Chapter 6
Justice Discourses and the Global Environment:
Diverse perspectives on an uneven landscape

Ross Gillard[1], Lucy Ford[2], and Gabriela Kütting[3]

[1]University of Leeds, School of Earth & Environment, University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT, UK, R.O.Gillard@leeds.ac.uk

[2] Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Oxford Brookes University, OX30BP, lford@brookes.ac.uk

[3]Department of Politics and International Relations, School of Law and Politics, Cardiff University, Cardiff. CF10 3AX, KuettingG@cardiff.ac.uk

Introduction

Discussions of justice in Global Environmental Politics (GEP) have taken on many different hues. Questions of equitable access to clean environments and natural resources are central to environmental justice discourses. They seek to expose the unequal distribution of environmental degradation and challenge the uneven recognition of different groups' interests in governing environmental issues, Often couched within traditional state-centric dichotomies of 'North/South' or 'developed/developing' relations, a range of justice issues has emerged within international debates about sustainable development, global environmental governance and development entitlements.

Sociological considerations are essential to identifying the often racial, class-based and gendered nature of environmental injustice; something feminist theory has developed through the concept of intersectionality (Davis, 2008; Kaijser and Kronsell, 2014; Lykke, 2010). For example, the unequal access some groups have to knowledge and power can affect the distribution of environmental ills within and across state-boundaries. Such procedural justice issues of access to power and voice raise questions about inclusivity in environmental governance, inter-generational justice, and the challenge of representing multiple concerns in complex environmental decision-making.

Further, a deep green perspective has sought to move away from the anthropocentrism of traditional social justice discourses by challenging nature/society distinctions, relocating humans within a broadly ecocentric perspective and extending the notion of rights to the non-human world. This *ecological* justice view directly questions many of the fundamental principles of current environmental politics and governance, thereby provoking critical reflection on how nature is interpreted and represented in social institutions.

This chapter engages with each of these social and environmental discourses in turn and reflects upon how they have influenced GEP and International Relations (IR) over the last twenty years. We illustrate our arguments with examples from land-related environmental justice issues. First we introduce some entrenched *problematiques* of power in IR. We then introduce the discursive diversity of environmental justice before tying the two together with a discussion of their relevance to GEP studies. In particular, we draw lessons from critical feminism to argue that a discourse of ecological justice and the theoretical notion of intersectionality provide a sharper analytical edge to that offered by the focus on institutions found in much mainstream IR.

Justice in Global Environmental Politics

Twenty years ago an explicit discourse of justice was largely absent from GEP research. Though a distinct discourse of environmental justice has since emerged at the international level, the themes of inequality and justice are not necessarily new to the field. Pre-cursors can be found in early textbooks, where questions of justice and power are implicit in many critical discussions (e.g., Vogler and Imber 1996) and are even more explicit in later texts (Paterson 2000; Lipschutz 2004; Kuetting and Lipschutz 2009). In mainstream environmental

politics, the discourse of sustainable development did much to draw attention to questions of inter- and intra-generational justice (Shue 1992; Thomas 1992; Vogler and Imber 1996). Key textbooks are now reflecting the prominence of justice discourses around myriad environmental topics (e.g. Parks and Roberts in Betsill *et al* 2006, Acselrad in Park *et al* 2008 and Ehresman and Stevis in Kuetting 2010).

When Vogler and Imber edited *The Environment and International Relations* twenty years ago, one of the key objectives was to determine how the environment fits into IR. The main questions were about institutions and how environmental norms developed i.e. how international institutions rose to the challenge of environmental problems but also how IR theory could incorporate the environment. Writers such as Williams and Saurin (1996) grappled with incorporating the environment into International Political Economy while Bretherton (1996) made a connection between gender and the environment. Theories of justice and questions of social power relations between various environmental actors were not yet at the forefront of IR analysis. Since then, they have evolved through critical engagement with an increasingly pluralising governance agenda.

Some have argued that the issue of climate change has been a key driver of emerging discourses of justice in GEP (e.g. Parks and Roberts 2006: 329). This is true to an extent, but there has been a deepening engagement with questions of justice in global environmental politics from various perspectives and with regards to various environmental concerns. Some of this scholarship poses troubling questions to IR and its assumptions. Many climate related writings draw on John Rawls and other moral philosophers, seeking to update and apply their ethical principles for a just society (Ehresman and Stevis 2011:89; Gardiner, 2011). For instance, the notion of 'cosmopolitan justice' has featured prominently in academic GEP discourses. Here, the difficulties associated with nation-state regimes – sovereignty, national interest, global competitiveness – are side-stepped by adjusting the Rawlsian premise of equal rights and responsibilities for all 'peoples' (those affiliated to a given state) to all 'persons' (regardless of their citizenry) on the planet (Brock, 2009; Harris, 2013; Hayden, 2005). This position challenges many of the theoretical foundations of IR, making its applied institutions no longer the preferred medium for governing global environmental issues. Ultimately, cosmopolitan justice argues that the needs, capabilities and values of individuals are universal (though culturally nuanced), and are thus better met through collaboration within and across – as opposed to between – traditional state boundaries or political jurisdictions.

Broadly speaking, environmental justice refers to the application of principles of social justice to understanding and managing human-environment interactions. Environmental justice analyses and actions have focused on different *dimensions* (distributive and procedural) and *subjects* (individuals, collectives and nonhumans). For example, contestation over changes in land use can be understood by asking: who benefits, how is this determined, and does this differ for individuals, communities or the environment? This conceptual diversity developed in conjunction with a range of different real-world social movements and political discourses (Schlosberg, 2007; 2013) e.g. indigenous communities speaking of

cultural representation in regards to land disputes in North America. This dialogue between theory and practice has been fruitful for environmental justice and global environmental politics alike, bringing together environmental policy makers and activists of all stripes (Agyeman and Evans, 2004; Schlosberg and Collins, 2014).

The distributive dimension of environmental justice focuses on environmental 'goods' (access to clean and healthy soil, air, water, space, land) and environmental 'bads' (pollution, sites of industrial production, urban decay, lack of green spaces, land appropriation). This often comes down to space and place, making critical human geography and environmental justice close allies in GEP research (Walker and Bulkeley, 2006, Angelovski 2015). Early environmental justice movements sought to oppose the unfair distribution of environmental bads, drawing attention to correlations between marginalised communities and the ill effects of industrialisation (Schrader-Frechette, 2005). These discourses and politics hinged on the tussle between marginalised communities and exploitative enterprises amidst unequal governance arrangements. Drawing on utilitarian principles the distributional dimension of justice takes an aggregated approach to the analysis of (environmental) costs and benefits within society (Sen, 2011), and this makes it readily transferrable to the study of international relations and global governance.

Following this line of argument, much contemporary environmental justice discourse addresses the increasingly unequal distribution of various costs and benefits associated with human-environment interactions in a globalised world. For instance, where changes in land use occur as a result of agricultural intensification, the costs (e.g. loss of common access and biodiversity) may be borne by the already vulnerable (e.g. pastoralists and ecosystems) whilst the benefits (e.g. crops and revenue) accrue to the already affluent (e.g. landowners and investors). Such occurrences have been met with numerous forms of resistance that can be collectively described as an 'environmentalism of the poor' (Martinez-Alier, 2003). Here, the spatial-temporal disconnect between localised and delayed costs for distant and immediate benefits is crucial, as it illustrates the truly global nature of many environmental injustices. This mismatch in burden sharing and political recognition has fuelled a remarkable growth in social and environmental movement theory and practice, or 'political ecologies' (Martinez-Alier, 1997; Martin et al., 2013). As rising trends in inequality associated with land use change, biodiversity loss and natural capital depletion become more prominent, questions are increasingly being asked of the procedural – and power – dimensions of the political and governance arrangements that produce these effects.

The procedural dimension of environmental justice refers to both the *recognition* of multiple actors and their *participation* in environmental politics and governance. Arguably the latter cannot be meaningfully enacted without the former and this interdependence is often at the heart of procedural justice discourses (Martin et al., 2015). For instance, at the site-specific level where socio-cultural identities are intimately bound to the natural environment, the politics of contesting environmental degradation and land rights may be as much about protecting ecosystems as it is about certain values or ways of life (Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010). Recognising the diversity of actors affected by environmental issues and including

them in efforts to govern are fundamental tenets of environmental justice that continue to challenge the state-centricity of IR and much of GEP (Schlosberg, 2007).

The more applied body of literature on global governance, specifically relating to trans-boundary environmental issues, has also been forced to engage with pertinent questions of justice, both in terms of defining of what is just but also who has the power to define just outcomes., In the field of GEP this has primarily been done through an institutionalist approach based on (neoliberal) assumptions about the involvement of multiple non-state actors. Superficially, this could be described as more democratic and therefore potentially more just. However, pluralism by itself does not say much about the procedural aspects of these governance arrangements and how they arrive at distributive outcomes. Clearly, notions of power and justice are intrinsically linked, as the equity of distribution and recognition cannot be evaluated without reference to power and politics. It is to these discourses and their influence on environmental IR that we now turn.

Power, justice and the limitations global environmental governance

Much IR scholarship suggests that by bringing as many nation states together as possible, international institutions can address the increasingly globalised nature of human-environment relations and the governance challenges they pose (e.g., Harris, 2013). However, in recent times, the political assumptions and ethical foundations upon which such institutions are built have been heavily criticised. Not least, for insufficiently challenging global power inequalities (procedural justice) and for producing governance arrangements that do not protect, let alone improve the position of, already vulnerable people and natural environments (Gardiner, 2011; Okereke, 2007). For example, in the case of international biodiversity conservation and the protected land disputes it gives rise to, local livelihoods and non-economic valuations of nature have frequently been shown to come second to global capitalist priorities and logics (Holmes, 2011; Okereke, 2007; Sullivan, 2013; Swyngedouw, 2013). By adopting such discourses and endorsing biased institutional arrangements, these approaches to environmental justice risk depoliticising and disempowering their subjects.

Where power imbalances are explicitly invoked, it is primarily through the lens of mainstream state-centric IR theory. As a general rule, scholarship on global environmental governance and global environmental politics more widely, fails to take account of inequalities in *social* power relations, within and between various levels of analysis (for example, Breitmeier, Young and Zürn, 2006, Mitchell et al 2006). Within IR, power is operationalised as the ability to set rules (explicitly through formal channels but also implicitly through social interactions and defining the terms of debate), thereby making other actors do what they may not have done otherwise (Lukes 1974). Thus, studies of power in global environmental governance are largely about decision-making and agenda setting, with only limited attention given to the functioning of discursive power as well as intersectional demoninators of power, such as race, class and gender.

Arguably this latter, more social, form of power has fundamental repercussions for the generation of all other types of power; from the material use of force, to political agenda setting. By normalising one way of living in the world over others, it provides (and defines) the foundations and legitimacy that all other formal processes rest on. There are numerous theoretical frameworks available that mobilise concepts of discourse, knowledge and power to explain how social relations can produce instances of inequality and processes of injustice – particularly with regards to the politics of governing (cf. Wetherell et al., 2001; Dean, 2010; Flyvbjerg, 2001). Yet their insights remain largely marginalised by the dominant institutionalist and realist traditions of IR and GEP.

There are several reasons for this disregard of social power, particularly in studies of justice and equity. In essence, mainstream IR literature is based on the neoliberal-institutionalist assumption that multilateral institutions and their frameworks are the best way to address trans-boundary problems and it is, therefore, concerned with the fine-tuning of such arrangements. This prioritizes the aggregated state level over distinct social groups. As a result, scholarship on global environmental politics and governance tends to be concerned primarily with relations between narrowly defined political actors and the structures within which they operate. Such scholars regard institutions as the most important social and political variable, both in terms of causing change and prescribing solutions (Young, 2002: 3). Normatively, they are concerned with solving environmental problems as political, institutional or policy issues. Arguably this instrumentalist approach is symptomatic of political science more generally: it is concerned with setting up institutional frameworks to solve problems facing sentient actors with officially recognised standing (in both the legal and social sense) (Cox 1981).

By contrast, we argue that environmental problems are unique in social science analysis: not least because nature (our shorthand for the non-human environment) must be represented and interpreted by interested parties rather than by itself (see Stone, 2010; Latour, 2004). This has fundamental implications for how nature is valued e.g. culturally, politically and economically. Not only does it highlight the importance of discursive power, it also makes nature vulnerable to unjust compromises e.g. through the application of governance arrangements that may be robust politically but ineffective ecologically. One only has to think of the inability of agrochemical regulation to prevent biodiversity loss to see this in action. In comparison, the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) pays close attention to issues of social and environmental justice (Brand, 2010). It recognises the role of indigenous or traditional knowledge and communities in its ground-braking article 8(j), where knowledge and its uses are seen as important and should be protected and indigenous peoples should participate in political processes and in mechanisms of benefit sharing. Democratisation processes in many countries involved the recognition of indigenous peoples, and it has become clear that indigenous peoples and local communities were important for the conservation of biological diversity. Furthermore, it has become increasingly obvious since the 1970s that traditional forms of agriculture have created an enormous genetic diversity of seeds, a process that is undermined by modern agriculture.

However, the political and legal recognition of indigenous peoples and local communities is constrained by the fact that their realization is left to national legislation processes (and their respective power relations). As mentioned earlier, this can result in a prioritising of national economic interests and logics ahead of local livelihoods and ways of life. Additionally, the principle of national sovereignty in the CBD concedes national governments – and not local peoples – the rights over genetic material. Ultimately the recognition and participation of indigenous peoples and local communities is not backed up by legally recoverable rights in international or national legal processes or in the negotiation of land access agreements. Alternative approaches like traditional resource rights or community rights demonstrate the presence of social and discursive power, however do not as yet result in sufficient legitimacy to produce tangible outcomes for the disadvantaged.

Such examples suggest that the critical turn in GEP is constrained by the realities of transnational policy-making and dealing with the day-to-day business of coalition building i.e. focusing on what is realistic and acceptable rather than on what is necessary according to principles of justice. As a result of this, there is significant disconnect between analyses and practices, leaving the discursive and ideological roots of injustice in the shadows. Like all shadows, justice and the environment are unavoidable themes that continue to trouble mainstream IR.

Multiple forms of environmental justice inquiry have evolved dialectically in relation to the harsh realities of global power inequalities, resulting in an expansive and diverse set of political discourses and movements. As Schlosberg (2013) points out, environmental justice is about more than just clean air; it includes the everyday experience of different types of injustice felt by different individuals and groups at different levels of political life. Perhaps most pertinently, it is about mobilising against a variety of social structures through which injustices are expressed, thereby making the politics of economy and ecology clear and contestable. As a result, there has been growing acknowledgement of issues of power, knowledge and justice in GEP research. Yet this acknowledgement continues to operate within the neo-realist or neoliberal frameworks of IR, thereby clinging to the assumption that narrowly defined political institutions and actors are the primary mechanisms and architects of global environmental governance.

This focus on international institutions or new forms of governance implies that the inclusion of multiple actors is in itself an advancement of procedural justice and thus political legitimacy. However, an increase in participation may not do anything to address power disparities, particularly those of a social nature that operate outside of, or go unnoticed within, a given institution. Environmental governance approaches have stressed the importance of legitimacy and accountability, often framing these concerns in the language of social and environmental justice (Pattberg and Widerberg, 2015). However, such research is obviously framed with the normative aim of making institutions more accountable rather than with justice concerns as the main variable, especially at the international level. It is important to avoid mistakenly equating increased accountability or representativeness with improved levels of equity.

The progressive potential of environmental justice discourses has struggled to flourish at the international level, where the reductionism of political realism continues to dominate (Dietelhoff and Muller, 2005; Manuel-Navarette, 2010). For example, in the United Nations Framework Convention on Cclimate Change (UNFCCC), where responses to the potentially disastrous impacts of climate change for natural resource-dependent communities are being negotiated, the resilience and adaptive capacity of those with land-based livelihoods can get lost in an aggregate discourse of 'vulnerable people in need of top-down intervention'. Such discourses are promulgated and legitimised by the mere presence of non-industrialised nation states at the decision-making table (Thomas and Twyman, 2005; Paavola, 2005). Despite, or precisely because of, this poor fit between local values and international institutions (Paavola *et al*, 2009), environmental justice movements continue to proliferate as alternatives to the UNFCCC (Jordan et al., 2015).

In the Coxian sense (1981), many global environmental governance arrangements constitute a top-down approach to problem solving, employed by powerful actors in order to orchestrate and manipulate local communities within a hegemonic system. Yet, this type of literature takes an uncritically positive view of civil society engagement. For example, local 'epistemic communities' are seen as benign, democratic, and participatory antidotes. Within this view, communities have transcended traditional forms of regulation, potentially signalling the beginning of a transnational or cosmopolitan era in which the power of states and hegemonic economic actors is undermined (Kaldor 2003). Indeed, such knowledge networks are vital elements of an emancipatory global civil society, but we should be wary of glorifying them as alternative forms of governance capable of challenging the sclerotic power structures of traditional state-centric policy-making and diplomacy (Wapner, 1995, Paterson, 2000; Jordan et al., 2015). For instance, as Holmes argues in the case of national parks and protected areas, in a neoliberal world the roles and responsibilities of states, non-governmental actors and corporate actors alike are all still defined by the functioning of markets (2011: 1)

Further, through elite discourses of 'Earth Systems Governance' and 'Planetary Boundaries' mainstream global environmental governance presents an instrumentalist principle of preserving ecological system states that are of value to humans. Not only does this prioritise expert forms of ecological and socio-economic knowledge it also reinforces a technocratic approach to addressing human-environment interactions. Such discourses are shining examples of how mainstream IR has sought to respond to the pressures of complex environmental issues through aggregated discourses, depoliticisation and top-down intervention. Within this context, procedural and distributive justice concerns have been superficially addressed at best, and the fundamental questions underpinning how a socially and environmental equitable society can be conceived of, let alone brought about, remained unanswered.

Some environmental justice scholars such as Bullard (2005) and Timmons Roberts and Parks (2007) go so far as to argue that true environmental improvement or healthy nature-society relations can only exist in an equitable society. Yet it does not follow that an equitable

society is necessarily a sustainable society. In other words, the relationship is not mutually causal. For instance, when an outside social force can take on the role of environmental guardian in the absence of any (officially recognised) local interest in the matter – would this be equitable? Put more generally, does place have a global or a local environmental ethic and does the principle of self-determination stand above environmental interests? Underlying these tensions is the issue of who decides what constitutes desirable sustainability in a particular context; in effect, social power. Discourses of political ecology and ecological justice argue that progressive agendas need to address both questions of justice and sustainability.

Political ecology and ecological justice

Questions of power have long been the subject of green political theory (e.g. Stoett and Laferrière, 1999). However, this has often implicitly separated economics and politics. A growing political ecology approach reunites politics, economics and justice with deep green thought to produce a new environmental justice discourse. For example, Joan Martinez-Alier sees the clash between environment and economy as the root cause of much ecological conflict. He argues that a social system based on accumulation of wealth and unlimited growth is fundamentally incompatible with the functioning of complex ecosystem (2002; see also Kuetting, 2000, 2010).

It is important to remember that the presence of social justice does not guarantee environmental improvement i.e. bads may be more evenly distributed between different social groups rather than ceasing to exist. Social justice can be seen as independent of environmental improvement. To reunite the two, an ecological value base to society is needed, wherein the integrity of the natural environment is seen as a prerequisite to human flourishing. That environmental justice discourses such as political ecology have made this clear is perhaps their most fundamental contribution to recent political thought. However, this is no easy task for IR as there are multiple ways of valuing the environment and these all compete for expression on an already unequal political landscape.

Broadly speaking, the existence of, and open contestation between, multiple values can be seen as a sign of a deliberative society with the potential to achieve equitable outcomes. Whether they find adequate expression in political processes within that society – and in relation to others – is another matter. The social relations that form the basis of existing unjust political and economic systems are not bound to cease, rather the opposite. In practice, it is likely that the bureaucratic vicissitudes of global environmental governance are likely to continue to make life difficult even under an ecologically defined political system. Evidence of this unsettling conclusion can be seen in discourses of 'ecological modernisation' and attempts to 'green' capitalism, wherein profit maximisation and economic efficiency are still prioritised over equity or plural values.

Again, the UNFCCC is a clear example of how global environmental governance has struggled to fully respond to environmental justice discourses. At the heart of this institution

is the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibility', which acknowledges the need to distribute costs according to the historical and contemporary particularities of all parties affected by climate change (Shue, 2014). However, the fact that an enormous number and diversity of actors are affected and connected by climate change precludes the political legitimacy of any aggregate technocratic solution.

Environmental justice discourses began by highlighting the socially situated nature of environmental harm, fighting for greater recognition and participation in the process. Unfortunately it is possible to interpret the increasing diversity of actors in the environmental decision making process as part of a wider neoliberal trend in global governance. While pluralists offer a positive interpretation of more voices bringing more equality and effectiveness to the global system, others see this diversity as a drive for efficiency at the expense of accountability. Such critics are not chiefly concerned with the institutions themselves, but rather with the power relations within *and* beyond them.

Of all the strands of environmental justice discussed above, ecological justice is the most ontologically inclusive. It is concerned with 'a fair distribution of environmental goods and bads among different species' (Parks and Roberts 2006:332; also Benton 1993; Low and Gleeson 1998). Discourses of ecological justice have their roots in deep ecology. They offer links to eco-socialist and eco-feminist discourses by: moving away from the anthropocentrism of social justice discourses, challenging nature/society distinctions, and de-emphasising humans by placing them within a more relational perspective. Further still, discourses of ecological justice fight to extend the notion of rights to non-humans. Ultimately, ecological justice is about challenging the unequal distribution of material conditions for life on Earth and the recognition of the needs of different species and ecosystems.

There are now diverse and explicit discourses of environmental justice in GEP theory. In practice it has sought to broaden the range of actors and values included in institutions and governance arrangements. However, it still does not pay sufficient attention to social power relations or the wider social, economic and cultural structures that perpetuate them. These shortcomings point to the limitations of incremental change through current structures and indicate a need to rethink the ontological and ethical foundations of much of global environmental politics.

Some environmental justice discourses, such as political ecology, are doing just this. While institutional understanding is important, and policy frameworks need to be developed, a critical, theoretical, emancipatory agenda must also have its place. Perhaps the most important lesson here is that it is not enough to merely add the marginalised in. In other words, it is not enough to rectify injustice by inclusion, but dominant normative structures (such as patriarchy) also need to be challenged (Peterson 1993). Likewise, with global environmental justice, it is not just about redressing inequalities in access to decision-making between developed and developing countries, nor about creating new international markets to offset environmental harm or to quantify the instrumental value of nature. These agendas

need to be supplemented by deconstructing the statist, or capitalist or separatist norms that reproduce systems of domination (Soper 2009).

Intersectionality and environmental justice

Feminist theory can offer vital and directly applicable insights for achieving environmental justice. Although not always explicitly couched in terms of justice, they highlight the need for an analysis of power and for understanding how structures of domination systematically reproduce environmental degradation (Merchant 1980; Mies and Shiva 1993; Seager 1993; Bretherton 1996; Salleh 2009). Bringing together intersections of power – race, class, ethnicity, gender, age, local, global as well as society-nature relations – can help us to attain 'an image of higher resolution of the factors relevant to addressing power relations and injustices' (Kaijser and Kronsell 2014:421). This notion of intersectionality offers fruitful avenues for analysing (environmental) injustices (Winker and Degele 2011; Kaijser and Kronsell 2014). More normatively, intersectionality echoes the work of political ecologists by focussing on geographically situated knowledge and alliances between marginalised voices (Salleh (ed) 2009; Kaijser and Kronsell 2014).

Crucially, intersectionality calls for a reconciliation of some of the contradictions amongst different disciplines and projects. For example, both liberal and Marxist analyses of gender or class inequality rely on a discourse of economic growth as the solution to overcoming various forms of domination (Kaijser and Kronsell 2014:424). Critical voices remind us that ecological limits may require different kinds of economic development rather than a narrow focus on growth or efficiency, calling for equitable distribution within the planet's limits (Daly 1992; Ford and Kuetting, forthcoming; Rockstrom 2009). Thus, intersectionality offers a holistic framework that can analyse institutional structures of injustice and dominant norms that frame policy-making; that will investigate questions of representation in all stages and arenas of governance; and that will examine how specific policies affect different communities on the ground (Kaijser and Kronsell 2014). Ultimately, we argue that IR needs to engage with intersectionality in order to: fully understand the power dynamics of global environmental politics, illuminate how structures and social processes systematically produce injustices, and account for the way different communities and environments across the globe experience different levels of justice.

By way of illustration, let us take a brief intersectional view of the environmental issue of land. Land, at least in the ecological sense of the word, has been relatively absent from mainstream IR scholarship, although it is implicitly central to territorialist discourses in the politics amongst nations. Yet land is at the heart of the health and wellbeing of both people and the planet. The continued degradation of soil through industrial and chemical pollution, combined with the ecological impacts of climate change (e.g. coastal erosion and rain variability), means that access to land is a prominent theme of globalised injustice. The most obvious example is the increasing prevalence of land grabbing, wherein the capitalist logic of 'accumulation via dispossession' is at its most environmentally malicious (Margulis *et al* 2013; Harvey, 2007).

Land issues cannot be justly addressed without considering the competing priorities of those affected at the local level, paying particular attention to the intersections of different aspects of social power such as class, race, and gender. It also requires analysis of how the issues are articulated through the norms and practices of the political institutions responsible for governing the problem. For instance, global environmental governance arrangements such as the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) attempt to redress distributional issues between developed and developing countries by promoting investment in the latter. But on the ground, CDM projects are often far from just, sometimes harming local people and habitats (Boehm and Dabhi 2009). For example, a CDM project in Costa Rica has led to changes in national legislation that privilege the rights of forest owners and large-scale farmers at the expense of the rights of local subsistence farmers, having a particularly negative effect on women (Isla 2009:205).

An intersectional analysis also requires us to analyse the procedural dimensions of justice by scrutinising the negotiating process; looking at whose voices are (un)heard and what influence they have over deliberations. Critical approaches push us even further to question the surrounding political economy and norms, asking how they affect the process, what kind of economic, political or cultural assumptions are privileged, and what forms of understandings and knowledge are side-lined? Paying attention to the intersections of power across economic, political, cultural, geographical, and ontological categories is not a silver bullet solution to globalised environmental justice. But, it is a necessary step toward painting a more complete picture of the systematic processes that continue to create global inequality.

Conclusion

The environmental justice literature is rightly celebrated as a flexible and progressive agenda capable of problematizing existing approaches to IR and the environment. Its conceptual richness can stimulate dialogue and collaboration between researchers and activists alike (Walker and Bulkeley, 2006). However, in practice there will also be differences of opinion with regards to which dimensions and subjects of environmental justice are most important and how they are operationalized by international institutions and environmental governance arrangements (Martin et al., 2015; O'Brien and Leichenko, 2003). As a result, fundamental ethical questions about the relationship between ends (distribution) and means (procedure) remain philosophically and practically open. These differences, as expressed in environmental governance and politics, will involve various political, ideological and strategic (and therefore power laden) social processes that will require critical appraisal (Gardiner, 2011).

Similarly, the increased attention to issues of justice in GEP is not merely coincidental, but is in fact symptomatic of the complexity of globalised environmental issues. Social inequality and environmental degradation have a complicated and long-standing relationship, many aspects of which have shaped environmental politics theory and practices over the years. Having argued in this chapter that the neoliberal institutionalism of mainstream IR neglects

the nuance of social power relations, we conclude by suggesting that any global efforts to govern the environment in a just manner will have to start from a more inclusive ontology; paying closer attention to the ecological foundations of contemporary society as well as the social processes that perpetuate their numerous inequalities.

Our brief tour of the various dimensions and subjects of environmental justice, within the context of IR and GEP, has shown how inadequate many extant environmental governance arrangements appear. This diversity of perspectives and discourses of justice can enrich future research, guiding political analysis and practices aimed at disrupting entrenched power relations. In particular, the most fundamental challenge environmental (or ecological) justice poses to global environmental politics emerges from those discourses where nature is afforded rights and valuations beyond the merely economic or instrumental. Finally, by taking some important cues from critical feminist analysis we have shown that it is at the *intersections* of multiple power dynamics and discourses − e.g. race, class, gender, place − that the most politicised and potent opportunities for exposing and redressing inequality can be found.

References

Acselrad, H. (2008) "Between market and justice: the socio-ecological challenge" in Park J Conca K and Finger M eds, *The Crisis of Global Environmental Governance*. Routledge, London 96-109

Agyeman, J. and Evans, B. (2004) "Just sustainability: The emerging discourse of environmental justice in Britain?" *The Geographical Journal, 170 155-164*

Anguelovski, I. (2015) "Environmental justice" in D'Alisa G Demaria F and Kallis G eds, *Degrowth: A vocabulary for a New Era* Routledge, London 33-37

Benton, T. (1993) *Natural Relations: Ecology, Animal Rights and Social Justice* Verso London

Ayres, J. and Bosia, M. J. (2011) "Beyond Global Summitry: Food Sovereignty as Localised Resistance to Globalization" *Globalizations, 8 47-63*

Boehm, S. and Dabhi, S. (2009) *Upsetting the Offsets − the political economy of carbon markets* MayFly Books, London

Breitmeier, H., Young, O., and Zürn, M. (2006) *Analyzing International Environmental Regimes* MIT Press, Cambridge MA

Bretherton, C (1996) "Gender and environmental change: are women the key to safeguarding the environment?" in Vogler J and Imber M eds, *The Environment and International Relations* Routledge, London 99-119

Brock, G. (2009) *Global justice: a cosmopolitan account* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge UK

Bullard, R. (1990) *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class and Environmental Quality* Westview Press, Boulder CO

Bullard, R. (2005) *The Quest for Environmental Justice* Sierra Club Books, San Francisco

Cox, R. W. (1981) "Social Forces, States and World Orders" *Millennium, 10 126-151*

Daly, H. (1992) *Steady-state economics* Earthscan, London

Davis, K. (2008) "Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful" *Feminist theory, 9 67-85*

Dietelhoff, N. and Müller, H. (2005) "Theoretical paradise–empirically lost? Arguing with Habermas" *Review of international studies, 31 167-179*

Ehresman, T. and Stevis, D. (2010) "International environmental and ecological justice" in Kütting G ed *Global Environmental Politics: Concepts, Theories and Case Studies* Routledge, London

Fairhead, J., Leach, M. and Scoones, I. (2012) "Green Grabbing: a new appropriation of nature?" *Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 237-261*

Folke, C., Carpenter, S. R., Walker, B., Scheffer, M., Chapin, T. and Rockstrom, J. (2010) "Resilience thinking: integrating resilience, adaptability and transformability" *Ecology and Society 15 20*

Gardiner, S. M. (2011) *A perfect moral storm: the ethical tragedy of climate change* Oxford University Press, Oxford

Gunderson, L. H. and Holling, C. S. (2001) *Panarchy: understanding transformations in human and natural systems* Island Press, Boulder CO

Harris, P. G. (2013) *What's Wrong with Climate Politics and how to Fix it* Polity, Cambridge UK

Hayden, P. (2005) *Cosmopolitan global politics* Ashgate, Aldershot UK

Holland, B. (2008) "Justice and the environment in Nussbaum's" Capabilities Approach": Why sustainable ecological capacity is a meta-capability" *Political research quarterly 61 319-332*

Holmes, G. (2011) "Conservation's Friends in High Places: Neoliberalism, Networks and the Transnational Conservation Elite" *Global Environmental Politics 11 1-21*

Kaijser, A. and Kronsell, A. (2014) "Climate change through the lens of intersectionality" *Global Environmental Politics*, *23 417-433*

Kaldor, M. (2003) *Global Civil Society: An Answer to War,* Cambridge:Polity.

Kütting, G. (2000) *Environment, Society and International Relations.* London: Routledge.

Kütting, G. (2010). *The Global Political Economy of Environment and Tourism* Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke UK

Kütting, G. and Lipschutz, R. (2009) *Environmental governance: power and knowledge in a local-global world* Routledge, London

Laferrière, E. and Stoett, P. (1999) *International Relations theory and ecological thought - towards a synthesis* Routledge, London

Latour, B. (2004) *Politics of nature: how to bring the sciences into democracy* Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA

Lipschutz, R. (2004) *Global Environmental Politics: Power, Perspectives and Practice* QC Press, Washington

Low, N. and Gleeson, B. (1998) *Justice, Society and Nature: An exploration of political ecology* Routledge, London

Lykke, N. (2010) *Feminist Studies: A Guide to Intersectional Theory, Methodology and Writing* Routledge, London

Martin, A., Akoi, A. and Gross-Camp, N. (2015) "Towards an explicit justice framing of the social impacts of conservation" *Conservation and Society, 13 166-178*

Martin, A., McGuire, S. and Sullivan, S. (2013) "Global environmental justice and biodiversity conservation" *The Geographical Journal, 179 122-131*

Martínez-Alier, J. (1997) "Environmental justice (Local and Global)" *Capitalism Nature Socialism, 8 91-107*

Martinez-Alier, J. (2002) *The Environmentalism of the Poor* Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham UK

Martinez- Alier, J. (2003) "Environmental conflicts, environmental justice and valuation" in Agyeman J Bullard R D and Evans B eds, *Just Sustainabilities: Development in an unequal world* MIT Press, Cambridge MA

Merchant, C. (1980) *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* Wildwood House, London

Methmann, C., Rothe, D. and Stephan, B. eds (2013) *Deconstructing the Greenhouse: Interpretative Approaches To Global Climate Governance* Routledge, London

Mies, M. and Shiva, V. (1993) *Ecofeminism.* Zed, London

Mitchell, R. B., Clark, W. C., Cash, D. W. and Dickson, N. M. eds (2006) *Global environmental assessments: information and influence* MIT Press, Cambridge MA

Nussbaum, M. (2003) "Capabilities as fundamental entitlements: Sen and social justice" *Feminist economics, 9 33-59*

O'Brien, K. L. and Leichenko, R. M. (2003) "Winners and losers in the context of global change" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 93 89-103*

Okereke, C. (2007) *Global justice and neoliberal environmental governance: ethics, sustainable development and international co-operation* Routledge, London

Okereke, C and Schroeder, H. (2009) "How can justice, development and climate change mitigation be reconciled for developing countries in a post-Kyoto settlement?" *Climate and Development, 1 10-15*

Paavola, J. (2005) 'Seeking justice: international environmental governance and climate change' *Globalizations, 2 309-322*

Paavola, J., Gouldson, A. and Kluvánková-Oravská, T. (2009) "Interplay of actors, scales, frameworks and regimes in the governance of biodiversity" *Environmental Policy and Governance, 19 148-158*

Parks, B. C. and Timmons Roberts, J. (2006) "Environmental and ecological justice" in Betsill M M Hochstetler K and Stevis D eds *International Environmental Politics* Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke UK

Pattberg, P. and Widerberg, O. (2015) "Theorising Global Environmental Governance: Key findings and Future Questions" *Millennium, 43 484-705*

Peterson, V. S. (1992) "Transgressing boundaries – theories of knowledge, gender and international relations" *Millennium, 21 183-106*

Schlosberg, D. (2007) *Defining environmental justice: Theories, movements, and nature* Oxford University Press, Oxford

Schlosberg, D. (2013) "Theorising environmental justice: the expanding sphere of a discourse: *Environmental Politics, 22 37-55*

Schlosberg, D. and Carruthers, D. (2010) "Indigenous struggles, environmental justice, and community capabilities" *Global Environmental Politics, 10 12-35*

Schlosberg, D. and Collins, L. B. (2014) "From environmental to climate justice: climate change and the discourse of environmental justice" *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change, 5 359-374*

Seager, J. (1993) *Earth Follies: Feminism, politics and the environment* Earthscan, London

Sen, A. (1999) *Development as freedom* Oxford University Press, Oxford

Sen, A. (2011) *The idea of justice.* Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA

Shrader-Frechette, K. (2005) *Environmental justice: creating equality, reclaiming democracy* Oxford University Press, Oxford

Shue, H. (1992) "The Unavoidability of Justice" in Hurrell A and Kingsbury B eds *The International politics of the Environment: Actors, Interests and Institutions* Clarendon Press, Oxford 373-397.

Soper, K. (1993) "A theory of human need" *New Left Review, 197 113-128*

Soper, K. (2009) "Beyond consumerism: reflections on gender politics, pleasure and sustainable consumption" *Women, Gender and Research, 18 92-100*

Stone, C. D. (2010) *Should trees have standing? Toward legal rights for natural objects* 3rd ed Oxford University Press, Oxford

Sullivan, S. (2013) "Banking nature? The spectacular financialisation of environmental conservation" *Antipode. 45 198-217*

Swyngedouw, E. (2013) "The non-political politics of climate change" *Acme, 12 1-8*

Thomas, C. (1992) *The Environment in International Relations* Royal Institute of International Affairs, London

Timmons Roberts, J. and Parks, B. (2007) *A Climate of Injustice: Global Inequality, North-South Politics and Climate Policy* MIT Press, Cambridge MA

Vogler, J. and Imber, M. eds (1996) *The Environment and International Relations* Routledge, London

Thomas, D. S. and Twyman, C. (2005) "Equity and justice in climate change adaptation amongst natural-resource-dependent societies" *Global Environmental Change, 15 115-124*

Walker, G. P. and Bulkeley, H. (2006) "Geographies of Environmental Justice" *Geoforum, 37 655-659*

Winker, G. and Degele, N. (2011) "Intersectionality as multilevel analysis: dealing with social inequality" *European Journal of Women's Studies, 18 51-66*

Young, Oran (2001) "Environmental Ethics in International society" in Coicaud J-M and Warner D eds *Ethics and International Affairs: Extent and Limits* UN University Press, New York 161-193

Young, O. (2002) *The Institutional Dimensions of Environmental Change* MIT Press, Cambridge MA