

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY SYMPOSIUM ORGANISED BY THE GREEN INSTITUTE

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ENERGY SESSION

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Akinsemolu: Hello Professor Sovacoo. How you doing today?

Prof. Sovacool: Good, thank you.

Dr. Akinsemolu: Happy World Environment Day.

Prof. Sovacool: Thank you too.

Dr. Akinsemolu: So I'm just going to update you. Since you have a presentation, we can just start your presentation while we wait for Charles to come back here.

PROF. BENJAMIN.K. SOVACOOOL: EQUITY, ENERGY AND JUST TRANSITIONS

Sovacool: okay Good morning everyone from the United States. I'm here to talk about Equity energy and just Transitions. And I think it's important to start with this kind of perplexity phenomena that we have understood. Now that many of the things we need to intervene for climate change actually can have negative impacts on Equity. So they can say capture the resources of indigenous groups or transfer assets that the public had in the hands of private companies and firms. Thinking creates marginalized patterns of stakeholder exclusion or is very unfair and how we govern them. They can also create encroachment things that we need to fight climate change. Require building roads for electric vehicles or pipelines for migration or Citing concerns and deforestation over wind farms and they can lastly exacerbate some of the demographic aspects like poverty and gender inequality and racism and colonialism and we found this to be true looking at climate change adaptation efforts around the world. Things like desalination plants and Alaska and sea walls in Australia, and so forth. But we also found it to be true With Disaster Recovery efforts as many of these are also exacerbated by Climate change things like Hurricane, Katrina which sought public recovery efforts kind of benefit casinos and cruise ships but not communities of color or the famous Boxing Day tsunami in Asia which had a real negative impact on fishers and the recovery efforts actually only Consulting and wealth of corporate fishing fleets. Tended to displace those that were more bottoms-up or small and medium Enterprises. Same with them even places in the global North like the Canterbury earthquakes in New Zealand. And which also saw Disaster Recovery kind of only benefit or mostly benefit private actors and kind of Elites delete interests. We see this not just anecdotally across climate adaptation and disaster management. We also see it with climate mitigation. And by this I mean climate mitigation very broadly to include renewable energy and agriculture Energy Efficiency and land use management. Even things like cycling Lanes, bicycles and cook stoves It's all actually have very negative political ecology or vulnerability impacts and in the very large scale. Qualitative case assessment that we did last year of 198 studies and more than 300 cases of those studies often had multiple cases. So more than 300 cases of where climate interventions made some aspect of vulnerability worse. And on this graph you can see we kind of catalog with a frequency count how often that came up in the numbers are shocking in 77 percent of the cases. We see climate interventions actually hurting other forms of life biodiversity habitats Rivers, streams, Waters and oceans also in 76 percent of the case they hurt the host communities themselves with aesthetic issues local pollution construction. Negative impacts on land and so forth. And then the list goes on and on for a whole catalog. Vulnerable groups from the rural poor to Future generations to Children. Even prostitutes and alcoholics are on this list prostitutes because they follow boom-and-bust cycles for hydroelectric. Dams and wind farms and alcoholics because many people in the global South cope with health impacts negatively by drinking alcohol

rather than actually going to see a doctor. So the problem is that these types of impacts are not a talk there. Systematic and often structural and of hunt of highlight this as well. Very recently some colleagues in Australia and I published this piece in December which found that. Well you kind of see the phase-out of fossil fuels create disruptions in mining DVDs because people are losing their jobs that can really affect you know, 30 million, plus people more disruption more than 150 million people. So three times as many will have their livelihoods disrupted by minerals that Need for low carbon Transition. Things like Cobalt and copper and lithium and rare Earths and other forms and so you know we are unleashing a future wave of disruption as we transition to a low-carbon economy that could really damage rural communities, artisanal Miners and many of the people who are most at risk of these types of impacts. One review we also did last year published in nature human behavior during a very busy slide. Try to create a framework for how we think about these Justice impacts and how we think about these equities. And I like this multi-dimensional framework, even though it's a bit difficult to see on the upper left we have these demographic inequities these demographic and equities are kind of all the rage now it's kind of where we really focus a lot of good research. We talk about gender and feminism and racism we talk about things like household income and family size and how adoption patterns for things like electric vehicles or solar panels aren't fair. They're huge disparities among low-income groups among urban groups, among people of color among men and women high class versus low class. However and obsessing over demographic and equity which is really important there are three other dimensions of equity that are almost never discussed as frequently as demographics and those are spatial interspecies and temporal and these types of inequities can be just as severe spatial and equities. Be whiny divisions between Global North and Global south or where we have electricity networks and where we don't where we have EV charging stations in where we don't where we have financing patterns, and where we don't or exacerbate it's a rural poverty composed, to compare to urban wealth, interspecies and Equity is to get any time he's climbing. Interventions are environment whether it is building roads or new power plants or using land, or having an electronic waste or even mineral extraction in the chapter of equities. Are any of those that compound risk for the future? Whether it is the kind of inherent E-Waste that stock piles in solar photovoltaic and EV batteries or it could be financial temporal risks like a household invests in solar photovoltaic. They need to pay back on that but if the inverter fails or the battery fails or the warranty goes out or the company goes bankrupt, then that financial solar photovoltaic system becomes a financial burden so these are kind of temporally. We also see future sure risks that are compounded over the next 50 to 100 years and this creates a much more complicated notion of what equity. Equity isn't just about your income and your social identity it's also about space it's about other forms of life. And it is about inter temporal Dimensions that span into the hundreds to thousands of years especially when you consider the long-lived nature of some toxics like nuclear waste or even carbon which takes thousands of years to fully cycle at it. Atmosphere because of this is really why we've seen the notion of a just transition coming to play the intergovernmental panel on climate change. Does a fantastic job defining just transitions in their most recent report which was just published last year. You can see that to them. This is straight from their report adjust transition is not just principles but also processes and practices that really seek to Ensure that no one no people, no places, no sectors, no parts of the world are left behind as we transition to a low-carbon economy. It stresses the need to be proactive so we don't just react we are actually designing. Proactive anticipatory governance mechanisms that help ensure that we manage not just negative environmental impacts but social and economic impacts in also means that you try to adhere to principles of respect and dignity. And fairness and decency and democracy and protection of Human Rights. Lastly and perhaps complicatedly, it means we may have to intervene to redress past harm so it's not just about future harms. It's also going backwards maybe providing reconciliation efforts and corrective and restorative justice and it also spans as you see here the many, different dimensions those Not Just Energy but also climate land use Health gender water poverty. So forth. Because of this import we do see just transition policies and Frameworks and roadmaps proliferating extremely rapidly and quickly. This is already out of date as the data is compiled in 2021 and it was published in 2022. You can see even then we see just transition task forces all around the world. We have a very promising just transitions fund within the European green deal and we even have a platform in Europe that is helping multiple carbon-intensive regions transition out of Cole up to say, nothing of the more than 50 different, sub-nationals actors. We catalog in the IPPC chapter things like social movements from South Africa to the United States that are also trying to create an insurer just fair transition.

One of the final things we do in our research at the University of Sussex. And Boston University is tried to apply just transition Frameworks to very hard to abate sectors. This isn't just climate medication or forestry or Renewable. In this particular case, this is industry this would be Net Zero cement concrete steel refining food and beverages, paper, and Pulp glass Ceramics. And here, you can see we did a systematic review of the just transitions literature's spanning different kind of themes and communities. Justice literature to the sustainability

transitions literature to the energy democracy literature and we found these kind of common themes about what it actually means in the academic literature from fundamentally rethinking capitalism and a circular economy to Notions of spatial Justice and power relations to even new tools of conceptualizing Justice itself. And I think we have trying to chart these New Frontiers of Justice thinking and these New Frontiers of Justice thinking kind of map nicely. On to some of the gaps that exist so we've kind of argued as we think about new heuristics Ferry important to go beyond the West to create theories that are originating from the global south of the bottom up. It's not just you know, Greco-Roman philosophy or people like John Rawls. We've also really need to Grapple with non-anthropocentric. Notions of Justice Martha Nussbaum makes this very compelling argument in her book as well about species membership and to Justice or. But I've heard it spans species or pans communism. We need to think about how justice issues Cascade across whole complex systems socio-technical systems and spatial systems. We need to think about how we can maybe harness business models to capture justice as well as who wins and losses Justice interventions and how Justice operates as discourse and as a kind of first step in trying to pluralize what just Transitions and energy. Justice mean, I've found a lot of insight and Inspiration coming from feminism anti-racism indigenous theories of justice and postcolonial theories of Justice. Each of these helps open up and reveal previously not neglected but less focused areas of Justice like patriarchy or white racism or genocide and imperialism. And I think these Frontiers are very exciting and helping ensure that the Notions of the just transition are also fair and justice thank you for your time.

Charles: Thank you. Dr. Sovacool

Sovacool: Welcome, welcome back Charles

Charles: Thank you. This is a lot to unpack, so much to unpack in the equity energy and just transition and I really appreciate very in-depth research that you done in this capacity. I'm going to ask you two quick questions because we use out for your time from the previous speaker but I see the animosity of what you've done and I'm so grateful that the green institute brought you to speak to people. So the advocacy about the just transition becomes a global advocacy, especially in the region, and Africa, where a climate condition seems to be peeling a lot more. Even though our carbon emissions as much as that of kind of our countries. Someone asking two very quick questions here. What is the role of government in the just transition? What you see, the government role will be? Or what will they play a sort of like to make this transition? Very singles?

Sovacool: Quick question Charles there's been a lot of debate about this. Whether the government is even the right actor to Justice because in many cases, it's governments who are committing Injustice and I think that governments have an important part to play by sponsoring things like these. Just transition task forces or Truth and Reconciliation commissions like that, South Africa, or Rwanda. If you're trying to uncover gross Injustice, but I don't think you're the only actors and the IPPC is quite clear on this that the kind of scale of ambition of sub-national actors of those that aren't government that are even outside of the UNFCCC system cities. He's Industries Corbett. Cooperatives Civil Society groups. These efforts could actually save more carbon than the UN comp system via Paris and Kyoto Etc. So that kind of it must in Estates matter and they have to keep doing what they're doing. But these other actors are actually just as important and collectively they could achieve more than nation states and governments can

Charles: Right Absolutely. The second question will be in very quick succession. So, what are some potential benefits as well as challenges of this just transition?

Sovacool: So I think you've got to making stories from a certain sort supporting

Charles: speaking to a lame, speaking to people who I was buying into the whole advocacy on energy transition, climate change it just transition.

Sovacool: I think you have a spill substantive issue, of which Injustice is matter right? And those that may matter for particular Community like jobs may actually not be as important as others like, species Extinction, right? Or compounding risks for the future. And I think that's the rub. Once you start to use Justice as a lens it reveals a kaleidoscope of the justices, our own work. Looking at for transitions in Europe Nuclear Power Smart Meters Evie's and solar identified 120. How do you prioritize those? How do you rank? Those who get to rank them who get to implement them? So I think Justice Approaches are kind of the first step atrophy what's wrong? And then we've got to come up with really compelling ways that tackle. This collectively and help prioritize which Justice Elements matter most for a given Community.

Charles: Dr. Sovacool I can thank you enough it's really a pleasure of moderating this session with you and I look forward to subsequent sessions that we could have to pack all this and have more conversations In Pockets of events around the continent.

Sovacool: Thank you, Right.

Charles: So we might have to move to the next speaker if I could get some assistance from the back end.

Anita: Hi, good afternoon or good morning.

Sovacool: Anita welcome we are looking forward to this session and been the only woman in this session? I'm sure we could all talk a lot of things especially the continent especially Nigeria where you added so much value to the energy renewable energy sector so you're going to pick any topic that you feel that Comes to you easily on this conversation. However, this session is an energy transition, and alternative sources of energy. So I'm going to give a little bit of bio about you if you don't mind so that the listeners that the audience will get to know who were talking to and who's talking to us? Anita is currently a senior director of sustainable energy for all she leads on the program. Delivery of the Universal Energy Facility a multi donor funded results-based financing facility for the development of renewable energy projects across sub-Saharan Africa, towards Bridging the energy access and reliability Gap. So focused and productive use and sustainable impact in lives and businesses. Anita thanks you so much please. If you have presentations go ahead with it all. Otherwise we have a couple of questions to ask you please the floor is yours.

Anita: I think I had submitted the slide initially.

Charles: I will get the back end to do that. Just take a second and I will get them. So while we're trying to get the slides on to Anita we just have an interactive conversation along these lines. Oh there it is.