

Ethics and global climate change wk6 assignment



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Ethics and Global Climate Change al Affiliation Ethics and Global Climate Change Stephen Gardiner argues that the richer nations should pay most of the costs for addressing global warming. What are Gardiner's strongest reasons for believing this? From Gardiner's (2004) arguments, readers are presented with apparent justifications for believing that richer nations should pay most of the costs for addressing global warming. Among the strongest reasons include: (1) backward-looking or historical considerations which emphasized that since " developed countries are responsible for a very large percentage of historical emissions... (thus) historical principles of justice... require that one " clean up one's own mess." This suggests that the industrialized countries should bear the costs imposed by their past emissions" (Gardiner, 2004, p. 579); and (2) the sink consideration where it was expounded that " the developed countries have largely exhausted the capacity in the process of industrializing and so have, in effect, denied other countries the opportunity to use " their shares." On this view, justice seems to require that the developed countries compensate the less developed for this overuse" (Gardiner, 2004, p. 580). Do you find his rationales singly or collectively persuasive? One strongly finds Gardiner's rationales collectively persuasive. His explanations were accurately justified that developed countries have the responsibility to pay most of the costs for addressing global warming since the root causes and contributory factors were allegedly instigated by them. These two rationales were noted to be distinct, yet, compatible. The historical considerations were viable and easily understood to be directly contributory to the amount and extent of global warming through the emissions excreted to the earth's atmosphere as a result of industrialization. As emphasized by Gardiner (2004) both carbon dioxide and <https://assignbuster.com/ethics-and-global-climate-change-wk6-assignment/>

methane remain in the earth's atmosphere for considerable lengths of time: "CO₂ lasts much longer in the atmosphere (about 5-200 years, as opposed to methane's 12 years)" (p. 561). Therefore, these amounts were therefore products of years of historical excretion from these developed countries and it would be futile to deny responsibility and accountability for them. Likewise, the counterarguments for the backward looking perspective which was stated as " , until comparatively recently, the developed countries were ignorant of the effects of their emissions on the climate and so should not be held accountable for past emissions" (Gardiner, 2004, p. 581) is gravely unsubstantiated. As it is common knowledge, ignorance does not justify appropriate accountability for one's actions. Furthermore, using ethical and moral standards, Gardiner further explained that " in the case of the historical principle, if the harm inflicted on the world's poor is severe, and if they lack the means to defend themselves against it, it seems odd to say that the rich nations have no obligation to assist, especially when they could do so relatively easily and are in such a position largely because of their previous causal role" (2004, p. 581). The sink considerations were likewise appropriately justified as Gardiner asserted that " a party deprived of its share of a common resource ought to be compensated both for that and for the fact that material harm has been inflicted upon it as a direct result of the deprivation" (2004, p. 580). The author explained that it would be ethically and morally justified to compensate an aggrieved party for the part or share of a resource that is clearly used by the developed nations and as a result, further jeopardy was inflicted from potential and actual damages that ensue from being deprived. Ethical considerations were more effectively explained and cited from the work of Shue (1994) who asserted that " if you deprive

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me of my share of an important resource, perhaps one necessary to my very survival, it seems odd to say that you have no obligation to assist because you were ignorant of what you were doing at the time. This is especially so if your overuse both effectively denies me the means of extricating myself from the problem you have created and also further reduces the likelihood of fair outcomes on this and other issues" (cited by Gardiner, 2004, p. 581). Overall, one strongly agrees with Gardiner's assertion that the richer nations should pay most of the costs for addressing global warming due to historical or backward looking considerations and the sink considerations that identified proper responsibility and due accountability for facilitating and instigating the factors that led to climate change. References Gardiner, S. (2004). Ethics and Global Climate Change. *Ethics*, 555-600. Shue, Henry. 1994. After You: May Action by the Rich Be Contingent Upon Action by the Poor? *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 1: 343-66.