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Climate justice discussions need new participants and new audiences

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We greatly appreciate Coolsaet et al.'s correspondence, which gives us the opportunity to clarify and emphasize the scope and intended use of our framework.

With respect to scope, we are in agreement with our colleagues that various forms of justice (i.e., distributional, procedural, etc.) have been discussed in different disciplines. We thus believe, as stated in our paper, that the novelty of our contribution lies not predominantly "in the philosophical structure, but in the cross-disciplinary translation [of philosophical concepts], the clarity of exposition and ease of application" (*1*). For instance, by indicating how the various forms of justice are independent, we hope to facilitate researchers finding and specifying the precise forms of justice that are most relevant to their own projects.

That being said, we disagree that this intervention is neither new nor useful. We were motivated by the fact that the global modelling and scenario-building communities have made few efforts to systematically and consistently integrate concepts of justice into their work. There is a need for a central and accessible discussion that facilitates these efforts. Indeed, building capacity in these communities to better understand *how* to include equity and justice in scenario analysis was one of the central recommendations of the recent IPCC workshop on scenarios (*2*).

While we agree thus that our framework builds on earlier justice scholarship (predominantly philosophical), we think that there is at least one novel conceptual

contribution. Our contrast between distributional justice (as a static evaluation of ideal end-states) and our use of the term “transitional justice” (as evaluations of the dynamics between forms of justice) is quite distinctive in the literature [and, *pace* Coolsaet et al., is not discussed in (*3*)]. We believe that this contrast is especially useful in the context of just transitions and long-term scenarios, where the issue is how to evaluate pathways with heterogeneous justice implications and even trade-offs.

However, there is a deeper methodological point raised by our colleagues about various drivers and sources of injustice. They rightly point to various prejudices and ideologies, including racism, speciesism, colonialism and capitalism, which can and have contributed to injustices historical and contemporary.

First, adopting this focus on injustice is not inconsistent with the framework. On the contrary, we think our framework can be complementary to such positions. For instance, corrective justice can be the appropriate form of justice in response to historical wrongdoing while distributional justice can be an element in the appropriate response to inequities resulting from various economic structures. More broadly, drawing attention to researcher choices with respect to metrics and indicators as being matters of justice can inform both how we come to understand injustice and how we can develop responses to it (4).

Second, our project's primary intentions are to enable communication and discussion facilitated by categorizing concepts and terms in a standpoint-independent manner. By providing a systemic framework structure, we want to facilitate discussion of, and encourage research into, these drivers and mechanisms of injustices – instead of to show or explain them. These concepts can then be taken up in standpoint-dependent claims and research. We believe such normative concepts are, for instance, especially valuable for climate scenario researchers, given the strong influence this community has on the overall climate change research and policy-making field. For instance, while the IPCC's latest mitigation report concludes that "Explicit attention to equity and justice is salient to both social acceptance and fair and effective policymaking for mitigation", it does not systematically analyze considerations of justice along the climate mitigation pathways it highlights. Nor are knowledge gaps addressed, such as "equity frameworks [that] quantify equitable international support" (*5*). Hence, in full appreciation of Coolsaet et al.'s reflections but in strong contrast to their conclusions, we believe that the availability of such a standpoint-independent conceptual framework will contribute to both understanding of and increased uptake of climate justice.

Our colleagues might disagree with standpoint-independence here (or may be skeptical of standpoint-independence *tout court*). However, we believe that giving up on the possibility of standpoint-independence would undermine hopes for transparent and successful discussion of climate justice. Discussions of climate justice should allow – at least in principle – a broad range of approaches and participants. Critical and

standpoint-dependent interventions, e.g. as pushed by environmental justice theorists, are important, but there is also space for contributions like ours with more theoretical discussions of justice.

In closing, we very much appreciate the points raised by our colleagues, because we believe they help demonstrate the value of having such a standpoint-independent framework within which to identify and critically debate the drivers of injustice. We do not see any arguments by Coolsaet et al. that would necessitate revisions of this justice framework. We believe this standpoint-independent framing acts as a first step for the climate community to reflect on these deeper justice considerations and the moral concerns of future pathways.

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Competing Interests

The authors declare no competing interests.