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# Climate neocolonialism: the carbon metric under the intergenerational justice

*Neocolonialismo climático: a métrica do carbono sob o olhar da justiça intergeracional*

*God is the one who remembers  
those whom History has forgotten.*

BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS

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**ABSTRACT:** This article, prepared according to the deductive method, seeks to identify the phenomenon of climate change protection within the scope of national constitutions, treaties, and transnational jurisprudence, concerning carbon metrics and their impacts on the economy and historicity of nations, as the colony-metropolis binomial. The objective is to reveal the justice or not of the current transnational impositions of carbon metrics. It is intended to identify the characteristics of the intergenerational climate law norm that imposes sanctions and rewards according to the carbon economy of each member state, as well as the analysis of intergenerational historical justice since future generations will suffer the impact of the actions of past generations. It also seeks to analyze how transactions and carbon metrics between exporting and importing countries of agricultural, extractive, and mineral products are processed in the new context of the Paris Agreement under the historical perspective of colony-metropolis relations, as well as what the rewards are. Historical and restorative measures would be necessary to neutralize this new climate colonialism so that progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions does not become a trap for domination by developed and historically polluting states.



**KEYWORDS:** Climatic colonialism. Carbon Metric. Intergenerational climate environmental standard. Paris Agreement. Intergenerational justice.

**RESUMO:** O presente artigo, elaborado de acordo com o método dedutivo, busca identificar o fenômeno da proteção às mudanças climáticas nos âmbitos das constituições nacionais, tratados e jurisprudência transnacionais, com relação à métrica de carbono e a seus impactos na economia e historicidade das nações, conforme o binômio colônia- metrópole. Objetiva-se revelar a justiça ou não das presentes imposições transnacionais das métricas de carbono. Pretende-se identificar as características da norma de direito intergeracional climático que impõe sanções e prêmios conforme a economia de carbono de cada Estado membro, bem como a análise da justiça histórica intergeracional, uma vez que gerações futuras sofrerão o impacto das ações de gerações passadas. Busca-se, também, analisar como se processam as transações e métricas de carbono entre países exportadores e importadores de produtos agrícolas, extrativistas e minerais no novo contexto do Pacto de Paris sob o olhar histórico das relações colônia-metrópole, bem como quais as recompensas históricas e restaurativas seriam necessárias para neutralizar este novo colonialismo climático a fim que o progresso na redução de emissão de gases de efeito estufa não se torne mais uma armadilha de dominação por estados desenvolvidos e historicamente poluidores.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Colonialismo climático. Métrica do carbono. Norma ambiental intergeracional climática. Acordo de Paris. Justiça intergeracional.

## 1. THE CARBON METRIC UNDER THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE

When Friar Bartolomeu de Las Casas accompanies the Spanish fleet and is faced with the terrible massacre that colonization and the search for silver and gold impose on the indigenous populations of the newly discovered America, he rises up and creates one of the first theorizations about the principles of human rights and their universal character, being a precursor of Enlightenment ideas that, only two centuries later, they would result in formal declarations of human rights in the American and French Revolutions (GALMÉS, 1991). Las Casas was before conquerors who came not for the cultivation of the land or the beginning of a new civilization, but for its pure extraction and plunder. “The project was not to cultivate the land, but to exploit it to exhaustion. The result of

private investments, the enterprise of discovery was made by men of arms, whose motivation was renown, prestige and, of course, wealth.” (PEREIRA, 2022). Colonialism, then, was a practice whereby a state with power could establish control and dependence on another, weaker territory, establishing colonies, and maintaining them.

A very significant element of colonialism underlined by researchers Tzevetan Todorov (1983) and Enrique Dussel (1993) is the cover-up of the other in this colonialist process. Your deletion. It occurs in life, in culture and especially by the catechizing religious element of imposition of the dominant religion in the metropolis. The indigenous people, and later the blacks, are enslaved and despised because of their color, race, and social and historical institutions. Not only do taxes and restrictions serve for the servitude of indigenous peoples and blacks, but also, spiritually, docility is sought by religious imposition. Las Casas, then, rises up and innovates by attributing free will and the notion of non-imposition of Christian dogma by assigning, to all, the minimum rights of life and self-management of oneself and one's patrimony.

The colonialism that witnessed Las Casas is deeply related to the climate and natural resources from its inception. Brazil is named after a tree that was deforested almost to extinction to supply the metropolis with the red paint that was extracted from it. Latin America, more broadly, has suffered the plundering done by the colonizers with regard to both precious metals and raw materials since their “discovery.” Currently, especially in the Amazon region of the continent, it provides the pristine forest and the last forests, elements, as we know, extremely important in the current moment of climate change that is observed on the planet.

Thus, this erasure made by the colonizer is still present today in new mechanisms also in the environmental field. Researchers and politicians from the developed and industrialized world have used climate variability around the world to justify their neocolonial practices, which, under the veil of development and energy transition projects,

require Western countries and companies to continue to pollute as long as the Paris Agreement as agreed transnationally is complied with. More recently, given the many applications of the carbon metric made by developed countries, there is no way to ignore the mechanisms of global power dating back to the colonial era.

According to Petra Schönhöfer (2019), a German journalist specialized in climate change, European governments and corporations have not only damaged and destroyed the environment on the continent and exploited local marginalized communities, but have been involved in equal or worse situations on all other continents. For the journalist, the natural world in Africa, Asia and Latin America was destroyed through the capitalist systems deployed by the Global North, which normalized, expanded and strengthened abusive extraction through overproduction and excessive consumption. According to the author, the European Green Deal does not describe how it will reconcile and repair the loss and damage that EU countries have caused to ecosystems and communities outside Europe. Nor does it recognize how these harms force people from the Global South to migrate to the shores of Europe, where they experience setbacks, and they should offer at least a solution:

In August 2019, the world turned to Brazil in horror: the Amazon rainforest so crucial to Earth's climate system and essential to global biodiversity was on fire. The clouds of smoke extended to Brazil's financial center of São Paulo, where the sky darkened. Scientists, politicians, and celebrities around the world felt compelled to respond in some way. But somehow, the fact that the actions of industrialized countries and the multinationals they support are the main driver behind the ecological and humanitarian disasters occurring in the Amazon and many other parts of the world has been largely ignored. However, the continued exploitation of raw materials thanks to restrictive trade agreements between the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the European Union (EU) is a reality in many former colonies.

According to the German Environment Agency, in 2018 Germany consumed about 1.3 billion tons of fossil fuels, minerals, metal ores and biomass used in areas such as mechanical engineering, cars and electronic devices. These include metals such as iron, copper, cobalt, nickel, lithium, platinum, tungsten, indium, gallium, and rare earths. Consumption in Germany is 10% above the European average and a staggering 100% above the global average. Demand is growing as an equally resource-intensive lifestyle spreads around the world. The consequences are catastrophic: the United Nations estimates that, worldwide, more than 40 percent of all conflicts in the past 60 years have been associated with the extraction and trade of raw materials. Moreover, while many countries in the Global South, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, are becoming increasingly dependent on the export of unprocessed raw materials, most of the added value remains in the countries of the North. These figures show how Germany – along with the other industrialized nations – lives at the ecological expense of other countries, an idea widely known as “climate colonialism.” “This is based on a development model that has made industrialized countries rich through the exploitation of less developed nations. Rich countries are outsourcing burdens to countries with smaller footprints,” explains molecular biologist and philosopher Christoph Rehmman-Sutter in his essay *Stoppt den Klima-Kolonialismus* (Stop Climate Colonialism). Colonialism, he argues, is associated with an imperial structure of domination in which nations built settlements in remote areas to bring goods and products back home. This definition can also be applied to climate issues, Rehmman-Sutter adds, if we take into account the one-sided distribution of global economic power. “When I talk about climate colonialism, I do so with the prediction that this form of spatial and temporal relocation of productive areas makes it more difficult to recognize the imperial structures that the countries involved employ to dominate the inhabitants of other countries. There are, of course, still power structures between the rich industrialized countries and the territories previously colonized by them, especially at the economic level.” (SCHÖNHÖFER, 2019).

Petra Schönhöfer (2019) recalls, in the same publication, the teachings of sociologist Stephan Lessnich in his book *Living Well at Others' Expense: The Hidden Costs of Western Prosperity*, in which he discusses how “emerging nations are providing the raw materials that industrialized countries depend on for their growth, while acting as their dumps,” citing the examples of the destructive cultivation of soy in Argentina and the deforestation of Thailand’s mangrove forests. Thus, with regard to the Green Deal or European *Green Deal*, “although the cause ‘decarbonization’ is noble, it does not erase centuries of violent extractivism.”

In this way, according to the author, there is a continued colonialism disguised in the discourse of climate change. After all, it is a great neo-colonialist fallacy to think that by similarly taxing economies with distinct colonialist histories, one is seeking global climate justice.

More than the question “what is sustainable?”, we must ask “for whom is this sustainable?”. Moreover, historically, the big question is, “Is this fair from a climate and intergenerational point of view?” This colonial historical influence of considering in the climate pacts the needs of the metropolises – major causes of climate change due to the Industrial Revolution – to the detriment of the weight that these same changes (forming the welfare capital of the Northern Hemisphere) have for the developing peoples, mainly black and indigenous populations, is what we call Climate Neocolonialism.

## **2. HISTORICAL JUSTICE TO COLONIZED AND EXPROPRIATED PEOPLES AS A METRIC FOR THE ENERGY TRANSITION**

Climate justice is intergenerational justice by nature and, as such, has its sights set on more generations than those of simple political pacts. This vision of climate justice does not only stop at the future, but takes into account the historical past.



In 2006, the article by Nicholas Stern (2008) entitled *The Economics of Climate Change* was published at the then well-known Richard T. Ely conferences, which analyzed the economic aspects of extreme weather events arising from the acceleration of the increase in global temperature, from the point of view of implementing macroeconomic public policies for a possible mitigation of the effects. It advocated three main recommendations: carbon pricing, technology policy and energy efficiency. In turn, carbon pricing was already an area studied from a technical point of view by the organization “Climate Accountability Institute”, managed by Rick Heede and other researchers.<sup>1</sup>

When the Paris Agreement set the parameters for reducing greenhouse gases, these two main studies or methods were used, both of purely scientific matrix, which do not take into account the historicity of States: whether polluting or not; if colonizers or, on the contrary, colonized.

The Paris Agreement crystallized the carbon metric as a multi-lateral metric when developing countries seriously argue about equal mitigation criteria for unequal historicities. To achieve the commitment to a zero-emissions metric, both developing and developed nations have the same starting point, which makes trading carbon credits unfair at its inception. And today the carbon footprint is a commodity that continues to enrich the most developed countries, since they have more technological power to reduce emissions and or buy credits. As Zygmunt Bauman (2010), in his book *Parasitic Capitalism*, teaches us, capitalism is always creative in reinventing itself in new assets and means of production. The carbon market must be viewed from this perspective.

That’s the vision of a bloc of developing countries calling itself “*Like-minded Developing Countries*,” which counts countries like India, China and Bolivia among its members. They consider the carbon

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<sup>1</sup> For more information: <https://climateaccountability.org/board.html>.

market as a “carbon colonialism” and preach that developing countries have greater scope for action and interference in the parameters of the carbon market, as it is unfair to put all countries on the same level of neutrality by 2050. At the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), the group claimed in a document the “historical responsibilities of developed countries in the greenhouse gas emissions that have resulted in the climate crisis” (UN, 2021).

Eduardo Galeano poses the great question that must also permeate climate reflection on our continent and – why not? — in all countries which were once colonies:

It is Latin America, the region of open veins. From the discovery to the present day, everything has become an European or, later, North American capital, and as such has accumulated and accumulates to this day in the distant centers of power. Everything: the earth, its fruits and its depths, rich in minerals, men and determined, from outside, by their incorporation of their capacity for work and consumption, natural resources and human resources. The mode of production and the class structure of each place have been successively to the universal machinery of capitalism (GALEANO, 1976).

Enrique Dussel (1993), when addressing the question of colonialist liberation, proposed that it goes beyond economic liberation, and is not only “the faculty of choosing the way in which we will use our incomes”, but also, and mainly, how we will live as a civilization. The civilizing choices of a people, and this includes how to deal with climate change, is the sore point for colonies that submit to the Paris Agreement:

La praxis de liberación no se hace en virtud de un derecho dado. La praxis de liberación obra en nombre del derecho a la vida, es un derecho absoluto: es el derecho que instauro todos los derechos restantes, es el derecho básico por excelencia. En efecto, se denominan derechos básicos aquellos sobre los cuales

se fundan os restantes. Son el basamento ontológico de todo derecho (DUSSEL, 2013).<sup>2</sup>

Thus, thinking of a carbon economy that does not take into account colonial historicity is fruitless and unfair, also from the point of view of intergenerational law. According to a recent report by Greenpeace UK, “the climate and ecological crises are a legacy of systemic racism, and people of colour suffer disproportionately from their harm.” The report further stresses that “it is people of color who, despite having contributed less to the climate emergency, are now disproportionately losing their lives and livelihoods.” (GREENPEACE, 2022)

This nexus between race, coloniality and increased vulnerability to climate change is a concern of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2021), which stated in its report, presented to the Human Rights Council in accordance with Council resolutions 14/9, 18/28, 27/25, 36/23 and 24/45, at the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent held from 24 to 26 March 2021, that the climate crisis has an immense and disproportionate impact on the rights of people of African descent, linked to historical and structural racism. For the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, people of African descent, like other discriminated peoples and communities, were forced to live in areas vulnerable to environmental degradation, where their right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment was often not fulfilled. The negative impact of climate change has been disproportionately borne by people living in the least protected situations. Environmental racism poses a serious and disproportionate threat to the enjoyment of multiple human rights, including the right to life, the right to health, the right to an adequate standard

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<sup>2</sup> “The praxis of liberation is not made by virtue of a given right. The praxis of liberation works in the name of the right to life, it is an absolute right: it is the right that establishes all other rights, it is the basic right par excellence. In fact, those in which Merge the others are called basic rights. They are the ontological basis of all law.” (Our translation).

of living, and cultural rights. In many parts of the world, people of African descent seeking to defend their human rights related to the environment face unacceptable violence, threats and intimidation.

For researchers such as Camila Moreno, Daniel Speich Chassé and Lili Fuhr (2016), the carbon metric goes beyond carbon, being a true web of production intrinsic to the capitalist means of production in which we are inserted, with the same dangers and vices if analyzed without its historical and social context:

Over the years, the carbon metric has extrapolated from the scientific field in a process that has dangerously integrated economic discourse and thought. We might ponder that “carbon” was, from the beginning, a false or limited way of framing a much broader problem. But is it possible today to reassess this basic assumption? And why should we do that? Currently, the counting of carbon emissions and the merger of this accounting modality into the System of National Accounts are presented as a revolutionary way to simplify things to ensure climate action. We are opposed to this optimistic proposition because – in reality – quantification makes things much more complicated and raises several questions. One can and should also ask: Is it possible to talk about the success of certain policy decisions without measuring them in terms of GDP growth? It is clear that many of today’s policies would be different if they were really aimed at satisfying the interests and needs of real people and not in the interest of shareholder profits. But what seems so obviously right would be very difficult to change in practice. In terms of the profound and transformative change we need, what does “decarbonization” mean and what are its real-world impacts? Is the carbon-deux scheme really a key driver – as portrayed – to respond to the magnitude of the crisis that lies ahead? Or should it be challenged? Can we really expect to maintain environmental and social integrity in the context of carbon accounting? To what extent is carbon-centric logic not actually preventing transformative climate action, and what are the implications? Does something like “carbon neutralization” make ecological and ethical sense?

Can “carbon concerns” really encompass the dimensions of social and political justice that are at the root of many of these ecological problems? (MORENO; CHASSÉ; FUHR, 2016, p.76)

The aforementioned scholars expose the myth of zero carbon emissions based on a metric that is also colonialist:

However, the commoditization of carbon and the creation of carbon-deprived rights in the name of “green growth” takes us in the opposite direction. The current political debates are very much stuck in the thinking and mindset of the carbon metric and it would take a long time and enormous effort to change that. We would like to offer at least some perspectives. On the one hand, global social justice is not possible without global cognitive justice. Recovering and valuing the epistemological diversity of the world is an imperative. Recovering the “epistemologies of the South” is also part of reinventing social emancipation. A fundamental issue to be brought to the public debate is that, under the alleged objectivity of the carbon metric, lies a very great violence: the attempt to make reality and its contradictions something fungible to carbon units implies cultural, symbolic and epistemic violence. We believe it is very necessary to preserve the spaces and communities where this logic is not yet dominant. From the indigenous peoples of the Amazon to agroecology, to the communities that sustain agriculture in Europe, Japan or the USA – alternative practices, lifestyles, economies and societies are possible and real. Often small, marginalized and precarious, alternative practices should not be valued, considered acceptable, or validated under the strict carbon metric. We need to ensure policies that are capable of protecting these spaces and populations, their rights and their cultures. Most importantly, we need to be more innovative about ways to foster new initiatives and broaden and spread good experiences. This is a key issue in the current political debate, as the dominant thinking and policies in the field of climate action move towards a hegemonic logic guided by the achievement of “mitigation results”. In this logic, cost-opportunity assessment

reduces environmental complexities to “transferable units of mitigation,” paving the way for *offsetting* schemes around the world. We need to communicate strongly and loudly the false solutions and, with equal intensity, point to alternative choices that our elected representatives and decision-makers could make. What would a radical decarbonization of our economy and lifestyle really look like if we were to take seriously phasing out all fossil fuels? How could we relocate our economies? How to dismantle the mantra of growth? How do you regulate industries that destroy and pollute, and how do you stop your lobbyists from simply buying into political decisions in your favor? Carbon and GDP alone do not point the way. We need to challenge our mental infrastructures, through which we acquire the established foundations of our thinking. As we argue here, the all-powerful carbon paradigm can lead to profound injustices. Beyond carbon and on the way forward, we need a multidimensional perspective that is aware of the metabolic processes that sustain life on the planet, taking into account its natural limits, as well as the fundamental rights and needs of all human beings and the basic rules of participation and inclusion. (MORENO; CHASSÉ; FUHR, 2016, p. 77)

Thus, we see the enormous vice that the Paris Agreement has in proposing a metric based purely on the emission of gases and not on the historicity of these gases. Analyzing the right of future generations to a healthy environment – and how the carbon metric was proposed – without imprinting on the parameters the historical peculiarities referring to the countries that took advantage of nature and the resources of the common good to the detriment of the developing countries that were the object of this dispossession does not reflect the justice and equity that the Paris Agreement should propose. Backwards. A pact to reduce climate change should address the historical past that industrialized and rich nations have with the poorest. The Paris Agreement needs clearer and fairer parameters to confront this past of pollution and colonialism. What would be the mechanisms to be proposed?

### 3. NEW PARADIGMS FOR AN INTERGENERATIONAL CLIMATE NORM. THE CARBON METRIC AS A COLONIAL AND COLONIALIST METRIC.

Critical Geopolitics and History problematize the traditional geopolitical order with a revision of the prevailing historical perspective and generally challenge the hegemonic power of representations of the international sphere and their historical narratives. Precisely under the aid of critical geopolitics and history are today the solutions for the adaptation of the Paris Agreement to the historical compensation for the use of carbon and all the finite natural goods that the industrialized and developed countries have occupied themselves – until now without taxation. As Boaventura de Souza Santos (2022) teaches us:

I call the decolonization of History an intellectual intervention that confronts the different modes of modern domination, to the extent that these have configured the hegemonic writing of modern History. The most important or widespread modes of modern domination are capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy. The last two existed before capitalism, but were profoundly reconfigured by capitalism in order to guarantee a sustainable exploitation of human labor and nature. (DE SOUZA SANTOS, 2022, p.15)

The contribution that the critical Geography and History perspectives brings us comes from the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic when presenting its First Nationally Determined Indicative Contribution (SAHRAWI ARAB DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, 2021) during COP 26. In it, it demonstrated its resilience as a people occupied by the State of Morocco. In the document, it clarifies that it considers as its national territory the Sahara occupied by Morocco and the liberated Sahara, as well as the refugee populations in the Tindouf area, on Algerian soil. Even with all the problems of forced occupation, it indicates the objective of committing, nationally, to the Paris Agreement,

offering its vision of adaptation and mitigation of climate change in its territory. This is because, without the presentation of an NDC or, in this case, an INDC, the sub-Saharan people and territory would be left without UN support and without funding for necessary actions:

In the part's context on National Circumstances, the deep inequality that exists, not internationally recognized and sanctioned by the United Nations, between the occupied territory and the occupying power. Under the terms of the 1991 United Nations ceasefire agreement in Western Sahara, the POLISARIO Front and the Kingdom of Morocco are recognized by the UN as the two equal parties to the conflict. However, despite this formally recognized parity, the failure to organize the UN-ordered referendum and to resolve the conflict prevented SADR from being recognized as a full UN member state. This prevents SADR from participating in international processes and mechanisms (...) to which Morocco has full access as a member of the UN. Consequently, of these two equal parties to the conflict, only Morocco can be a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and a signatory to the Paris Agreement. SADR, and the Saharawi people it represents, remain excluded from these mechanisms and from the global governance of climate change and the broader financial architecture. As a result of this situation, SADR has no voice in climate negotiations or broader climate change governance processes, nor (...) any access to international climate finance or technical assistance through which it could build its capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and reduce its considerable vulnerability to the impact of climate change. This is contrary to many of the principles recognized in the Paris Agreement, including those of climate justice, country support, participation and transparency, and consideration of vulnerable groups and indigenous and local knowledge (SAHRAWI ARAB DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, 2021).

This is a poignant example of how the Agreement is based on the political state of peoples and not their natural state of existence



and survival. There is no mechanism that protects the sub-Saharan people in case of a formal contradiction of the Moroccan government. If a people is under domination or threatened with genocide, no aid will be due from the point of view of the transnational mechanisms of the Paris Agreement.

An identical situation arises from indigenous peoples who have people and territory, but are under the control of a sovereign country of which they are a part of. When the country has similar climate goals there is no inconvenience. But when the country refuses to protect from the point of view of climate survival an entire people, often mobilized by a doctrine of extinction or confinement, such as the Brazilian indigenous peoples of the Amazon rainforest, who suffer from the attacks of illegal miners due to the dismantling of the state safeguard structure (by a political option of the central executive government), this becomes an unsolved problem in terms of the Paris Agreement. It turns out to be a transnational pact in which signatory countries transit without many flexibility mechanisms.

This also translates into its content. Taxing solely on the basis of carbon emissions will not bring climate justice. Robust political entities, such as the European Community, consider the exclusively economic solution of carbon taxation to be a safe and even productive solution. The European Commission (2021) adopted in May 2021 a package of proposals aimed at making EU climate, energy, land use, transport and taxation policies capable of achieving a net greenhouse gas emission reduction of at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, and enforce its European Green Deal for a just, green and prosperous future.

The set of proposals combine the application of emissions trading to new sectors and the strengthening of the current EU Emissions Trading System; increasing the use of energy from renewable sources; increasing energy efficiency; faster deployment of low-emission transport modes and the infrastructure and fuels to support them; an alignment of tax policies with the objectives of the European Green

Deal; measures to prevent carbon leakage; instruments to preserve and increase natural carbon sinks in the EU. The Effort Sharing Regulation gives each Member State enhanced emission reduction targets for buildings, road and domestic shipping, agriculture, waste and small industries. Reflecting the different starting points and capacities of Member States, these targets are based on GDP *per capita* and are adjusted to take account of cost efficiency.

A crucial point is the production and use of energy, which accounts for around 75% of the EU's emissions. In fact, the situation is aggravated by the war in Ukraine and the dependence on Russian natural gas, which makes the energy transition urgent. The European Union recalls that there may be a greater vulnerability of households, micro-enterprises and transport users in the short term. Therefore, the concession of the policies contained in the package presented makes it possible to distribute equitably the costs of the fight against climate change and of adapting to it. In addition, carbon pricing instruments generate revenues that can be reinvested to stimulate innovation, economic growth and investments in clean technologies. And the most important measure: the creation of a carbon tax on products imported into the bloc.

Nevertheless, at no time is there any mention in the European *Green New Deal* project of the historical reparation due, for example, to the massacre of populations and the destruction of the American, Asian or African natural landscape due to colonialism. If this movement has had any success in the field of compensation for slavery and racial segregation – the United Kingdom compensated in 2013, after losing in the British courts, 5,000 Kenyan survivors, in addition to issuing a note of request for forgiveness – (PARELLADA, 2020), the same we do not see in the environmental field, when it comes to repairing years of extractivism and degradation.

There is no request for forgiveness from Spain regarding the abuses denounced by Las Casas. There is no request for forgiveness for the deforestation of the *sesmarias* adopted in Brazil, in which

monocultures of sugar cane and coffee were instituted, to the detriment of the biome and its indigenous population. There is no apology from mining companies and other transnational companies that, by adopting ethical and environmental values lower than those of their host countries, abandon exploited populations to pollution and the denial of the human right to a healthy life. A notable example to mention is the sale of fossil fuel with toxic levels of sulfur and other toxins to Africa by companies based in the European Union.<sup>3</sup>

There is no denying the enormous importance – as a civilizing achievement – of transnational pacts to reduce carbon emissions and their taxation, such as the Paris Agreement. But it is alerted to its current lack of regard to intergenerational justice, its analysis in the unfolding of time and generations, and the intrinsic justice that must exist in the carbon metric for future generations according to the actions of past generations. The generations that enslaved Indigenous People and cut down the last forests of native Brazilian wood. The generations that, irrigated by the silver of Incas and Aztecs, built a civilization of architectural beauty and scientific discoveries. The generations that succeeded settlers, who exterminated Indigenous People and who today live on the edge of rivers, lakes and seas, whose indigenous memory only remains in the name. All these present generations that came from colonized and colonizers deserve pacification: a just pacification that is not given only in a new *commodity* dictated by old metropolises.

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<sup>3</sup> West African governments are taking steps to stop the import of fuel with dangerously high levels of sulfur and other toxins. Much of the so-called “dirty diesel” originates in Europe, according to one Report published by Public Eye, a Swiss NGO, last year. The report laid out what Public Eye flame from “illegitimate business” of European oil companies and commodity traders, who sell low-quality fuel to Africa. While European standards prohibit the use of diesel with a sulphur content exceeding 10 parts per million (Ppm), diesel with up to 3,000 Ppm is regularly exported to Africa. From July 1<sup>st</sup> on, diesel sold at pumps in Ghana and Nigeria will have to meet a standard of 50 Ppm. (STEWART 2017)

Without looking at the colonizing past of Europe and the industrial societies that, from this colonization, managed to achieve an Industrial Revolution, and with it a welfare society that is alien to the poverty of the colonized, there is no way to impose climate justice. There is no European *Green Deal* that survives an unfair carbon metric that does not take into account the historical unfolding of colonies and metropolises.

#### 4. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Coloniality was based on the coercion and violence of its imposition. When, even today, the word colonialism comes to the fore, we have an image of a paradise of the new world that – discovered and maintained for centuries – still serves as financial and logistical support for a metropolis, which makes use of it without restrictions. Nowadays, with political independence often not followed by breaks in mutual dependency – in which the old colony is still part of the supply of natural and mineral goods to the colonizer – we still have the central role of the metropolises in the economy and development of the countries that were colonies. This also occurs in the area of the carbon matrix transition economy, essential for preventing global warming and disasters arising from climate change.

The Paris Agreement reveals in its making very little or almost no historical reparation that is due to enslaved peoples and made, in practice, still today of colonies, whose natural wealth formed in a colonial past and form, even today, the substrate for the enrichment of developed countries, historical polluters. If we consider climate justice to be an intergenerational justice, which aims to leave a healthy environment for future generations, in this intergenerational justice we must also weigh the history of looting and plunder that colonized countries have suffered over the last five centuries.

Excess CO<sub>2</sub> emissions into the atmosphere, which causes loss of biodiversity; the degradation of arable land or the depletion of the

planet's water are elements of collective impact. From this excess, many countries and companies have taken advantage and still do. Such historical balances of polluters and colonizers must be debated and confronted in a process of improvement of the Paris Agreement and future pacts, not only by the cold number of carbons emitted today, so that the ecological reparation to save the planet from extreme weather events is also a just reparation from the point of view of the intergenerational climate norm.

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