that green hydrogen does not significantly contribute to solving the climate crisis and social problems. Contrarily, influenced by domestic and international politics, the project in Namibia seems to primarily fix the immediate crisis of capitalism, which is not simply to access cheap energy but also to send over accumulated capital into new ways of circulation for capitalism to renew itself. By commodifying and integrating yet more landscapes and natural resources into global value chains, the Namibian society faces significant disadvantages. This is exacerbated by numerous challenges in Namibia and the nearby town of Lüderitz, limited local participation, and potential corruption. Similarly, the finance approach of the project pushes Namibia into potential financial dependencies. Besides that, the legacy from German colonialism and South African occupation before liberation is manifested in where and how the infrastructure of hydrogen production is envisioned and planned. There is a risk that the hegemony of elite social classes and a few primarily foreign actors will be sustained, potentially reinforcing social inequalities through a project that is heralded as benefitting the entire nation.

By assessing the political ecology of green hydrogen, the paper contributes to a critical research agenda of the low-emission energy transition, which considers global inequalities, colonial histories, and techno-optimistic ideologies. This will hopefully help to build a foundation for a truly decolonial and just energy transition, all around the world.

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## Conceptualizing systemic biodiversity litigation

Fenn, Rebecca<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tilburg Law School

### Abstract:

In this conceptual contribution I explore a set of biodiversity litigation cases which I understand as 'systemic'. Facing conservation law's and litigation's failure to halt the biodiversity crisis, these cases aim at addressing root causes and global drivers of biodiversity loss by fostering transformative change through fundamental, system-wide reorganization in economic, social, political or technological domains. I understand systemic biodiversity litigation as a spectrum of multiple, overlapping dimensions which concern the temporal scope, the geographic scope and the extent to which a case deals with decision-making in the political, economic, and technological domain. More systemic cases move away from the conventional model of conservation litigation focusing on protected species or protected habitats and focus instead on the granting of authorizations, the requirement of considering effects on biodiversity in political and corporate decision-making, or the functioning of entire sectors or business models. Systemic litigation cases use legal strategies which focus less on the implementation of environmental and conservation law (rule of law strategy) and instead aim at extending the scope of conservation law so as to include more drivers of biodiversity loss (epistemic expansion of conservation law), or extending other areas of law so as to include considerations related to biodiversity (normative expansion of conservation). These strategies resonate with problematizations of conservation law which go beyond viewing biodiversity loss as a problem of implementation and enforcement, and instead question the structure of conservation law and its disadvantaged position vis-à-vis other areas of law favoring economic interests over matters of environmental protection.

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## Resisting or Persisting in the Climate Regime? A Latin American Case Study on Civil Society Organizations' Counter-Conduct on Loss and Damage

Fischer, Marie Sophie<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Augsburg

### Abstract:

This paper examines the impact of civil society organizations (CSOs) as advocates for the "most vulnerable" in the realm of loss and damage (L&D) from climate change, particularly in the context of COP28's agreement on the operationalization of a dedicated fund. Since the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992, responsibilities and climate justice entitlements have increasingly diluted. Concerns arise that the newly created L&D financing may be co-opted by the dominant climate regime, potentially neglecting the needs of frontline communities. Focusing on the role of CSOs, this study investigates the extent to which their advocacy challenges the prevailing L&D governmentality by fostering counter-discourses. Inspired by a Foucauldian understanding of government that goes beyond a single center of power, I explore the knowledge forms, visibilities, technologies, and identities shaping their resistance. The paper builds on participatory observation in a small and community-centered CSO in Latin America and its engagement in international, national, and local sites. Besides the ethnographic memos, I study the wording of the CSO's publications and public interventions (e.g. at COPs). I argue that there are CSOs that pluralize and democratize L&D governmentalities by upholding the lived experiences and epistemologies of the most affected and marginalized people. Moreover, I show that the emerging counter-discourses on L&D visualize the entanglements of climate and environmental justice claims that rise from (neo)colonial continuities. However, I point to persisting power dimensions in public funding structures and the COP procedures that prune the radical potential of these counter-discourses.

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## Empowering Change: The role of climate movements and litigation in advancing climate justice in Germany

Frerichs, Lea<sup>1</sup>; Fünfgeld, Anna<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

### Abstract:

The realization of climate justice as part of a climate transition, which aims not only to reduce emissions but also to bring about broader societal change, is currently being driven forward primarily by civil society organizations and activists. In our paper, we analyze the impact of two central strategies to realize climate justice and protection in Germany: climate protests and climate litigation. In order to assess the transformative potential of these strategies, we look at current dynamics, contextual conditions and modes of action and their impacts in these two fields. The analysis is part of a larger, annual outlook on the conditions and societal dynamics of the German climate transition. Both phenomena enjoy considerable media attention and are regularly the subject of debate in the German Bundestag. Through a quantitative analysis of media coverage of the climate movement and climate litigation as well as references to them in Bundestag debates, we were able to map the respective trends and developments. Among other things, a broad, dynamic climate movement has emerged in Germany in recent years, which has gained strong media visibility since 2019 and has largely been able to maintain this visibility despite a temporary coronavirus low. However, the contextual conditions for climate protests have tended to deteriorate in recent years due to shrinking civic spaces. The number of climate litigation in Germany has risen sharply since 2021 at the latest. This dynamic is favored by an increasing density of climate law norms and the emergence of legal and activist support networks, so that recently there have been more enabling conditions for climate litigation. Our paper takes a closer look at these and other findings and examines their effects on the climate transition in Germany.

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## **Agricultural Pesticides and Highly Vulnerable Aquatic Ecosystems: An Urgent Need to Acknowledge Self-Standing Rights to Voiceless Victims**

Guida, Alessandra<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Queen's University Belfast-School of Law

### **Abstract:**

Pesticides adopted in agriculture are irreversibly damaging aquatic ecosystems and creating 'dead zones' within bodies of water, where almost nothing can survive. This becomes even more concerning if the threatened ecosystems are World Heritage Areas. The Great Barrier Reef, which is the World's largest coral reef system and one of the most vital and vulnerable ecosystems, is adversely impacted by agricultural pesticides. Specifically, according to the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority, there is ongoing pollution of the Great Barrier Reef catchment, where marine scientists found excessive levels of agricultural pesticides, including those banned by several European countries. Agricultural pesticides are also degrading aquatic ecosystems in Europe. Among others, intensive agriculture surrounding the Danube Delta, which is included on UNESCO's World Heritage list, is causing quality problems of surface and groundwater by pesticide pollution and adversely impacting numerous freshwater fish species in its numerous lakes and marshes. National and International measures aiming at preventing harm to aquatic ecosystems from agricultural pesticides are accordingly proving to be ineffective. Against this scenario, the Agenda 2030 incorporates the claim according to which international governance has to enable a bottom-up process. Nevertheless, the slogan of 'leaving no one behind' is still far to go from paper to practice as long as the countless marine species impacted by agricultural pesticides have neither self-standing rights nor voice on the international table of negotiations. This study aims to discuss whether an international acknowledgment and full implementation of the emerging Rights of Nature might significantly contribute to giving voice to the voiceless victims of environmental harm.

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## Thinking Like a Fund: How the UN Green Climate Fund Governs, Depoliticizes and Realigns Energy Transitions

Haag, Steffen<sup>1</sup>; Müller, Franziska<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

### Abstract:

Green funds operate along all stages of adaptation or mitigation projects and have become an influential force for the ways in which climate adaptation and mitigation unfolds, both regarding the discourses and materialities surrounding such enterprises. We argue that fund structures may exert influence at the local level (projects), the administrative level (governance), and the epistemic level (rationale, problematization and theory of change). Fund-driven transformation processes are therefore prone to financialization and carry the risk to reproduce hegemonial or even neo-colonial forms of governance and knowledge production. This refers for instance to interventions into sovereignty and postcolonial statehood or to the creation of epistemological dichotomies that privilege western bodies of knowledge.

We argue that the turn towards ‘fund-driven climate mitigation ensues a turn towards bankability, a turn towards postliberal stakeholder governance, and a turn towards results-based management within the hitherto politicized sphere of climate adaptation and mitigation. Altogether this establishes new financial, economic and epistemic dependencies while limiting the already few spaces for local ownership in transition processes. One major actor in this regard is the Green ClimateFund (GCF) the world’s largest public climate fund.

To “think like a fund” i.e. to shed light on the GCF’s ‘mentalities’ and to contribute to the small but significant debate on funds-driven green transformation we carry out a governmentality analysis of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Our work contributes to the debate on green governmentality (Tanja Murray Li, Mitchell Dean, Robert Fletcher, Adeniyi Asyianbi) and also engages with recent debates on green financialization (Philip Mader, Sarah Bracking). Based on an empirical sample of 25 renewable energy projects, we analyze how the logics of green fund shape green transformation projects in terms of depoliticization, externalization of governmental authority, and creation of transnational governmental alignments. We discuss implications for a just energy transition and likewise for just and transparent fund governance.

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## Deliberative democracy, social equality, and the climate crisis

Hennig, Jesko<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)

### Abstract:

Can deliberative democracy handle the climate crisis? I find that deliberative democrats typically rely on ordinary citizens' 'communicative power' to publicly pressure governments into effective climate action. However, they rarely appreciate the fact that such communicative power presupposes 'social power', i.e., capacities to organise, mobilise, or negotiate. This oversight leaves deliberative democracy vulnerable to the continuing objections by Political Realists, 'activists', and 'agonists', who often propose more substantially egalitarian conceptions of democracy. To rebut such objections, while making their strategies to address political crises more realistic, deliberative democrats can make an easy move: explicitly embracing the commitment to an egalitarianism about social power that their reliance on ordinary citizens' communicative power already implies. I suggest specifically that deliberative democrats adopt a twofold egalitarian position about the *relative distribution*, and about an *absolute minimum* of social power available to citizens. Such a position entails paying closer attention to measures like wealth redistribution and universal basic income, while rethinking policing, assembly, and public space.



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## Who speaks for us?': Claiming rights, resistance and (in)justice in South Asia

Hossain, Jinat<sup>1</sup>; Thieme, Susan<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Zurich; University of Bern

<sup>2</sup>University of Bern

### Abstract:

The historical narrative of South Asia is characterized by a persistent quest of justice entangled with different forms of resistance and protest which reflects a continuous struggle under authoritarian governance. Within this backdrop, we investigate and portray how resistance as form of justice claim is shaped in Bangladesh and Nepal and explore their potential as well as challenges in transition for justice. Both Bangladesh and Nepal are experiencing multifaced transition through rapid economic growth, increased inequalities, political instability and social-ecological crisis, which collectively present significant challenges on citizen's claim for justice. Drawing upon empirical investigations conducted in both countries between 2021 and 2024, the film presents some flashes from the protest and mobilizations on **(a)** access to safe water, a demand from the climate vulnerable communities in *Sundarbans* delta of Bangladesh and **(b)** justice in work, a demand from health workers in Nepal. The examples, which at first glance appear very different, motivate our collaborative film production to encounter these protests highlighting **(i)** how claim for justice in the form of resistance is (re)shaped in Bangladesh and Nepal; **(ii)** the challenges and opportunities for fostering a justice in both countries with such efforts of mobilization and resistance efforts. We present the output of a collaborative process of film production following two steps- **first**, we co-produced audio, visual, photographs, arts and maps with community and collaborators in Bangladesh and Nepal; **second**, we will co-produce the final film (post production phase) in collaboration with researchers involved and media professionals for editing. The film presents the critical interpretation and the contested notions of justice within the socio-political landscapes of Bangladesh and Nepal. We showcase the voice of those people, who contribute significantly to the society but their needs and struggles are not heard. The film is an attempt to bridge between science and society, contributing to the ongoing discussion on justice through transdisciplinary research.

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## Environmental peacebuilding as a dual process of social and ecological reconciliation in the Anthropocene?

Hwang, Juneseo<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg (Centre for Futures of Sustainability)

### Abstract:

Peacebuilding through environmental cooperation (so-called ‘environmental peacebuilding’) is gaining traction as the global society increasingly grapples with environmental challenges and conflict resolution as a whole. It is premised on the possibility of resolving conflicts over environmental resources and societal problems arising from environmental change through cooperative mechanisms. Put simply, it is believed that social cohesion can be promoted when conflict parties ensure equitable access to and distribution of natural resources. Today, such interventions are not limited to societies affected by environmental conflicts.

As our planet burns down, how far can we sustain peace through environmental cooperation? Environmental peacebuilding programmes seem ill-suited to sustaining peace, especially when one considers the peaceful existence of human beings within the planetary ecosystems. While environmental peacebuilding offers new opportunities for bridging social relations, it is often limited to efforts to ‘remediate social cleavages between human communities by utilising the environment as a natural resource that provides ecological services for human flourishing’. Peace remains elusive and fragile where structural violence, such as climate change, reduces the habitability of our planet.

In this presentation, environmental peacebuilding is reconceptualised from a post-anthropocentric perspective as a dual process of reconciliation—one between divided communities and the other between the human and the natural worlds. Through an empirical analysis of grassroots environmental activism in Northern Ireland as a potential case of environmental peacebuilding from below and from a post-human perspective, such conceptualisation is viewed as a way of promoting socially and ecologically sustainable peace.

Based on the case study of The Gathering, a Derry-based campaign group, my research finds that environmental campaigning in divided societies can increase intergroup contact and create a sense of unity as ‘place/planet protectors’, developing a new current of reconciliation with nature. It concludes that in the Anthropocene, peace should more actively embrace social reconciliation and ecological reconciliation as an interconnected process.

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## Offshore gas extraction. Storylines from Germany and the Netherlands

Ittner, Irit<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)

### Abstract:

Ethnographic research in the North Sea highlighted national path dependencies looking at a transboundary user conflict, which unfolded around offshore gas extraction and ocean protection. It displayed multi-level ocean governance in practice and underlined that major resistance originated from climate activism though activists emphasised marine biodiversity. For a litigation, they formed a successful coalition of claimants, which collected evidence on ecologically valuable reefs in the project area. They won the case in April 2024 and stopped the gas project.

How does one explain existing limitations of ocean protection, government frameworks and complex scientific findings from a case study to a public audience, islanders and tourists? The author and her research partners chose to co-design an exhibition for Borkum (the island municipality was among the claimants) to present Dutch and German storylines of the reefs off Borkum, the establishment of a *Schutzkulisse*, offshore extractivism and the resistance movement in their historical and political context.

The contribution includes the title roll-up of the exhibition. It will present the storyline of the exhibition, and reflect on the process of co-design and the momentum of the exhibition, which included another protest against gas extraction. Two days after the opening, the drilling boat was established off the island.

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## Whose Just Transition? Epistemic Injustice and Struggles for Recognition in Governing a Just Energy Transition Through JETP

Kammler, Lea<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

### Abstract:

The concept of energy justice, particularly its role in governing the global transition to low-carbon energy systems, has garnered increasing attention within the social sciences. Despite a growing focus in academia on how power dynamics and injustices related to knowledge – production, dissemination and recognition – are entrenched within the social body, the discourse remains polarized around (re)distributive notions of justice. Such systemic biases tend to silence marginalized voices and render certain forms of knowledge and experiences invisible, turning governing a just energy transition into an epistemic struggle for recognition.

This paper explores the role of epistemic injustices and the struggle for recognition in shaping a just energy transition. It draws upon Miranda Fricker's (2007) philosophical conception of epistemic injustice – when someone is wronged in their capacity as a knower – and integrates it with Nancy Fraser's 'status model of recognition' (2003, 2008) to offer a relational understanding of the harms and injustices inherent in governing a just energy transition. By examining the German-Indonesian cooperation under the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP), the analysis aims to reveal epistemic injustices and the misrecognition of the structural accumulation of constituted patterns of harm and violence of international partnerships. Additionally, it underscores the necessity of building networks of trust and solidarity that counter the logic of neoliberal governance, as a prerequisite for decarbonizing the global energy system under the premise of justice.

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## Re-politicizing urban transformation: Urban planning between epistemic injustice and post-politics

Klaever, Anke<sup>1</sup>; Mössner, Samuel<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Technical University Berlin

<sup>2</sup>University of Münster

### Abstract:

Recently, experimental formats in urban planning have emerged as promising tools to transcend formal structures and procedures, fostering societal transformation and justice. Initially met with enthusiasm, there is now a growing critique questioning the political implications of such formats. This abstract starts with the premise that there is need for conceptual perspectives that re-politicize experimental planning. Drawing on case-studies from urban planning in Münster and mobility transition in Berlin, we offer a novel perspective that merges the post-political perspective with questions of epistemic(in)justice. A post-political critique of (urban) planning has long been discussed in critical planning theory. It focuses on issues of political subjectification, the inclusion and exclusion of opinions and positions, and the strategic framing of ostensibly non-negotiable societal constraints. The literature argues that positions perceived as consensual are often critically uncovered as "stage-managed" (Macleod 2011: 2632), and, following French political philosopher Jacques Rancière, effectively exclude positions and roles by policing mechanisms. Rancière's significant perspective, notably influential in planning theory (Almendinger 2017: 191), focuses on the recognition, participation, and exclusion of the political subject in existing social orders (Krassmann 2015: 73). It addresses the 'order of the sensible'—what is visible and expressible within societal consensus versus what is dismissed as mere 'noise' in planning. Therewith it touches upon epistemic question regarding the trust placed in the visible and expressible (testimonial injustice), as well as the ability of subjects to communicate own experiences hindered by a gap in collective understanding, which limits one's capacity to articulate or comprehend a social experience (Fricker 2007, 2013). In this theoretically grounded abstract, we aim to amalgamate both conceptual strands on the politics of planning in order to forge a more coherent understanding of societal transformation processes in urban contexts.

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## Documentary and discussion: “Apaguen los mecheros y enciendan la vida” - Oil extractivism and environmental (in)justice in the Ecuadorian Amazon

Knöfel, Mathilde<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Union of Affected People by Texaco (UDAPT)

### Abstract:

The contribution on “oil extractivism and environmental (in)justice in the Ecuadorian Amazon” will consist in the screening of the short documentary “*Apaguen los Mecheros y Enciendan la Vida*” (“Extinguish the gas flares and light up life” - original language Spanish with English subtitles) [~30 minutes], followed by a short presentation about two environmental justice cases brought forward by the grassroot organisation *Union of Affected People by Texaco’s Oil Operations* - [UDAPT](#) and a group of young girls against the Ministry of Energy and Non-Renewable Natural Resources, Ministry of the Environment and the State Attorney General's Office (known as the *Mechero* case) and the U.S. oil giant Chevron-Texaco (known as the Lago Agrio Case or Aguinda vs. Texaco) against gas flaring and oil extractivism in the Ecuadorian Amazon basin. The intervention will end with a final discussion and reflection [~30 minutes].

The region’s soil, air and water sources have been heavily contaminated by the oil industry since 1967, year in which the U.S. oil company TEXACO entered the Amazon and started its operations. Since then, the oil industry has expanded becoming the strongest economic sector, while cancer rates within the local population have drastically increased, affecting mostly women. Different Indigenous Peoples inhabiting the region since centuries have reported a decrease in fish stocks of rivers, the death of animals and crops after repeated oil spills and the burning of toxic gases through obsolete gas flaring technologies, impacting not only their life sustaining practices but also their ancestral culture.

**Documentary details:** Pablo Fajardo, the renowned environmental lawyer who managed to bring down the North American transnational Chevron (formerly Texaco), shows us his world of commitment for the rights of an Amazonian population affected by oil activities. Together with the activist Donald Moncayo and the Union of People Affected by Texaco (UDAPT), the discourse in defense of the environment extends and structures a series of events and testimonies with a clear purpose: to make visible the struggle and injustice that has been going on in that region of Ecuador for more than fifty years, for the humble attempt to cross borders and raise awareness among the public of all ages of the fragility, duality and privilege promoted by the dominant energy system in the world.

Link: <http://www.odinedoc.com/extinguish-the-burners-and-light-up-life.html>

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**Destruction and (Re)Construction in Sacrifice Zones of Capital: Resistance against environmental destruction on the island Ilha de Maré, Bahia, Brazil**

Kocks, Johanna<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Philipps-University Marburg, Center for Conflict Studies

**Abstract:**

Environmental destruction affects people differently depending on socially constructed vulnerabilities along the axes of race, class, and gender in specific contexts of time and space. This paper draws connections between the concepts of “slow violence” and “structural violence,” exploring the interwoven nature of continuous, perpetual forms of violence and the spatially specific embeddedness of violence as it manifests in particular structures. This paper asks how forms of slow and structural violence are interconnected, perpetuated, and resisted, and how violence constructs and maintains specific uneven geographies of environmental destruction.

Utilizing the concepts of sacrifice zones and environmental justices this paper examines the case of the artisanal fisherwomen of the Quilombo of Ilha de Maré in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, and their continuous resistance against a petroleum supply chain and the intoxication of their land and water. Through an ethnographic approach, this paper reveals how communities in a postcolonial setting continuously resist destruction in their daily lives and how they perceive forms of violence through toxicity in a specific geographic setting over time.

Situated within feminist political ecology, this paper engages with debates around epistemic violence and (in)visibility in the context of knowledge production in environmental conflicts, making a concerted effort to center the experiences of those most affected.

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## Justice in scaling Nature-based solutions – A new conceptual framework

Lehmann, Ina<sup>1</sup>; Langemeyer, Johannes<sup>1</sup>; Maestre Andres, Sara<sup>1</sup>; Schaafsma, Marije<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

### Abstract:

In recent years, Nature-based solutions (NbS) have emerged as a widely supported tool for achieving major sustainability objectives, supporting humanity to stay within planetary boundaries and revising our relationship with the environment. To deliver on these policy objectives, NbS will have to be implemented at tremendous scales across a diversity of social, economic and ecological contexts and be supported by multiple institutions.

NbS have been shown to work well in several local contexts, but have also led to concerns over justice as stakeholders are likely to be affected in different ways, potentially creating winners and losers. Such concerns are likely to be amplified when scaling NbS across contexts and places. Scaling NbS therefore raises complex questions of justice, but the issue of scaling has so far received little attention in justice scholarship. In particular, key knowledge gaps remain around how to enact and evaluate justice in NbS scaling. The objective of our proposed paper therefore is to provide a conceptual framework of scaling justice with a focus on NbS as a key area of empirical application.

We draw on a five-fold scaling framework that includes i) *scaling up* to higher policy level changes in laws, policies, or norms to foster institutional change for NbS; ii) *scaling out* by replicating localised NbS over wider spatial scales; iii) *scaling down* by (re-)allocating necessary resources and means, e.g. incentives, regulations, funding, to support NbS implementation and impact; iv) *scaling in* by ensuring organisations have the structure, capacity, functions or skills to deliver NbS; and v) *scaling deep* through achieving transformative change in practices, norms, beliefs and values and reflexive learning.

We discuss synergies and trade-offs between different dimensions of justice (*recognition, procedural, distributive*) in different scaling approaches. We thereby generate new conceptual and practical guidelines and tools for just and scalable NbS implementation to foster transformative change.



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## Undone Climate Futures: The Knowledge Politics of Climate Overshoot and Carbon Removals

López Rivera, Andrés<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

### Abstract:

The 1.5°C limit to global warming, which is a stringent goal of the Paris Agreement, is increasingly falling out of reach. As a result, the politics of climate change are being increasingly shaped by the prospects of climate overshoot, which refers to temporarily crossing the 1.5°C threshold and subsequently returning below it within a given period of time. In climate change scenarios, overshoot pathways evoke socio-technical imaginaries that prioritize the large-scale deployment of carbon dioxide removal (CDR) technologies, also known as negative emissions technologies. The development and up-scaling of such technologies are increasingly regarded as a matter of necessity in climate science and policy discourses. Technological advances and innovations in a variety of CDR technologies are fueling future expectations not only about its climate change mitigation potential, but also about its potential to become a trillion-dollar industry. Yet, the large-scale deployment of CDR technologies is expected to be resource-intensive in terms of energy, land, water, and other resources. This could potentially lead to the emergence of new forms of green extractivism, particularly in the Global South. The present paper examines how the discourse on overshoot and carbon removals is being problematized by a multiplicity of actors with respect to the Global South. The analysis focuses on the ongoing negotiations for a market-based approach to carbon removals under the Paris Agreement. On this basis, the paper advances a critical analysis of these emerging imaginaries of climate futures, especially by mobilizing an approach that focuses on diverse ways of knowing and languages of valuation in the Global South.

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## **Towards a political theory of ecological art: Appraising environmental citizenship in liberal democracies**

Malik, Ambika<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

### **Abstract:**

My paper explores the contentious relationship between democratic liberty and environmental protection, presenting a novel conception of justice for liberal environmental citizenship based upon a widened understanding of liberal obligation. Situating the practice of ecological art within this political context, I argue that its message and method favours understanding it as a purveyor of responsible and informed environmental citizenship.

The challenge of motivating individuals within liberal democracies to care for the environment has led to several normative frameworks of “environmental citizenship” being proposed to engender environmental protection. I contend that prominent frameworks by Andrew Dobson, John Barry, and Derek Bell fail to consider the full ambit of environmental fallouts and as a result offer inadequate accounts of environmental injustice and responsibility. To supplement them, I argue that the notion of harm should be expanded to include disdain for individual passivity towards injustice and inequality and offer the merit of basing environmental citizenship upon the capabilities approach of justice.

I further urge the invalidity of interpretations of political neutrality (elaborated upon by theorists such as Michael Saward) which bar the democratic state from espousing as desirable particular moral conceptions of the good life, a contention which has led to the claim that sustainable ways of life cannot be favoured by the democratic state. Arguing against this conclusion, I encourage a more nuanced, lasting conception of neutrality; one in which states prioritise the possibility of individual freedom over a more transient (and often self-defeating) system of thought.

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## Responding to Non-Compliance with Climate Responsibilities

Marbach, Joris<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

### **Abstract:**

The lack of action in line with adherence to the target of 1.5°C (respectively 2°C) increase in global average temperature demands to think about what to do. While there is discussion and research about what can possibly be done - ranging from negative emission technologies, carbon capture and storage, and solar radiation modification, to matters of civil disobedience, degrowth, and the role of science in this process – there is less focus on comprehensive ethical evaluation of these questions. However, while some of these could, that does not mean that they should be engaged in; and to advise whether they should be engaged in it needs comprehensive guidance to think about issues of desirability. This thesis therefore investigates, from a normative perspective, what agents (meaning individuals, corporations, governments, international organizations, and civil society actors) should do when other agents fail to meet their climatic responsibilities (meaning responsibilities to mitigate, adapt, or compensate) as raised by Simon Caney (2016) in *Climate Change and Non-Ideal Theory: Six Ways of Responding to Non-Compliance*. These six ways are compared according to a framework developed in the thesis, which considers the aim of sustainable development and the role of the environment for meeting human needs, and the responsibilities of agents to ensure this aim. Facing non-compliance with these responsibilities it is argued that increasing compliance should be aimed for.

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## Conflicts of justice and distribution in the industrial hydrogen transformation

Maschke, Judith<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bremen University

### Abstract:

The contribution focuses on the steel plant in the federal state of Bremen, which is responsible for around half of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the state of Bremen and is to be gradually converted to a supply of green hydrogen over the next 15 years. The aim is to make a contribution to achieving climate neutrality in the federal state of Bremen by 2038.

In an initial qualitative interview study, 21 stakeholders (public, private sector and NGOs) were interviewed in 12 expert interviews from the state of Bremen. These interviews will be completed in the coming weeks by two further qualitative interview studies. The first will take place in the district of Cuxhaven, which borders Bremen, with stakeholders from the fields of politics, environmental protection and tourism. In the second interview study to follow, stakeholders will be interviewed at national level. Here, the interviews are primarily aimed at political representatives (especially BMWK), energy agencies and environmental protection organizations. The focus of the interviews was and is on issues of energy justice and expectations of the hydrogen transformation.

Hydrogen transformations are increasingly being critically discussed in human geography research, among other things with regard to new or the continuation of existing injustices in global energy systems. The initial findings from the Bremen interview study already show that justice in the Bremen hydrogen transformation only means the preservation of jobs and Bremen as a business location. Aspects of justice were hardly discussed in the context of future hydrogen imports and distribution issues.

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## Climate emergency from the law perspective

Müllerová, Hana<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute of State and Law of the Czech Academy of Sciences

### **Abstract:**

There is a rising trend to frame necessary climate action with the concept of ‘climate emergency’. Over 2,000 of climate emergency declarations have already been announced by states, regions, cities, or institutions. They symbolically acknowledge that the human-induced planetary crisis demands urgent action, attempt to focus attention, mobilise people, and stimulate rapid and ambitious climate transformation processes from governments.

However, such understanding of ‘emergency’ differs from what emergency in the conventional legal sense is. Conventional emergency measures, used for instance in cases of fires, floods or other imminent threats, typically authorize to use extraordinary legal measures, such as evacuation, appropriation, or other exceptional measures outside of established law processes. To make it even more complicated, specific forms of climate regulations have appeared in the EU law that aim to accelerate the green transition with introducing various types of exceptional measures without being labelled ‘emergency’. These confusions about climate emergency may cause doubts about the law implications of such emergency manifestations.

In my presentation, I will try to disentangle the ambiguities related to climate emergency. I will first describe the new trend of declaring climate emergency at various levels of governance worldwide. Then I will explain what emergency typically means in law and with what risks it is usually linked from the rule of law perspective. Finally, I will present the recent trend in the EU climate legislation related to the energy transition and support for renewable energy sources deployment, and consider whether it may be labelled ‘emergency’.

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## Defensa de la vida: Women\*'s Struggle Against the Threats of Mega-Projects at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Mexico

Philipp, Rosa<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Bern, Switzerland

### Abstract:

The paper examines practices of resistance to the Interoceanic Corridor mega-project in southern Mexico. It focuses on how women\* are defending their lives in the face of violence from the extractive mega-infrastructure project's impact on their territories and bodies. The project's objective is to unite the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. By promoting regional development and modern progress, the Interoceanic Corridor has engendered discontent and instigated protests among the indigenous and local communities. The resistance movements at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec are part of broader national and international initiatives aimed at safeguarding land and *territorio* (territory), which are in their view under threat through neoliberal development and mega-projects. Engaging with feminist decolonial epistemology, this paper investigates the notion of *defensa de la vida* (defence of life) and how life itself becomes a form of resistance. For this study, I conducted interviews, observations and workshops in various research stays with several women\* from different backgrounds, ages, education levels. The paper uses extensive quotes from the women\* who were interviewed to analyse how women\* defend their *territorio* and lives. The term 'life' refers to all interactions with human and non-human beings, which are threatened by the mega-infrastructure project. I show how different women\* resist these impositions by living life itself and resisting the violence of colonization and its ongoing process, by embracing community and using everyday practices, such as traditions and festivities. Furthermore, I argue that caring for others and *territorio* can act as a form of resistance.

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**When history is made of water. From indifference to the defense of the river and the sea.  
The political operationalization of the aquatic sense of place**

Ramos, Rogelio<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>CIESAS Sureste

**Abstract:**

When social movements are narrated, the role played by the ecological environment in which they are rooted is rarely considered. This becomes particularly interesting in contexts in which the practices of capitalist accumulation seems have led to the complete rupture of the links between people and their natural environments, which have been reduced to function merely as sources of profit.

This discussion describes a process of social mobilization undertaken by the inhabitants of Bahía de Paredón, a fishing village located in Chiapas, Mexico, who, against all odds, are fighting for the sanitation of a river whose waters also pollute the sea where they have worked for generations. The village is marked by a bad reputation and stigmas that are nourished by the ecological deterioration that has affected it for decades, by several social conflicts, violence, and by a historical clientelistic relationship with the government. And yet, water has brought about the convergence of interests and popular organization around a common objective, its defense.

The aim is to show that the persistence of a sense of place deeply rooted in water, constitutes a niche of resistance against the influences of capitalism which having depleted ocean products, now is heading towards even more damaging stages, such as criminal economies. From this perspective, social resistance process results of the permanence of vernacular rationalities related to the sea and fishing, that have survived as memories, stories and different kind of artistic expressions, which have emerged as political capital when the threat against elements so closely linked to identity hurt sensibilities.

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## Fluid Natures, Contested Knowledges: Co-Production and Social Learning in Neoliberal Maritime Territories

Ruiz de Oña Plaza, Celia<sup>1</sup>; Velázquez Durán, Victor<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>CIMSUR-UNAM

### Abstract:

The co-production of knowledge and social learning (KCP&SL) in marine and coastal conservation faces a dilemma: reconciling equitable collaboration with asymmetric power and knowledge gaps. This study examines this issue within neoliberal environmental governance and maritime extractivism in fishing territories near conservation areas.

We analyze empirical results from comparative ethnographic case studies on the Pacific coasts of Chiapas and Costa Rica. In these regions, environmental conservation is a field of epistemic and political struggle. Government authorities and scientists often impose vertical governance models based on scientific-biological understandings, while artisanal fishers' organizations fight for recognition of their traditional ecological knowledge.

We conceptualize "knowledge co-production" as a politicized, multifaceted process negotiated at different scales. We explore tensions and opportunities in this process, especially in resisting vertical governance models and maritime extractive projects linked to the blue economy. Our approach aligns with perspectives that view knowledge and ignorance production as shaped by unequal power distribution.

We aim to foster dialogue on knowledge co-production in fluid natures, adhering to Blue Justice principles. This involves breaking epistemological boundaries between marine biological and social sciences. Our goal is to contribute to a nuanced understanding of power-knowledge dynamics in pursuing a more just nature-society-science articulation.



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## **Tradeoffs and synergies of environmental security and environmental justice: From ecocides to conflict transformation and environmental peacebuilding**

Scheffran, Jürgen<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Geography, University of Hamburg

### **Abstract:**

The relationship of environmental security and environmental justice is explored in the context of climate change which in regional hot spots can be a risk multiplier of weather extremes, resource scarcity, human migration, fragility and conflict- Vicious circles, tipping points and risk cascades can be aggravated by military operations, arms races and nuclear weapons, potentially leading to ecocides of extreme environmental damage at local and global scales. The nexus of risks disproportionately affects marginalized and disadvantaged communities, particularly indigenous people, ethnic minorities and low-income populations facing pollution, toxic waste, habitat destruction or loss of cultural heritage. Environmental injustice can provoke unrest, protest and violence which undermine peace and security. A striking example of adverse interactions in violent conflict is Russia's attack on Ukraine which results in loss of life, devastation, millions of refugees, and arms race but also in significant environmental impacts, including the exploitation of energy and materials, increased GHG emissions, chemical and radioactive contamination, flooding, the destruction of critical infrastructures to be rebuilt, and diversion of large resources from addressing planetary concerns and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Critical perspectives challenge geopolitical power structures and resource exploitation, resist against militarization and ban ecocides, question discrimination and injustice. In turn integrated strategies are needed to synergize environmental security and environmental justice, realizing practices of disarmament, conflict transformation and environmental peacebuilding. Key is to empower participative, sustainable, resilient, cohesive, inclusive, solidaric and healthy communities, mobilizing civil society and agents of change in Global North and South, between present and future generations.

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## Innovative methods for protected areas environmental justice research

Schoderer, Mirja<sup>1</sup>; Rodriguez de Francisco, Jean Carlo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam

<sup>2</sup>German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)

### **Abstract:**

Nature-based solutions, such as area-based conservation - particularly protected areas - are expanding globally based on different global environmental agreements. They can effectively combat the degradation of natural resources and contribute to sustainable development. Nevertheless, they can also have adverse social and environmental effects. Against this background, we examined a protected area's impact and environmental justice implications in a case study in Santander, Colombia, to promote more sustainable and equitable conservation policies. The regional natural park Misiguay Forests was declared in 2014 in the context of post-armed conflict and mistrust against any action of the environmental authority responsible for this park. No one in the affected communities knew about the existence of this park or its precise boundaries. This paper discusses methodological approaches and tools for tracking this "ghost" park and understanding its visible and invisible implications while supporting empowerment of local communities.

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## Shifting coastal sands and artisanal fishing – The struggle over beach space in southern India

Schüpf, Dennis<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>German Institute of Development & Sustainability (IDOS)

### Abstract:

Flowing parallel to the sea, coastal sand resources are subject to erosional and extractive processes and thus interwoven with the socio-ecological dynamics at the land-sea interface. Climate change and the societal response to it, continuously reshape the morphology of coastal areas and thus affect marine sand fluxes through, for example, the construction of seawalls and groynes for erosion prevention. The socio-spatial implications of coastal land loss linked to sediment starvation, however, often remain hidden alike questions concerned with environmental justice. Inspired by the concept of “the social life of sediment”, this photo documentary aims to explore sand as a more-than-human actor whose flows and sediment fluxes affect the livelihoods of artisanal fishing communities located at the Coromandel Coast of southern India. Access to sandy beaches, hereby, is the very foundation upon which their livelihood is based. Beach space is needed for boat landing, repair and maintenance, catch drying, pulling and mending of nets as well as auctioning and selling of fish. Since beach as a location of labor is shrinking due to man-caused erosion, fishers are often forced to adapt by migrating to new coastal stretches with more sand availability. While the migration to other sandy beaches is a necessary means of adaptation, this leads to local conflicts over beach space and its governance. In particular, the construction of groynes is embedded in unequal power relations and redistributes sand resources. Especially, women in the fishing sector are unequally affected and forced to move to urban areas for fish drying and selling. The images thus draw our attention to the socially entwined needs with access to sand and the consequences of its absence. Finally, the question arises how fishworkers adapt to shrinking coastal spaces while being squeezed in between vested interests, such as tourism, but also an increasing agenda of a blue economy.

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## Exploring Alternative Frameworks for Environmental Justice: Insights from Climate Litigations in South Asia

Talukdar, Shuma<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mahindra University, Hyderabad (India)

### Abstract:

This study investigates alternative frameworks for environmental justice through an analysis of climate litigations in India, Nepal, and Pakistan. Focusing on overlooked dimensions within traditional environmental justice paradigms, the study examines emerging perspectives and marginalized approaches evident in legal cases addressing environmental concerns. By qualitatively analyzing court judgments, legal documents, and scholarly literature, the study aims to uncover novel insights into the evolving landscape of environmental justice in South Asia.

Key study includes the identification of environmental justice themes within climate litigations, exploration of alternative frameworks challenging conventional notions, and assessment of their implications for environmental law and policy. Utilizing comparative and thematic analysis methodologies, the study seeks to highlight commonalities and disparities among the legal systems of the three countries, providing nuanced insights into the complexities of environmental justice discourse.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to broader discussions surrounding environmental equity and sustainability. By shedding light on overlooked perspectives and alternative approaches within the realm of environmental justice, the study aims to inform policy deliberations and legal interventions aimed at promoting fairness and inclusivity in environmental governance. Moreover, it underscores the role of the judiciary in shaping environmental jurisprudence and advancing the cause of environmental justice in diverse socio-political contexts.

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## Offsetting Justice? Biodiversity Offsets and the Question of Responsibility for Environmental Damage

Tielke, Luca<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

### Abstract:

Biodiversity offsetting is an increasingly applied conservation policy tool that aims to compensate for environmental damage caused by economic activities. The idea is to offset the loss in biodiversity in one place by an equivalent gain in biodiversity elsewhere to achieve an overall no net loss in biodiversity. *But what actually constitutes a loss in biodiversity?* In my conference paper, I intend to address this question by focusing on one fundamental aspect of biodiversity offsetting often neglected by respective legislature: the *valuation* of biodiversity. Offsetting schemes usually evaluate biodiversity in quantitative ecological terms to assess the losses that need to be compensated. However, what is considered a loss in biodiversity is not simply a matter of abstract numbers. Rather, it is a *value-based decision*, and, as such, always inherently *political*. By neglecting questions as to which and whose values count, biodiversity offsetting schemes not only depoliticize biodiversity loss but also disregard the diversity of values people attach to biodiversity. In practice, people affected by biodiversity offsetting often have no say in the initial decision to destroy nature. And very rarely are they included in the actual planning process. From a democratic viewpoint, this is significantly unjust. Assessing biodiversity values should always be a matter of *public deliberation*. Otherwise, biodiversity offsetting is prone to result in or even deepen social, intergenerational, and colonial injustices. Hence, I propose a *democratization* of biodiversity offsetting to ensure that offsetting schemes do not provide a ‘cheap way out’ of the responsibility for environmental damage.

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**'I cannot be 'objective', the planet needs us now!': Emotions as a site of solidarity building among climate scientists**

Tyagi, Aastha<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Hamburg

**Abstract:**

In the on-going interviews among scientists on agency, emotions have become an interesting and unexpected site of self-reflection. The scientists speak of emotions invested in solidarity and emotional responses to agency show an intimate connection: capacity building (empowering), freedom, fear (of losing agency and no impact for individual action). Past studies have shown us how emotions such as anger and fear studied mobilising techniques in large movements. In this presentation, I will be relying in two strands of academic scholarship, anthropological work on emotions (Hochschild 1983; Scheer, 2012) and affect theory (Ahmed 2004; Berlant 2010) and how networks and practices produce emotions (Mesquita 2022; Salmela & von Scheve, 2018, 2017). When it comes to climate change, looking at sociological production of emotions might give us new insights on how movements and scientists alike articulate and co-produce their own emotions, for a larger goals.

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## Democratizing Urban Metabolism? Conceptual Thoughts on Justice in Urban Energy Transitions

Weißermel, Sören<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Kiel University

### **Abstract:**

In the context of the pressing climate crisis, technologically driven urban low-carbon policies increasingly raise questions of socio-spatial justice. The urban energy transition, as a main target of climate policy, is at the intersection of two major crises: the crisis of housing and the crisis of representative democracy. In Germany, this has become particularly evident in the public outcry surrounding the amendment of the German Building Energy Act (GEG) in 2023, which signals both the fear of further exploding housing costs and an alienation from parliamentary actors and decision-making. The democratization of urban energy transitions therefore seems imperative to prevent further democratic erosion and to achieve socio-ecologically just outcomes of low-carbon transformations.

This conceptual paper starts from an urban political ecology perspective. More specifically, it sheds light on Marx's reflections on the dialectical, mutually transformative metabolic relationship between humans and non-human nature that evolves through labor. Under capitalism, Marx observed a deepening metabolic rift manifested in ecological exploitation and the resulting undermining of the conditions of existence, and in the increasing alienation of this relationship by the modes of production. Applied to urban energy transitions, this suggests an alienated relationship to urban energy, its origins and modes of production, as well as a lack of knowledge and powerlessness on the part of consumers in the face of technological change, price increases, and political decisions. In the light of Marx's thoughts on revolutionary subjectivity in relation to a new relationship between human beings and the environment, made possible by the transformation of the conditions of production, this perspective provides us with important clues as to the need for, and the nature of, a democratization of urban energy. On the one hand, this might actually be able to address the metabolic rift, and on the other, by thinking production, agency and knowledge together, it draws attention to the need for radical citizen participation, without which any ambitious climate policy must fail.



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## Notes