

The Climate Exemption from the Office: the Environmental Case for Remote Working

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Abstract: International climate mitigation commitments for 2030 are insufficient to hold global warming below 1.5°C. To prevent climate change from crossing tipping points, everyone needs to play their part: citizens, businesses, and governments. Many employees could maintain an acceptable level of productivity by working from home and in doing so they could significantly reduce their GHG emissions. Data from the dramatic experience of the Covid-19 pandemic provide empirical support for both claims. The article questions whether companies are justified in forcing these workers to go back to the office. My answer is no. Therefore, I argue, using both utilitarian and deontological arguments, that it is part of a company's CSR duties to provide employees with the climate exemption from the office, provided that this does not jeopardise the company's market position.

Keywords: Climate change, Remote working, Stakeholder approach, CSR, Utilitarianism, Deontology.

notizie di POLITEIA, XXXVIII, 146, 2022. ISSN 1128-2401 pp. 92-111