

WORLD ETHICS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LEARNING GUIDE

Paul G. Harris

A Companion to
*World Ethics and Climate Change:
From International to Global Justice*
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*World Ethics and Climate Change: From International
to Global Justice*
Paul G. Harris

PREFACE TO THE LEARNING GUIDE

The aims of *World Ethics and Climate Change: From International to Global Justice* (Edinburgh University Press, 2010) are to help readers go beyond traditional discussions about global warming and climate change, and to reveal alternative conceptions of what causes these problems, how they might be solved, and who is responsible for taking action to do so. The book also aims to highlight the impact of our daily lives on the Earth's climate system and on those people who are least able to cope with adverse changes to it. As such, the book aims to heighten readers' sensibilities about the practical and ethical reasons for why those of us who are relatively affluent might try to behave in ways that are less environmentally harmful.

World Ethics and Climate Change, like other books about climate change, is needed because more than two decades of international diplomacy have failed to stem emissions of greenhouse gases that are causing global warming and climate change. *World Ethics and Climate Change* tries to identify a way to escape this ongoing 'tragedy of the atmospheric commons'. In the book I attempt to take a different approach to the ethics and practice of international environmental justice. I propose significant adjustments to the existing international climate change regime, in the process drawing support from cosmopolitan ethics and global conceptions of justice. Ultimately, *World Ethics and Climate Change* is an argument for a new, cosmopolitan (or 'global') kind of diplomacy and politics that sees people, rather than states alone, as the causes of climate change and the bearers of related rights, responsibilities and obligations.

As the title suggests, *World Ethics and Climate Change* is about *world ethics* – an exploration of moral values, norms and responsibilities that apply to climate change. It is about a particular kind of world ethic, namely cosmopolitanism, which asserts that human beings ought to be at the centre of moral calculations, that ethical obligations and responsibilities are not defined or delineated by national borders, and that universal values exist and ought to guide the behaviour of people and states. Importantly, the exploration of world ethics in the book is not meant to be a work of abstract philosophy. As such, *World Ethics and Climate Change* is about *practical* world ethics – what we ought to do (or ought not do), as well as why we ought to do it (or not). More specifically, the book is about what cosmopolitanism says regarding the causes of global warming (Does it matter who or what causes global warming?), the consequences of it (Does it matter who is affected, and how they are affected?) and the politics of climate change (How should we distribute the associated burdens, and among whom?). The book is about using cosmopolitanism as a practical tool to help us to understand climate change and to craft better climate change policies. One message of *World Ethics and Climate Change* is that cosmopolitanism offers people and governments a pathway by which to escape the tragedy of the atmospheric commons.

World Ethics and Climate Change comprises three parts. Part I describes major practical and ethical challenges of climate change, looking in particular at the causes, impacts and injustices of climate change in the context of broader considerations of how justice does and should obtain in world affairs. Part II is about climate change and *international* (that is, *interstate*) justice. It describes and critiques the interstate, communitarian doctrine underlying and guiding ongoing international negotiations and policy responses to climate change. Part III of the book is about climate change and *global* justice. It explores an alternative, cosmopolitan perspective of the problem, in so doing critiquing the routine and increasingly anachronistic preoccupation (even of many cosmopolitans) with the pollution of people in developed countries only.

ABOUT THE LEARNING GUIDE

World Ethics and Climate Change is a research monograph. This *Learning Guide* aims to make it accessible to a wider group of readers, especially university students reading the monograph as part of academic courses and seminars. The objectives of the *Learning Guide* are (1) to enhance students' comprehension of concepts and arguments in *World Ethics and Climate Change*; (2) to help students

build on ideas in the book through additional thinking about its contents and by directing them to additional resources; and (3) to aid students in putting ideas in the book into practice in their daily lives. While the *Learning Guide* is aimed most directly at undergraduate students, it is hoped that post-graduate students and general readers will find parts of the guide useful in bolstering their understanding of the book's contents and enabling them to appreciate how ideas in the book relate to their lives.

The contents of this guide mirror the contents of *World Ethics and Climate Change*. Each chapter of the guide corresponds with the chapter of the same title in the book. Thus the first chapter of this guide is designed to assist students in understanding and learning from the first chapter of the book, the second chapter of the guide matches the second chapter of the book, and so on. Students can choose to read chapters of *World Ethics and Climate Change* before consulting the *Learning Guide*, but many may find it useful to look over the matching chapters of the guide before they begin reading the book. Lecturers can suggest the best strategy to suit their particular courses or seminars.

Each chapter of the *Learning Guide* begins with an introductory synopsis of the corresponding chapter in *World Ethics and Climate Change*. Following this synopsis, each chapter of the guide includes the following learning tools:

- **Learning Objectives:** A list of three to five core learning objectives intended to help guide lectures, discussions and self-study.
- **Key Points:** A list of five key points described or analysed in the chapter.
- **Key Terms:** Five key terms that can be defined by reference to the book and other sources.
- **Questions:** Five questions related to the book chapter that can be used in classroom discussions, as essay questions or as starting points for student research.
- **Further Reading and Online Resources:** Five to ten additional readings and online resources that may be useful when defining terms, answering questions and undertaking further study.

To find the online resources, cut and paste the Website URL addresses into your Web browser's address bar. Website addresses were functional at the time of writing. If the ones you want to use are not functioning, confirm that there are no spaces in the address in your Web browser. If the address is still not functioning, search for the titles using a search engine, such as Bing, Google or Yahoo.

Students who use all or most of the material in the learning guide should become much more familiar with the book's contents, be better able to expand on ideas in the book and to critique and analyse them, be better able to build upon ideas in the book through further study, and be better able to discuss the subject of the book in an informed way with other students – and to put the book's ideas into practice in their daily lives.

OBTAINING THE BOOK

Users of this guide who are able to do so are strongly encouraged to purchase a copy of *World Ethics and Climate Change*. All royalties generated from sale of the book will be paid by Edinburgh University Press directly to Oxfam for its programmes to help the world's poor, including those people most harmed by climate change (and least responsible for it). You can order the book from the following Website: <http://www.eupjournals.com/book/0-7486-3910-1>

I hope that any harm done to nature in the short term by publishing and distributing the book will be substantially outweighed by the good that will come from its royalties going to Oxfam, and especially from readers internalising ideas in the book and changing their lives accordingly.

Paul G. Harris
Hong Kong

CHAPTER 1

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Chapter 1 of *World Ethics and Climate Change* summarises the monumental problem of climate change, focusing on its impacts, particularly for the world's poorest and weakest countries, communities and people. It describes some of the causes and consequences of climate change and identifies some of the reasons why climate change is a matter of international justice – and injustice. Global warming is causing increasingly significant ongoing climate change that will become profoundly damaging to human well-being in this century and beyond. While all regions of the world will be impacted by climate change, it is the poorest regions and poorest people that will suffer the most. The world's wealthy countries and people will, in most cases, be able to adapt to climate change, or at least survive it. In contrast, the poorest countries, the poorest regions within them, and the world's poorest individuals, most of them in Africa and developing parts of Asia and Latin America, will suffer and often die as a consequence of climate change. Importantly, those who will suffer the most from climate change – the world's poor – are the least responsible for it. Historically it has been the world's wealthy states and their citizens that have polluted the atmosphere, often as a result of conspicuous consumption and other activities that are not essential to life or happiness, and indeed often undermine them, as when people neglect family and friends to garner wealth and possessions or when they consume foods that are both bad for the environment and bad for their health. Now the burgeoning middle and wealthy classes of the developing world – the world's new consumers – are adding to this pollution, leading to explosive growth in greenhouse gas emissions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To develop an awareness of some fundamental causes of global warming, including socio-economic factors.
2. To understand some of the major consequences of climate change, including ongoing and future impacts.
3. To understand some of the anticipated regional effects of climate change.
4. To understand and appreciate the relationship between climate change and poverty.
5. To begin to comprehend and appreciate some of the injustices of climate change.

KEY POINTS

1. Scientists attribute most of the causes of climate change, and thus most of the consequences of it, to human activities.
2. Ongoing climatic changes are consequences of global warming. Natural ecosystems are already being affected by regional temperature increases and other climatic changes.
3. Overall, the future effects of climate change in all of the world's regions are likely to be negative, and frequently severe.
4. As climate change increases, so too does poverty and suffering in the poorest countries and among the poorest people of the world.

5. Those people who will suffer the most from climate change are those who have contributed the least to it.

KEY TERMS

1. Global warming
2. Climate change
3. Greenhouse gas
4. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
5. Positive feedback

QUESTIONS

1. Who or what causes global warming and climate change? How do we know the answers to these questions?
2. What are the most important and profound consequences of climate change? How will humans, societies, ecosystems and other species be affected?
3. Which regions, countries and groups of people will be most harmed by climate change?
4. What is the relationship between climate change and poverty?
5. In what ways might the causes and consequences of climate change be matters of justice, or injustice?

FURTHER READING AND ONLINE RESOURCES

African Development Bank et al. (2003), *Poverty and Climate Change*, www.oecd.org/dataoecd/60/27/2502872.pdf.

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The Nature Conservancy, <http://www.nature.org/initiatives/climatechange/issues/>

Oxfam, <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/issues/climatechange/introduction.html>

Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, <http://www.ipcc.ch/index.htm>

CHAPTER 2

JUSTICE IN A CHANGING WORLD

The causes and consequences of climate change raise major practical challenges for societies and governments. They also raise questions of international and global justice, almost certainly more profoundly than at any time in human history. Chapter 2 of *World Ethics and Climate Change* frames the causes and consequences of climate change in the context of wider considerations of ethics and justice in world affairs. While communitarian conceptions of ethics and justice largely restrict the scope of our obligations to fellow citizens, cosmopolitan accounts of justice extend those obligations much farther, in the process substantially discounting or even rejecting the moral significance of the states in which people live. But before we can fully comprehend these different accounts of justice we must first attempt to define what we mean by justice. Alas, the meaning of justice is subject to different, sometimes competing, definitions. Nevertheless, Chapter 2 of the book attempts to define justice sufficiently to help us understand how it is germane, ethically and practically, to climate change diplomacy and policies. In very general terms, justice in the context of global warming is about how the benefits and burdens associated with climate change are distributed among states, people and other actors. Drawing on several common accounts of justice, namely causality, utilitarianism, Kantianism, Rawlsianism, impartiality and human rights, the chapter shows how one can conclude, from a range of perspectives, that climate change is very much a matter of justice, and indeed a matter of profound *injustice*.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To be able to define justice, and to understand the role of justice in world affairs, from a variety of perspectives.
2. To be able to define communitarian and cosmopolitan perspectives of ethics and justice, and to understand the role of the former and the potential of the latter in world affairs.
3. Building on Chapter 1, to more fully understand and conceptualise the environmental and other injustices that arise from climate change.
4. To be able to define causality, responsibility, utilitarianism, Kantianism, Rawlsian justice, impartiality and basic rights in the context of climate change.
5. To understand how these various conceptions of justice help us to identify more precisely the potential injustices of climate change.

KEY POINTS

1. Communitarians emphasise that individuals are constituted, at least in large part, by the communities in which they live, and that assessments of what is just will derive from people's lives within their own communities.
2. Cosmopolitans believe that ethical norms apply to all people, regardless of the communities and states they might call home. They see obligation extending far away, even to people that we might never see or hear about, let alone meet in person.

3. Justice is about identifying to whom rights are owed and to whom associated duties should be assigned and how much of the burdens of protecting those rights each actor with duties should bear. It refers to the idea that individuals ought to receive the treatment that is proper and fitting for them – in short, to each his or her due.
4. The adverse effects of climate change most harm the weakest and poorest countries and people of the world, imposing burdens on those countries and those people least responsible for causing it, most exposed to it and most vulnerable to its ravages, and least able to pay for mitigation and adaptation.
5. The unequal and inequitable distribution of the causes of climate change makes it a matter of justice, and the fact that people not responsible for climate change will suffer its consequences makes it a matter of injustice.

KEY TERMS

1. Communitarianism
2. Cosmopolitanism
3. Justice
4. Rights
5. Duties

QUESTIONS

1. According to communitarians and cosmopolitans, what role should ethics and justice play in world affairs?
2. How should we define justice for the purposes of understanding climate change and the world's responses to it? Is this a matter of social justice, distributive justice, procedural justice or even legal justice?
3. How might we define 'climate justice'? What examples can we find for potential (or perhaps ongoing) injustices of climate change?
4. Which of the accounts of justice described in Chapter 2 of the book (causality, responsibility, utilitarianism, Kantianism, Rawlsian justice, impartiality and basic rights) best captures the injustices (or potential injustices) of climate change? Which account is most persuasive in this context?
5. Are you convinced that climate change is a matter of profound injustice? How might your answer to this question influence your own, and perhaps your government's, response to climate change?

FURTHER READING AND ONLINE RESOURCES

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Carnegie Council for Ethics and International Affairs, <http://www.cceia.org/index.html>

'Communitarianism', *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/communitarianism/>

'Cosmopolitanism', *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cosmopolitanism/>

Dower, Nigel (2007), *World Ethics*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Ethics and International Affairs journal [free access to many articles], <http://www.cceia.org/resources/journal/index.html>

'International Justice', *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://www.seop.leeds.ac.uk/entries/international-justice/>

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CHAPTER 3

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Chapter 3 of *World Ethics and Climate Change* describes the concept of environmental justice and the interstate doctrine upon which it has been layered as governments have sought to address transboundary environmental problems. Since the mid-seventeenth century, the world has been guided by, and governments have sought to reinforce, international norms of state recognition, sovereignty and non-intervention. According to these prevailing and powerful norms, states are the ultimate and most legitimate expressions of human organisation, the venues for morality and the solutions to major challenges that extend beyond individual communities. These norms have largely guided discourse, thinking and responses to transboundary environmental problems: international environmental diplomacy, regimes and treaties have been based (almost by definition) on the responsibilities, obligations and capabilities of *states* to limit their pollution or use of resources, and to work together to cope with the effects of environmental harm and resource exploitation. The Westphalian international norms have been so powerful as to result in a doctrine of *international* environmental justice, manifested in the principle of common but differentiated responsibility among states. This doctrine has guided the creation of many recent international environmental agreements, but states have been noteworthy for the degree to which they have failed to implement it. This is a consequence of the doctrine itself. In the case of climate change, Westphalian norms have stifled diplomacy and prevented policy innovations, fundamentally ignoring the rights, responsibilities and duties of individuals.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To be able to define and comprehend the concepts of international (or interstate) justice and international environmental justice.
2. To understand the origins and development of the state system, and to recognise how that system has influenced the formulation and implementation of international environmental justice.
3. To be able to recognise and explain how the 'doctrine' of international environmental justice has permeated international environmental conferences and agreements.

KEY POINTS

1. The international system is often dated to the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 (and other agreements from around the same period), which codified the fundamental principles and norms that guide and often materially influence world affairs today: territoriality, sovereignty and non-interference.
2. The notion of justice in international relations is informed by communitarian conceptions of justice within domestic societies: people develop their identities and measure value based on the communities, routinely the states, in which they live. From this perspective, states have very few duties of justice toward one another, and even less so toward people living in other states.
3. Justice is particularly salient in international relations in the context of economic globalisation and environmental interdependence. Hundreds of millions of people in poor countries are suffering, and it is evident that actions in the developed countries often cause harm in developing countries. For example, pollution of shared environmental commons and resources in the former causes harm to large numbers of people in the latter. Much or all of this harm is arguably unjust.

4. Justice has played an important role in international environmental agreements in recent decades, and indeed it has become a norm – even a doctrine of sorts – in guiding contemporary international negotiations in this context. Environmental justice outside state borders has been premised on the rights and duties of states. Underpinning the idea of international environmental justice is an interest-based logic: The consequences of international environmental pollution can be limited or prevented only if both economically developed and large developing countries reduce their polluting emissions.

5. International justice has been manifested in a number of international environmental negotiations and agreements, including the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, the Law of the Sea, the Montreal Protocol, the Earth Summit and the Biodiversity Convention. International environmental justice has served as the foundation for incorporating justice considerations into the climate change regime.

KEY TERMS

1. The State
2. Sovereignty
3. International (interstate) justice
4. Environmental (ecological) justice
5. International environmental justice

QUESTIONS

1. How and why did the state system develop historically, and how does this history shape the world in which we live today?
2. Why have developing countries demanded greater international justice? What is special about their demands in the context of natural resources, pollution and environmental change?
3. How has the history of the state system shaped notions of international justice, and how has this notion in turn influenced the evolution of international environmental justice?
4. How has international environmental justice been manifested in international diplomacy and international environmental agreements?
5. What has been the effect of international justice being incorporated into international environmental agreements?

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CHAPTER 4

INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Chapter 4 of *World Ethics and Climate Change* describes the international climate change regime and its provisions for international environmental justice. It outlines how the international response to climate change has failed to adequately address the problem. The doctrine of international environmental justice that has emanated from Westphalian norms, discourse and thinking has taken the world politics of climate change in a direction that has been characterised by diplomatic delay, minimal action – especially relative to the scale of the problem – and mutual blame between rich and poor countries resulting in a ‘you go first’ mentality even as global greenhouse gas emissions skyrocket. The doctrine is one premised on national interests, which in practice routinely translates into national selfishness. The international doctrine has been written into international agreements such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and subsequent agreements and diplomatic negotiations on implementing the protocol and devising its successor. Although some major industrialised states in Europe have started to restrict and even reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases, these responses pale in comparison to the major cuts (exceeding 80 per cent, *at minimum*, by mid-century) demanded by scientists. Indeed, global emissions of greenhouse gases are *increasing*, and will do so for decades to come unless drastic action is taken very soon. This is in large part due to huge emissions increases being experienced in many major developing countries as their economies grow and as millions of their citizens adopt Western consumption patterns. At present, however, emissions from these expanding wealthy classes and new consumers of the world are excluded from the climate change regime because most of the states in which those people live are under developed and victims of pollution from traditional consumers in the world’s wealthy countries. This exclusion obtains despite the growing impact of this new consumption and pollution on the Earth’s atmosphere.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To be familiar with the diplomacy and politics of the agreements and institutions comprising the climate change regime.
2. To understand the basic features of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol.
3. To be able to define ‘common but differentiated responsibility’ and to understand its role in the climate change agreements and associated international negotiations.
4. To be able to define the ‘tragedy of the commons’ as it applies to climate change, and to understand how the climate change regime is a manifestation of this phenomenon.

KEY POINTS

1. Conferences and negotiations starting in the 1970s resulted in a number of international agreements on climate change, most importantly the 1992 Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.
2. The climate change regime, including these agreements, may be at or near the zenith of justice in international environmental affairs, demonstrating that most governments at least recognise the need for justice in this issue area.

3. Fundamental to the climate change regime is the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. According to this principle, while all states are responsible for global environmental problems, some are more responsible than others.
4. Governments acknowledged in the climate change agreements that, while all of them should be part of efforts to limit emissions of greenhouse gases, the developed states would take the lead and would help the world's poor countries address both the causes and consequences of climate change.
5. While the incorporation of justice considerations into the climate change regime may be considered an important step for international justice, it has not achieved the regime's aim of preventing dangerous interference with the Earth's climate system. Indeed, the causes and consequences of climate change are growing much worse.

KEY TERMS

1. Framework Convention on Climate Change
2. Kyoto Protocol
3. Common but differentiated responsibility
4. Climate justice
5. Tragedy of the commons/tragedy of the atmospheric commons

QUESTIONS

1. Why did states come together to negotiate the climate change agreements, and what explains the type of requirements placed on developed and developing states in those agreements?
2. Why was the idea of common but differentiated responsibility important in negotiating the climate change agreements?
3. How was justice incorporated into the climate change agreements? What specific features of the agreements were (or appear to have been) intended to promote climate justice?
4. How were the climate change agreements intended to avert a 'tragedy of the commons'? Have they been successful? What are the explanations for this outcome?
5. What has happened to greenhouse gas emissions since the Framework Convention on Climate Change was signed? How does action by states to control these emissions, and to take other actions described in the climate change agreements, comport with the latest science of climate change?

FURTHER READING AND ONLINE RESOURCES

Center for Progressive Regulation, 'International Environmental Justice and Climate Change', <http://www.progressiveregulation.org/perspectives/intlenvironJustice.html>

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United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, <http://unfccc.int/>

CHAPTER 5

COSMOPOLITAN ETHICS AND JUSTICE

One potentially potent alternative to the Westphalian norms that have arguably undermined governments' responses to climate change can be found in cosmopolitan ethics and global conceptions of justice that routinely and explicitly encompass people as well as states. Chapter 5 of *World Ethics and Climate Change* defines cosmopolitanism and looks at what this perspective tells us about justice in a highly globalised world. It introduces several scholars' conceptions of this world ethic, noting many of its key features. The chapter then introduces and critiques some cosmopolitan (or cosmopolitan-like) arguments about climate change, in the process showing how cosmopolitanism is suited to better understanding the problem of climate change. A cosmopolitan approach places rights and obligations at the individual level and discounts the importance of national identities and state boundaries. Cosmopolitans recognise the obligations and duties of responsible and capable individuals regardless of their nationality. From a cosmopolitan perspective, what matters are (for example) affluent Americans and affluent Chinese *people*, rather than the 'United States' or 'China' as *states*. People in one state do not matter more than people in others. Cosmopolitan justice makes demands on capable individuals for a range of reasons, such as the prescription to 'do no harm', the historical argument of 'you broke it, you fix it', the maxim to 'prevent extreme suffering', the belief in the 'ability to benefit others or prevent harm', the 'priority of vital interests' and the concept of not undermining others' capacity to be independent moral agents. *International* justice considers national borders to be both the practical and ethical foundation for justice. But cosmopolitan or *global* justice, while recognising that national borders have practical importance, views them as the wrong (or at least not an adequate) basis for deciding what is just, including in the context of climate change. Climate change creates the conditions for cosmopolitan responses, in large part by way of the interdependence it engenders.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a more detailed understanding of cosmopolitanism and its relationship to global justice.
2. To become aware of several cosmopolitan (or cosmopolitan-like) arguments about climate change, and to understand some of the advantages and disadvantages of those arguments for climate justice.
3. To understand the role of the state in cosmopolitan prescriptions for climate change.
4. To be able to identify the reasons why cosmopolitanism may be better suited to understanding the realities of climate change than are alternative perspectives, particularly communitarianism.

KEY POINTS

1. In contrast to the Westphalian norms that have guided and indeed defined the international system for centuries – a set of ethics premised on protecting the interests of the state – cosmopolitans envision an alternative way of ordering the world.
2. Three core elements of cosmopolitanism are individualism, universality and generality.
3. Two versions of cosmopolitanism are routinely identified: an ethical/moral/normative version, which focuses on the underlying moral arguments regarding how people, states and other actors

should justify their actions in the world, and an institutional/legal/practical version, which aims to translate ethics into institutions and policies.

4. Global justice is based upon a cosmopolitan world ethic premised on the rights, duties and ethical importance – and moral pre-eminence – of persons.

5. Cosmopolitanism can point to new ways of addressing climate change, but it is important to point out that even cosmopolitan literature tends to draw conclusions about what states should do rather than what people should do. Even cosmopolitans often lapse into Westphalian discourse when describing how to implement their ideas in the context of climate change.

KEY TERMS

1. Individualism (of cosmopolitanism)
2. Universality (of cosmopolitanism)
3. Generality (of cosmopolitanism)
4. Moral cosmopolitanism
5. Institutional cosmopolitanism

QUESTIONS

1. What is distinct about the cosmopolitan view of the world, particularly when compared to the norms that have guided international relations for several centuries?
2. What are the most important features of cosmopolitanism? Which of these are most vital to our understanding of the causes of climate change and the world's responses to it?
3. How does institutional (or legal) cosmopolitanism differ from moral (or ethical) cosmopolitanism? What might the former look like? Can moral cosmopolitanism significantly affect the world without associated institutions?
4. How do cosmopolitans describe and define global justice? How might cosmopolitanism provide a better 'theoretical and ethical road map' for dealing with the injustices of climate change?
5. What role does the state play in cosmopolitan arguments about climate change?

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CHAPTER 6

AFFLUENCE, CONSUMPTION AND ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

Chapter 6 of *World Ethics and Climate Change* examines perhaps the most important development in the world today: the rise of hundreds of millions of new consumers in a number of developing countries. Barely more than a decade ago it was possible to talk about climate change, both in practical and moral terms, by pointing to the responsibility of developed countries and their citizens as the causes of atmospheric pollution and as the bearers of duties to end that pollution, make amends for it and aid those who will suffer from it. The climate change regime, insofar as it recognises this responsibility, is premised on this notion. But the world has changed dramatically in recent years. The developing countries together now produce fully half of the world's greenhouse gases. China has overtaken the United States to become the largest national source of these pollutants. Given the developing countries' large populations, this change does not in itself alter the moral calculus very much because their national per capita emissions usually remain low relative to the developed countries. What has changed, however, is the increasing number of new consumers in these countries, many of them very affluent indeed, who are living lifestyles analogous to, and often superior to (in terms of material consumption), most people in the developed countries. These new consumers are producing greenhouse gases through voluntary consumption at a pace and scale never experienced. While many societies in the West are finally starting to make changes that limit and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, the new consumers are going in the opposite direction, with truly monumental adverse consequences for the atmospheric commons. At present, these new consumers face no legal obligations to mitigate the harm they do to the environment, and they have so far escaped moral scrutiny. If solutions to climate change are to be found, this will have to change, not least because 'old consumers' in developed societies will be watching these new consumers do the things that the old consumers are being told they must not do in order to help the world limit global warming and mitigate the adverse effects of climate change. As long as the new consumers hide behind their states' poverty, practical and politically viable solutions to climate change will be very difficult to realise.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the role of material consumption, affluence and modern lifestyles in causing global warming.
2. To understand the size, growth and environmental impact of the world's 'new consumers', including those in China and India.
2. To be able to identify and analyse the role of the new consumers in the context of climate change, in particular understanding how they share practical and moral responsibility for global warming and climate change.
4. To be familiar with a variety of philosophical viewpoints and to understand how those viewpoints might justify saying that obligations of justice lie with capable and responsible people regardless of the states in which they live.
5. To understand the polluter-pays principle and its relationship to affluence, consumption and climate change.

KEY POINTS

1. One reason that climate change is a matter of *global* or cosmopolitan justice is that millions of people geographically and temporally distant from the sources of global warming suffer from its consequences. Another reason is that the persons who are presently causing future global warming no longer live almost exclusively within the states that have historically caused it.
2. Hundreds of millions of affluent (i.e. middle-class and upper-class) people now live in developing countries. They have the power to consume and pollute as much as people in developed countries. This huge number of increasingly affluent people in developing countries has been overlooked in part because it is a recent phenomenon.
3. One thing that seems unassailable from the perspective of world ethics and global justice is that greenhouse gas emissions required for subsistence take priority over other kinds of emissions. These subsistence ('survival') emissions ought not be subject to limitations.
4. Developing-country governments focus on the unjust 'luxury emissions' of the rich versus the 'survival emissions' of the poor, noting that the former ought not come at the expense of the latter. But they seem to be talking about the luxury emissions of relatively rich people in rich countries rather than the luxury emissions of rich people in developing countries.
5. Various cosmopolitanism viewpoints (such as those premised on vital interests, common humanity, relationships of obligation and duties not to harm) point to a number of reasons why climate change demands different behaviours from capable people, and ultimately different policies. The polluter-pays principle is one basis for these policies.

KEY TERMS

1. New consumers
2. Vital interests
3. Common humanity
4. Duty not to harm
5. Polluter-pays principle

QUESTIONS

1. Who are the 'new consumers'? Where do they live and what is their impact on the global environment? How are they similar to, or different from, traditional 'old consumers'?
2. Are the responsibilities and obligations of rich people in rich countries for global warming and climate change more or less than those of rich people in poor countries? What does your response say about the appropriate policies of the governments of the countries in which those people live?
3. Which of the cosmopolitanism viewpoints in Chapter 6 (for example, those premised on vital interests, common humanity, relationships of obligation and duties not to harm) provide the most persuasive argument for requiring that new consumers join most people in developed countries in efforts to limit global warming and to address climate change?

4. What arguments are used by affluent people and by governments in developed and developing countries to ignore their contributions to global warming or to absolve themselves of blame and responsibility for climate change? What do you think of these arguments?
5. Is it acceptable for capable people, especially affluent capable people, to embrace the kind of lifestyles that have largely gotten the world into its current ecological mess? What are the implications of your answer?

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CHAPTER 7

COSMOPOLITAN DIPLOMACY AND CLIMATE POLICY

Chapter 7 of *World Ethics and Climate Change* proposes an alternative to the status quo climate change regime, premised as it is on the rights and duties of states while ignoring the rights and duties of too many people. The chapter proposes that cosmopolitan aims should be incorporated as *objectives* of climate change diplomacy and policy. Because cosmopolitanism is concerned with individuals, it can help the world reverse the failed national and international policies that have contributed to the tragedy of the atmospheric commons. It can do this in part by addressing the lack of legal obligations for many millions of affluent people in developing countries to limit their greenhouse gas emissions while still recognising that the world's affluent states, and indeed the affluent people within them, are responsible to do so. Cosmopolitan justice points us to a fundamental conclusion: that affluent people *everywhere* should limit, and more often than not cut, their atmospheric pollution, regardless of where they live. This points to a cosmopolitan corollary to the doctrine of interstate justice, one that explicitly acknowledges and acts upon the duties of all affluent people, regardless of nationality, to be good global citizens. The cosmopolitan corollary comprises a new form of international discourse, a new set of assumptions about what states and their citizens should be aiming for, and a new kind of institutionalism that folds world ethics and global justice into the practice of states. This corollary is more principled, more practical and indeed more politically viable than current doctrine and norms of international environmental justice applied to climate change. In the context of climate change, cosmopolitan justice has the potential to define a pathway whereby major developing country governments can simultaneously assert and defend their well-justified arguments rejecting *national* climate change-related obligations while also acknowledging and regulating growing pollution among significant segments of their populations. This in turn can help to neutralise the reticence of most developed country governments and their publics to live up to their obligations to finally undertake the major cuts in greenhouse gas emissions that will be required to limit future damage to the atmospheric commons upon which all states and all people depend. The chapter describes how cosmopolitan diplomacy and policy might be actualised, with illustration of possible new funding arrangements and institutions that could help those most harmed by climate change by drawing on assistance from those most responsible for it.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To be able to understand and discuss cosmopolitan alternatives to traditional, state-centric policy responses to climate change.
2. To be able to describe and comprehend features of what the book calls the 'cosmopolitan corollary' to international doctrine.
3. To be able to describe and discuss ways of implementing the cosmopolitan corollary among states, notably through institutionalising cosmopolitanism in the climate change regime.
4. To be able to describe and critique potential new funding mechanisms for climate change mitigation and adaptation.
5. To be able to describe methods for encouraging and enabling action within countries to mitigate climate change and garner funding to help the world's poor adapt to it.

KEY POINTS

1. The burden of determining how to implement climate diplomacy must first be preceded by an appreciation of the importance of new thinking, discourse and policy that is highly sensitive to cosmopolitan objectives.
2. By associating the wealth and behaviours – and the pollution – of individuals and classes of people with ethical diplomatic arguments, international agreements and the domestic implementation of those agreements, governments of both developed and developing states can escape the ongoing blame-game in which poor countries blame rich ones for the problem so far, and rich states blame poor ones for the problem to come – with both refusing to sufficiently obligate even their affluent citizens to do all that is necessary and just.
3. A new kind of climate diplomacy premised on cosmopolitanism allows major developing country governments to simultaneously assert and defend their well-justified arguments rejecting *national* climate change-related obligations while also acknowledging and regulating growing wealth and pollution among a significant segment of their populations.
4. Cosmopolitan diplomacy surrounding climate change should be premised on the rights and duties of human beings. Persons should be at the centre of climate change discourse, negotiations and policies, and they should be viewed as the primary *ends* of diplomacy and government policy.
5. Applied to climate change, cosmopolitan justice has the potential to define a pathway whereby all countries, both developed and developing, can participate fully in the climate change regime without making any demands on the world's poor – indeed, while aiding them in new ways.

KEY TERMS

1. Cosmopolitan justice
2. Cosmopolitan corollary
3. Cosmopolitan diplomacy
4. Environmental regulation
5. Carbon tax

QUESTIONS

1. According to cosmopolitans, why has the climate change regime failed to respond effectively to the problem?
2. How might cosmopolitanism be institutionalised in the climate change regime? What role would there be for individuals in this revised regime?
3. How could the cosmopolitan corollary described in Chapter 7 be implemented among states?
4. What kind of funding mechanisms and institutions could be created, in keeping with cosmopolitan principles and global justice, to provide resources for those who suffer from climate change now and in the future?

5. How could and should the cosmopolitan corollary described in Chapter 7 be implemented within states?

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CHAPTER 8

THE UNAVOIDABILITY OF GLOBAL JUSTICE

World Ethics and Climate Change concludes in Chapter 8 with a summary of the book and a discussion of global citizenship and individual responsibility. Even those who call for incorporating equity and justice into solutions to climate change usually do so in terms of states: justice among states is required because climate change is an injustice among them. This emergence of *international* environmental justice is an important step forward historically. However, it is an inadequate step because it has been actualised only minimally due to the selfishness of its objects – states themselves – and because it ignores so many people who cause and experience the injustices of climate change. Even after more than two decades of international negotiations and much earnestness on the part of diplomats, government officials and activists, there is very little to show for all of this activity relative to the scale of climate change and its severe impacts. Very little has come from the climate change regime so far by way of deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions required to stem global warming, let alone the very large transfers of funds and technology to poor countries and people needed to spread the cuts widely and to help the most vulnerable cope with inevitable climate change. By ignoring individuals and indeed global justice, the climate change regime has backed states into a corner. This was to be expected given the nature of states to promote their narrow, usually short-term interests most of the time – at times even over the interests of their own citizens. Thus we need to go beyond international justice to consider fully, and implement fully, *global* justice as well. We are all in this together, which implies quite a lot for every capable person, along with capable states, international organisations and other actors. The solution to our ethical deficit, and to climate change, is, at least in large part, cosmopolitan justice. Ultimately what that means is a combination of political *and* personal morality, and behaviour to match.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To be able to summarise the main ideas throughout the book and to understand their implications for the world's responses to climate change.
2. To define and understand the meaning of global or world citizenship.
3. To understand the relationship between climate change, resulting injustices, and global citizenship.
4. To comprehend the moral agency of individuals, and to appreciate the responsibility of capable individuals with respect to climate change.
5. To understand the relationship between climate change, global justice and individual action, and to be willing to act on that understanding through changes in one's lifestyle and behaviours.

KEY POINTS

1. Human beings are central to cosmopolitanism and, by necessity, central to action on climate change.
2. Global justice – the rights of all people everywhere to their due, and the duties of people everywhere depending on their capabilities – will have to be at the centre of all aspects of climate change politics and policy.

3. From the cosmopolitan perspective, individual persons have fundamental rights that precede the rights of states. Cosmopolitanism also identifies persons as moral agents with duties to act in certain ways.
4. At present, many of us follow (although we seldom admit as much) the moral concept of ‘us-here-now’. This is unjust. Living a life of sufficiency is the better ethical and environmental course.
5. We might not be able to solve climate change – we might not be able to prevent most of the adverse effects, including the monumental human suffering and economic costs it will entail in coming decades – if we do not embrace global justice. Doing so may be ethically, practically and politically essential.

KEY TERMS

1. Global justice
2. Global citizenship/world citizenship
3. Moral agency
4. Responsibility
5. Sufficiency

QUESTIONS

1. Are we all global citizens? What are the implications of your answer for climate change and for responses to it?
2. How responsible are individuals for acting to address climate change? How responsible are you to do so?
3. How might we change our behaviours to comport with our individual contributions to global warming and our cosmopolitan duties to respond to climate change?
4. How might acting more responsibly with regard to climate change, for example by living a life premised on sufficiency rather than excess, simultaneously mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, aid people who will suffer the most from climate change, and make ourselves happier?
5. Is global justice unavoidable if the world is to respond to climate change effectively?

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CORRECTIONS AND REVISIONS

Future editions of the *Learning Guide* will be revised in light of comments and corrections from readers. Future editions will also include updated information and a list of corrections to, and readers' comments on, *World Ethics and Climate Change*. Those updates, corrections and comments on the book will appear here.

If you would like to suggest corrections or revisions to *World Ethics and Climate Change* or to the *Learning Guide*, or if you simply want to share your ideas about the book, please contact the author directly by email, post or fax:

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