

COP 23, Bonn, Germany & Implementation of the Paris Agreement
Equity & Climate Justice Under the Paris Agreement

Dr Ted Christie, 01 November 2017



Disclosure Statement

Ted Christie does not work for, consult to, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has no relevant affiliations

The next [UN Climate Change Conference](#) will convene in Bonn, Germany, from 6-17 November 2017. Presided over by the Government of Fiji, it will *focus on implementation of the Paris Agreement* on climate change, which entered into force on 4 November 2016.

This will include the development of **guidelines** on how the Paris Agreement's provisions can be implemented across a wide range of issues such as transparency, adaptation, emission reductions, provision of finance, capacity-building and technology.

The *Preamble of the Paris Agreement* 'notes the importance for some of the concept of "**climate justice**", when taking action to address climate change'.

Article 2.2 of the Paris Agreement is a relevant consideration for achieving climate justice.

Article 2.2 requires implementation of the Paris Agreement "*to reflect equity*".

Any **guideline** for implementing the Paris Agreement to reflect equity, when preparing NDC emission reduction targets, needs to define the meaning of "*equity*" – a term not defined in the Climate Change Treaties.

The **plain** and **legal** meanings of '**equity**'

are similar:

"fairness", "justice".

Applying this meaning for equity would ensure that the concept would not be open to different interpretations.

This meaning should be applied as a guideline to address the information conflict that has arisen over inequality and shared responsibility when implementing the Paris Agreement.

Given the wider meaning of equity [“fairness”, “justice”], consideration of a **guideline** for the concept of *climate justice* under the Paris Agreement is justified.

The concept of climate justice has its origins in the 1990s, when the United States’ EPA introduced its policy for **environmental justice**.

Equity is a cornerstone of the “fair treatment” element of environmental justice.

Applying **equity/fair treatment** as a **guideline** to achieve *climate justice* under the Paris Agreement should mean that no country that has ratified the Agreement should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences – *ecological, economic, social, cultural* – resulting from actions and measures taken to manage the risk of global temperature rise and its impacts.

The *advantages* of adopting this interpretation as a *guideline* for *equity and climate justice* - based on ‘*fair treatment*’ and ‘*environmental justice*’ – is that climate justice adds a significant dimension to a **key element of the Paris Agreement**:

“[In bringing] *all nations into a common cause*
to undertake ambitious efforts
to combat climate change
and adapt to its effects,
with enhanced support to assist developing countries
to do so”.