

Climate Change, Environmental Policy, and Sustainability

1. Environmental Policy Dynamics in the Global South: Challenges and Insights

Convenor	Ranjith Kallyani, Assistant Professor, Jaypee University of Information Technology, Solan
Keywords	Environmental Policy, Climate Justice, Climate Change
<p>Call for Abstracts</p> <p>This panel aims to delve into the distinctive environmental policy dynamics emerging in the Global South, countering the prevalent influence of Northern paradigms in shaping environmental agendas. While strong scholarship, including seminal works like “Varieties of Environmentalism” by Guha and Martinez-Alier, highlights the unique political questions and movements driving environmental discourse in the Global South, this panel will focus on examining the influence of these dynamics on the current climate crisis debates within the region. By examining both local and global influences moulding Southern environmental policies, this panel will seek to analyse the production of policy-related knowledge, governance structures, and institutional frameworks in the Global South. Through this analysis, the panel aims to unearth the challenges and potentials for fostering a more inclusive and impactful environmental policy landscape.</p> <p>We invite scholars and practitioners in the field of environmental policy in the Global South to submit papers elucidating the unique challenges and insights of Southern environmental policy dynamics. Potential topics encompass, but are not confined to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of political movements and questions moulding environmental policy agendas in the Global South • Examination of the influence of Northern paradigms on Southern environmental policymaking processes • Evaluation of the disproportionate impacts of climate change on the Global South and their ramifications for policy formulation • Case studies elucidating the production of environmental policies in the Global South and strategies for enhancing inclusivity and efficacy. 	

2. Decolonising Public Policy for Sustainability in the Global South

Convenor	Saurabh Arora, Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex
Co-Convenor(s)	Dwarkeshar Dutt, School of Public Policy, IIT Delhi Bipashyee Ghosh, Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy, University College London Anita Pinheiro, Independent Researcher

Keywords	Climate change, Environmental Policy, and Sustainability, Diversity and Public Policy, Energy and Energy Transitions
<p>Call for Abstracts</p> <p>European conquests of much of the planet since the 16th century are central to making colonial modern societies that most humans now inhabit. Showing remarkable continuities with colonial governance (Mamdani 2012), policymaking in 20th century’s newly independent nation-states generally reduced socioeconomic development to modern industrialisation of agriculture and other areas (eg: Ajwang et al. 2023). Resulting colonial modernities have deployed neoliberalism in the last four decades, to accumulate immense wealth for a few while exacerbating social and environmental injustices for many.</p> <p>Addressing inequalities and injustices are multiple calls for global transformations including the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. However, such calls neglect colonial modernity. Instead they focus on more circumscribed political formations such as:</p> <p>a) dominant sociotechnical systems/regimes in specific areas of activity like energy and agriculture;</p> <p>b) institutions geared towards promoting national economic growth (since the mid-20th century) and global capitalism (since late 18th century).</p> <p>As a result, sustainability transformations – from social innovations and energy transitions to net zero and circular economy – can extend colonial modernity’s toxic extractions and military supremacies (Arora and Stirling 2023).</p> <p>This panel aims to debate constituting features of colonial modernities in diverse Southern manifestations (eg: Gaonkar 2001), which must be transformed for sustainability (yet are obviously extremely difficult to transform). Decolonising public policies must foreground marginalised Indigenous and vernacular peoples’ words and worlds. It is the least powerful peoples’ social movements and worldmaking practices that must be supported as pluriversal alternatives for sustainability (Kothari et al. 2019). The panel invites papers exploring questions such as,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do public policies in the Global South make colonial futures through modern development and sustainability? ● How do development policies help concentrate power and privilege, by manipulating differences of religion, caste, race and ethnicity that intersect with gender and sexuality? ● How is modern policy making constituted by (colonial) violence directed against oppressed peoples and ecologies, to extract value and assert supremacy? ● Can policy processes and knowledges be decolonised through struggles and movements for justice and sustainability? If yes, how? ● Decolonial analyses of relations between different Southern (and Northern) regions and between diverse activities around food, energy, housing, textiles, mobility, communication, conservation, healthcare and education are particularly welcome. 	

3. Development and Energy Needs of the Global South: Addressing Inequity in Climate Policy Frameworks	
Convenor	Aravindhan Nagarajan, Assistant Professor, Azim Premji University
Keywords	Development, Just Transitions, Energy Equity

Call for Abstracts

Many domestic and regional policies concerning climate change and sustainability within developing countries such as India, are primarily framed to address stringent global targets. However, scientists and policymakers of the global south have argued over the past few decades that these policy agendas and their associated benchmarks are framed through the perspective of the global north (Hickel & Slamersak, 2022; Kanitkar et. al, 2024; Braunreiter et. al, 2021).

Using sector-specific case studies in the Indian context, the panel will delve into challenges such as low carbon energy transition, energy needs of the industrial sector, and agricultural policies addressing developmental and climate concerns. The panel will argue that achieving global climate and sustainability targets must not obscure but rather emphasise the global south developmental context. It will emphasise that assessing and analysing energy and developmental inequalities to operationalise global equity concerns is the starting step to frame climate policy for the global south.

In this panel, we welcome contributions that would explore

- The role of global climate negotiations and other institutions (eg: climate finance) in shaping sectoral policies of developing countries (and vice versa)
- The complexities of achieving long term low carbon developmental paths in India and their impacts on labour and the broader economy
- Assessing developmental aspirations and energy requirements of India’s manufacturing sector (especially small and medium-scale establishments)
- Concerns of India’s agricultural sector in the context of climate and sustainability concerns.

We particularly welcome papers that would interrogate assumptions and benchmarks of developmental inequalities in climate and sustainability policies, assess how sector specific challenges affect overall developmental processes, and emphasise the importance of operationalising principles of equity and justice within global south climate policies.

4. Democracy, Institutions, and Politics of Water & Climate Change

Convenor	Satyajit Singh, University of California Santa Barbara
Co-Convenor(s)	Shailaja Fennell, University of Cambridge
Keywords	Democracy, Water, Climate Change

Call for Abstracts

The panel is an open call for researchers working on climate change and understanding how it affects our relationship with water. This panel interrogates how democracy - democratic practices and democratic institutions - facilitate or hinder specific climate adaptation and mitigation efforts and the extent of overlap with local meanings accorded to water ownership, management, and usage. It also examines forms of collective action undertaken by those adversely affected by climate change to conserve, regenerate, and/or appropriate water. While focusing on the last mile, the panel will try to map how increased water scarcity and climate change affect social groups in rural and urban contexts. It examines how they engage in collective action and democratic engagements with different stakeholders to address scarcity, access, adaptation, and mitigation. It explores emerging ways democratic institutions, such as local governments, address increased water scarcity. As local engagements around water are facilitated through collective action, the panel explores the interplay of formal institutions with social action. We also want to understand whether

democratic outcomes facilitate or limit egalitarian resource allocations in specific cases. The panel invites papers on all water concerns, including agriculture, irrigation, drinking water, and sanitation in urban and rural contexts. The papers will examine roadblocks to the emerging collective efforts in articulating mitigation and adaptation efforts. The papers will engage with emerging micro-politics and micro-processes of policies due to climate change.

Key concerns:

- The capacity challenges of existing democratic institutions to deal with climate change and its relationship to understanding the meanings and uses of water.
- The capacity challenges of local institutions and governments to address climate change and their ability to reflect on water ownership, use, and conservation.
- Interconnections and collaborations between different government agencies and tiers of government are required or emerging in devising the conservation, regeneration, and allocation of water.
- Specific climate concerns and forms of identifying water systems in social groups that are 'blind spots' for existing institutions and governments.
- Whether (and how) democratic processes like accountability, transparency, voice, and choice have become more important or redundant in the making and regulation of water markets.
- Climate concerns, their relationship to water systems, and the meanings and values accorded to water cannot be addressed democratically.

5. Climate Solutions for Tomorrow: Advancing Policy Design Capacities for Effective and Durable Outcomes

Convenor	Maitreyee Mukherjee, Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute for Environment and Sustainability (IES), Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP), National University of Singapore (NUS)
Co-Convenor(s)	Namrata Chindarkar, Associate Professor, JSW School of Public Policy, IIM Ahmedabad. Ben Cashore, Li Ka Shing Professor in Public Management & Director, IES, LKYSPP, NUS
Keywords	Climate Change, Environmental Policy, Sustainability

Call for Abstracts

One of the most important questions facing policy makers and sustainability scientists is how to build lasting and effective climate solutions. While there has been no shortage of climate related technological, market, and finance initiatives over the last 30 years, there is widespread frustration among governments, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations over the pace and scale of change. These questions are of particular importance in the Global South, where governments, following the Paris Accord, have unleashed an array of initiatives designed to develop transition pathways towards a low-carbon economy and achieve their nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

The purpose of this panel is to shed light on the puzzle of the failure to accelerate climate outcomes alongside sustained policy attention on climate targets. This panel is devoted to deliberating over and uncovering: How to design durable, 'fit-for-purpose' policies that can sustain political, governance and socio-

economic challenges, to ensure effective decarbonisation pathways in the Global south? By doing so, the panel aims to generate design insights for traveling climate related sustainability policy pathways.

The panel invites both conceptual and empirical papers examining climate policies in the Global South, addressing the following questions (but not exhaustive),

- What are the most critical policy design capacities to accelerate decarbonisation pathways?
- What policy design approaches have proven effective historically in delivering climate outcomes? What factors drive policy lock-in while ensuring long-term policy durability?
- What policy capacities are most useful to diffuse, or build, to develop durable climate action pathways?

6. Science-Policy Interface on Climate Change: Exploring Decolonisation, Inclusivity, and Justice for Local Decision-Making

Convenor	Anita Pinheiro, Independent Researcher
Co-Convenor(s)	Muhammed Sihas KM, University of Hyderabad
Keywords	Climate Change, Environmental Policy, Sustainability, Science-policy, Decolonisation, Justice

Call for Abstracts

Global climate change policies and governance systems heavily rely on scientific evidence for effective measures. This panel explores how such a science-policy interface unfolds in the local context and how it impacts local decision-making for climate change adaptation and mitigation. The panel addresses questions on the use of global science for local decision-making and how the diversity of knowledge systems is reflected or not reflected in climate change policies at the local level. The specific focus includes decolonisation, inclusivity, and justice aspects of the science-policy interface on climate change and its governance.

We welcome theoretical, methodological, and empirical contributions that span diverse disciplines, sectors, contexts, and geographies. Though the panel focuses more on South Asia, we also look forward to dialogues from other parts of the Global South. The panel’s focus includes but is not limited to, climate-related policies and knowledge systems related to food, agriculture, fisheries, other livelihoods, waste management, pollution, energy, mobility, infrastructural projects, local and indigenous knowledge, biodiversity, disaster management, urban greening, etc.

The key questions this panel addresses include the following:

- How well science-based climate change policies are able to capture the concerns and lived experiences of people at the local level?
- What are the implications of using global scientific knowledge in local decision-making processes?
- What structural changes are required to decolonise climate science and policymaking processes?
- How do we incorporate diverse traditional, local, and situated knowledge systems for local decision-making regarding climate change? Are there any examples of conflicts between different knowledge systems or co-production of knowledge for climate change policymaking?
- How do class, caste, and gender reflect in science-based climate change policies? How are the concerns and lived experiences of marginalised sections incorporated into climate change policies?

- What are the justice-related questions that intersect with the science-policy interface on climate change at the local level?
- What are the ways to achieve just and inclusive climate change policies that address the issues at the local level and the concerns of marginalised sections of society?

7. Policy Perspectives: Coastal Resilience, and Livelihoods in South Asia

Convenor	Kabindra Sharma, Associate Fellow, SaciWATERS
Keywords	Climate Change, Livelihoods, Coastal Policy, Coastal Communities, South Asia

Call for Abstracts

This panel aims to address a notable gap in policy discussions by focusing on coastal governance in South Asia, a critical yet often overlooked aspect of policy discourse in the region. Coastal policy plays a vital role in shaping resilience and livelihood opportunities, particularly in the face of increasing climate challenges. Therefore, this panel invites submissions that delve into the complex dynamics of policy formulation, implementation and impact assessment within coastal regions.

We encourage contributions that highlight the significance of coastal governance and offer insights into broader conversations on policy processes in the Global South. Interdisciplinary approaches are welcomed, as are analyses of South Asian contexts to illuminate the various challenges and opportunities surrounding coastal resilience and livelihoods. Accepted papers will be presented during the panel session at the conference, providing an opportunity to contribute to the advancement of policy research in the region. We invite researchers, policymakers and practitioners to submit their papers and join us in exploring this critical aspect of policy discourse in South Asia.

8. The Forests Rights Act in India’s Tiger Reserves – Why is Policy Not Being Implemented?

Convenor	Ajit Menon, Professor, Madras Institute of Development Studies Nitin Rai, Independent Researcher
Keywords	Forest Rights, Wildlife Policy

Call for Abstracts

Contemporary wildlife conservation policy continues a colonial approach that was premised on enclosing the commons that were used by local people for their livelihoods. The enclosure of forests by the British colonial administration was largely aimed at the production of timber. Vast areas of land were declared as reserved forest and removed from the control of local people, making them inaccessible to them. The labour of forest communities was appropriated in silvicultural operations and people were denied land ownership even as peasants in non-forested agricultural areas were awarded land titles, creating a huge inequality in land ownership that exists till date. Independent India not only inherited this apparatus but built upon it. Processes of forest reservation continued though the priorities changed from timber to biodiversity and wildlife conservation. Project Tiger in 1973 buttressed fortress conservation and the 2006 Wildlife Protect Act Amendment provided legal backing for the constitution of tiger reserves with large inviolate core areas. There

is even talk today of wildlife corridors aimed at joining together tiger reserves and increasing the inviolate space for wildlife.

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Rights to Forest) Act (FRA), 2006, was meant to change all this. The Act spoke of the need to address historical injustices to forest dwellers by recognizing their claims to forest land, both individual and community forest rights. It presented a vision that went beyond fortress conservation and inviolate, free of human, tiger reserves, a vision that accepted that humans and non-humans will necessarily co-inhabit forested landscapes given the density of population and the lack of available land for relocation. The FRA aimed to reverse the nature-culture dichotomy that shaped forest management and wildlife conservation.

Almost 20 years after its enactment, the FRA continues to stall, especially in tiger reserves. There are a few cases of community forest rights being admitted though they have not been operationalized in practice. Moreover, in most tiger reserves no rights have been admitted at all. Why is this the case? Why is it that the implementation of a progressive legislation is being actively resisted in tiger reserves? Answers to these questions, we believe, are linked to the continued imagination of tiger reserves as inviolate zones for wildlife and policy that supports measures aimed at ensuring that such inviolate spaces materialize.

The panel invites papers that analyse the various processes that constrain and influence the implementation of FRA in tiger reserves. It welcomes both papers that examine in detail processes of forest rights claims within protected areas as well those that examine how the state engages in policy measures that constrain claim-making in tiger reserves. Finally, papers that analyse cohabitation of wildlife and humans in protected areas, putting forth an alternative imagination, are also welcomed.