

Climate Justice: Risks and Advantages of Going Distributive

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Abstract: In this article I discuss both a risk and an advantage of the climate justice account recently proposed by Axel Gosseries, namely distributive and forward-looking. First, I maintain that if we go distributive and forward-looking about climate justice, rather than rectificatory, being non-isolationist is nearly inevitable. However, if someone buys only the critical part of the non-isolationist version of Gosseries' account (i.e. we must treat pre-1990 emissions as any other past fact contributing to today's global injustices), and not the constructive part (i.e. we must use climate policies to reduce global injustices, regardless of the causes), they are left with no reason why developed countries must shoulder the major part of the climate burden generated by pre-1990 emissions. Second, going distributive, in the way Gosseries intends, brings an advantage over rectificatory approaches. It allows to bite the bullet of the non-identity problem, thus justifying climate action based on the moral duty to minimise risks to the fixed-identity victims of global warming, but without alleviating the climate responsibility of developed countries.

Keywords: Climate justice, Intergenerational justice, Non-identity problem.

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