
Climate change and distribution - Basics of eco-socialism

Josef Baum*¹

¹University of Vienna – Universitätsring 1 11010, Vienna, Autriche

Résumé

Concrete distribution issues are underexposed in the climate discourse.- When lower income groups are relatively more disadvantaged by different socioeconomic and socio-ecological inequalities, the burden for these groups will even increase when climate change continues. In a reverse conclusion overall impacts of climate policy are basically pro-poor, and can be augmented by specific (tax) structures. Anyway: Justice and equality are preconditions for effective environmental and climate policy.

We see a special complexity by linking **4 basic distribution dimensions**:

1. Social-economic dimension ("classical" income distribution)
2. Socio-ecological dimension
3. Spatial dimension: especially place of residence and workplace
4. Temporal or intergenerational dimension

Ad 2: NINE LEVELS OF THE SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL DISTRIBUTION DIMENSION

In the socio-ecological dimension **nine levels** are to be distinguished, whereby the current distribution asymmetry ("Pro-rich" or "Pro-poor") and the relation to space and time will be indicated:

1. (Real) access and use of "nature services" - eg green space during heat waves
2. Imposition by environmental degradation

Impact over 3 sub-levels

- a. exposition
- b. Sensitivity (alternatives!)
- c. Actual effects

3. Risk and uncertainty by future environmental pollution

*Intervenant

For example, floods, landslides, storms, heat stress, accident hazards

4. Causing environmental degradation - Current and historical.

5. Costs bearing -burden sharing

Direct and indirect. Overlapping possibilities, incidence of environmental measures. E.g. CO2 tax

6. Influence possibilities of environmental policy measures. Real participation

7. Positive impact of environmental policies, benefits from positive changes in the environmental situation

8. Co-benefits: positive impacts of indirect impacts of environmental policies

z. B. Air quality improvement

9. Adaptation effects to positive changes in the environmental situation – e.g. due to the rise in land prices

-For empirical purposes here strata are used and not classes - but there as a correlation to classes (and the accumulation process)

Now from nine levels of socio-ecological distribution listed here, **seven from literature tend to be asymmetrically structured in favor of upper income strata, or have pro-rich-effects** in the distributional analysis. Only levels 6 and 7 - the "positive impact of environmental policies" and the "impact of co-benefits" - show a reverse trend.

Without any countermeasures, climate change will significantly increase pro-rich effects at seven levels. Conversely, climate protection measures will basically increase the pro-poor effects over time.

Because the solution of the climate question can ultimately only be global, the connection of national and global distribution issues, which has hardly been discussed so far, is important. In any case, the significant reduction of inequality at the national level is a prerequisite for a real view of the large global disparities and the readiness to implement measures in this regard.

The anchoring of the co-benefits of climate policy measures (better air, better public transport, more green space in cities, less road noise and much more) in public opinion as a "double dividend" is important - Co-benefits can represent a significant reduction of inequality in socioecological terms.

Because climate change is a complex process, integrated solutions are necessary. Single measures can even increase blockages.

Mots-Clés: Climate change, distribution, eco, socialism