The Effects of Neoliberalism on Climate Change

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Neoliberalism and Climate-Change Policy

The principal force involved in constructing climate change policy is dependent on many factors ranging from ideals to principles. Neoliberalism is one such ideology that is largely shaping the agenda of climate change and affecting how the world is pursuing this issue. However, studies emphasize the conception of carbon markets as a consequence of neoliberalism on climate policy. Its implications are too constrained. This essay argues for neoliberalism's role in managing climate change.

Market-Based Climate Agendas

The significant agendas of Climate change such as REDD+ and Carbon credits are also highlighted. Concentrating on countries like the United States or Australia, the model neoliberal state, it can be recognized that neoliberal states must delay to stimulate emissions reductions since system-wide limits of greenhouse gases are difficult to achieve (Bumpus et al.,2010,p.78)

Individual Choice and Environmental Governance

Countries like the United States have established a series of alternative ways to track it. Neoliberalism promotes the idea of liberating choices to curb the issue of climate change effectively. The emphasis is given on three: sub-national regulation growth; executive authority usage; and specifically through the placement of a network of research infrastructure and propagation the growth of environmental technologies is sustained (Macneil and Paterson,2012, p. 234-238)

Governmentality and the Exercise of Power

The theoretical framework for examining the politics of climate change on the foundation of governmentality does not limit the application of power but reinforces discipline, and a liberating government, as alternative methods of state and control. Climate change is rendered a governable body and is best explained in the background of a movement from biopower to a progressive liberal government. Since the mid-1990s, climate change has been the center of attention of the advanced liberal government. They consider climate change an economic subject that facilitates market-based solutions that contribute to cost-effective technological explanations. (Oels,2005,p.193).

REDD Carbon Neutrality and Neoliberal Policy

Forest plantations (under REDD) and carbon neutrality are both fundamentals of climate change policy that have been extensively exploited under neoliberalism. It has played a precarious role in the climate change debates. It establishes a dominant element in its arrangement to limit greenhouse gas concentrations under the Kyoto Protocol and to regulate the climate(Newell et al.,2012,p.165).Along with that forest plantation projects have taken a toll under neoliberalism. The agenda of neoliberalism is withholding benefits that could have been reaped by planting trees to curb climate regimes. While the win-win dialogue of ecological modernization has granted the addition of Kyoto Protocol sink projects, green governmentality dialogue has provided a critical civic environmentalism discourse(Backstrand and Lovbrand,2006,p.63)

REDD Plus as a Performance-Based Mechanism

Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), REDD+ has been emphasized as a performance-based tool through which state and non-state actors will be compensated for forest emissions reductions. The Cancun Agreement has paved the way towards a phased implementation plan for preventing deforestation. The first phase includes making national policies, actions, and capacity-building programs. It is followed by the second period, which is driven by result-based activities(Bailey and Wilson,2009,p.2320). The final phase is staged in measuring, reporting, and verifying results. The level of support and the developing country's national capability and keenness to attain results determine which phase it should start from. Neoliberalism has affected the execution of these plans with each nation busy with reaping maximum benefits yet limited performance-based incentives (Boykoff et al.,2009,p.27)

Monitoring Evaluation and Forest Governance

The evaluation process of REDD+ has also been identified but affected by the whole political turmoil. A National Forest Inventory (NFI) is one option for the Forest Monitoring system REDD+ countries have for improvement evaluation. Some states have their own existing workable NFIs, whereas some countries needed to develop their own before 2012. The authenticity and workability of these differ from state to country which may act as an obstacle to active practice. Rationally advocating the prime objective of UNFCCC in the context of REDD depends on the practical and adaptable legal instruments that will successfully measure the emission reduction and measure a country's performance based on it(Newell and Paterson,2009,p.81). More regulations are required focusing on reference standards for developing nations, as they will determine the probable compensation a country would receive from REDD+ for a given activity level. The effectiveness of REDD+ is highly influenced by the supervision of REDD+ revenues. These taxes' fairness is questionable and must be addressed(Mcafee and Shapiro,2010,p.583). Without adequate benefit sharing, support from most stakeholders cannot be gained. Apprehensions should be addressed, and policymakers should resolve the problems of people involved from the top to the grassroots level. Carbon markets are merely flourishing and providing incentives for one kind of class. The industrial class is solely leading the carbon market. Instead of opting for pollution control technologies, large corporations buy carbon credits for their excess pollution. The establishment of Carbon markets has further aggravated the carbon pollution situation instead of resolving it. Carbon markets have granted property rights to wealthy polluters who exceed their level of pollution and pay for it. Also, these markets have drawn attention away from the type of innovation, long-term investments, and broad restructuring that is needed for a further reduction in carbon emissions on a larger scale(Ervine,2014,p.727).

Historical Development of Forest Carbon Markets

Earlier, the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) had evaded deforestation projects because of political and socio-economic reasons, even though its prime focus was the reduction of greenhouse gases. Fearing this would cause additional problems seeping in, LULUCF mitigation opportunities in developing countries were kept to address CDM afforestation and reforestation (A/R) projects. The expected benefits of REDD+ generated substantial support and garnered people's interest; though the lack of arrangement of a global mechanism for REDD+ reaped disappointment. However, the initiative opened up a way forward for research and forest-related initiatives(McCarthy,2006, pp.88). Countries rich in forest areas already have formal forest-related initiatives, but lack of interest and finances hinder their enactment. Proper implementation schemes and focus on these previously present initiatives will deliver more positive outcomes. The major obstacle the REDD+ scheme faces is the penetration of corruption throughout this framework. It has been neglected by policymakers and hasn't been a part of debating sessions. Most developing countries with vast forest areas have a high level of corruption embedded in their systems. These countries have used forests for both socioeconomic and political gains. Still one can consider the REDD+ resolution in the Cancun Agreements as an efficient way for all developed and developing nations to unite and find ways to decrease the anthropogenic pressure on forests(Humphreys,2009,p.321). It focuses on the actions that should be taken to stop deforestation and further emphasizes the role of both developed and developing nations in reducing greenhouse emissions.[10] To develop a possible yet effective strategy for REDD+, REDD+ stakeholders must be educated. Also, it is important to analyze the evolution of these activities critically and comparatively analyze the past and present circumstances(McCarthy,2006, pp.89).

Political Conflict and Investment Requirements

REDD+ remains a politically explosive issue, with both the state and non-state holders asking for their stake. The REDD+ projects require a huge amount of investment. Even after the initial expenditures, further finances are needed to evaluate the effective policies working in accordance with the proposed incentives. REDD projects are costly, as well as time-consuming hence effective operations should be performed for maximum gains. If we want a change, more work should be done on historical background and social and political aspects that address the local conditions and environment. The carbon market setup is so complex that the general public has little idea about it to question its efficiency. As a result not collaborating with the general public will never resolve climate crisis issues(Blok,2012,p.65)

State Responsibility and Forest Protection

REDD+ has been working to stress state responsibilities and encourage them to balance the economic, social, and environmental incentives needed to protect forests on a government scale. Some governments feel threatened under this framework due to the need to distribute responsibilities. A clear weakening in the Ministry of Forest's power can be witnessed as they are regularly checked under this framework(McCarthy,2006, pp.88).

Financing Developing Countries

The idea of REDD+ calling for developed countries to fund developing nations for their activities financially; to lessen forest-sector carbon emissions, seems simple. Its applicability is questionable. It can be seen that though there have been useful practices at some level the majority of international and national patrons are lagging behind or not efficiently working under this framework. Research is being done but is majorly theoretical; the focus should be more on practical solutions (McCarthy,2005,p.999)

Incentives and Sustainable Alternatives

Proper incentives and channeling thoughts in the right direction are essential to better articulate the idea behind REDD+. Incentives for forest conservation should also focus on proposing alternative solutions to sustain local livelihoods based on forestry(Laurie and Bondi,2006,p.77).

Emissions Trading Under Neoliberalism

The last 25 years have been subjugated by the neoliberal ideology, determining clarifications to emergent political, social, and economic issues. Keeping that in mind, it is not shocking that emissions trading schemes initiated on the core doctrines of neoliberalism have developed as the dominant response to climate change especially by developed countries taking a neoliberal stance. There have been increasing encounters with the climate policy marketization, and carbon taxes are credited as alternative policy tools that are more expected to orient economic and social activity concerning carbon pollution modification. A carbon tax does not necessitate the economy's radical political or social transformation. Nevertheless, it does dwell on the state to regulate and govern explanations for climate change. This guarantees a test of the free market position of current neoliberal answers to climate change. (Lohmann,2010,p.81).

Carbon Neutrality and Offset Markets

Having a net zero carbon footprint is defined as Carbon. Attaining net zero carbon emissions by sustaining an equilibrium in a measured quantity of carbon freed from emissions with an equal quantity sequestered or purchasing sufficient carbon credits to match the variance. It is used from the perspective of carbon dioxide discharging processes related to transportation, industrialization, construction, etc. It can also refer to releasing carbon dioxide into the environment from burning fossil fuels. With renewable energy generating a similar quantity of beneficial energy, carbon dioxide emissions are compensated, or instead exhausting only renewable energy that doesn't yield carbon dioxide (forming a post-carbon economy) the problem of climate change can be curbed as global warming will be curbed.(Nightingale,2005,p.603) .To make fossil fuel emissions carbon neutral, the carbon freed from the fossil fuel burning, must either be prohibited from flowing into the atmosphere, through carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) or extracted back from the atmosphere. These carbon dynamics have painted a more complicated picture of climate change, affecting all countries big and small (Lockie and Higgins,2007,p.9).

Deregulation Inequality and Climate Failure

For many years, national economies have been directed by neoliberal deregulation policies. Neoliberalism has been catastrophic for people in most countries, setting an opposition of one race against the other, and in fact, every individual focuses on his interests. There is also a growing global acknowledgment that we are in the middle of an unparalleled climate crisis. Prepared or not, that crisis is disturbing every country, every zone, and every person. It has serious effects, and it will be disastrous until a pivotal collective global act takes place. By disassembling the source of public directing society to meet communal necessities, neoliberal deregulation has also made it nearly unmanageable to aid the global climate crisis. (Nel,2015,p.2298).

Climate Justice and the Rights of Vulnerable People

The two topics, neoliberalism, and climate crisis failure will express the fight for the benefit of the poor and common people for the next era. Also, the need to fight climate change may give us a chance to talk about the bigger issues of neoliberal deregulation.

At times, it seems that by abandoning neoliberalism, we can defend the rights of people worldwide and resolve the climate change crisis (Hayter,2014,p.151).

The official political shifts within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) summarize fundamental governance practices for each stage.

International Environmentalism and Neoliberal Justice

International environmentalism as categorized by main progressions:

- The eminence of permissive principles of justice, where justice is well-defined as the coherent chase of sovereign self-centeredness between parties who are unequal.
- Marketization through market instruments, private sector commitment, and supposedly ‘objective’ thoughts are regarded as the most real and effectual forms of governance
- Governance by exposure, in which the chief problems to sustainability are seen as ‘flawed information’ and burdensome regulatory organizations that constrain innovation; and mostly, in which multidimensional decision-making is moved from agreement to multilateralism (Taylor,2000,p.258).

The current UNFCCC regime has established neoliberal modifications in climate governance, minus resistance, in an unambiguously dissimilar arrangement to the earlier eras. There are considerable gaps in evenhandedness, transparency, and representation. While conservative opponents protest that serious consideration of humanmade climate change will harmfully influence economic growth, fundamental environmentalists oppose that modifying climate change will require considerable alteration of the capitalist structure, if not entirely, this system’s end. Speaking about climate change has developed into a booming industry in its specific right, a foundation of significant growth in a range of areas (Boykoff et al.,2009,p.15).

Capitalism Environmentalism and Disaster

Neoliberal capitalism triggers disasters. In the public dissertation, it is usually observed that environmentalism is seen as a neoliberalism counterforce or as a restraining power to capitalism. Embracing the global environmental discourse is frequently seen as divergent injustices shaped by the present capitalist system and the only substitute for accommodating the reasoning of the current neoliberal system. The global ecological cause, mainly climate change, is seen as a weapon to use in a conceptual fight (Bailey and Wilson,2009,p.2341).

Since the development of modern environmental dialogue, some scholars have advocated the implicit penalties of global ecological apprehensions that are complicit with and reassuring the neoliberal development systems of governance(Newell and Paterson,2009,p.31).

Construction of the Global Environment

It is important to understand that the foundation for the neoliberal prospects of the ecological disaster, which was already shaped by the cognitive creation of the global ‘environment’ and its dominant facets:

- Acceptance of natural resources and their weight in the current scenario.
- The limitations imposed by governing bodies
- The ongoing economic disparities.

Neoliberalism is an impeccable beneficiary of an Environmental project, a perceptive tool for neoliberalism. While climate change uses ecological reasons to claim the need to manage the global atmosphere, neoliberalism recommends the economy as the only means of safety and management (Ervine,2014,p.724).

Conclusion on Neoliberalism and Climate Change

Neoliberalism has turbocharged and dwelled on the idea of climate change, modifying the facets according to its principles and ideals. It tells you to feel guilty if you are in any way responsible for this environmental crisis, to feel guilt and embarrassment if you contribute to this climatic debt. It directly holds you accountable and makes you bear the weight of possible ecological collapse(Blok,2012,p.75). It cannot be denied that less consumption of resources and low-carbon substitutes, sustainable farming, and zero-waste methods are individual choices that count but when cost-effective, viable, environmental decisions are available for everyone, then only significant changes can be brought. If inexpensive mass transit isn’t accessible, people will travel by car. When local organic food is too costly, they opt for the fossil-fueled driven market. If inexpensive manufactured goods flow limitlessly, they will near buy environment-friendly stuff. This is neoliberalism’s con job: to encourage us to talk about climate change but not through politics or rational thinking. Eco-consumerism may compensate for your guilt. But it’s only mass actions that influence the climate crisis’s course. We need a mental break from neoliberalism and to think like a community and collective responsibility rather than individual responsibility (Humphreys,2009,p.321).

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