

## **Conference: Climate Change, Sustainability and an Ethics of an Open Future**

22nd-25th August, 2013

Kontakt der Kontinente, Soesterberg, Netherlands

### **Summary:**

The event was rich in discussion on several of the most essential topics concerning how to make headway towards a more sustainable and just policy – most notably in the face of anthropogenic climate change, but also concerning resource depletion, loss of biodiversity etc. Discussions ranged from the scientific background of such questions, normative challenges for theories of justice and accounts of human rights, institutional challenges relating to appropriate reactions to risk and uncertainty, to issues of motivation and collective and individual responsibilities. Many people and institutions directly implicated in the network were involved, but also many other participants from leading European universities, with backgrounds ranging from science, economics, and law to theology, philosophy and ethics. The keynote lecturers included some of the major major climate ethicists in the world (Prof. Stephen Gardiner, U Washington; Prof. Simon Caney, U Oxford).

More particularly, the keynote lectures concerned 1) the scientific state of the art concerning climate change and its interface with policy (Dr. Jeroen van der Sluijs); 2) the correct diagnostic assessment of geoengineering and the normative reasons in favour or against it (Prof. Stephen Gardiner); 3) population aspects of a sustainable and just society, including possible directions for policy (Prof. Ingrid Robeyns); 4) European energy policy, an outline and elements of an evaluation (Prof. Hille Haker); 5) conceptual and related scope for philosophical and religious account to have a view of history that furthers intergenerational justice (Prof. Marcus Düwell); 5) the ecological preconditions of justice, developed into a very detailed and elaborate proposal (Prof. Simon Caney); and 6) theological perspectives on the ecological crisis and its solution (Prof. Michael Northcott).

The parallel sessions dived deeper into a wide array of aspects of problems of sustainability, climate change, and an open future – such as conceptual, institutional, ideological/world-view related and motivational; and a number of case studies were studied in depth. There were papers concerning more theoretical approach of, e.g. risk, uncertainty and responsibility; and on more applied questions of individual ethics, political philosophy and existential/ theological dimensions. The conference venue, with its compact set-up, offered an ideal setting for discussions among participants, for building networks and very fruitful exchange of ideas, which are being continued via e-mail and other media.

The conference has clearly offered a great stimulus for tying together various outstanding threats in the field, concerning climate change, but also related topics of sustainability such as biodiversity and resource depletion. Specifically concerning the ESF networking programme ‘Rights to a Green Future’, it offered researchers involved a clear chance to discuss and sharpen ideas and take them to the next level – e.g. by making cross-connections between geoengineering and underlying theoretical approaches, by linking institutional questions to related views of history, or by involving population-related aspects in issues of individual and collective responsibility.

The conference was organized by Societas Ethica, the European Society for Research in Ethics, founded in 1964, and by Utrecht University’s Ethics Institute/ Dpt. of Philosophy.

Apart from support by ESF/Enri-Future, co-sponsors were Oikocredit and the Ethics Institute at the Utrecht University

### **2. Scientific content**

A detailed view of the scientific content can be gotten from the titles of the keynote and parallel sessions, as well as some biographical data on the keynote speakers (for conference programme, see App. 1)

Keynote sessions (see the summary, above, for a somewhat more elaborate description of the content of the keynote sessions):

Dr. Jeroen van der Sluijs (GeoSciences, Utrecht University)  
*Scientific Scenarios for the Development of Climate Change*

Professor Stephen M. Gardiner (University of Wahington, Seattle)  
*The Ethics of Climate Extortion*

Professor Ingrid Robeyns (Erasmus University Rotterdam)  
*Sustainable Procreative Freedom*

Prof. Hille Haker (Loyola University Chicago): *Energy Ethics*  
Prof. Marcus Düwell (Utrecht University): *Rights to a Green Future*

Professor Simon Caney (University of Oxford)  
*Tolstoy's Question: The Ecological Preconditions of Justice*

Professor Michael Northcott (University of Edinburgh)  
*Cosmopolitical Ethics in the Anthropocene*

### **Parallel sessions**

FEI TENG: Carbon Emission Right in the Context of Climate Change

MICHEL BOURBAN: Climate Change, Potential Catastrophes and the Rights of Future

LIESKE VOGET-KLESCHIN: Sustainable Development in Between the Priority of the Right and the Priority of the Good: The Need for a Substantial but Incomprehensive Notion of the Good Within a Concept of SD

JENNY EHNBERG: Natural Law and Sustainable

MARTIN KOPP: Towards a Christian Voluntary Simplicity? Growth Questioned by Theological Ethics

MARTIN PETERSON: The Last Man Argument Revisited

AUKE POLS: Irreversible Social change

ERIC BRANDSTEDT: Individual Climate Duties

BEN-WILLIE GOLO: Indigenous Ecological Knowledge, Environmental Sustainability and Political Ethics of an Open Future in Ghana

ANDREA GAMMON: Climate as Assemblage and Distributive Agency for Climate Ethics

MARIA ANTONACIO: Humanism and the Cultural Logic of Sustainability

MATTHEW RENDALL: Carbon Leakage and the Argument from no Difference

JONATHAN PARKER: From Knowledge to Action: Developing Sustainable Lifestyles in Response to Climate Change

AURÉLIE HALSBAND: How Much Biodiversity Should We Conserve for Future Generations?

BERNICE BOVENKERK: Public Deliberation and the Representation of Future Generations, Animals and Nature

MICHAEL HACKL: Naturschutz als Grundlage und Voraussetzung für den Erhalt der Freiheit. H. Jonas' Verantwortungsphilosophie und F.W.J. Schellings Metaphysik der Freiheit

PATRICK NULLENS: The Reformed and Evangelical Doctrine of Total Depravity and Ecological Wisdom"

MICHAEL LUCAS: Transformational Infrastructure and Intergenerational Ethics at Morro Bay

TIM CHRISTION MYERS: Understanding Climate Change as an Existential Threat: Confronting Climate Denial as a Challenge to Climate Ethics

EKATERINA BATUEVA: Rethinking Education for Our Sustainable Future

STEFAN HEUSER: Auf dem Weg zu einer großen Transformation? Welche Ethik wir angesichts des Klimawandels brauchen

ROLAND MEES: Ethics of the Distant Future and Moral Corruption

JAN JANS: A Frog is Not an Elephant ... On Anthropocentrism in Ecological Ethics

JOS PHILIPS: How Sufficiencyarianism Can Help Us Improve Our Accounts of Precaution

TATJANA VISAK: Shall I Cooperate? Duties for Individuals Arising from Climate Change and the Capacity of Utilitarianism to Solve Collective Action Problems

MARC DAVIDSON: Intergenerational justice as Equal Treatment

GABRIEL FONTELES: Ethical Clashes: the Belo Monte Case Dam Construction and Conflicts Between Indigenous and Non-indigenous Ethics

RALF LÜFTER: Die Zukunft der Nachhaltigkeit Kenia

STEVEN C. VAN DEN HEUVEL: Human Beings as Masters over Nature: The Relevance of Bonhoeffer's Anthropocentrism for Environmental Ethics

PIETRO LANZINI: Positive Spillover Between Pro-Environmental Behaviors: The Quest for the Magic Button

ROBERT HEEGER: Climate Change and responsibility to Future Generations: What Normative Questions Should we Address?

RUTGER CLAASSEN: The Capability Rights of Future Generations

HEIDI JOKINEN: Contents and Process – How the Habermasian Discursive Model Gives Too High Hopes of Solving Global Climate Problems

NEIL MESSER: Theological and Ethical Resources in the Face of Climate Change: Sin, Repentance and Hope Sustainability and Jewish Law?

DICKSON KANAKULYA: Ethics and the Re-Conceptualization of Sustainability

DAVID KRONLID: Moving-and-Mooring in Uncertain Terrains. A Capabilities Approach to Climate Change Ethics

SASKIA FIKKERS: Rights of Future Generations – The Right Approach?

CAMERON VAZIRI: Inevitability Ethics: Revisiting Eco-Authoritarianism

ANGELA ROTHAAAN: In Search of An Open Future – Against an Unsustainable Society

GEORGE KODIMATTAM JOSEPH: Intergenerational and International Justice: Sustainability and the Dilemma of Developing Nations

OLLE TORPMAN: Environmental Pragmatism and the Objection from Impracticality

ANDERS NORDGREN: From a Project on Meat Production and Climate Change

PATRIK BAARD: Risk and Goal-Setting Angola

CHRISTIAN BAATZ: What can Be Said in Defense of the Equal Per Capita View? An Analysis of Two Rivaling Approaches in Climate Ethics

JOEL PARTHEMORE: Conceptual Frameworks and Climate Change: (Re-)Framing the Debate

JOAN MCGREGOR: Just Food: How Our Eating Shapes Our Future

JONATHAN JOSEFSSON: The Best Interest of the Child in Times of Migration Management – A Case Study of Decision-Making in the Swedish Migration Court of Appeal

CHRISTIAN BAATZ & LIESKE VOGET-KLESCHIN: Individual Responsibility for Global Environmental Problems

AMY DEBEATS: Environmental Responsibility and the Ethics of Radical Life Extension

IVO WALLIMANN-HELMER: How to Defend Institutional Redesign for Sustainable Policy Making

LUIGI RUSSI: Wild Things: Stories, Transition and the Sacred in Ecological Social Movements

GERHARD BOS: A Right to Protection from Moral Tragedy, Safeguarding a Sustainable, Habitable Environment

KARMA GUINDON: Ecological Ethics for Contemporary Social Work

FRANCESCA PONGIGLIONE: Individual Responsibility and Climate Change: Beyond Selfishness and Altruism

GÉRALD HESS & HUGUES POLITIER: About the Possibility of a (Distant) Future Ethics : The Motivation Problem

DENIS MALHERBE & DAVID WELLMAN: Authority, Power and Control in the Work of Building Transnational Sustainable Communities within the European Union

EGIDIO ALCIDES DE BUSTAMANTE AZEVEDO: Transrational Interpretations of Peace and its Contribution to Alternative Worldviews for a Sustainable, Ethical and Aesthetical Present.

JO DIRIX: Diversified Climate Action : The Top-Down Failure and the Carbon Markets Emergence

SUSAN BROWN: Conceptualizing Digital Ethics for 21st Century 'Grand Challenges'

CHON TEJEDOR: The Most Dangerous Assumption in the Climate Change Debate: Neutrality and Future Generations

ALIX DIETZEL: Relational vs Non-Relational Justice in Climate Ethics

MAY THORSETH: Sustainability Politics and the Liberal Dilemma

HERMANN DIEBEL: Gesellschaftliche Fragen, theologische Antworten – das doppelte Problem theologischer Wirtschaftsethik im Hinblick auf die Gestaltung einer unsicheren Zukunft

BART MIJLAND: Composing the Future We Want? Mozambique

CHRISTOPH BAUMGARTNER: Climate Ethics of the Anthropocene. An analysis of our moral obligations to future generations in a new geological epoch

KIAN MINTZ-WOO: Discounting for Epistemic Reasons

NORBERT CAMPAGNA: Climate change and the duties of nations

PHILIP FREYTAG: Promising a Future for Everyone. On the Moral Foundations of Sustainability

Keynote speakers

**Professor Simon Caney (University of Oxford):**

Simon Caney is Professor in Political Theory at the University of Oxford and Director of the Centre for the Study of Social Justice. His research interests are primarily in contemporary political philosophy. He has a particular interest in the ethical issues raised by global climate change. He is the author of *Justice Beyond Borders* (Oxford University Press, 2005) and coeditor of *Climate Ethics: Essential Readings* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

**Professor Stephen M. Gardiner (University of Washington, Seattle):**

Stephen Gardiner is Professor for the Department of Philosophy and holds the Ben Rabinowitz Endowed Professor in Human Dimensions of the Environment in the College of the Environment, both at the University of Washington, Seattle. His areas of specialization are ethics, environmental ethics, and political philosophy. He is widely published in political and environmental ethics. He is the author of *A Perfect Moral Storm: The Ethical Tragedy of Climate Change* (Oxford University Press, 2011), a co-editor of *Climate Change: Essential Readings* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

**Professor Michael Northcott (Edinburgh University):**

Michael Northcott is Professor of Ethics at the University of Edinburgh. He is best known for his research and writing on the ethical and theological implications of climate change and the ecological crisis. He has authored or edited ten books and over eighty research papers.

**Professor Ingrid Robeyns (Erasmus University Rotterdam):**

Ingrid Robeyns is professor in Practical Philosophy at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam. Her research focuses on the capability approach, theories of justice, family justice, the assessment of economic systems from a multi-value perspective. She has published widely on the capability approach. She is the co-editor of *Measuring Justice: Primary Goods and*

*Capabilities* (Cambridge University Press, 2010) and *Amartya Sen's Work and Ideas: A Gender Perspective* (Routledge 2005).

**Dr Jeroen van der Sluijs (GeoSciences, Utrecht):**

Dr Jeroen van der Sluijs is a Senior researcher at the Department of Innovation, Environmental and Energy Sciences at the Copernicus Institute, Utrecht University. He is the coordinator of the research cluster 'Energy and Global Change: Dealing with Risks and Uncertainties'. He has been working on uncertainty in model based environmental risk assessment, along with the development of methodologies that facilitate a better management of uncertainty, quality, plurality and value judgements in risk assessment, integrated assessment, and sustainability assessment. Recently he has in commission of Rathenau Institute lead-autored a report to parliament "Room for Climate Debate", presenting an in depth analysis of uncertainty and controversy on climate change and proposed new ways to address climate change uncertainties in the science policy interface. He has over sixty scientific publications.

### **3 Assessment of the results and impact of the event on the future directions of the field**

Results and influences on the future direction of the fields: several innovative topics were discussed here with exemplary clarity.

More particularly some key results of the plenary lectures include:

- a better view of how policy should deal with the uncertainties involved in climate science (Dr. Jeroen van der Sluijs);
- a more correct diagnosis of geoengineering and of its normative status (Prof. Stephen Gardiner);
- possible population policies that could be defended as both just and feasible (Prof. Ingrid Robeyns);
- elements of an evaluation of European energy policy (Prof. Hille Haker);
- the importance of historical aspects of philosophical and religious views for sustainability (Prof. Marcus Düwell);
- an elaborate overview of the ecological preconditions of justice (Prof. Simon Caney).

More particularly some key results of the parallel lectures include:

- a better view of the rights of future generations as seen from a capability perspective;
- progress towards a better view of precautionary ways of dealing with uncertainty, also in its connection with (future) rights of future people;
- a clearer grasp of shortcomings and possibilities such as utilitarianism and economic approaches wedded to discounting;
- a survey of motivational hurdles facing individual and institutional agents in the face of sustainability challenges;
- field studies into sustainable ways of life and their relevance for policies geared towards a green future;
- a critical look at more concrete institutional arrangements such as carbon markets;
- a better grasp of the implications of sustainability of liberal and democratic views and ways of life.

The conference venue, with its compact set-up, offered an ideal setting for discussions among participants, for building networks and very fruitful exchange of ideas, which are being continued via e-mail and other media.

The quality of the speakers and many of the parallel sessions, the breadth of topics, the intense set-up of the conference, and the concentratedness of the conference venue all contributed to intense discussions, enthusiasm, and the development of contacts across fields, which are continuing beyond the conference.

Just to mention a few examples: I already received a few dozen e-mails on my own contribution in a parallel session. One participant solicited e-mail reactions concerning the question of how higher education might respond to the ethical challenges articulated at the conference, particularly with respect to shaping curricula; several contributions were sent around to all participants, and some presentations could be used in e-courses to be developed.

-There were some 54 junior researchers involved. Participants were from several dozen countries and included several leading researchers in the field, a former minister, and someone directly involved in European policy.

-The best contributions of the conference will be published in a journal, and there will also be proceedings, guaranteeing wider access to the conference's results, so as to take the results to a wider audience.

-Numerous researchers involved in the network and from network countries participated, and several topics central to the ENRI-Future network received in-depth discussion that will directly advance the work of the

network. This includes issues of risk and uncertainty and their incorporation in theories of justice and human rights; institutional and motivational challenges of sustainability; political institutions required by challenges of climate change and other sustainability concerns, and their impact on liberal-democratic political arrangements.

#### Appendix: **Conference programme**

##### **Thursday / Donnerstag 22 August 2013**

18:00 Dinner / Abendessen

19:15-20:45 **Welcome Address** and thematic introduction by /Begrüßung und thematische Einführung durch Prof. Göran Collste (Linköping University, President of Societas Ethica) and Prof. Marcus Düwell (Utrecht University, Organizer)

##### **Keynote Session I / Plenarvortrag I**

Dr. Jeroen van der Sluijs (GeoSciences, Utrecht University) *Scientific Scenarios for the Development of Climate Change*

##### **Friday / Freitag 23 August 2013**

##### 9:00-10:15 **Keynote Session II / Plenarvortrag II**

Professor Stephen M. Gardiner (University of Wahington, Seattle) *The Ethics of Climate Extortion*

10:45-11:45 Short Papers I-II / Kurzvorträge I-II parallel sessions / parallele Sitzungen

12:00-13:00 Short Papers III-IV / Kurzvorträge III-IV parallel sessions / parallele Sitzungen

13:00 Lunch / Mittagessen

14:15-15:15 Short Papers V-VI / Kurzvorträge V-VI parallel sessions / parallele Sitzungen

15:30-16:30 Short Papers VII-VIII / Kurzvorträge VII-VIII parallel sessions / parallele Sitzungen

##### 17:00-18:15 **Keynote Session III / Plenarvortrag III**

Professor Ingrid Robeyns (Erasmus University Rotterdam) *Sustainable Procreative Freedom*

18:30 Dinner / Abendessen

19:45-20:45 **Gastvortrag zur Geschichte der Societas Ethica** Prof. em. Dr. Karl-Wilhelm Dahm (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster) *with an english summary* by Dr. Lars Reuter (The Möller Foundation)

20:45-21:15 **Launching of De Ethica A Journal of Philosophical, Theological and Applied Ethics**

Prof. em. Brenda Almond (Editor in Chief, University of Hull) and Maren Behrens, Ph.D. (Associate Editor, Linköping University)

##### **Saturday / Sonnabend 24 August 2013**

9:00-10:15 **Panel Session / Forum** Prof. Hille Haker (Loyola University Chicago): *Energy Ethics*

Prof. Marcus Düwell (Utrecht University): *Rights to a Green Future*

10:45-11:45 Short Papers IX-X / Kurzvorträge IX-X parallel sessions / parallele Sitzungen

12:00-13:00 Short Papers XI-XII / Kurzvorträge XI-XII parallel sessions / parallele Sitzungen

13:00 Lunch / Mittagessen

14:15-16:00 General Assembly and concluding discussion /Mitgliederversammlung und Abschlussdiskussion

16:00 Excursion to Utrecht with celebration of Societas Ethica's 50th conference /Ausflug nach Utrecht mit feierlichem Abendessen anlässlich der 50. jährlichen Societas Ethica-Konferenz, *including / einschließlich: Young paper Award Ceremony / Verleihung des Nachwuchspreises*

##### **Sunday / Sonntag 25 August 2013**

9:00-10:15 **Keynote session IV / Plenarvortrag IV** Professor Simon Caney (University of Oxford)

*Tolstoy's Question: The Ecological Preconditions of Justice*

10:45-12:00 **Keynote session V / Plenarvortrag V** Professor Michael Northcott (University of Edinburgh) *Cosmopolitical Ethics in the Anthropocene*

12:00 Lunch / Mittagessen

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#### **Participants**

Brenda Almond University of Hull, UK	Christian-Albrechts- Universität zu Kiel Deutschland	Fondazione Bruno Kessler Trento, Italy	Lund University, Sweden
Maria Antonacio Bucknell University Lewisburg, USA	Ekaterina Batueva University of Economics Prague, Czech Republic	Gerhard Bos Utrecht University, The Netherlands	Sascha Braun Universität Mannheim, Deutschland
Markus Arnold Universität Luzern, Schweiz	Christoph Baumgartner Utrecht University, The Netherlands	Michel Bourban Université de Lausanne, Suisse	Susan Brown: University of Manchester, UK
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Christian Baatz	Alberto Bondolfi	Eric Brandstedt	Roger J. Busch Erding, Deutschland

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Simon Caney (keynote speaker) University of Oxford, UK	Ben-Willie K. Golo University of Ghana Accra, Ghana	Michael Lucas California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo, USA	Jann Reinhardt Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin Deutschland
Tim Christion Myers University of Oregon Eugene, USA	Karma Guindon Wilfrid Laurier University Waterloo, Canada	Natalia Luib Universität Mannheim, Deutschland	Maximilian Reisch Universität Mannheim, Deutschland
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Göran Collste Linköping University, Sweden	Michael Hackl Universität Wien, Österreich	Denis Malherbe France Business School (ESCEM) Tours, France	Lars Reuter The Møller Foundation Copenhagen, Denmark
Karl-Wilhelm Dahm Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Deutschland	Hille Haker Loyola University Chicago Chicago, USA	Joan McGregor Arizona State University Phoenix, USA	Ingrid Robeyns (keynote speaker) Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands
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Dascha Düring Utrecht University, The Netherlands	Heidi Jokinen Åbo Akademi University, Finland	Michael Northcott (keynote speaker) University of Edinburgh, UK	Alexander Smith Universität Mannheim, Deutschland
Marcus Düwell Utrecht University, The Netherlands	Jonathan Josefsson Linköping University, Sweden	Patrick Nullens Evangelische Theologische Faculteit Leuven, Belgium	H.W. Sneller Leiden University, The Netherlands
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