P149 / PUBLIC POLICIES, JUST TRANSITION AND COOPERATION IN AFRICA AFTER 2030 :OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Topic : Policy Design, Formulation & Instruments

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GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Which public policies are required to implement Just Transition in Africa? Just Transition as a necessity to adapt to the consequences of climate change is of capital importance for the continent. Indeed, it is the most vulnerable to this phenomenon, whereas the less responsible of its occurrence, with only 4% of greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions that cause global warming according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). However, it suffers the most from its consequences: unpredictable weather patterns leads to forced migration and less predictable harvests, endangering food security and further complicating the implementation of food sovereignty in a continent where agriculture is the livelihood of no less than 60% of its adult population (IPCC). Additionally, more than 600 million Africans don't have access to a clean and affordable source of energy on a daily basis. The consequences of climate change justify the need to implement Just Transition within Africa.

Yet, most of the energy transition projects in the continent are focused on the implementation of just transition out of Africa. For example, one of the rare projects within the scope of just transition in Africa is to provide green hydrogen to Europe, hence reproducing the pattern of colonial extractivism, through 'predatory foreign direct investment and invasive profit-driven green extractivism' (Kaboub and Adow , 2026,3) (among others) endeavor to secure supply chains, raw materials and strategic minerals in Africa to implement Just transition within their own countries. This new scramble for Africa's natural resources makes the continent 'a focal point of contention' in the global restructuring process occurring at the global level (Kaboub and Adow , 2026,4), and keeps Africa a passive actor in the implementation of Just transition, at the expense of global powers.

From an inward perspective, the attempts to implement just transition in the continent failed to live up to the expectations. The Framework and Action Plan of the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) conceived under the aegis of the African Union (AU) 'were soon eroded through numerous overlapping forces, involving both non-African and African actors' (Sokona et al.2023, 63), which raises the issue of translation of Just transition in the African context. Practically, the rare Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETP) actually implemented in Africa, as in South Africa, are in forms of loans and reputed to lack transparency (Farand and Chloé , 2022). Efforts made by some African countries to put a cap on the exportation of their critical mining to promote their transformation locally are yet to bear their fruits. Africa remains at the bottom of the global value chain related to energy transition.

Hence the purpose of this panel is justified. It aims among others to answer the following questions:

How to make the ownership of Just transition policies in Africa as highlighted by the AREI effective?

Which policy instruments (Lascourmes and Simard , 2011) would be conducive to Just Transition within Africa?

How does Just transition translates in the agendas at the regional, national or local levels in Africa ?

CALL FOR PAPERS

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The possibilities to implement just transition within the continent do exist. The continent's renewable energy potential is 50 times greater than the anticipated global electricity demand for the year 2040. It has over 40% of the global reserves of key minerals for batteries and hydrogen technologies (Kaboub and Adow,2026). Its population, of which 70% is under 30, is projected to reach 1.5 billion by 2050, a huge market for clean and affordable energy. At the regional level, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and its subsequent Protocol on Investment in Africa provides the framework for sustainable investment on just transition.

Hence, the present panel welcomes contributions which address among others, the following questions:

Which policy dynamics influence the implementation of Just transition in Africa?

How to make the ownership of Just transition policies in Africa as highlighted by the AREI effective?

Which policy instruments (Lascourmes and Simard , 2011) would be conducive to Just Transition within Africa?

How does Just transition translates in the agendas at the regional, national or local levels in African countries?

Papers addressing those questions from case studies or comparative perspectives including with other regions of the world, as well as proposals related to innovative policy approaches related to the role and place of Africa in just transition are welcome.

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