Digital Press Social Sciences and Humanities

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International Conference on Nusantara Philosophy: Philosophy of Well-Being: Revisiting the Idea of Sustainable Living and Development

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Digital Press Social Sciences and Humanities 12: 00002 (2025) https://doi.org/10.29037/digitalpress.412468
International Conference on Nusantara Philosophy: Philosophy of Well-Being: Revisiting the Idea of Sustainable Living and Development

Whispers of the Earth: Decolonizing Energy for a Just Energy Transformation

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Abstract

This paper explores the geopolitical dynamics of climate funding, focusing on how programs like the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) perpetuate colonial legacies under the guise of aid. While nations like the United States and the European Union claim to support climate action, their policies often reinforce economic dominance over the Global South through mechanisms such as climate capitalism. Grants and loans, marketed as solutions, frequently bind recipient nations to extractive systems that prioritize market interests over justice. The paper critiques the historical continuity of fossil fuel extraction as a colonial practice that repositions the Global South as a provider of raw materials and cheap labor. It calls for a reevaluation of the Western perspective on energy, which commodifies it and disregards ecological and social costs. Instead, the paper advocates for a decolonial approach that integrates Indigenous values and ecological stewardship. Drawing inspiration from concepts like *Buen Vivir*, rooted in Quechua traditions, and Arturo Escobar's "pluriversal" framework, the analysis highlights the potential for alternative paradigms that honor interconnectedness. These perspectives challenge Western dualisms—nature versus culture, emotion versus reason—offering inclusive ways of thinking. The paper also discusses Bolivia's and Ecuador's recognition of nature as a legal subject, exemplifying diplomatic cosmologies that align legal systems with ecological values. Ultimately, the decolonial perspective offers a path toward an energy transition that prioritizes justice, sustainability, and the dignity of all life forms.

Keywords

just energy transition partnership, coloniality, decolonial perspectives, energy justice

1 Introduction

The Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) emerged as a high-value investment plan officially signed during the G-20 Summit in November 2022. According to the "Joint Statement by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and International Partners Group members on the Indonesia Just Energy Transition Plan" (2022), JETP is intended to be a long-term partnership aimed at assisting Indonesia in achieving its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) commitments. Specifically, the partnership targets a 41% reduction in emissions with international support.

As detailed in the Comprehensive Investment and Policy Plan (CIPP) released by the JETP Secretariat (2023, p. 1), the plan outlines a US$20 billion investment over 3–5 years. Half of this amount is pledged by the International Partners Group (IPG), comprising Japan, the United States, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, Germany, France, Norway, Italy, and the United Kingdom. The remaining US$10 billion will be provided by the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ), which consists of major players in the private financial sector. However, only 3% of the total funds are allocated as grants, while the rest is distributed through concessional and non-concessional loans.

This commitment to addressing the climate crisis is framed around accelerating the renewable energy sector through economic and technological investments alongside the IPG. The joint statement further emphasizes Indonesia's role as a leading nation in a "just" energy transition, leveraging renewable energy while minimizing the economic and social costs of the green transition. Additionally, JETP claims to address unemployment and poverty while protecting vulnerable groups from environmental harms caused by climate change.

By mid-2024, the U.S. government had disbursed USD 1 billion in JETP funds for a geothermal project in East Java, undertaken by PT Medco Cahaya Geothermal. This development underscores that JETP's implementation remains embedded within the structures of *energy colonialism*—defined as the

continuation of historical relations of domination exercised by Global North states and corporations over the Global South, and even within peripheral regions of the Global North.

The perspectives adopted by the Indonesian government and the IPG demonstrate a narrow conceptualization of energy—viewing it solely as capital to meet industrial demands. However, JETP presents an opportunity for the government to pursue a truly *just energy transformation* through a decolonial approach.

Existing research on JETP has primarily focused on policy aspects, both domestic and international. The journal article *Beyond the Struggle of Indonesia for Achieving a Just Energy Transition Partnership: An Analysis from Adaptive Foreign Policy Theory* (Chotimah, 2024), acknowledges the importance of distributive justice but fails to interrogate the structural power imbalances between the Global North and South.

Similarly, reports produced by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on JETP have largely overlooked conceptual frameworks. Studies by Trend Asia (2023), *Apakah rencana dan kebijakan investasi JETP dapat mendorong transisi energi yang adil dan ambisius?* and IRID (2023), *Policy brief JETP Indonesia: Mei 2023* focus on policy aspects that should be incorporated into the JETP framework, while research by Yayasan Indonesia CERAH (2023), *Transisi energi berkeadilan: Tantangan & peluang bagi daerah*, examines the potential and challenges of JETP across various regions. Meanwhile, studies conducted by CELIOS (2024). *Peluang dan tantangan pendanaan energi terbarukan berbasis komunitas*. and AEER (2023). *Memetakan skema pendanaan JETP*, highlight financial risks that could be detrimental to the state. While numerous other research initiatives have been undertaken by different organizations, none have critically engaged with fundamental concepts such as *energy justice* and *decolonizing energy*.

This article seeks to fill that gap by offering a conceptual analysis of the JETP framework—an aspect that has remained largely unexamined. As a climate finance initiative, JETP cannot be disentangled from the colonial power matrix that governs relations between the Global North and South. The dominant framework for energy transition, as applied within JETP, continues to conceptualize energy primarily as a *resource*, thereby failing to address—let alone resolve—the root causes of the climate crisis. This article aims to propose an alternative framework for energy transition programs, including JETP, that does not perpetuate financial and ecological disadvantages for Global South recipient countries.

2 Methods

This paper employs a literature-based methodology, drawing upon a wide range of secondary sources, including news reports, official documents, and data related to the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) and the broader context of the climate crisis. By analyzing publicly available information and critical discussions surrounding JETP, this approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the initiative's implications, particularly in terms of its funding structures, implementation strategies, and socio-political impacts. This method also situates JETP within the global climate governance framework, highlighting its role in addressing climate challenges in developing nations while critiquing its underlying power dynamics.

The theoretical framework of this paper is rooted in decolonial approaches, which interrogate dominant narratives and assumptions about energy as a mere extractable resource. Decolonial thought challenges the epistemological and historical constructs of the Global North that shape energy transitions, advocating instead for perspectives that view energy as an interconnected, living component of nature. This theoretical lens provides a critical foundation to examine how JETP reflects and perpetuates colonial power relations while offering alternative ways of conceptualizing energy justice that prioritize sustainability and the well-being of marginalized communities.

3 Discussion

3.1 Examining Geopolitical Conditions: What Drives the Interests of Grant Donors?

Hannah Ritchie, in her quantitative study *"Who Has Contributed Most to Global CO2 Emissions?"* (2019), explains that since 1751, the world has emitted more than 1.5 trillion tons of CO2. To meet climate goals and limit the average temperature increase to 2°C, urgent emission reductions are required. Often, countries with the largest historical CO2 contributions are seen as bearing greater responsibility for addressing the crisis (Ritchie, 2019). The United States ranks first, emitting 400 billion tons of CO2,

equivalent to 25% of global emissions. The European Union is also a major contributor at 22%, while countries with significant annual emissions today, such as India and Brazil, have minimal historical contributions. Africa, despite its large population, has an exceptionally low emission footprint due to minimal per capita emissions. From this historical perspective, the United States (US) and the European Union (EU) owe much of their industrial development—rooted in colonialism—to substantial contributions to the climate crisis. Together, these regions are responsible for 47% of historical carbon emissions (Ritchie, 2019). However, US climate policy proposals do not reflect the implications of this history. Instead, they are often embedded in colonial ideas and policies, perpetuating the subordination of the Global South through climate capitalism.

Developed nations owe climate compensation to the Global South, amounting to an estimated total of $192 trillion, or an average of $940 per capita annually from 2020 to 2050 (Fanning & Hickel, 2023, p. 1077). Annual compensation of $6.2 trillion represents 8% of the global GDP in 2018. Based on this calculation and Indonesia's population, Global North countries are estimated to owe Indonesia $261.9 billion annually. This immense funding obligation highlights the historical responsibility of developed countries and the ongoing economic disparities. Specifically, the United States owes the largest climate compensation to the Global South at $80 trillion, followed by the European Union and the United Kingdom at $46 trillion, and other Global North countries collectively at $44 trillion.

A report by the US Congressional Committee on the Climate Crisis (*Serial No. 117-10 (House Hearing) - International Climate Challenges and Opportunities*, 2020, p. 70) frames developing countries as lacking agency and in need of US intervention. According to the report, many developing countries in Africa and other regions prioritize access to modern energy but face significant challenges. Public and private financing for clean energy is deemed key to bridging the access gap, although factors like energy prices failing to reflect environmental and health impacts hinder progress. Proposed measures include expanding renewable energy, improving energy efficiency, modernizing power grids, and accelerating electric vehicle adoption. At COP26, countries such as Nigeria and India committed to net-zero goals, while over 40 nations pledged to transition away from coal without carbon capture. The Energy Transition Council aims to support developing nations in achieving clean energy targets through COP-30 in 2025.

Furthermore, the report presents the climate crisis—which has devastated lives and livelihoods in the Global South—as an investment opportunity for the Energy Transition Council, primarily comprising G7 and G20 developed nations (2020, p. 71). The minimal proportion of grants allocated to countries like Indonesia and Africa fuels suspicions that initiatives such as JETP are part of green capitalism and colonialism masquerading as concern for the planet. Even if subsidy schemes are substantial, the narrative of "saving the planet" remains problematic.

Although developed countries provide subsidies in the form of funding and technology, geopolitically, nations in the Global South have long contributed disproportionately to the wealth of developed countries during extended periods of colonialism. This history of resource and labor extraction for the benefit of industrialized nations cannot be overlooked (Chagnon et al., 2022, p. 761). The global economy, shaped by capitalism, conquest, and colonization in the Americas, Africa, and Asia, established these regions as sources of raw materials and labor to meet the production and consumption demands of industrial centers. In the periphery-center dynamic, regions were often forced to specialize in raw material extraction and export, such as minerals, metals, oil, gas, rubber, and timber, while industrialized nations focused on manufacturing goods (Chagnon et al., 2022, p. 765).

European colonization and its impact on early industrialization created highly unequal labor relations and restricted access to the means of production. These dynamics, including land distribution, persist today as the creation of cheap labor and resource frontiers fuels ongoing capitalist development. The asymmetrical power structures and history of exploitation underpin contemporary large-scale extractivism and climate destruction (Chagnon et al., 2022, p. 765). Meanwhile, the same "developed" nations are responsible for 70% of cumulative carbon emissions currently warming the planet (Ge et al., 2014). They have enriched themselves without paying for the emissions they have produced since the Industrial Revolution, a process accelerated by long-term colonial exploitation.

3.2 The Colonial Matrix of Power in Energy Transition Issues

On November 9, 2019, an article titled *"Why We Strike Again"* (2019) by environmental activists Greta Thunberg, Luisa Neubauer, and Angela Valenzuela stated, “The climate crisis is not just about the environment. It is a crisis of human rights, of justice, and of political will. Colonial, racist, and patriarchal systems of oppression have created and fueled it. We need to dismantle them all. Our political leaders can no longer shirk their responsibilities.” This article, authored by prominent figures in the climate movement, highlights the argument that environmental issues are inherently intersectional rather than isolated.

Climate issues must be understood through broader perspectives, such as decolonial approaches, which examine the relationship between the climate crisis and the historical legacies of slavery and colonialism by Western powers (Thunberg et al., 2019).

To move beyond "dirty energy," it is crucial to reevaluate the ties between fossil fuels and the broader economy, recognizing the power relations and hierarchies within the international energy system. These relationships are rooted in colonial and neo-colonial legacies, encompassing practices of resource plundering, land dispossession, and exploitation, particularly in the Global South. A pertinent example is the case of *carbon colonialism* in Congo, which exacerbates global climate challenges. While electric vehicle consumption is often viewed as a sustainable solution amid the fossil energy crisis, its production causes significant social suffering in Congo's mining communities. Historical colonial processes have shaped the cobalt sector in Congo, making renewable energy transitions reliant on Congolese cobalt far from sustainable. According to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), cobalt mining offers minimal local benefits and presents severe challenges to sustainable development. Thus, climate solutions dependent on cobalt extraction in Congo fail to address power imbalances in the renewable energy supply chain (Auffredou, 2022, pp. 1-3).

Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano (2000, pp. 533-580) highlights the concept of *Coloniality of Power* to explore how decoloniality interrogates value systems and power structures. Coloniality of Power refers to the enduring systems and legacies of colonialism that persist despite formal independence. These legacies introduced hierarchical classifications of humanity and a capitalist economic system that now governs the globe. Decolonial thinker Maria Lugones (2007, pp. 186-209) further connects these classifications to notions of race and gender, while the capitalist system relates to the control and exploitation of labor and resources. This exploitation, termed *extractivism* by thinkers such as Acosta (2013, p. 62), originated in the colonial conquest of the Americas in 1492 and continues to evolve in ways that perpetuate profit-driven exploitation in the Global South.

Economically, the Global South is relegated to an unjust global division of labor, functioning as a supplier of natural resources and cheap labor while serving as a market for industrial economies. This dynamic, enforced by colonialism, ensures that extractivism remains a constant feature of economic, social, and political life in many Global South countries. For instance, nearly every Latin American country experiences varying levels of extractive practices. While some nations have increased state intervention in these activities, fundamental changes remain limited, and extractive accumulation continues to dominate production policies across both neoliberal and progressive governments (Acosta, 2013, p. 63).

Efforts to break free from colonial legacies are often undermined by new tools of coloniality, such as crippling debt, the "free market" ideology, structural adjustment programs, and other mechanisms of domination. These tools confine Global South nations to subordinate roles as market providers for the wealthy, restricting their sovereign policymaking spaces. This dynamic is evident in energy transition plans such as the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) in South Africa, Indonesia, and Vietnam. These top-down policies disregard local contexts, social structures, and the groups most affected by ecological degradation (Nam Do, 2023, p. 5).

Rather than leveraging the energy transition to dismantle centuries of control and exploitation, the Indonesian government has participated in perpetuating free-market mechanisms, neglecting the significant social and environmental costs. Such patterns are likely to persist unless the government adopts a strong political stance on JETP, instead of treating the program merely as an investment injection.

3.3 Revisiting the Relationship Between Energy and Humanity

The struggle for energy justice is inherently a struggle for humanity. However, it is necessary to ask: what kind of humanity is being fought for? Decolonial thinkers like Sylvia Wynter (2003, p. 266) argue that the framework of human rights stems from Western modern philosophical conceptions of "humanity" (rooted in the works of Immanuel Kant). This definition, constructed within the Western intellectual tradition, is built upon racial constructs that categorize non-white, non-Christian, and non-male individuals as "half-human" or requiring a "mask" to achieve humanity.

Similarly, the concept of "energy" must also be critically reexamined, as it is not a neutral construct. Socio-ecological theorist Larry Lohmann (2021, pp. 87-88) notes that the notion of energy emerged in the 19th century through the laws of thermodynamics, as "a project of a certain privileged group of male Northern Europeans (…) to help machines provide business with labour productivity increases, labour discipline, labour concentrations and relative independence from a multitude of ingrained human and more-than-human rhythms, as well as speedier realization of the value of commodities."

The relationship between humans and energy (including non-human animals and nature) was abstracted through the laws of thermodynamics. The immense availability of fossil fuel energy was

reframed as a "resource to be exploited" through colonial concepts of "energy." This notion facilitated the utilization of energy and nature to drive capitalism, guided by the colonial concept of *Terra Nullius* (Tornel, 2023, p. 57). Broadly, *Terra Nullius* redefined Indigenous peoples' lands and human activities through the lens of "productive" and "non-productive" frameworks. This concept disregarded and erased Indigenous ways of life that had harmonized with nature for thousands of years, codifying what is deemed "valuable" and "non-valuable" within a capitalist economic system (Tornel, 2023, p. 48).

This is where the decolonial approach offers a pathway to transcend such codifications of value within the discourse of energy justice. The decolonial approach seeks to create a more egalitarian and just world. To achieve this, it necessitates revaluing what has been deemed "non-valuable." Decolonial thinker Malcolm Ferdinand, in his book *Decolonial Ecology* (2022a, p. 179), emphasizes that alternative narratives about the environment are a fundamental principle of decolonial ecology. These narratives prioritize diverse ways of living and being in the world (such as those of Indigenous peoples), which colonialism disrupted and replaced with modern ways of life.

One of the milestones of this decolonial ecology was the declaration of the principles of environmental justice in 1991 at the first People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in Washington, DC:

> We, the people of color … to begin to build a national and international movement of all peoples of color to fight the destruction and taking of our lands and communities, do hereby re-establish our spiritual interdependence to the sacredness of our Mother-Earth; to respect and celebrate each of our cultures, languages and beliefs about the natural world and our roles in healing ourselves; to ensure environmental justice; to promote economic alternatives which would contribute to the development of environmentally safe livelihoods; and, to secure our political, economic and cultural liberation that has been denied for over 500 years of colonization and oppression, resulting in the poisoning of our communities and land and the genocide of our people.

This declaration intimately joins together the call to reconnect with Mother-Earth and ecological development with the demand for “political, economic, and cultural liberation” in the face of five hundred years of colonization, which is the decolonial demand. This declaration is a statement that environmental struggles cannot be separated from broader demands for political, economic, and cultural liberation. This declaration underscores the interconnectedness of ecological well-being and social justice, recognizing that environmental destruction is deeply tied to histories of colonization and systemic oppression. However, despite these foundational calls for justice, mainstream climate discourse continues to prioritize technocratic and market-driven solutions that overlook the lived realities of marginalized communities.

Dominant narratives about the climate crisis tend to focus on reducing carbon emissions, often disconnected from the realities of marginalized communities. According to Ferdinand (2022a, pp. 178-179), these narratives depoliticize the climate crisis within an economic paradigm focused on efficiency and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) solutions for carbon emission reduction. Consequently, the struggle to protect the earth and its biodiversity lacks meaningful implications for fostering harmony between humans and non-humans. These dominant narratives fail to address the inequities, dominations, and injustices that persist globally, let alone provide pathways to address them through environmental policies.

Ferdinand (2022b) further asserts that such narratives marginalize or exclude the voices and concerns of women, Indigenous peoples, and people of color. More precisely, the prevailing climate crisis discourse is rooted in the same structures of modernity and globalization established since 1492. The centuries-long colonization of the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Oceania not only caused material harm but also shaped dominant conceptions in several domains. These influences have extended into scientific knowledge, which has functioned to marginalize other forms of knowledge, fracture the relationships between humans and non-humans, perpetuate inequalities between nations (North/South), and maintain hierarchies based on gender and socio-racial structures.

Arturo Escobar’s pluriversal approach to energy transformation offers ways to counteract the limitations of dominant climate crisis narratives, which depoliticize environmental issues and marginalize non-Western epistemologies. Unlike reductionist frameworks that prioritize economic efficiency and STEM-driven solutions, a pluriversal perspective acknowledges the deep entanglements between social, ecological, and epistemic dimensions of energy transition. The concept of the *pluriverse*—a world where many worlds coexist—offers a crucial perspective in discussions of energy justice. Dominant energy models often prioritize large-scale, centralized systems that reflect capitalist, technocratic, and extractivist logics, marginalizing diverse, localized approaches to energy production and governance (Escobar, 2018,

p. 183). A pluriversal approach to energy justice recognizes the coexistence of multiple epistemologies, practices, and relationships with energy, centering Indigenous, decolonial, and community-based frameworks (Kothari et al., 2019, pp. xxxiii-xxxv). This perspective challenges the one-size-fits-all solutions imposed by global energy transitions and instead emphasizes autonomy, sustainability, and the right of communities to define their own energy futures based on their cultural, ecological, and historical contexts

As Escobar (2018, p. 7) argues, a just transition is not merely a technical response to the climate crisis but a transformational project that challenges the structures sustaining social and environmental inequities. This requires designing regenerative ecosystems that restore the connections between the social and natural realms while prioritizing local autonomy and distributed knowledge. The prevailing energy transition discourse, rooted in modernity's extractivist and technocratic logics, often disregards these perspectives, imposing universal solutions that fail to address historical injustices. By embracing the pluriverse, energy justice frameworks move beyond technological substitution to fundamentally reconfiguring power dynamics, amplifying marginalized voices, and fostering relational, place-based approaches to sustainability. The future is not a fixed endpoint but a continuously evolving space where global transformations are enriched by localized, context-specific knowledge, offering more equitable and just pathways for energy transition.

3.4 Decolonizing Energy Justice

As explained previously, the global energy system is deeply embedded in colonial and geopolitical structures that prioritize profit, control, and efficiency over justice and sustainability. Contemporary energy frameworks are largely shaped by capitalist and extractivist logics, where energy is treated as a commodity rather than a commons. This perspective reinforces hierarchical power dynamics between the Global North and the Global South, where resource-rich but economically disadvantaged regions are positioned as suppliers of raw materials while wealthier nations dictate the terms of energy production and consumption. The dominance of centralized, large-scale infrastructure—such as fossil fuel extraction and mega renewable projects like JETP—further entrenches inequalities by displacing local communities, disrupting ecosystems, and perpetuating historical patterns of resource exploitation. Without addressing these foundational geopolitical structures, energy transitions risk replicating the same injustices under the guise of sustainability. At this point, decolonizing energy is an urgent necessity to dismantle the colonial and capitalist structures that continue to shape global energy systems. Current energy transitions, including initiatives like the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP), risk reinforcing the same extractivist and hierarchical frameworks unless they fundamentally challenge the geopolitical power imbalances between the Global North and the Global South.

The contemporary concept of "energy justice" refers to global energy systems that equitably distribute benefits and burdens while ensuring inclusive and representative decision-making processes. This implies that energy justice should address the equitable distribution of costs, risks, and negative impacts arising from energy production. The transition from fossil fuels (e.g., coal) to renewable energy sources inevitably brings about new power struggles, shifts in the economic-political landscape, and interdependencies. Ultimately, energy transitions must consider social justice, the urgency of climate change, and the reconfiguration of energy systems (Newell et al., 2020, p. 8).

Unfortunately, current views on energy justice still rely on universal definitions rooted in the history of Western thought. Existing energy justice frameworks are deeply entwined with the *politics of incumbency*, or the political systems that sustain the current energy regime. These frameworks often fail to interrogate the colonial principles underlying energy systems, especially in the Global South (Castan Broto et al., 2018; Sovacool et al., 2017, pp. 646-647). As a result, the prevailing discourse on energy justice tends to reproduce hegemonic power relations between "donor" and "recipient" countries, as well as between "states" and "communities."

Tornel (2023, p. 48) critiques energy justice approaches that depend on national energy policies, arguing that they fail to recognize historically and spatially embedded patterns of injustice within local energy systems. Such approaches often lack coherent critiques of global capitalism and structural oppression. Consequently, energy justice narratives become overly positivistic and affirmatory, overly reliant on policymakers, experts, and individuals making "clean energy" lifestyle choices (Sovacool and Dworkin, 2015, p. 437). This issue is especially pronounced when universal policy frameworks are promoted without accounting for the distinct characteristics of each country, as seen in initiatives from international organizations such as the World Bank and the IEA.

Projects like Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7, which focuses on clean and renewable energy, often aim to "modernize" or "develop" energy systems in the Global South. Yet, these efforts effectively transform energy systems and infrastructures into tools of neoliberal governance. In this sense, large-scale

energy infrastructure and electrification programs become key mechanisms for political control by economic elites. The material and symbolic dimensions of such infrastructure projects allow states to discipline and integrate citizens into modernization and development agendas (Power & Kirshner, 2019, p. 7).

Decolonizing energy frameworks requires rethinking global energy governance, moving away from top-down, technocratic models toward more pluralistic and community-driven approaches. Scholars argue that energy justice should not only focus on access and affordability but also on self-determination, autonomy, and the recognition of diverse epistemologies (McCauley et al., 2013, p. 3). Indigenous and decolonial perspectives emphasize relational understandings of energy, viewing it not merely as a resource for human consumption but as an integral part of ecological and cultural systems (Kothari et al., 2019, pp. 178-180). For energy justice to be transformative—not merely transitional—the framework must articulate the entrenched "politics of unsustainability" inherent in current systems. Achieving this requires acknowledging the structural injustices embedded in prevailing energy systems and policies.

Energy transformations are about supporting the already existing struggles for total liberation and/or creating (new) material and political tools for emancipation, then the challenge is to avoid the temptation of falling back on piecemeal and retributive reforms, as well as the lure of State power as the principal method of transformation. Real energy justice will not be wedded to the legacy and injustice perpetrated by the state (Dunlap & Tornel, 2023, p. 7).

It should remain non-sectarian without disregarding difference, focusing instead on building networks that stop ecocidal development, ontological separations (e.g., mind and body, nature and culture, etc.) and teleological frameworks. Energy transformation must including an alternative to survive and confront a reality dictated by state/colonial, patriarchal and capitalist relationships and infrastructures that appear out of control, structuring the present and future until people—in many social positions and professions—decide to no longer let themselves be arranged, but rather to arrange themselves (Dunlap & Tornel, 2023, p. 7).

Understanding energy injustice opens pathways to reimagining alternatives in global political-economic systems and energy structures, allowing for the conceptualization of energy justice beyond colonial-capitalist paradigms. One promising approach is transformative energy justice, which seeks to address injustice by restructuring the generative frameworks underpinning it and addressing its root causes.

3.5 Envisioning the Principles of Ideal Energy Justice

In Latin America, where decolonial thinking originated, scholars such as Ecuadorian economist Alberto Acosta Espinosa (2018) have proposed alternative relationships with the Earth (and other entities) through the concept of *Buen Vivir* (living well). Inspired by the Quechua indigenous people's idea of "feeling-thinking with the Earth," *Buen Vivir* represents a counter-narrative adopted by indigenous communities in Latin America as resistance to colonialism and capitalism. It rejects the Western development model centered on economic growth and material accumulation. Instead, it emphasizes harmony with nature and community as the foundation of life, viewing life as a continuous journey guided by indigenous knowledge, ethics, and spiritual values (Acosta & Abarca, 2018, pp. 132–133).

The core tenets of *Buen Vivir* include: (1) rejecting exploitative capitalist views of nature while promoting a vision focused on social and environmental well-being; (2) prioritizing community-based ways of living over individualism; and (3) striving to decolonize and move away from patriarchal and colonial social structures that have long dominated (Acosta & Abarca, 2018, pp. 133–134).

The pluriversal perspective that was introduced by Arturo Escobar, aligns with the principles of *Buen Vivir* by advancing a vision of energy justice that resists extractivist, capitalist, and colonial frameworks. Dominant energy systems are deeply entangled with histories of dispossession, where fossil fuel and renewable energy projects alike have often been imposed on Indigenous and marginalized communities without their consent. Energy justice, when viewed through a pluriversal lens, moves beyond access and affordability to recognize the multiple ways communities relate to energy, encompassing cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions. Rather than treating energy merely as a resource for human consumption, this perspective acknowledges its role in sustaining broader relationalities between humans and non-humans, challenging anthropocentric and market-driven models of development.

A pluriversal approach to energy transitions demands alternative, community-centered models that reflect diverse ontologies and epistemologies. As Acosta & Abarca (2018, pp. 138-139) suggests, *Buen Vivir* envisions a future where energy systems are not extractive but regenerative, reinforcing reciprocity between communities and the Earth. This requires rethinking energy governance, moving away from centralized control toward decentralized, locally embedded structures that prioritize autonomy and self-

determination (Kothari et al., 2019, p. 180). Ultimately, integrating *Buen Vivir* into energy justice frameworks challenges the dominance of Western techno-scientific paradigms and promotes a more equitable and context-sensitive approach to energy transformation. Escobar (2018, pp. 181-182) argues that the future is not a fixed endpoint but a continuously evolving space where multiple worlds coexist, each contributing unique knowledge and practices. Recognizing energy as more than a technical issue, but as an ontological and political struggle, allows for a shift toward just and sustainable energy futures. By embracing the pluriverse, energy transitions can move beyond the logic of extraction and exploitation, fostering ethical relationships with the land, energy, and communities that depend on them.

This plurality of worldviews informs decolonial thought with a perspective of "diplomatic cosmologies." In the article *Promise to Pachamama: Revisiting Bolivia's Historic Law of the Rights of Mother Earth* (2018), the term “diplomatic cosmologies” refers to Bolivia’s constitution under former President Evo Morales, which recognized *Pachamama* (Mother Earth) as a legal subject. Natalia Greene’s advocacy report (2011) similarly notes Ecuador's recognition of nature as a legal entity, exemplified by the case of the Vilcabamba River, which won a lawsuit against the Municipality of Loja for depositing large amounts of excavation waste into the river.

In Indonesia's context, the cosmological framework of the Baduy people is deeply embedded in their environmental management and land-use practices. Their worldview is centered around *Sasaka Pusaka Buana*, the sacred origin of life, which they believe to be the center of the earth (*pancer dunia*). This site, along with *Sasaka Domas*, is regarded as sacred (*kabuyutan*), where ascetic rituals (*ziarah*) are conducted annually by the *puun* (spiritual leader). These sacred spaces serve not only as religious sites but also as ecological reserves, where human intervention is strictly prohibited (Iskandar & Iskandar, 2017, p. 931). The Baduy cosmology dictates a clear spatial hierarchy, dividing their land into three zones: the strictly protected *kabuyutan*, the Inner Baduy area which functions as a buffer zone, and the Outer Baduy area, which interacts more with external influences. By structuring their landscape in alignment with their spiritual beliefs, the Baduy integrate ecological conservation with cosmological reverence, ensuring long-term sustainability of their environment.

Beyond these sacred zones, the Baduy structure their daily living spaces in alignment with their cosmological order, creating a harmonious relationship between settlement areas, agricultural land, and forests. Each mountain within the Inner and Outer Baduy territories is divided into three ecological zones: the valley near water sources for settlements (*lembur*), the mid-slope for swidden agriculture (*huma*), and the hilltops for mature forests (*leuweung kolot* or *leuweung titipan*). While swidden cultivation is practiced, fallowed land (*reuma*) regenerates into secondary forest, ensuring sustainable land use. Furthermore, riverbank forests and mature forests are strictly protected from agricultural activity, reinforcing the idea that nature is not merely a resource but a living entity that must be preserved (Iskandar & Iskandar, 2017, p. 934). This holistic cosmology informs the Baduy’s approach to energy use, which is minimal and guided by ethical constraints against over-extraction. Their worldview aligns with decolonial ecological perspectives, rejecting extractivist energy models and instead embracing an integrated vision of energy, land, and spiritual well-being. By maintaining their cosmological approach to land management, the Baduy offer an indigenous framework for sustainability that challenges dominant Western paradigms of conservation and resource utilization.

At this point, several alternative frameworks become an offer for shifting the framework from the exploitative energy concept. Shifting toward a framework of transformative energy justice requires moving beyond the colonial-capitalist paradigm that treats energy as a mere commodity. Instead, energy must be understood as an integral part of the web of life, deeply connected to land, water, and food sovereignty. This shift entails dismantling centralized, profit-driven models of energy production that perpetuate ecological destruction and social inequalities, replacing them with decentralized, community-led systems rooted in reciprocity and sustainability. *Buen Vivir*, as proposed by Acosta & Abarca (2018, pp. 133-135), provides a crucial counter-framework by centering energy transitions on the well-being of both humans and non-humans, rejecting exploitative relationships with nature, and recognizing indigenous knowledge as a valid epistemic foundation for governance. Similarly, the pluriversal perspective advocated by Escobar (2018, p. 188) challenges the universalist, technocratic solutions of dominant energy regimes, arguing instead for locally embedded, diverse energy practices that respect multiple ontologies and cultural worldviews.

Concrete instances of transformative energy justice can be seen in indigenous-led renewable energy projects that prioritize ecological integrity and community autonomy. For example, in Latin America, indigenous communities have implemented solar and wind energy projects that are governed collectively, ensuring that energy production does not come at the cost of environmental degradation or cultural displacement. In Indonesia, the Baduy people's cosmological approach to land management serves as another model, where sacred zones function as both ecological reserves and spiritual sanctuaries,

restricting exploitative interventions. Their ethical constraints on energy use reflect an alternative to extractivist development, emphasizing harmony with nature over relentless economic growth. By adopting such frameworks, energy transitions can move beyond superficial sustainability claims and instead foster ethical, regenerative relationships with the land, ensuring that energy justice is not only about access but also about the preservation of life itself.

4 Conclusion: How to Decolonize Energy Justice?

Just energy transformation requires recognizing energy as more than an abstract force or inert object—it is a complex system intertwined with political power and domination. Thus, the JETP framework must be reimagined or replaced with more inclusive and transformative projects addressing the struggles against coloniality and cultural identity in Indonesia. Decolonial thought offers a perspective that frames the climate crisis not merely as an environmental issue but as part of a broader system of global injustice rooted in colonialism. As discussed earlier, concepts such as *Buen Vivir* from Latin America propose harmonious relationships with nature and a rejection of resource exploitation for profit. These principles challenge humanity's view of energy, emphasizing the inseparability of nature's spiritual and ecological values from human life. In contrast, capitalist-oriented schemes like JETP risk marginalizing alternative approaches that prioritize true ecological sustainability and community well-being.

If JETP is unavoidable, both the Indonesian government and IPG must reevaluate the universal conceptions of justice embedded in existing regulatory frameworks and create space for emancipatory energy projects. Rather than perpetuating renewable energy projects that neglect historical contexts, human-nature relationships, and marginalized communities' experiences, it is essential to center the perspectives of locally affected populations in addressing the climate crisis. This involves emphasizing decolonial energy frameworks and integrating marginalized communities' ethical perspectives and demands for self-recognition, autonomy, and cognitive justice.

As previously noted, decolonizing energy also requires a shift from hierarchical decision-making structures dominated by elites in advanced economies to more egalitarian and just approaches. Such approaches should affirm local energy sovereignty, ensuring that indigenous peoples and local communities play active roles in formulating their energy solutions without relying on external savior narratives.

Ultimately, decolonizing energy goes beyond the technical transition to clean energy; it necessitates transforming mindsets and power structures to ensure social, economic, and ecological justice. By adopting this approach, the JETP framework could be reformed or replaced with initiatives that are more inclusive and transformative ones that address the struggles against coloniality and cultural identity in Indonesia.

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