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Climate Matters *Pro Tanto*, Does It Matter All-Things-Considered?

I. Climate Matters

In *Climate Matters* (2012), John Broome argues that individuals have two kinds of duties to act against climate change, 'private' duties which relate to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions-producing actions, and 'public' duties which relate to political actions. With respect to private duties, Broome claims that GHG-emitting actions are normally unjust, because they harm people and harming people normally means doing them an injustice (p. 54).[1] On this basis he argues that individuals have private duties to offset their emissions to zero. They have this duty even if they could do more good by doing something else, because duties of justice (with few exceptions) have trumping priority over duties of 'goodness' (duties to make the world better). In this paper I argue—against Broome—that private climate-related duties to offset cannot be justified by a duty to *do no injustice*, because there can be no such general duty.[2] It is not feasible in our current social conditions—at least for many people in many countries—to do no injustice, and we cannot have duties to do what it is not feasible that we do. Instead of 'do no injustice', the strongest imperative that can be generated is 'minimize injustice', which reopens the question of moral tradeoffs between unjust actions of different kinds, which Broome had set aside as a matter of 'goodness'. He admits that when it comes to maximizing goodness, an individual's reducing of her GHG emissions is not the best way to do so. How about when it comes to minimizing *injustice*? Climate change is inarguably one of the most important issues we face. It's clear that it matters *pro tanto*.[3] Does it matter all-things-considered? In §II I set out Broome's argument in greater detail. In §III I make the case against individuals having a duty to do no injustice and argue that at best they have a duty to minimize injustice. In §IV I consider the relative importance of reducing (or offsetting) personal emissions against other *pro tanto* duties of justice.

1 All references with pagination only are to (Broome 2012).

2 I say 'do no injustice' rather than 'do no harm', because as Broome himself notes, doing someone harm only *normally* means doing her an injustice (p. 54). Here are two examples of where harm and injustice come apart. In exploitation cases, a person is made better-off than she would otherwise have been, even while having her rights violated, for example by being paid below a living wage. Exploitation cases plausibly involve injustice but not harm. Retaliating violently in self-defence against an assailant might not be unjust, even though it makes the assailant worse-off than he would otherwise have been. Retaliating in self-defence cases plausibly involve harm but not injustice. Although they come apart in certain cases, they often go together. My concern in this paper is with GHG-emitting actions as unjust harms: actions that are unjust because they do harm.

3 See discussion in of the distinction between *prima facie* and *pro tanto* oughts in (Reisner 2013). I use the latter rather than the former (despite the greater familiarity of the former) because it is important that the 'oughts' aren't dissolved simply because they don't end up as all-things-considered. Climate change matters, so emissions matter, and that will remain so even if reducing (or offsetting) emissions is never what an individual all-things-considered ought to do.

II. Individuals' duties of justice to offset GHG emissions

Broome draws a clear distinction between duties of justice and duties of goodness. Duties of goodness have a consequentialist flavour, directing individuals 'to try and improve the world, and not make it worse' (p. 50). But they are not the whole story of what morality requires of individuals: 'improving the world is not our only moral duty' (p. 51). There are also duties of justice, which have a deontic flavour. They prohibit doing people harm in order to promote the good, as for example in the familiar case of killing one innocent person to harvest their organs and transplant them to save five people, which common sense intuitions judge impermissible (see discussion pp. 50-54). Broome allows that sometimes duties of justice and duties of goodness conflict; justice tells us not to do something, and goodness tells us to do it. In such cases, 'justice most often wins' (p. 53). Duties of justice are generally considered to have trumping weight against duties of goodness.

Broome denies that individuals have a duty of goodness to reduce their personal greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), on the grounds that there are much better ways to improve the world:

> If, as an individual, you aim to improve the world, reducing your emissions of greenhouse gas is a poor way to do it [...] There are many more effective ways of spending money to extend lives. For example, you could support treatment for tuberculosis, which saves lives at a cost of between $150 and $750 each (pp. 65-66).

But he claims that there is, however, a duty of justice to fully offset personal GHGs, stemming from the requirement not to harm:

> Each of us has a clear duty to emit no greenhouse gas. Emitting greenhouse gas does serious harm to others for our own benefit, and that is morally impermissible. It is an injustice. The duty to emit no greenhouse gas is stringent, but even so it can be satisfied easily and effectively by offsetting. [...] Reducing our emissions to zero, whether by offsetting or in other ways, will not go far toward solving the problem of climate change. We should do it on grounds of justice, not because it is a good way to improve the world (p. 96).
>
> I recommend you to use offsetting as a way to meet your duty of justice not to cause harm (p. 14).

The case is straightforward: individuals must not do harm, and emissions do harm. In fact, not all individuals. Broome has a scope-restriction in mind: 'When I say that greenhouse gas emissions are an injustice, I am referring to the emissions of the rich' (p. 58). This is because in Broome's view, harms are not injustices when they are reciprocal. But the harms done by GHG-emitting actions are *not* reciprocal; they are

disproportionately authored by the rich. Thus the emissions of the rich are harms that count as injustices, while the emissions of the poor may count as harms but do not count as injustices. An average adult in a rich country emits around 800 tonnes of GHGs in her lifetime (p. 74), which does damage estimated to cost between $19,000 and $65,000 (p. 75). Broome makes the strong claim that 'every bit of emission that you do cause is harmful' (p. 77; cf. Lawford-Smith *forthcoming*), based on the fact that emissions spend a very long time in the atmosphere, and so have innumerable opportunities to cause harm. While it is not absolutely certain that the emissions of a particular action cause harm, it is overwhelmingly likely that your cumulative emissions do (pp. 74-78). Moreover, these harms are actively perpetrated by each individual:

> ...the harm caused by your emissions is the result of something you *do*. We make an intuitive distinction between doing harm and failing to prevent harm. Many harms befall the world's poor because of their poverty. When we (the rich) fail to give the poor more money than we do, we fail to prevent those harms. There are reasons for thinking we ought not to make this omission—we ought to send more aid. But we do not do an injustice to the poor by omitting to send more money, provided we do not ourselves cause the harms that befall them. However, emitting greenhouse gas is not like failing to send more aid. In living our lives, we *act* in ways that cause greenhouse gas to be emitted. We cause carbon dioxide to spew from our chimneys and the exhaust pipes of our cars. Our eating causes cattle to be reared and rice to be grown for us, and those agricultural processes emit methane. And so on. These are all the consequences of things we do, rather than things we omit to do (p. 55).

Here Broome buys into the widely-accepted (although nonetheless controversial) privileging of 'doings' as being morally worse than 'allowings', where inflicting a harm upon a person is morally weightier than not intervening when a harm is inflicted upon a person by someone else. We don't merely stand by as climate change happens. Rather we take an active role in inflicting climate change upon the current and future people of the world. Justice requires us not to do no harm, and we violate that requirement by performing GHG-emitting actions.

However, Broome does not think it follows from the general prohibition against causing harm, together with the fact that GHG emissions cause harm, that we are required to not emit GHGs in the first place. That's because it is possible to neutralize the harmful effects of our GHG emissions. We can effectively take our personal GHG emissions to zero, by first emitting at our preferred levels, and then using reliable offsetting programs to neutralize those emissions. We add our body weight and the weight of our luggage to a flight, which causes the aeroplane to burn more fossil fuel, and we add to the demand for flights through our purchase. Booking and taking a flight has a direct and an indirect effect on releasing GHG

emissions into the atmosphere. But if we also plant a certain number of trees and ensure they're kept alive after our deaths (see p. 86), we have a direct effect on removing GHG emissions from the atmosphere. If we get the balance right, we can eliminate the harm we would otherwise have done. Over time, as more people start offsetting and the cheaper options for offsetting are used up, offsetting will become more expensive. This will tip individuals' preferences from emitting at preferred levels and paying to counteract the emissions, toward simply emitting less, in order to avoid the financial expense (see discussion pp. 74-81).

So much for the overview of Broome's argument. Before moving on to the main case against his argument, I want to make three brief comments about the above. First, I said earlier that the requirement to offset, based on a negative duty to do no harm, has a deontic flavour. But Broome's view need not be interpreted as the 'threshold deontological' view that duties of justice are deontic and duties of goodness are consequentialist. Rather, his whole story can be consequentialized, by assigning sufficient disvalue to the fact of *our* emitting, rather than emitting going on. That he takes this view is clear in the passage in which Broome explains Bernard Williams' case of a person being given the option of killing one person in order to prevent several further deaths. Broome says 'the injustice consists in harming, not in merely causing more harm to be done' (p. 84). That what you do makes a difference to the amounts of GHGs in the atmosphere is not the only thing that matters, it also matters that *you* emit and do not offset GHGs.

Sufficient disvalue can be generated through individuals' internalizing the case against emitting-without-offsetting, so that they find it difficult to overcome the impulse to either not emit, or emit-and-offset; even when the stakes are so high that emitting-without-offsetting would be the right thing to do. Williams put this in deontic terms when he says that killing to save the greater number compromises integrity. But the same thought can be captured in consequentialist terms, so long as emitting-without-offsetting generates significant disvalue an individual takes herself to be the kind of person who *wouldn't* emit without offsetting. If we assign disvalue in this way, we can retain the same distinction between duties of justice that require individuals not to do harm, and duties of goodness that require individuals to cause more good to be done, without any deontological theory at all.

Second, a comment on the qualification Broome makes about the role played by benefiting from one's unjust emissions. Here's what he says:

> Remember that you yourself are the beneficiary of your unjust act. Your emissions benefit you, and only a small part of your benefit will be canceled out by the money you send to charity. [...] But what if you are an altruist, and devote all your resources to doing good? That

> is different. If you do not yourself benefit from your emissions, they are not so clearly unjust. Even if they are unjust, their injustice is plausibly made morally permissible by the much greater good that results from them. An altruist has a good case for not offsetting her emissions (pp. 91-92).

This comes in the section 'Objections to Offsetting', which follows the main case for thinking of emissions as unjust harms. It suggests that what is really unjust is not merely emitting, but emitting given that you benefit from those emissions. An altruist, who fully relinquishes any benefits of her emissions by using all her resources to pursue the good, has her emissions characterized as either not unjust, or permissibly unjust insofar as they are counterbalanced by a much greater good.

(When Broome made the point that justice most often trumps goodness (p. 86), the 'most often' qualification was there for cases like these, where the difference in what is gained by doing what is just and what is gained by doing what is good is so immense as to suggest that we should instead choose the good. What is important is that only great gains allow us to violate our duties of justice; we do not simply switch to harming others as soon as there are small incremental gains to be made.)

This suggests that Broome's thinking about the duties of justice the rich have with respect to their GHG emissions are not quite as categorical as he sometimes makes them sound. However, this qualification does not suffice to shield him from the criticism to follow. Most of the GHG emissions of individuals in rich, industrialized countries primarily benefit those individuals, so they will count as doing harm and thereby as unjust on Broome's account. For him, that means those individuals must offset their GHG emissions to zero. I will argue that is not necessarily the case.

Third, and related to the issue just raised about how categorical the duty to offset is supposed to be, Broome would be shielded from the argument in this paper if he were merely taking an 'isolationist' rather than an 'integrationist' approach to climate ethics, in the terms proposed by (Caney 2012, Sec. 2). Isolationist approaches treat issues in different areas in isolation (e.g. considering the implications of climate change only) while integrationist approaches treat them together (e.g. considering the mutual implications of climate change and poverty). Isolationist approaches to climate ethics are vulnerable to the criticism that they give implausible answers to the questions of burden-sharing, distribution of entitlements to emit, climatic impacts, and policy instrument choice; because they ignore the wider context including who is already bearing what burdens, who needs entitlements in order to maintain other important goods, the impacts of climate change on other important goods, and the effects policies would have if they failed to consider all relevant domains (Caney 2012, Sec. 2.A). Furthermore, as an isolationist

claim, 'offset emissions to zero' is not very interesting. Most people would presumably agree that there's a *prima facie* or *pro tanto* case for offsetting. The much more interesting and difficult question is the all-things-considered one. Thus I will proceed on the assumption that Broome's position is integrationist.

III. Against a duty of justice to do no harm

Cautious readers might be suspicious that what's going to follow in this section is a wildly implausible definition of 'harm', on the basis of which a claim can be made that it is impossible for individuals in affluent, industrialized countries to avoid perpetrating injustice on the basis of it. 'All not helping is harming!' 'Failure to do the absolute best you can is harming!' 'Not getting the most bang for your moral buck is harming!' 'Not cooperating with others to radically change the global social order is harming!' The first—the blurring of failing to assist and actively harming—is partially vindicated by an understanding of causation as making more likely,[4] which 'allowings' can do. The latter have all been put forward in the literature, but lack such a vindication. The last shows up in Thomas Pogge's work on the obligations of the affluent to alleviate global poverty, and the second and third have appeared more recently in William MacAskill's arguments against the Ice Bucket Challenge. Pogge defines harm as the failure of individuals together to move to a feasible alternative set of global institutional arrangements, which he refers to as imposing an unjust institutional order upon the global poor (Pogge 2004; 2008); MacAskill defines harm as doing anything other than what is maximally morally efficient (MacAskill 2014). I won't be making use of any such claims.

There are many different ways to characterize 'harm'. We have to make decisions about the nature of the causation involved in harming ('doings' vs. 'allowings', as already mentioned), the subjects of harm (the environment? Whole generations? Future individuals? Current individuals? Non-human animals?), the nature of the harm to those subjects (physical? Psychological? Can a rights violation count?), and the authors of harm (single authors are paradigmatic, but should we also allow multiple authors? If so, should we make distinctions between unorganized groups, loosely organized groups, and highly organized groups?). For my purposes here, rather than characterizing harm in the way I think most plausible, I want to characterize it in the way I think most charitable to Broome's argument. That is to say, in the way that will permit individuals' GHG-emitting actions to generally come out as causing harm (so as not to argue with him about whether in fact they do), and thereby as doing injustice against one or more persons, as he thinks they do.

4 As opposed to the canonical moral-philosophical understanding of causation as producing. See discussion in Schaffer [2003] 2014, esp. Sec 2.

I'll thus accept the standard moral philosophical view of causation as production.[5] I'll maintain a focus on 'doings' to the exclusion of 'allowings', as Broome himself does, and I'll allow both singly- and multiply-authored harms. On this understanding, an individual does harm with her GHG-emitting actions when those actions taken alone produce a harm to one or more of the relevant subjects, or when those actions taken together with the GHG-emitting actions of others produce a harm to one or more of the relevant subjects. Note that assigning duties of justice based on production of harm to subjects *alone* is a departure from the mainstream in moral philosophy, where it is standard to assign responsibility not only when there is production, but when that production is accompanied with intentions of the right kind—or at least with culpable ignorance, recklessness, negligence, or the reasonable foreseeability of harm (see e.g. Miller 2007, pp. 86-90). It's not clear that we can make sense of the idea of intentions for unorganized and loosely organized groups, even if we can for highly organized groups; and more importantly even for individuals and highly organized groups it's not clear that the relevant intentions (etc.) would be present in the case of most GHG-emitting actions.

In departing from the mainstream I'm taking something like a 'strict liability' account of legal obligation, applied to moral duties (duties of justice specifically), so that anyone producing harms through their GHG emissions will have a corresponding duty of justice to offset those harms. (I'll assume that there's no morally significant difference between singly-authored and multiply-authored harms so long as the numbers are proportional: an individual is responsible for her single-authored harm to one subject (where the causal relationship is 1:1) to the same extent as she is responsible for her contribution to a multiply-authored harm—together with the contributions of nine other persons—of ten victims (where the causal relationship is 10:10).[6] As to the subjects of the harms and the nature of the harms to those subjects, I'll be inclusive about these (readers who would prefer a more exclusive focus, e.g. physical harms to current persons only, can feel free to disregard those of the examples given later in this section which lie outside

5 I think moral philosophy is well behind metaphysics when it comes to thinking about causation, but even if 'doings' and 'allowings' are equally causes there might still be morally significant differences between different kinds of causes.

6 I have in mind cases like Glover's, where we compare 100 bandits each stealing 100 beans from one hungry villager each, with 100 bandits each stealing 1 bean from each of 100 hungry villagers (Glover 1975, sec. 3; see also Jackson 1987, pp. 96-98). The causal outcomes are the same: 100 hungry villagers each lose 100 beans. Glover's case is useful because it leaves out certain difficulties, e.g. each of the bandits contributing differently to the causal outcome (e.g. some stealing more beans, some stealing less), or there being a 'moral remainder' such as is created when small contributions accumulate to trigger a large harm, or problems with difference-making created by when contributions are neither necessary nor sufficient to the causal outcome, such as when it is overdetermined (see also discussion in Lawford-Smith *forthcoming*).

that focus).

I have already said that doing a person harm does not always mean doing a person an injustice (see esp. fn. 2). But when it does, must a person never do it? That is to say, when an individual's GHG-emitting actions, alone or together with others', would do harm to at least one person, must the individual either not perform the actions, or neutralize the harm by offsetting the emissions to zero? We know that on Broome's account (on most accounts, in fact) duties of justice almost always take priority over duties of goodness. That tells us that in any standard contest between withholding or offsetting GHG-emitting actions, and performing actions that would increase the good, the former would win out as the thing to do.

But what about in a contest between *different duties of justice?* While Broome acknowledges that there will sometimes be a conflict between duties of justice and duties of goodness (p. 53), he seems to overlook the possibility of conflict between duties of justice themselves. Broome thinks that individuals (in rich countries) have a duty of justice to offset their emissions to zero. If there were no conflict between different duties of justice, he could move between the *pro tanto* and all-things-considered claims with ease: *pro tanto* duty to offset; no conflict (and no extreme circumstances that would allow maximising the good to take precedence); all-things-considered duty to offset. If there is conflict, however, what to do remains an open question.

The main claim I want to make in this paper is that there is conflict, because our duties of justice are not (or are barely) compossible, and that this conflict reintroduces the issue of moral tradeoffs more familiar from thinking about duties to maximize the good. I'll argue that this conflict makes a duty to *do no injustice* implausible, and instead permits at most a duty to *minimize injustice*. In that case, the question shifts to where in the hierarchy of injustices GHG-emitting actions fall. If they're the worst, then Broome can still move with ease from the *pro tanto* to the all-things-considered. If they're not, it might then turn out that it's not the case after all that an individual ought (all-things-considered) to offset her GHG emissions to zero.

The apparently ordinary actions we perform with respect to what we eat; what we drink; what we wear; what we use; what we watch; what we listen to; the technologies with which we watch and listen; what we decorate our houses and apartments with; what we play sports with; which companies and corporations we buy from; which cafes, restaurants, and bars we frequent; (...the list goes on); all—very often, perhaps almost always—cause, either alone or together with others' actions, harms. These include harms to adult workers who are paid unfair wages, forced into degrading or humiliating work, subject to cramped and uncomfortable conditions, and worked beyond the point of physical, mental and emotional

exhaustion; harms against children, who are forced to work down mines, or as child soldiers, or in sweatshops; harms to non-human animals, which are kept under conditions of torture in factory farms, killed inhumanely, maintained in a state of perpetual pregnancy, forced to live in confined areas; harms to the environment, through deforestation, unsustainable use of land, pollution, contamination of freshwater supplies, decreases in biodiversity, and depletion of the ozone layer. We cannot buy non-organic meat and dairy without risking contribution to the harms of the agricultural industry, and you cannot buy soy-based substitutes without risking contribution to the harms perpetrated by e.g. Monsanto. We cannot buy a desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone (with the exception of the recent Fairphone) without risking contribution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, driven by the mining of Coltan.

We cannot buy gold, diamonds, and precious stones more generally without increasing demand for the large proportion of them mined in conflict conditions. We cannot purchase oil, or petrol, without increasing demand for natural resources many of which have been appropriated by ruthless dictators who use the profits to keep themselves in power and oppress the populations over which they have control (including very serious human rights violations and severe gender-based discrimination). We cannot eat in a multi-national fast-food restaurant without risking contributing to their paying their workers—or the farmers from which they source their ingredients—too little. A great many edible products contain palm oil, but buying palm oil risks contributing to deforestation. A great many items of clothing and sporting equipment and household goods are made in sweatshops and from non-organic cotton or materials otherwise involving unsustainable usage of land. A great many of the movies and television shows we watch, and songs and comedy shows we listen to, perpetuate misogyny, and racism, and ableism. A great many companies outsource labour to developing countries where workers are not paid fair wages or provided with tolerable working conditions. (We can understand many of these injustices in terms of a violation of workers' labour rights. Whether these injustices are based on *harms* depends on whether the workers have been made better off than they would otherwise have been.[7] See discussion in Pasternak 2014; for more on unethical consumption in general see Lawford-Smith 2015.)

Aside from all the harms we contribute to through our ordinary acts of consumption, there are also further domestic harms, such as the micro-aggressions and micro-harms of everyday racism, sexism, ageism, and ableism (Brennan 2014); and global harms, such as our ongoing hold on property which is not rightfully ours given historical injustices that have not been superseded, and social advantages that

7 See also fn. 2.

are not rightfully ours given the unjust socio-economic conditions in our respective societies. Notice that so far I have not said a thing about GHG emissions! These are a further way in our apparently ordinary actions do harm. Sometimes one of our actions does dual harm, because it both contributes to harm to the environment, workers, children, or animals, *and* because it produces GHG emissions which will cause further harms to current persons, future generations, non-human animals, and the environment. Not all of these harms will count as injustices (see fn. 2), but many—perhaps most—will. The bottom line is that there's injustice based on harming just about everywhere we look. For the individual who actually notices just how bad a situation she is in (many don't), the moral advice 'do no injustice' is frustratingly simplistic. She can hardly avoid it.

There are two main ways to underpin the claim that individuals can hardly avoid doing injustice with their apparently ordinary actions. Accept for the sake of argument that all the harms I've pointed to above give individuals a *pro tanto* duty of justice, either to withhold the relevant actions, to neutralize the harm done by them, or to compensate or otherwise make reparation for the damage done by them. One way an individual could hardly avoid doing injustice would be by the *pro tanto* duties of justice taken together failing to be compossible for her. She could fulfil some such duties; but she couldn't fulfil all of them together. Another way an individual could hardly avoid doing injustice would be by the *pro tanto* duties of justice taken together being overly demanding. She could fulfil all such duties, but to do so would ask more of her than we think it appropriate for morality to ask. I said in the Introduction that it is infeasible that the individual do no injustice. That is a weaker claim than that it is impossible, that the *pro tanto* duties of justice taken together fail to be compossible. I think it probably is possible, but that it would require a radical change in lifestyle (perhaps to the extent of quitting one's job, giving up many of one's projects, sacrificing friendships, drastically changing habits), and a massive commitment to ongoing research (because information about how one's actions involve one in injustice is constantly being updated and revised). We could, after all, move into the country, grow our own organic vegetables to eat, and cut out all of the consumption and activity that would have involved us in the production of unjust harms.

Short of this, we're involved in collective action problems, where changes to entire systems could be brought about by many people acting together, but cannot plausibly be brought about by any one of us acting alone (if we, together, really wanted our technologies to not implicate us in the mining of conflict minerals, we'd incentivize a company to produce a fair laptop, tablet, and desktop computer, and then it would no longer be the case that our choice was between a contribution to injustice, or no laptop, tablet, or desktop computer at all). Thus the claim that duties

of justice conflict, and that an individual can hardly avoid doing injustice, is underpinned by a notion of demandingness.

Many authors agree that we are required to take on greater costs to fulfil duties of justice than we are to fulfil duties of goodness. For example, if I have physically assaulted you, the duties of reparation I have toward you can be much more demanding of me than if I have no connection to you but you're suffering and I'm in a position to help you. Demandingness corresponds, in some rough sense, to whether we're dealing in duties of justice or duties of goodness (or duties of another kind). Still, this only tells us that the threshold might be higher than we think. To really give a verdict on whether morality could require individuals to do no injustice, given the extent of the injustice they do, we'd have to see an individual make a unilateral attempt to completely extricate herself. My suspicion is that if we saw what she had to give up, both objectively and in comparison to those around her (particularly those with whom she has important relationships), we'd judge such a requirement to be overly demanding.

If this is the case, then the duty to offset GHG emissions to zero, a duty of justice based on the harm done by GHG emissions of those in rich countries, is *pro tanto* but not necessarily all-things-considered. Offsetting matters, but it's not clear *how much it matters* compared against other duties of justice. Unless we want to throw our hands in the air and concede that when it comes to duties of justice 'anything goes', we'll have to offer some moral advice as to what an individual should actually do. In a situation such as many people are currently in, in which they're implicated in many injustices, and in which those injustices are not compossible, or barely compossible, or compossible but only at extraordinarily high cost to the individual which most would judge to be overly demanding, what should they do? The answer is obvious: they should *minimize injustice* (or avoid injustice entirely by minimizing harm). This is just as when it comes to goodness, the general imperative is to *maximize the good.*

An individual can minimize injustice in the following ways. If all the injustices she has a *pro tanto* duty not to do have equal weight, she should do as few injustices as she can up to the relevant threshold of demandingness. If all the injustices she has a *pro tanto* duty not to do have differential weight, she should do as few of the worst injustices she can up to the relevant threshold of demandingness. The general point is that Broome's characterization of offsetting GHG emissions to zero as a requirement of justice doesn't yet tell us that *what a person should actually do is offset her GHG emissions to zero*. What she should do depends on whether by offsetting her GHG emissions, she would be implicated in less injustice than by *not* offsetting her emissions and instead fulfilling some other duties of justice. But if offsetting isn't

an efficacious way to maximize goodness, then it likely isn't an efficacious way to minimize injustice either.

IV. Is offsetting GHG emissions required all-things-considered?

Does a duty to minimize injustice (or, more precisely, a duty of justice to minimize certain kinds of harms) entail a duty to offset emissions to zero? In other words, is the duty to offset emissions merely *pro tanto,* or is it all-things-considered? We need some sense of the injustices potentially competing with anthropogenic climate change in order to adjudicate on whether offsetting emissions is required all-things-considered or only *pro tanto*. It's no simple task to catalogue these.

In the above, I mentioned harms to the environment such as deforestation, unsustainable land use, pollution, freshwater contamination, decreased biodiversity, and ozone layer depletion; harms to adult workers paid unfair wages and worked to exhaustion in appalling conditions; harms to children forced to work in mines, as soldiers, as prostitutes; harms to non-human animals suffering in factory farms; the harms of conflict mineral mining that many of our technologies involve us in; the harms to workers and environment done by the various companies and corporations we buy from; and the harms the popular entertainment we consume often does against women, non-whites, disabled people (and many other groups).

Judith Lichtenberg, drawing on a range of sources to enumerate what she calls 'the New Harms'—large-scale harms to which we contribute together, lists harms to which we each make a causal contribution. Excluding those that are mainly about GHG emissions, which compose a large part of her list, there is also overfishing, groundwater pollution via chemical fertilizers, sweatshops, stocks and shares in companies that exploit their workers, and conflict minerals (Lichtenberg 2010, p. 559).

It is clear that if we can minimize harm by extricating ourselves from contribution to *everything* in this catalogue, without exceeding the relevant threshold on demandingness, we should. If we can't, we'll have to start making tradeoffs, prioritizing avoidance of contribution to the injustices with the greatest moral weight. I have said already that I think we can't extricate ourselves without exceeding the relevant threshold. Our obligation is to minimize injustice, and that means making tradeoffs between different injustices. How does offsetting GHG emissions fare in such a tradeoff?

For Broome to be correct in arguing that individuals have a duty of justice to offset their GHG emissions to zero, such duties would have to be *more weighty* than individuals' duties to 'offset' their contributions to overfishing and pollution and sweatshops and corporate exploitation and conflict minerals and everything else.

Possibly he could make that argument by pitting the long(er)-term effects of climate change against the short(er)-term effects of e.g. corporate exploitation; or by 'bundling' climate change together with other issues (offsetting minimizes injustice in pollution and climate change simultaneously); or by comparing numbers, either in mortality or in health (arguing e.g. that climate change will kill or hurt more people than overfishing or sweatshops). He hasn't made any of these arguments, though.

While some injustices are commensurable, such as those that kill different numbers of people, or those that adversely affect the health of different numbers of people or the same number of people to different degrees; others are incommensurable, such as those that impact humans compared with those that impact non-human animals. Some injustices are not strictly incommensurable, but nonetheless raise controversial moral questions about the valuing of different lives, such as injustices against co-nationals compared against injustices against distant strangers, or injustices against current generations compared against injustices against future generations. Moreover, individuals are embedded in different networks of social relationships and have different past experiences which may make them more sympathetic to victims of particular injustices and less sympathetic to victims of others. Incommensurability, reasonable disagreement, and differences in sympathy may be sufficient to undermine the case for a hierarchy of injustices.

In that case, the injunction to 'minimize injustice' would not require starting with the worst and working upwards until the threshold of demandingness is reached. Rather, because there's no way to identify the worst, it would allow individuals to choose which injustices to extricate themselves from, perhaps on the basis of their own sympathies. (Furthermore, to reintroduce a complication mentioned earlier, extremely great gains in goodness might justify small losses in justice, which reintroduces the possibility that fulfilling duties to maximize the good might sometimes take priority over fulfilling duties to minimize injustice. Broome acknowledges this when talking about the non-offsetting altruist (pp. 91-92).)

The point is that we don't have an all-things-considered duty of justice to offset our GHG emissions to zero. We have a *pro tanto* duty to offset our emissions. Whether that duty is also all-things-considered depends on whether it is excluded by our fulfilling other—weightier (assuming commensurability) or equally weighty (assuming incommensurability)—duties of justice. The only person who clearly violates her duties of justice is the person who does *nothing at all* to withdraw herself from making the relevant contributions to the catalogue of injustices given above. The person who does one of these things (or more) satisfies them, so long as she does enough.

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