


Chapter 3


Climate Justice for the Sundarbans: Integrating Local Tribal Health Rights With Global Policy Solutions

Oindrilla Ghosh

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9609-0781>

Christ University, India

Binod Kumar

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-9721-1367>

Radha Govind University, India

ABSTRACT

Climate justice emphasizes the moral imperative to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change on marginalized communities while striving for global sustainability. As local communities often bear the brunt of environmental degradation, their needs must be prioritized to achieve equitable solutions. This concept acknowledges that climate issues intersect with social inequities, demanding actions that not only reduce carbon emissions but also address poverty, health, and access to resources. Effective climate justice strategies integrate diverse perspectives, fostering collaboration across borders and sectors. By aligning grassroots initiatives with global climate goals, we can create comprehensive solutions that enhance resilience and promote social justice. Ultimately, climate justice advocates for a holistic approach to sustainability, recognizing that local actions are fundamental to achieving global climate objectives.

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-1310-8.ch003

INTRODUCTION

The Sundarbans, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the largest mangrove ecosystem in the world, is a unique ecological treasure (Gómez-Baggethun et al., 2012) that spans across India and Bangladesh (Sahana et al., 2021). This vast delta region is home to a rich biodiversity, including the illustrious Bengal tiger, and functions as a critical buffer against climate-induced threats (Yohe and Tol, 2002) like rising sea levels and extreme weather events (Das & Hazra, 2020). However, the Sundarbans also face profound socio-economic challenges fueled by climate change (Cutter et al., 2003), which exacerbate existing inequalities and threaten the health rights of local communities (Kanjilal et al., 2010). Climate justice emerges as a vital framework for addressing these intersecting crises (Armitage, 2005), highlighting the need for equitable solutions that prioritize the health and wellbeing of marginalized populations (Ahsan & Warner, 2014).

Climate justice is rooted in the understanding that climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable communities those with the least resources and capacity (Adger et al., 2005) for adaptation are often on the frontlines of environmental degradation (Danda et al., 2019). In the Sundarbans, local populations rely on natural resources for their livelihoods, including fishing, agriculture, and forest products (Panda et al., 2016). Climate change, driven by global industrial practices, threatens their existence as intensified storms (Biesbroek et al., 2013), salinity intrusions, and unpredictable weather patterns disrupt traditional ways of life (Kanjilal et al., 2013). In this context, climate justice seeks to integrate local health rights recognizing the right to health as essential to survival into policy narratives (Smit and Pilifosova, 2003) that transcend local boundaries and engage with global climate politics (Savacool, 2018).

Integrating local health rights into global climate policy solutions is both a moral imperative and a practical necessity (Mistri, 2019). Health outcomes are directly influenced by environmental conditions, and the impacts of climate change manifest as increased morbidity and mortality from diseases (Berkes, 2009), mental health challenges, and food insecurity (Alam & Bhardwaj, 2020). For instance, extreme weather events can lead to malnutrition and waterborne diseases (Midgley, 1995), further compromising health systems already plagued by poverty and marginalization (Roy, 2018). By advocating for the health rights of Sundarbans communities within global climate frameworks, stakeholders aim to elevate local voices (Elliot, 1993), ensuring their needs and perspectives inform climate action plans (Rashad Al Mahamud et al., 2020).

Moreover, climate justice emphasizes accountability for historical injustices (Savacool, 2011) particularly in the context of developed nations that have contributed disproportionately to greenhouse gas emissions (Saif et al., 2016). Global climate

30 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/climate-justice-for-the-sundarbans/388573

Related Content

Managing Climate Change Shocks: South African Wine Industry and Cape Town's Adaptation to the "Day Zero" Water Crisis

Lucky Diliza Madikiza (2026). *Designing Effective Public Policies to Address Global Warming* (pp. 317-340).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/managing-climate-change-shocks/388583

Promoting Artificial Intelligence in UAE's Teacher Education: Global Insights on Ethics, Policies, and Emerging Practices

Ayman Massouti (2026). *Building a Unified Teacher Licensing System: Policies, Education Reforms, and Cultural Integration* (pp. 251-278).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/promoting-artificial-intelligence-in-uaes-teacher-education/386443

Climate Crisis and The Future of Renewable Energy in the Turkic Republics

Baybarshan Ali Kazanc, Osman Furkan Furkan Arslanand Selin Dinçer (2024). *Analyzing Energy Crises and the Impact of Country Policies on the World* (pp. 178-194).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/climate-crisis-and-the-future-of-renewable-energy-in-the-turkic-republics/335609

Globalization, Cultural Competence, and English Language Education 5.0 Policy Implications and Strategies

Haida Umiera Hashim (2024). *Preconceptions of Policies, Strategies, and Challenges in Education 5.0* (pp. 1-16).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/globalization-cultural-competence-and-english-language-education-50-policy-implications-and-strategies/351863

The Carceral State of American Schools: The Impact of Symbolic Threat of Public School Policy

N. Alexander Aguadoand Justin J. Joseph (2023). *Addressing Violence in the U.S. Public School System* (pp. 1-25).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-carceral-state-of-american-schools/322998