

The Climate Imperative for World Federalism

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The division of state power in the world among 200 sovereign states causes problems of first and second orders. A problem of the first order is that the governments of those states are too small and weak to tackle global issues, even when they voluntarily come together in international forums. A problem of the second order is that movements for social betterment and justice, who wish to exert pressure on those governments and to mobilize them into action, find themselves even more divided, fractured and ineffective in promoting their goals. As the former International Executive Director of Greenpeace famously said: 'we are winning important battles but losing the planet'. In this paper I discuss some timely examples of first and second order problems from the field of climate justice and suggest how within a supranational democracy such problems could be effectively addressed. I develop the argument that people and movements who care for social betterment should recognize supranational democracy as the key to achieving their goals, and come together and focus their energies on realizing it.