

Loss & Damage across Generations due to Climate Change

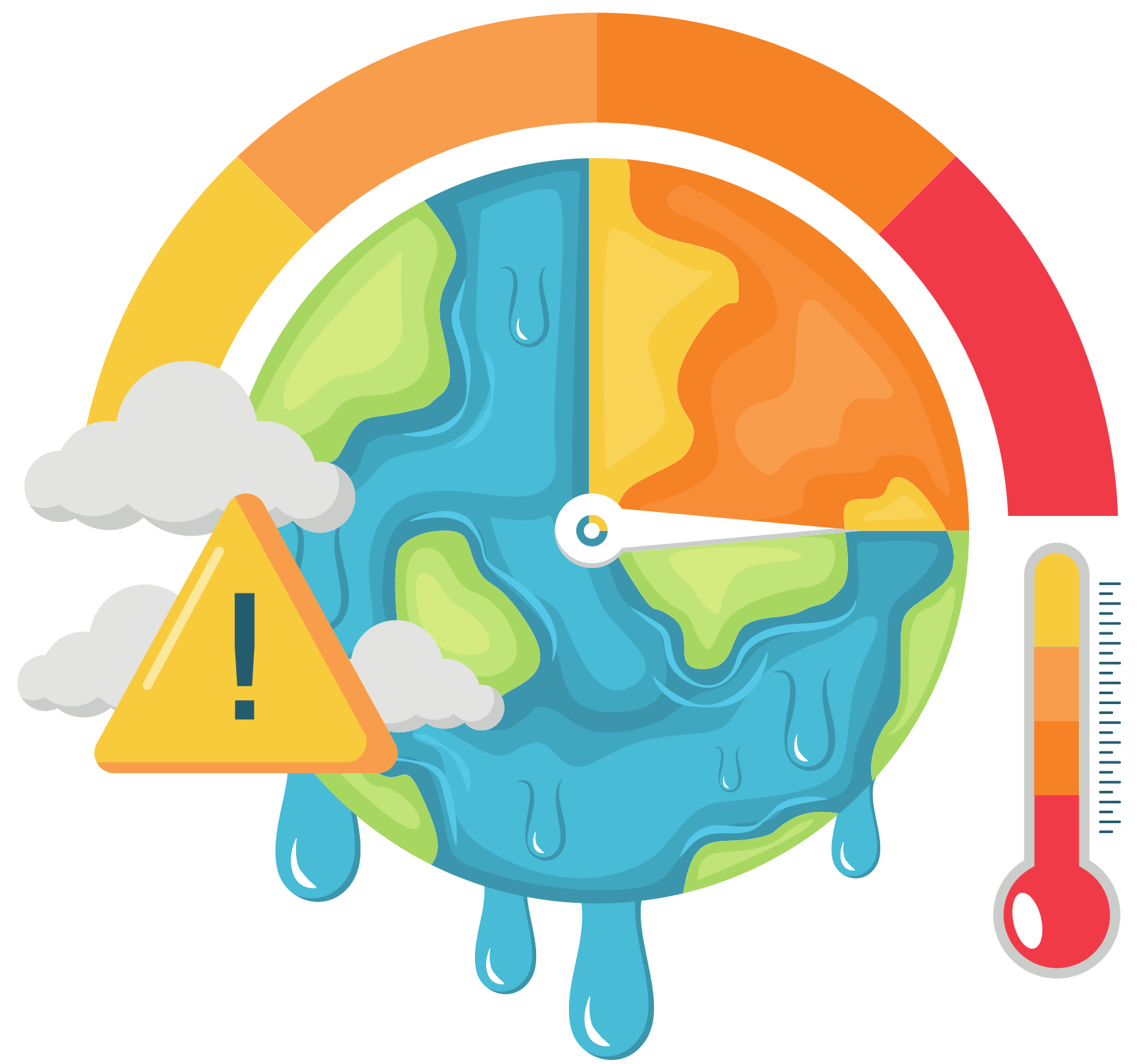
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ENERGY JUSTICE
& THE SOCIAL CONTRACT
CHAIR



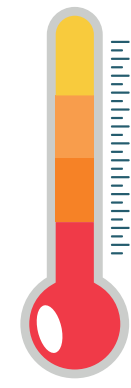
Introduction

Loss and Damage (L&D) due to climate change primarily from human activity has become a key focus for this generation.



January 12, 2023

NASA warned that 2022 was the fifth warmest year on record and noted that the trend was alarming.



July 2023

CNN recorded that the first week of July saw the hottest global temperature ever recorded.



September 2023

The United Nations indicated that implementation must accelerate to increase ambition across all fronts, taking an all of society approach to respond to the climate crisis.

The reality is that as the global temperature rises, domino effects occur across societies. As the climate gets warmer, forest fires intensify, the ocean gets warmer, sea levels rise, arctic sea ice melts, ocean acidification increases, and droughts begin to intensify. Yet despite all this, efforts to completely cease activities to fuel this damage caused primarily by fossil fuels have been slow. L&D is particularly important following not only the breakthrough agreement on the funding for loss and damage achieved following the Conference of Parties (COP27) Conference but also the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report released on March 20, 2023, that stresses the climate bomb present and the need for climate action on all fronts. Therefore the priority of climate action is urgent.

Today the question is no longer about living in a sustainable world but survival of the world we live in. This notion of existence and survival will be explored as I compare the loss and damage due to climate change being experienced in small islands looking at the case of the Caribbean versus the Pacific Islands and in coastal cities where I look at the case of for example, Bordeaux versus Venice. To do so, I will be applying the concept of Energy Justice, which is a theory that aims to foster a more equitable and sustainable future by looking at for instance: the way decision makers engage with society; the allocation of environmental ills; repairing any harm done; assigning responsibility; understanding different vulnerabilities of communities; and finally the global (cosmopolitan) justice principle that we are all citizens of the world and our responsibilities do not stop at our national borders. This research is original as, while there is a lot of energy justice and climate change literature, there is limited research connecting these issues on the vital area of loss and damage.

Objectives

This thesis will aim to explore loss and damage from climate change by critically examining the rights and obligations for current and future generations through an energy justice and legal interdisciplinary lens.

Results

Irrespective of where you live, whether it be on a small island or in a coastal city, the fact is you experience some element of climate change loss and damage. For example, small islands and coastal cities are faced with eroding coastlines and flooding as sea levels rise, population shifts as inhabitants move inland, and overall displacement as areas are on the brink of extinction. I will also be adding to the energy justice literature by providing this new aspect of research on these countries and introducing a case comparison for the small islands versus the coastal cities. My analysis will be the first to use a legal interdisciplinary method to explore these justice principles across these countries.

Methodology

- The Theory & Method of Energy Justice
- The Legal Doctrinal Method: Examination of UN Policy documents
- Legal comparative method: Laws & Policies of islands and coastal cities
- Socio-legal (Interdisciplinary) analysis: Business insurance and socio-economic impacts

Conclusion

My conclusion will show that loss and damage due to climate change have affected both the small island states and coastal cities under review. It will also demonstrate the impact on this generation and the effect on future generations unless the energy transition is achieved.