

# **A Research Agenda for Greater Equity and Effectiveness in International Environmental Politics Towards Delivering the SDGs**

## **Introduction and Rationale**

- Assess the state of international environmental politics and the discrepancies between developed and developing countries with respect to equitable contributions.
- Highlight the adjusted burden that climate change places on developing countries and their ability to meet international environmental objectives.
- Align the research agenda with SDGs 13 (Climate Action), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

## **Research Objectives**

1. **Equity in Responsibility:** Analyze the historical and economic basis for differences in environmental responsibility between developed and developing countries. Critical review of existing arrangements such as the Paris Agreement and their provisions for equitable burden-sharing.
2. **Building Capacity in Developing Countries:** Evaluate the financial, technological, and institutional barriers developing countries face to contribute to global environmental goals. Develop capacity-building mechanisms that marry local knowledge with global practices.
3. **Accountability of Developed Countries:** Assess how well accountability mechanisms ensure developed countries meet their financial and technological obligations to global environmental treaties. Investigate new accountability frameworks such as citizen-led efforts and international legal databases.
4. **Assess existing global governance structures** used to tackle climate change and other environmental problems with regard to their inclusiveness and effectiveness. Analyze ways in which marginalized voices—particularly from the Global South -- can better be included in decision-making.
5. **Synergies Among SDGs:** Examine means of reconciling environmental sustainability with economic and social objectives, especially in developing countries. Seizing opportunities of alignment between efforts towards SDGs 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) with climate action

## **Methodology**

### **1. Qualitative Methods:**

- **Case studies:** Examine the success and failure of equitable international collaboration like those found in the Green Climate Fund or the Kyoto Protocol.
- **Primary Data:** International agreements, national policy documents, scholarly literature content analysis, and equitable contributions identification

## **2. Quantitative Methods:**

- Statistical Methodology: Conduct regression models on a country's GDP, carbon emissions, and contributions towards global climate projects.
- Impact Prediction: Use predictive models to estimate how equitable burden-sharing mechanisms would impact progress towards SDG13.

## **3. Mixed Methods:**

- Integrate quantitative data from international databases (e.g., from UNFCCC, the World Bank) and qualitative insights from interviews of policymakers and local stakeholders in developing countries.

## **4. Participatory Research:**

- Work with communities in developing countries to codify local, Indigenous knowledge and include localized solutions to the global environmental agenda.

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## **Key Areas of Focus**

### **1. Resource Mobilization and Financial Contributions:**

- Assess the performance of current climate finance mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund.
- Develop new financing strategies (like global green taxes or climate bonds) which are fair and where everyone contributes.

### **2. Technology Transfer:**

Explore barriers to diffusion of technology from developed to developing economies.

- Suggest policy measures to encourage developed countries to transfer green technologies at affordable prices

### **3. Just Transition:**

- Russell Up and help develop a Just transition to renewable energy for developing countries dependent on fossil fuels.
- Build frameworks for social equity and economic growth during transitions.

### **4. Role of Regional Alliances:**

- Assess the potential of regional frameworks, including the African Union Agenda2063, in strengthening environmental politics.
- Explore how alliances regionally can fill the gap between local and global impact in environmental efforts.

## **5. Education and Awareness:**

- Evaluate how education and public awareness campaigns can contribute to global solidarity for climate action.
- How can SDG 4 (Quality Education) be used to raise awareness about the environment?

## **Policy Recommendations**

- Establish a system of climate justice that credits the most productive historical contributors and credits the poorest contributors and most populous countries;
- Establish a global accountability index that ranks countries on their climate commitments.
- Support a transformed international environmental governance system with a voice of the Global South.

## **Expected Outcomes**

- A system-wide grasp on the inequities in international environmental politics.
- Recommendations, both practical and policy, for how to make international environmental governance more effective and inclusive.
- A plan to reach SDG 13 and its synergies with other SDGs — leaving no one behind.

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## **Dissemination Plan**

- Engage and disseminate results at global platforms including COPs and UN Conferences.
- Assistant Professorship of Environmental Politics, International Relations and Sustainability
- Workshops and seminars with policymakers, NGOs, and community leaders

## **Limitations**

In conclusion, the proposed research agenda has its limitations. A key challenge is the reliance on secondary data from international organizations, which may be incomplete, inconsistent, or biased, especially for developing countries with limited reporting capacity. Moreover, the complexity-around global environmental politics and the interdependence of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) may hamper attempts to identify the lateral relationships and concatenate change factors leading to inequitable outcomes. The agenda also presumes a political will underpinned by cooperation on the part of nations that might not come about on account of the many conflicting priorities and economic interests that separate developed and developing nations. In addition, although the agenda calls for participatory approaches and localized solutions, the heterogeneity of sociopolitical and socio-cultural contexts across regions might hinder the uptake of wide-ranging policy proposals, thus necessitating further granular investigations into the specifics of local dynamics. Lastly, the research's interdisciplinary nature

calls for the integration of insights from diverse fields, which might pose challenges pertaining to methodology and analysis.

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