

Ethics and Global Environmental Policy

Cosmopolitan Conceptions of Climate
Change

Edited by

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Contents

<i>List of contributors</i>	vi
<i>Preface</i>	ix
1 Introduction: cosmopolitanism and climate change policy <i>Paul G. Harris</i>	1
2 Climate justice as globalized responsibility: mitigation, adaptation and avoiding harm to others <i>Steve Vanderheiden</i>	20
3 Climate change and the cosmopolitan responsibility of individuals: policy vanguards <i>Nigel Dower</i>	42
4 Individual responsibility and voluntary action on climate change: activating agency <i>Jennifer Kent</i>	66
5 Cosmopolitan solutions 'from below': climate change, international law and the capitalist challenge <i>Romain Felli</i>	89
6 Sharing the burdens of climate change: environmental justice and qualified cosmopolitanism <i>Michael W. Howard</i>	108
7 Cosmopolitanism and hegemony: the United States and climate change <i>Robert Paehlke</i>	128
8 Overcoming the planetary prisoners' dilemma: cosmopolitan ethos and pluralist cooperation <i>Philip S. Golub and Jean-Paul Maréchal</i>	150
9 Cosmopolitan diplomacy and the climate change regime: moving beyond international doctrine <i>Paul G. Harris</i>	175
<i>Index</i>	201

and *Climate Change* [Edinburgh University Press, 2010], which informs this one). From a cosmopolitan perspective, ethical obligations and responsibilities are not defined or delineated by national borders; human beings, rather than states, ought to be at the centre of moral calculations. This worldview points to climate-related policies and actions that are less 'international' and more 'global', thus encompassing actors other than just states, and specifically including individual human beings. A central aim of this book is to help establish some lessons for climate change policy that can come from conceiving of the problem from this perspective.

The idea for the book began as a panel on 'Cosmopolitan Diplomacy and the Climate Change Regime' at the 2009 general conference of the European Consortium for Political Research in Potsdam, Germany. Some of the participants in that panel have contributed to this volume, while others joined the project later. I am grateful to all of those who have been involved for sharing their thoughts and observations. Work in this book was substantially supported by a grant from the Research Grants Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China (General Research Fund Project No. HKIEd 340309). I wish to acknowledge gratefully the comments of anonymous reviewers, which have helped to strengthen the whole book and individual chapters. My thanks go to the kind and capable people at Edward Elgar for taking on this project and bringing it to readers. As always, I am especially grateful to K.K. Chan for a decade of daily support that makes the long process of completing each new book less arduous.

The potential value of cosmopolitanism for developing new policies to combat climate change is that it helps us break free of the myopic obsession with states and their governments, in the process highlighting the role of people (and other non-state actors) as causes of – and solutions to – the problem, not to mention highlighting the role of millions of people as its victims. One of the messages emanating from this book is that capable individuals everywhere have an ethical obligation to help in the fight to mitigate the causes and consequences of climate change. With this in mind, all of the editor's royalties from the sale of the book will be paid to Oxfam directly by the publisher. This is a small gesture toward partially fulfilling this obligation. It is also a recognition of a new reality: if all of us who are polluting the Earth's atmosphere and have the capability to change our ways do not do so, there will be a boundless need to help those most affected by the inevitable hardships and suffering that climate change will bring.

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1. Introduction: cosmopolitanism and climate change policy

Paul G. Harris

Climate change is the most profound environmental problem facing the world – and possibly the most important problem of any kind in the long term. The latest science of climate change shows that massive cuts in emissions of greenhouse gas emissions will be needed by mid-century to avert extreme, possibly catastrophic, harm to Earth's climate system. Yet, despite ongoing and sometimes intense diplomatic efforts over two decades, governments of the world have been unable to agree to anything near the kind of regulation of pollution that would be required to undertake these cuts.¹ This was amply demonstrated by the much-anticipated December 2009 international climate change conference in Copenhagen, which failed to reach any formal or binding agreement on steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or to deal with the impacts of global warming. The Copenhagen conference, and the subsequent conference of the parties in Cancun a year later, revealed what may be a fundamental flaw in the international management of climate change, namely underlying norms and ethics that give overriding importance to states and their national interests, rather than to the people and groups who ultimately cause and are most affected by climate change.

A major manifestation of this problem is recurring debate over the historical responsibility of developed states for climate pollution. While those countries surely deserve blame if we think only in terms of states, this focus on state responsibility fails to account for rising greenhouse gas emissions among affluent people in the historically less responsible countries of the developing world. Given this growing misfit between historical national responsibility and current emissions, the emphasis on states rather than people may have to be overcome if the world is to take the extraordinary steps necessary to combat climate change aggressively in coming decades.

One major step toward this objective may be to look at climate change from a cosmopolitan perspective. Cosmopolitanism points toward politically viable alternatives to the status quo regime that are just, practical and – most importantly – potentially more efficacious than existing responses

to climate change. Cosmopolitan conceptions of who is to blame for climate change, and whose rights are most in need of protecting in this regard, may usefully supplement the statist approach to the problem so far. At the very least, cosmopolitanism conceptions of climate change help us to identify fundamental problems with existing responses to this problem. Indeed, if taken seriously, cosmopolitanism forces a reevaluation of the causes and consequences of climate change while offering constructive critiques of the status quo.

This collection of essays undertakes this cosmopolitan reevaluation of the world's responses to climate change as part of a larger effort to understand how ethics can inform environmental governance. The contributors' arguments and analyses draw upon philosophy and ethics to inform the politics and policy of climate change.

FEATURES OF COSMOPOLITANISM

In contrast to the state-centric norms that have guided and indeed defined the international system for centuries, cosmopolitans envision an alternative way of ordering the world.² Cosmopolitans want to 'disclose the ethical, cultural, and legal basis of political order in a world where political communities and states matter, but not only and exclusively'.³ States matter greatly, to be sure. But this is more of a practical matter than an ethical one for cosmopolitans. Thomas Pogge sums up three core elements of cosmopolitanism this way:⁴

First, *individualism*: the ultimate units of concern are *human beings, or persons* – rather than, say, family lines, tribes, ethnic, cultural, or religious communities, nations, or states. The latter may be units of concern only indirectly, in virtue of their individual members or citizens. Second, *universality*: the status of ultimate unit of concern attaches to *every* living human being *equally* – not merely to some sub-set, such as men, aristocrats, Aryans, whites, or Muslims. Third, *generality*: this special status has global force. Persons are ultimate units of concern for *everyone* – not only for their compatriots, fellow religionists, or such like.

David Held has synthesized cosmopolitanism into a set of eight, universally shared, key principles: '(1) equal worth and dignity; (2) active agency; (3) personal responsibility and accountability; (4) consent; (5) collective decision-making about public matters through voting procedures; (6) inclusiveness and solidarity; (7) avoidance of serious harm; and (8) sustainability'.⁵ From these principles a 'cosmopolitan orientation' emerges: 'that each person is a subject of equal moral concern; that each person is capable of acting autonomously with respect to the range of choices before

them; and that, in deciding how to act or which institutions to create, claims of each person affected should be taken equally into account'.⁶ Importantly for climate change, the last two principles provide 'a framework for prioritizing urgent need and resource conservation. By distinguishing vital from non-vital needs, principle 7 creates an unambiguous starting point and guiding orientation for public decisions [and] clearly creates a moral framework for focusing public policy on those who are most vulnerable'.⁷ A 'prudential orientation' is set down by principle 8: 'to ensure that public policy is consistent with global ecological balances and that it does not destroy irreplaceable and non-substitutable resources'.⁸

Some cosmopolitans take a consequentialist perspective, such as Peter Singer's utilitarianism, while others take a deontological perspective, such as Simon Caney's global political theory premised on human rights.⁹ Charles Jones describes three 'species' of cosmopolitanism: utilitarianism, human rights and Kantian ethics.¹⁰ He defines cosmopolitanism as a moral standpoint that is 'impartial, universal, individualist, and egalitarian. The fundamental idea is that each person affected by an institutional arrangement should be given equal consideration. Individuals are the basic units of moral concern, and the interests of individuals should be taken into account by the adoption of an impartial standpoint for evaluation'.¹¹ The nature of cosmopolitanism might be best appreciated by pointing to what it rules out: 'it rules out the assigning of ultimate rather than derivative value to collective entities like nations or states, and it also rules out positions that attach no moral value to some people, or weights the value people have differently according to characteristics such as ethnicity, race, or nationality'.¹² Another way of looking at cosmopolitanism, particularly in practice, is that it 'does not privilege the interests of insiders over outsiders'.¹³ In a fundamental way, what is crucial about the cosmopolitan perspective is its 'refusal to regard existing political structures as the source of ultimate value'.¹⁴

Two versions of cosmopolitanism are routinely identified: an ethical/moral/normative version, which focuses on the underlying moral arguments regarding how people, states and other actors should justify their actions in the world, and an institutional/legal/practical version, which aims to translate ethics into institutions and policies. Pogge distinguishes between moral and legal cosmopolitanism. Moral cosmopolitanism points to the moral relations among people; 'we are required to respect one another's status as ultimate units of moral concern – a requirement that imposes limits on our conduct and, in particular, on our efforts to construct institutional schemes'.¹⁵ Legal cosmopolitanism goes a step further by advocating creating institutions of global order, possibly in the form of a 'universal republic' in which 'all persons have equivalent legal rights

and duties'.¹⁶ This latter position may seem to be a bit extreme; moral cosmopolitanism certainly does not require institutionalization of a universal republic (or 'world government'). One variant of institutional cosmopolitanism asserts that 'the world's political structure should be reshaped so that states and other political units are brought under the authority of supranational agencies of some kind'.¹⁷ Institutional cosmopolitans sometimes call for major, even radical, changes to global institutions, but moral cosmopolitans frequently do not see this as being necessary.

An alternative (more realistic) version of institutional cosmopolitanism 'postulates fundamental principles of justice for an assessment of institutionalized global ground rules [while also being] compatible with a system of dispersed political sovereignty that falls short of a world state'.¹⁸ As Caney points out, some moral cosmopolitans 'reject a world state. They think that cosmopolitan moral claims are compatible with, or even require, states or some alternative to global political institutions'.¹⁹ Thus it is entirely possible and appropriate to advocate institutions well short of world government that contribute to global order generally, and particularly global justice within specific issue areas. What is more, as Darrell Moellendorf reminds us, 'very few people who have thought about these matters [i.e., whether an egalitarian world order would contain multiple states or a world-state] have considered the latter a real possibility, and with good reason'²⁰ – not least the practicality of governing the world's many billions of people and the threat such a world state might pose to human rights. However, it is also clear 'that the establishment and maintenance of justice requires a significant re-conceptualization of the principle of state sovereignty [and] a coordinated international response'.²¹

Cosmopolitanism includes two additional features according to Brock and Brighouse: identity and responsibility.²² The former refers, for example, to a person who is influenced by a variety of cultures or perhaps one who identifies with broader humanity rather than to a particular group or nation. The latter 'guides the individual outwards from obvious, local, obligations, and prohibits those obligations from crowding out obligations to distant others . . . It highlights the obligations we have to those whom we do not know, and with whom we are not intimate, but whose lives touch ours sufficiently that what we do can affect them'.²³ According to Robin Attfield,

Cosmopolitan ethicists maintain that ethical responsibilities apply everywhere and to all moral agents capable of shouldering them, and not only to members of one or another tradition or community, and that factors which provide reasons for action for any agent, whether individual or corporate, provide reasons for like action for any other agent who is similarly placed, whatever their community may be or believe. They also deny limits such as community

boundaries to the scope of responsibilities; responsibilities (they hold) do not dwindle because of spatial or temporal distance, or in the absence of reasons transcending particular facts or identities.²⁴

One might also think of both weak and strong forms of cosmopolitanism, the former saying that some obligations obtain beyond the society or the state, while the latter says that any principles (of justice, for example) that apply within the state also apply worldwide. As Brock and Brighouse see it, 'everyone has to be at least a weak cosmopolitan now if they are to maintain a defensible view, that is to say, it is hard to see how one can reject a view that all societies have *some* global responsibilities'.²⁵

Pogge addresses critics of 'weak' cosmopolitanism – 'the anodyne view that all human beings are of equal worth', which almost everyone, except 'a few racists and other bigots', accepts – and 'strong' cosmopolitanism – 'the view that all human agents ought to treat all others equally and, in particular, have no more, or less, reason to help any one needy person than any other', which it might be argued is falsely expansive – by proposing an 'intermediate' view of cosmopolitanism based on *negative* duties.²⁶ From this viewpoint, the fact that someone is a fellow national citizen 'makes no difference to our most important negative duties'.²⁷ 'You do not have more moral reason not to murder a compatriot than you have not to murder a foreigner. And you do not moderate your condemnation of a rapist when you learn that his victim was not his compatriot'.²⁸ Intermediate cosmopolitanism 'asserts the fundamental negative duty of justice as one that every human being owes to every other'.²⁹ But just as duties of justice vary *within* communities – it is widely accepted that one can have a greater duty to family members than to the wider community – this does not mean that there are no duties whatsoever, in particular that there is no duty to avoid contributing to conditions that undermine the fundamental rights and needs of others within the community. Similarly, while we may favor compatriots in many ways, we ought not to support institutions that impose an unjust order on people living in other communities. According to Pogge, 'special relationships can *increase* what we owe our associates, but cannot *decrease* what we owe everyone else'.³⁰ The upshot is that, 'though we owe foreigners less than compatriots, we owe them something. We owe them negative duties, undiluted'.³¹

For cosmopolitans, 'the world is one domain in which there are some universal values and global responsibilities'.³² Cosmopolitan responsibility entails 'the recognition that since we live, in some sense, in one global community or society – whether or not most of us have much of a feeling for this – we do have duties to care in one way or another about what happens elsewhere in the world and to take action where appropriate'.³³ It is not

enough to identify with humanity to be a cosmopolitan: it is necessary to act (or be willing to act) accordingly. From this basis, it stands to reason that capable individuals are obliged to act even if they live in dissimilar communities (that is, rich or poor countries), and those who are more capable are more responsible to do so. James Garvey puts it this way: 'the better placed an individual is to do what is right, the greater the onus on him to do what is right.'³⁴

Cosmopolitans frequently justify their claim that justice ought to prevail globally using one or both of two arguments. One argument, sometimes building on John Rawls's domestic theory of justice, is that levels of international cooperation today are extensive enough to make international society sufficiently like domestic society to warrant applying justice principles that were previously the domain of domestic communities to world affairs.³⁵ Another argument, derived from the empirical realities of globalization and the interdependencies and cause-and-effect relationships it manifests, is that justice ought to prevail globally because people and communities, whether knowingly or not, intentionally or not, increasingly affect one another, sometimes in profound ways. Justice is demanded by this latter argument because globalization is in large part a process of redistribution of scarce resources away from those with the least to those with the most. David Weinstock describes a relatively new 'way of understanding the relationship between the global rich and the global poor[:] the fate of the global rich is not as causally independent of the plight of the global poor as had previously been thought. . . . According to this view, globalization makes it the case that our obligations toward the global poor are obligations of *justice* rather than of *charity*. . . .'³⁶ Climate change could be the most profound manifestation of this latter argument.

COSMOPOLITAN JUSTICE

Most cosmopolitans accept, and often advocate, duties of *global* justice for states and frequently by individuals. Global justice is based upon a cosmopolitan world ethic premised on the rights, duties and ethical importance – and moral pre-eminence – of persons. According to Dower, the wish for global justice is motivated by three claims: (1) 'obligations are substantial or significant, rather than minimal or merely "charity"'; (2) global obligations should be premised on 'institutional arrangements which specify quite clearly which bodies have which duties to deliver justice'; and (3) obligations have their foundation in 'the human rights of others which are either violated by the global economic system or fail to be realized because of it'.³⁷ For cosmopolitans, 'the world is a community

of people and not a set of countries: that is, it is a community in which all have a claim to justice, just as they themselves owe justice to others'.³⁸

Onora O'Neill proposes a practical approach to determining who has moral standing: 'Questions about standing can be posed as context-specific *practical* questions, rather than as demands for comprehensive theoretical demarcations.'³⁹ Answers are found in part in the assumption that people 'are already building into our action, habits, practices and institutions'.⁴⁰ This suggests a 'more or less cosmopolitan' approach to principles of justice in given contexts.⁴¹ O'Neill's practical approach offers a *relational* account of moral standing:

Conjoined with the commonplace facts of action-at-a-distance in our present social world, this relational view points us to a *contingently* more or less cosmopolitan account of the proper scope of moral concern in some contexts. We assume that others are agents and subjects as soon as we act, or are involved in practices, or adopt policies or establish institutions in which we rely on assumptions about other's capacities to act and to experience and suffer. Today we constantly assume that countless others who are strange and distant can produce and consume, trade and negotiate, . . . pollute and or protect the environment . . . Hence, *if* we owe justice (or other forms of moral concern) to all whose capacities to act, experience and suffer we take for granted in acting, we will owe it to strangers as well as to familiars, and to distant strangers as well as to those who are near at hand . . . Today only those few who genuinely live the hermit life can consistently view the scope of moral concern which they must acknowledge in acting as anything but broad, and in some contexts more or less cosmopolitan.⁴²

This is a view of justice that takes *obligation* as being essential; 'obligations provide the more coherent and more comprehensive starting point for thinking about . . . the requirements of justice' than do rights because it is hard to know who has harmed which distant others.⁴³

Andrew Dobson makes a case for cosmopolitan obligation arising from the causal impacts of globalization in its many manifestations, including global environmental change.⁴⁴ What is especially important about his argument is that he goes beyond cosmopolitan morality and sentiment, which are important but apparently not sufficient to push enough people to act. Dobson describes 'thick cosmopolitanism', in particular the source of obligation for cosmopolitanism, in an attempt to identify what will motivate people (and other actors) not only to accept cosmopolitanism but to act accordingly. While he seems to accept that we are all members of a common humanity, he is unhappy with leaving things there: 'Recognizing the similarity in others of a common humanity might be enough to undergird the principles of cosmopolitanism, to get us to "be" cosmopolitans (principles), but it doesn't seem to be enough to motivate us to "be" cosmopolitan (political action)'.⁴⁵ Common humanity is one basis

for cosmopolitanism, but it does not create the 'thick' ties between people that arise from causal responsibility. Dobson argues that the way to think about the 'motivational problem is in terms of nearness and distance ... to overcome the "tyranny of distance"'.⁴⁶ He invokes Linklater's suggestion that if we are causally responsible for harming other people, and the physical environment upon which they rely, we are far more likely to act as cosmopolitans should.⁴⁷ Relationships of causal responsibility 'trigger stronger senses of obligation than higher-level ethical appeals can do'.⁴⁸

To help us comprehend this connection between nearness, causality and motivation, Dobson describes a Good Samaritan whose actions to assist a suffering man move us because the Samaritan was not responsible for the man's injuries; the Good Samaritan acted purely out of beneficence. However, if the Samaritan were 'implicated in the man's suffering in one way or other, we would *expect* him to go to his aid and his act of succor would seem less remarkable'.⁴⁹ This illustrates the 'cosmopolitan nearness' that arises from causal responsibility.⁵⁰ While this might not be the whole story – we might have obligations to help others in critical need simply because we are *capable* of helping them – even if we do have obligations for other reasons they are amplified if we are indeed the cause of the harm in question. What is more, in keeping with cosmopolitan morality, the 'causal responsibility approach' that Dobson describes is universal: 'the obligation to do justice implicit in it is owed, in principle, to absolutely everyone without fear or favor'.⁵¹ It is also universal because we now live in a globalized world in which most of what we, the affluent people of the world, do involves relations of causal responsibility, therefore making them relations of justice. As Dobson puts it, 'the ties that bind are not, therefore, best conceived in terms of the thin skein of common humanity, but of chains of cause and effect that prompt obligations of justice rather than sympathy, pity, or beneficence'.⁵² O'Neill argues that 'in our world, action and inaction at a distance are possible. Huge numbers of distant strangers may be benefitted or harmed, even sustained or destroyed, by our action, and especially by our institutionally embodied action, or inaction – as we may be by theirs'.⁵³ Dobson's point is that in these kinds of relations of actual harm, justice 'is a more binding and less paternalistic source and form of obligation than charity'.⁵⁴

The cosmopolitan standpoint presents serious challenges to the prevailing climate change regime, but it also offers opportunities for new, possibly more effective prescriptions for making the regime more attuned to reality and thus for making it more effective. What more do cosmopolitans say about climate change? The next section scratches the surface of their arguments, setting the stage for further discussion in the chapters that follow.⁵⁵

CLIMATE CHANGE AND COSMOPOLITANISM

Lorraine Elliott asserts that environmental harms crossing borders 'extend the bounds of those with whom we are connected, against whom we might claim rights and to whom we owe obligations within the moral community'.⁵⁶ She describes this as a 'cosmopolitan morality of distance', which effectively creates 'a cosmopolitan community of duties as well as rights'.⁵⁷ Elliott argues that this obtains for two reasons: 'the lives of "others-beyond-borders" are shaped without their participation and consent [and] environmental harm deterritorialises (or at least transnationalises) the cosmopolitan community. In environmental terms, the bio-physical complexities of the planetary ecosystems inscribe it as a global commons of a public good, constituting humanity as an ecological community of fate'.⁵⁸ Consequently, Elliott believes that the cosmopolitan standpoint provides a better 'theoretical and ethical road map for dealing with global environmental injustice' than does international doctrine.⁵⁹ Atfield goes further, arguing that only cosmopolitanism can do 'justice to the objective importance of all agents heeding ethical reasons, insofar as they have scope for choice and control over their actions, and working towards a just and sustainable world society'.⁶⁰ He believes that criticisms of failed state responses to environmental problems will inevitably be based on cosmopolitanism because 'the selective ethics of nation states are liable to prioritize some territories, environments, and ecosystems over others. If this meant nothing but leaving the other environments alone, this might not be too pernicious. [However,] it often means not leaving alone the others but polluting or degrading them'.⁶¹ Derek Heater also critiques what he calls the 'traditional linear model of the individual having a political relationship with the world at large only via his state' because, at least if we are concerned about 'the integrity of all planetary life, the institution of the state is relegated to relative insignificance – if not, indeed, viewed as a harmful device'.⁶²

This points to the need for a theory of environmental justice that fully encompasses the causes and consequences of climate change. Such a theory almost certainly must be cosmopolitan, as Steve Vanderheiden argues:

Insofar as a justice community develops around issues on which peoples are interdependent and so must find defensible means of allocating scarce goods, global climate change presents a case in which the various arguments against cosmopolitan justice cease to apply. All depend on a stable climate for their well-being, all are potentially affected by the actions or policies of others, and none can fully opt out of the cooperative scheme, even if they eschew its necessary limits on action. Climate change mitigation therefore becomes an issue of cosmopolitan justice by its very nature as an essential public good. ...⁶³

Governments have agreed to some principles and practices of environmental justice that apply at the *interstate* level, including in the context of the climate change regime. Indeed, some of the related proposals have a cosmopolitan flavor. For example, the developing countries have called for the allocation of greenhouse gas emissions to be based on equal per capita allotments. This would in effect require the rich countries to pay poor ones for the use of the latter's allotments. While the climate change negotiations so far have arrived at bargains that fall short of codifying these equal per capita rights to the atmosphere, Frank Biermann believes that only such allotments 'have an inherent appeal due to their link to basic human rights of populations in both South and North' and will probably have 'the normative power to grant the climate governance system the institutional stability it needs in the decades and centuries to come', not least because only equal per capita rights can be democratically supported.⁶⁴ Peter Baer also argues that equal per capita emissions rights are the only ethical option, noting that this has the practical benefit of offering options for developing country emissions limits in the future.⁶⁵ But others have argued that 'political and economic reasons [mean that] such a proposal has no chance of being accepted by developed countries because it leads to unacceptable costs for them...'.⁶⁶ This skepticism is well justified based on the history of the climate change regime, even as these arguments show that cosmopolitan-like positions are being debated among diplomats already – although states are often the intended bearers of duties and frequently the proposed beneficiaries of associated rights.

The work of Simon Caney is particularly noteworthy for the way it looks at climate change from a cosmopolitan standpoint, in particular showing how and why climate change is unjust because it threatens human rights. As Caney states, 'the current consumption of fossil fuels is unjust because it generates outcomes in which people's fundamental interests are unprotected and, as such, undermines certain key rights... This is unjust whether those whose interests are unprotected are fellow citizens or foreigners and whether they are currently alive or are as yet not alive.'⁶⁷ His argument proceeds this way: (1) persons have a right to something if it is 'weighty enough to generate duties on others'; (2) climate change jeopardizes 'fundamental interests' (for example, not suffering from drought, crop failure, heatstroke, infectious diseases, flooding, enforced relocation and 'rapid, unpredictable and dramatic changes to their natural, social and economic world'⁶⁸); (3) the interests jeopardized are of sufficient weight to generate obligations on other persons; thus (4) 'persons have a right not to suffer from the ill-effects associated with global climate change'.⁶⁹ One advantage of Caney's argument is that it does not turn on the question of who is causing climate change.

But the question still remains: who ought to bear the burdens of addressing the problem? Caney answers that all persons 'are under the duty not to emit greenhouse gases in excess of their quota' and persons 'who exceed their quota (and/or have exceeded it since 1990) have a duty to compensate others (through mitigation or adaptation)'.⁷⁰ He concludes that 'the most advantaged have a duty either to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in proportion to the harm resulting from [mitigation] or to address the ill-effects of climate change resulting from [adaptation] (an ability to pay principle)', with the added proviso that 'the most advantaged have a duty to construct institutions that discourage future non-compliance'.⁷¹

Michael Mason argues that there is environmental responsibility across borders because those who produce significant harm, regardless of whether they are states, are morally obliged to consider those affected by the harm, regardless of whether those harmed are co-nationals.⁷² What he argues for requires 'an appreciation of expressions of well-being not mediated by states'.⁷³ Jamieson has pointed out that the notion that governments have duties only to one another is problematic for environmental protection.⁷⁴ Given the nature of environmental problems and the environmental interests and actions of different individuals and organizations, 'rather than thinking about the problem of the global environment as one that involves duties of justice that obtain between states, we should instead think of it as one that involves actions and responsibilities among individuals and institutions who are related in a variety of different ways'.⁷⁵ Consequently, the common notion of international environmental justice – obligations of states to aid one another in this context – ought to:

be supplemented by a more inclusive ecological picture of duties and obligations – one that sees people all over the world in their roles as producers, consumers, knowledge-users, and so on, connected to each other in complex webs of relationships that are generally not mediated by governments. This picture of the moral world better represents the reality of our time in which people are no longer insulated from each other by space and time. Patterns of international trade, technology, and economic development have bound us into a single community, and our moral thinking needs to change to reflect these new realities.⁷⁶

COSMOPOLITAN CONCEPTIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

What comes from these views is a need to interrogate the preoccupation with governments and states, and potentially to focus much more on the needs, obligations and actions of individuals if we are to find alternatives to the weak international climate change regime. Contributors to this

book start from this need by exploring new ways for the world to respond to the crisis of climate change. To be sure, the contributors to this volume sometimes differ in their conceptions of cosmopolitanism, in keeping with the thinkers cited above. Nevertheless, they share Pogge's fundamental concepts – individualism, universality and generality – as starting points for conceptualizing climate change in a new way, and they agree that looking at climate change from a broadly cosmopolitan perspective can shed light on alternatives to the largely failed status quo. We begin with chapters focusing on what cosmopolitanism tells us about individual responsibilities for climate change before moving to discussions of justice among states and how cosmopolitanism might inform diplomacy and policies related to climate change.

In Chapter 2 Steve Vanderheiden argues that justice requires adequate action on climate change mitigation *and* adaptation. This raises the theoretical question of how national inadequacy in climate change policies affects the ongoing assignment of related burdens, something that is of tremendous policy relevance in ensuring that the normative objectives of global climate policy are achieved. Vanderheiden believes that the normative concept of responsibility offers a value basis for linking mitigation and adaptation efforts under a single overarching conception of justice, thereby providing a coherent account of climate justice. His view of climate justice links it to an account of responsibility, which can be stated briefly as demanding that persons and peoples voluntarily take responsibility for the climate change that they culpably cause, or be held responsible for it by others. If this can be done for all persons and peoples that affect or are affected by climate change, climate justice can be usefully understood as an effort at ensuring globalized responsibility. Being responsible in this sense requires that persons and peoples avoid harming others through the environmental externality of climate change, whether by paying the relevant mitigation costs needed to avoid causing climate change or by paying the adaptation costs need to avoid this resulting in human harm. Insofar as persons and peoples fail to do their share in mitigating or controlling this global environmental problem, they can be held responsible by others through assessments of liability to pay compensation.

In Chapter 3 Nigel Dower examines climate change from the perspective of selected cosmopolitan theories. From these theories he derives the cosmopolitan responsibility of individuals. As he points out, even if cosmopolitanism can be translated into practical climate policies, individuals will have to take some responsibility for bringing about the needed changes. Put another way, cosmopolitan responses to climate change need to occur at the level of institutions, including what Dower calls 'cosmopolitical changes' *and* at the level of 'active global citizenship engagement'.

In examining the latter, Dower focuses on three questions: if effective international cooperation to address climate change is to be realized, how important is it to allow for a variety of pragmatic principles, such as precaution, 'contraction and convergence' and 'polluter pays', and how significant are ethical principles that different individuals and groups can accept? What is the nature and extent of the obligations of individuals with respect to climate change, particularly those whose lifestyles are carbon-intensive, here and now – prior to any changes in laws, regulations, economic incentives or social expectations? And what is the relevance of these individual obligations for the likelihood and legitimacy of government policies for addressing climate change?

In Chapter 4 Jennifer Kent looks at individual responsibility and voluntary action on climate change. Consistent with Dower's argument, Kent believes that individuals and households will need to contribute to efforts to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions if international targets are to be achieved. However, she believes that the role of individual responsibility as a component of government policies, as well as of discourse around climate change, is under-theorized. Consequently, the mechanisms for ascertaining what individuals should do, and how local actions link to those at the global level, are poorly understood. She points out that responsibility for mitigating climate change has generally been applied through determining how greenhouse gas cuts can be distributed fairly among states. Much less emphasis has been placed on how these contributions will be distributed between states and their citizens, least of all within an ethical framework that establishes rights to, and responsibilities for, the global atmospheric commons. With this in mind, Kent's chapter considers individual responsibility for climate change mitigation as it is expressed through forms of voluntary action, and she considers how perceptions of agency may influence change at other levels. She shows that the adoption of a cosmopolitan ethic within the global climate regime is currently hampered by limits on individual agency.

Looking at the development of the international legal regime on climate change from the perspective of the capitalist relations of production, in Chapter 5 Romain Felli argues that developments in the regime are flawed due to three forms of 'fetishism': distribution, global governance and the state. Because of these so-called fetishisms, a truly cosmopolitan solution to climate change can come only 'from below' – that is, from movements beyond states – thereby contesting the fundamental logic of the climate change regime and capitalist relations of production that have contributed to causing climate change. While Felli acknowledges that cosmopolitanism tends to put human interests before those of the states, he believes that a simple opposition between states and individuals can be misleading. He

argues that the opposition between human interests and those of the state in this context needs to be perceived in terms of the capitalist relations of production that suppose two separate spheres, namely economics and politics. Felli's chapter describes how this separation between economics and politics is played out at the international level where the existence of a world market is 'paralleled with the generalization of political sovereignties' in the form of a system of formally equal and autonomous states. International negotiations on climate change, and resulting agreements among states, are thus expressions of narrow national interests. This 'fetishist understanding of the international realm' is in turn an expression of capitalist relations of productions. Therefore, according to Felli, there is a need to go beyond the appearance of 'states interests' so as to expose the 'mediations that produce this fetishist understanding'. Felli looks at this problem, in the process answering the questions of why state interests appear to be opposed to human interests in the context of climate change, and what this tells us about the role of cosmopolitanism in addressing climate change.

Chapter 6, by Michael W. Howard, argues for 'qualified cosmopolitanism' to address climate change. Howard examines several proposals for principles that he believes should govern the sharing of the burdens of climate change. One idea he explores is that polluters should pay for the costs of climate change; indeed, he describes three versions of the polluter-pays principle. But, as he points out, this principle by itself is inadequate because it does not distinguish between poor polluters and rich polluters. He points out that burdens of climate change will fall heavily on the global poor, in at least two ways. First, the impacts of climate change will hit places inhabited by poor people who lack resources needed to adapt. Second, mitigating global warming requires reductions in carbon dioxide just as developing countries need to expand their energy to support development. According to Howard, justice obliges the world's wealthy countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at a rate that permits development in poor countries, and to assist these countries in meeting necessary greenhouse gas reductions of their own. He argues that the 'polluter pays' principle should be qualified by an 'ability to pay' principle. He makes a distinction between cosmopolitan (or global) justice and international justice, proposing something much more modest than unqualified cosmopolitan egalitarianism but more robust than the human rights minimum that non-cosmopolitans tend to favor. His position is cosmopolitan insofar as he takes persons, rather than states, to be the relevant *objects* of moral concern, but in focusing on principles that should govern the sharing of the burdens of climate change he also considers statist structures.

In Chapter 7, Robert Paehlke looks at cosmopolitanism and climate change in the context of the United States. Until recently the United States government has been unwilling to acknowledge much responsibility for climate change. Even today, with Barrack Obama in the White House, there is no assurance that the United States will act robustly to address the problem. Indeed, as Chapter 7 shows, many political leaders and citizens of the United States continue to oppose action on this issue. To understand this reluctance to act on US responsibilities, Paehlke examines the domestic politics of climate change. He points out that in the 1990s the US Senate expressly rejected the principle of common but differentiated responsibility among states for climate change because it placed a greater burden of immediate action on the developed countries – especially the United States. Given this history, it is not surprising that the Kyoto Protocol to the climate change convention has not been ratified by the United States, or that President Obama felt that he must proceed with great caution at the December 2009 Copenhagen conference of the parties. The question that Paehlke addresses is whether this extreme caution regarding climate change on the part of the United States can be reversed. In particular, he asks whether there is any prospect of a large number of Americans adopting a more cosmopolitan perspective, thereby recognizing the special obligations of those in wealthy nations, including the United States, regarding the global risks associated with climate change.

In Chapter 8 Philip S. Golub and Jean-Paul Maréchal determine that overcoming the 'planetary prisoner's dilemma' of climate change requires a cosmopolitan response. Golub and Maréchal's aim is to contribute to the theoretical debate by focusing on the issue of distributional justice among states and social classes. States have varying capabilities and different historical responsibilities in the context of climate change, a reality that derives from their historical role in the global political economy. As Golub and Maréchal point out, this issue featured prominently in the failure of the December 2009 Copenhagen conference to establish the foundations for a much stronger global climate change regime. At the same time, however, the rise of a large class of consumers in emerging economies requires a serious appraisal of the role of social classes in climate change. The purpose of new theorizing on this issue should be to help find ways to overcome the contradiction between global human needs and the present reality of the segmentation of the international system into discreet national units. The question for Golub and Maréchal is how trust-building mechanisms can be developed for effective international cooperation. Focusing on the roles of American and Chinese greenhouse gas emissions, their chapter examines the intellectual and normative challenge to imagining new forms of 'ordered pluralist cooperation' leading

to convergence around common agendas that are in the overall human interest. Cosmopolitanism informs their suggestions for how to respond to this challenge.

In Chapter 9 Paul Harris proposes a way forward for the international climate change regime that acknowledges the responsibilities and duties of developed states while also explicitly acknowledging and acting upon the responsibilities of all affluent people, regardless of nationality. His aim is to explore the role of justice in the world's responses to climate change, and in particular to describe an alternative strategy for tackling climate change that is more principled and practical than the prevailing approach, and which may be much more politically acceptable to governments and citizens than are existing responses to the problem. This alternative strategy is premised on cosmopolitanism. A cosmopolitan ethic, and its practical implementation in the form of global justice, offers both governments and people a path to sustainability and successful mitigation of the adverse impacts of climate change. Harris's argument in favor of a more cosmopolitan approach to dealing with climate change is not meant to be an idealistic exercise or an act of imploring the world to accept that all people will quickly become good global citizens or that states can be abandoned in favor of cosmopolitan action alone. Rather, his argument is an attempt to show that the most practical and politically viable approach to climate change is in fact one that actualizes cosmopolitan ethics. Harris believes that, by placing persons, including their rights, needs and duties, at the centre of climate diplomacy and discourse, more just, effective and politically viable policies are more likely to be realized.

CONCLUSION

The world's responses to climate change may benefit greatly from taking a more cosmopolitan perspective because it is a global problem with global causes and consequences. As Held puts it, 'cosmopolitanism constitutes the political basis and political philosophy of living in a global age'.⁷⁷ The idea that states can continue to control what happens within their borders is no longer valid because 'some of the most fundamental forces and processes that determine the nature of life chances within and across political communities are now beyond the reach of individual nation-states'.⁷⁸ Climate change is one contemporary phenomenon that creates 'overlapping communities of fate' requiring new cosmopolitan institutions.⁷⁹ Where cosmopolitan justice is especially important is in locating obligation – to stop harming the environment on which others depend and

to take steps to aid those who suffer from harm to the environment – on the shoulders not only of governments but also of capable individuals. As Attfield points out, 'the global nature of many environmental problems calls for a global, cosmopolitan ethic, and for its recognition on the part of agents who thereby accept the role of *global citizens* and membership of an embryonic global community'.⁸⁰ Cosmopolitan justice, and the associated obligations, might therefore at minimum supplement the traditional statist view of climate governance, although it should not dilute the common but differentiated responsibilities of states. This has significant implications for reshaping climate change policies and the climate regime more generally – in line with cosmopolitan and environmentally friendly objectives – without ignoring the reality of continuing state dominance of related institutions and policy responses.

NOTES

1. See, for example, Kevin Anderson and Alice Bows, 'Beyond "dangerous" climate change: emission scenarios for a new world', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A* 369 (13 January 2011): 20–44.
2. Here I am largely recounting the summary of cosmopolitanism in Paul G. Harris, *World Ethics and Climate Change: From International to Global Justice* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).
3. David Held, 'Principles of cosmopolitan order', in Gillian Brock and Harry Brighouse (eds) *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 10.
4. Thomas W. Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Polity, 2008), p. 175.
5. Held, p. 12.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.
9. Peter Singer, 'Famine, affluence and morality', in William Aiken and Hugh LaFollette (eds) *World Hunger and Morality* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996); Simon Caney, 'Cosmopolitan justice, responsibility, and global climate change', *Londen Journal of International Law* 13 (2005): 747–75.
10. Charles Jones, *Global Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 15.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
12. Gillian Brock and Darrel Moellendorf, 'Introduction', *Journal of Ethics* 9 (2005): 2.
13. Andrew Linklater, 'Citizenship, humanity and cosmopolitan harm conventions', *International Political Science Review* 22 (3) (2001): 264.
14. Chris Brown, *International Relations Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 24.
15. Pogge, p. 175.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Charles Beitz, 'International liberalism and distributive justice: a survey of recent thought', *World Politics* 51 (2) (1999): 287.
18. Rainer Forst, 'Towards a critical theory of transnational justice', *Metaphilosophy* 32: (1/2) (2001): 164.
19. Simon Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 5.

20. Darrell Moellendorf, *Cosmopolitan Justice* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002), p. 172.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Gillian Brock and Harry Brighouse, 'Introduction', in Gillian Brock and Harry Brighouse (eds) *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 2.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
24. Robin Attfield, *Environmental Ethics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), p. 162.
25. Brock and Brighouse, p. 3.
26. Thomas Pogge, 'Cosmopolitanism: A defense', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 5 (3) (October 2002): 86.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 91.
32. Nigel Dower, *World Ethics*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p. 28.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
34. James Garvey, *The Ethics of Climate Change* (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 82.
35. Charles Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979). While Rawls does not say so, several scholars, notably Brian Barry, Charles Beitz and Thomas Pogge, have argued that Rawls' premises lead to the conclusion that resources and wealth ought to be redistributed to the world's least well-off people. See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971) and *The Law of Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).
36. Daniel Weinstock, 'Introduction', in Daniel Weinstock (ed.) *Global Justice, Global Institutions* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007), p. ix.
37. Dower, p. 92.
38. Wolfgang Sachs and Tilman Santarius, *Fair Future* (London: Zed, 2007), p. 125.
39. Onora O'Neill, *Bounds of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 191.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 192.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 195-6.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
44. Andrew Dobson, 'Thick cosmopolitanism', *Political Studies* 54 (2006): 165-84.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
47. Andrew Linklater, 'Cosmopolitanism', in Andrew Dobson and Robyn Eckersley (eds) *Political Theory and the Ecological Challenge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
48. Dobson, p. 182.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*, pp. 172-3.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 173.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
53. O'Neill, p. 187.
54. Andrew Dobson, 'Globalization, cosmopolitanism and the environment', *International Relations* 19 (3) (2005): 270.
55. I describe cosmopolitan (or cosmopolitan-like) arguments, but not all of these scholars may necessarily call themselves cosmopolitans.
56. Lorraine Elliott, 'Cosmopolitan environmental harm conventions', *Global Society* 20 (3) (2006): 350.

57. *Ibid.*
58. *Ibid.*, p. 351.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 363.
60. Attfield advocates a consequentialist variant of cosmopolitanism based on needs. See Robin Attfield, *The Ethics of the Global Environment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), p. 205.
61. Robin Attfield, 'Environmental values, nationalism, global citizenship and the common heritage of humanity', in Jouni Paavola and Ian Lowe (eds) *Environmental Values in a Globalising World* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 41.
62. Derek Heater, *World Citizenship and Government* (London: Macmillan, 1996), p. 180.
63. Steve Vanderheiden, *Atmospheric Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 104.
64. Frank Biermann, 'Between the United States and the South', *Global Governance Working Paper No. 17* (Amsterdam: Global Governance Project, 2005), p. 20.
65. Peter Baer, 'Equity, greenhouse gas emissions, and global common resources', in Stephen H. Schneider, Armin Rosencranz, and John O. Niles (eds) *Climate Change Policy* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2002).
66. Jean-Charles Hourcade and Michael Grubb, 'Economic dimensions of the Kyoto Protocol', in Joyeeta Gupta and Michael Grubb (eds) *Climate Change and European Leadership* (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000), p. 199.
67. Simon Caney, 'Cosmopolitan justice, rights and global climate change', *Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence* 19 (2) (2006): 255.
68. Caney, 'Cosmopolitan justice, responsibility, and global climate change', p. 768.
69. *Ibid.*
70. *Ibid.* Caney points out that knowledge of climate change has been sufficient since roughly 1990 to neutralize arguments of ignorance about its causes and severity.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 769.
72. Michael Mason, *The New Accountability* (London: Earthscan, 2005), p. x.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
74. Dale Jamieson, *Morality's Progress* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).
75. *Ibid.*, p. 306.
76. *Ibid.*, pp. 306-7.
77. David Held, 'Principles of cosmopolitan order', in Brock and Brighouse, p. 27.
78. David Held, 'Regulating globalization?: The reinvention of politics', *International Sociology* 15 (2000): 399.
79. Vanderheiden, p. 89.
80. Attfield, *Environmental Ethics*, p. 182.