

Anand, Ruchi (Hrsg.): *International Environmental Justice. A North-South Dimension*. Aldershot: Ashgate 2004. ISBN: 0-7546-3824-3; 149 S.

Rezensioniert von: Isabella Löhr, Zentrum für Höhere Studien, Universität Leipzig

Ruchi Anand's study is dedicated to the major problem in recent debates on international developmental policy: the disparity between the so-called northern developed and the southern developing countries. The author approaches the topic by focusing on international environmental policy as a point of intersection for ecological and developmental tasks, asking if any paradigms of environmental justice exist which can propel an international strategy that balances the political, social and economic interests of the northern and southern countries. The study is published in the new series „Ethics and Global Politics“ and is introduced by a foreword from the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), R. K. Pachauri, who underlines the fundamental relevance of the topic for concrete political negotiations on international environmental policy.

According to the author, environmental policy adds a qualitatively new dimension to scientific research on international politics and international law because „the environmental constitutes a 'global common'" (p. 17), needing an interdisciplinary and more contextualized problematisation which does not merely contain a political and institutional analysis of international policy. That is to say, environmental policy offers the potential to link the complexity between environmental issues with social, political and economic hierarchies in world policy. At this point Anand makes a connection to her research by outlining an ethical approach which is not intended to rest at an analytical stage but to be applied to future decision-making in international policy „in order to achieve a just and humane interaction between rich and poor countries“ in an „international order where concerns of justice are taken into consideration, especially for a problem such as environmental destruction, which requires coop-

erative efforts from each state, and each individual“ (p. 19).

The following chapters explore this issue with the help of three case studies on climate change, hazardous waste and the politics concerning the ozone layer. The leading question of the analysis of contemporary and recent international environmental policy inquires into the role, importance and function of environmental justice as a principle, which seeks sustainable and equitable international decision-making. But the author does not define the ethical paradigms which can be crucial for the term 'environmental justice' and prefers to give a descriptive explanation of what can be understood by environmental justice: „The basic issues concerning environmental justice are determining what is fair, to whom it is fair, to whom it is not fair and how these determinations are made about rights, fairness and entitlements to justice, etc.“ (p. 14).

The second chapter deals with climate change and the question of who is responsible for the increasing emissions, who suffers most under the longterm ecological and hygienic consequences of climatic change and who is ready to assume the responsibility for these issues. With the help of several tables the author lists the permissible and exceeded emissions of developing and developed countries. She also provides insight into the reasoning of the countries involved either not to lower the emission rate or not to protest against the high emission rates. Anand concludes that the developing countries suffer the greatest ecological consequences without causing them and without benefitting from the wealth which high-emission industries generate. With the help of a cost-benefit analysis, Anand postulates a power differential between the developed and the developing countries which allows the former to disregard protest from the latter and to exclude them from negotiating international conventions or from exercising any influence on environmental decision-making. The third chapter continues by exploring the export of hazardous waste between the OECD-countries and developing countries. The topic of „garbage imperialism“ or „toxic imperialism“ (p. 62) is analyzed from

the failure of the Basel Convention to prohibit the export of such materials. The author ascribes this lack of success mostly to the vague definitions of „hazardous waste,“ which tacitly sanctions misuse of the Convention. Again, she presents a cost-benefit analysis for the participants and repeats the claim that developed countries export their environmental problems, forcing developing countries to shoulder the social and economic burden without profit. The author concludes that justice and fairness were not leading principles for the convention and that the northern states not only benefitted from the lack of stringent regulations but also made the export of hazardous waste a „lucrative business“ (p. 86).

Discussion the politics of ozone emissions, the fourth chapter, gives an example of successful international cooperation on environmental questions. Anand analyses the process by which the „ozone regime“ was created. Most importantly, the developed countries insisted that developing countries participate in the negotiating process in the 1980s, even when they did not participate from the beginning. But, according to the author, it was important that the northern states were not able to export their environmental problems caused by ozone output and thus accepted the responsibility. Consequently, Anand states, they were strongly interested in establishing a worldwide valid ozone regime. Questioning the role of ethical paradigms like justice, equity and fairness in this procedure, the author gives differing statements. First, Anand underlines the meaning of these paradigms, playing „an indispensable role in determining the success of the ozone regime“ (p. 116). But at the same time she admits that the „willingness by the North to accept demands of the South was not solely based on a sense of responsibility by developed countries“ but on the insight that the efforts of the North would not countervail against the ozone problem so that finally „vulnerability of the industrialized North was the decisive factor in the success of the ozone – not international environmental justice“ (p. 118).

In the final chapter, Anand reflects on the impact and empirical relevance of environmental justice on international policy. Anand

deals with with some critics who point out that the notions justice, equality and fairness are universal categories whose empirical application cannot consider the differing interests, perspectives and reasons of the actors. But she does not respond to the serious objection that such a speech in itself carries out a certain point of view which is hidden behind a universalizing vocabulary and thus gives a distorted reflection of the problematic issues. Anand tries to solve the problem by insisting on the central categories of procedural and distributive justice, assuming that „the meaningful involvement and fair participation of each party to negotiations“ and of „how costs and benefits are distributed among parties“ (p. 128) suffice to guarantee ‘justice’, ‘equity’ and ‘fairness’ in international environmental decision-making. Yet the study lacks any ethical discussion in general and of the case studies in particular, as each is immediately described in terms of interest and cost-benefit. But there is no indication of how these interests evolved. Likewise, the reader wonders who lurks concretely behind the categories North, South, developed, and developing. These homogenised groups consist of differing parties that do not necessarily share the same interests. Finally, the vague yet central categories tend to polarise and oversimplify the possible arguments and standpoints and incorporate morally charged connotations to the debate.

As to the notion of environmental justice, Anand comes to a confusing result. She insists on the importance of justice, fairness and equity in the process of international decision-making, although the manner in which she presents the case studies shows that these notions are superseded by categories of interest. Thus she closes with the claim that these ethical categories should have a more prominent role in international policy.

In summary, the study raises politically important issues and tries to create an awareness that environmental policy is important to the success of developmental policy. Conversely, failure to consider this point can hinder environmental progress. From this perspective, the book is worth reading, although it suffers from a lack of theoretical reflection and repeats the same narrative, sometimes word by

word, when discussing the „north-south“ dimension of international environmental justice.

HistLit 2005-1-054 / Isabella Löhr über Anand, Ruchi (Hrsg.): *International Environmental Justice. A North-South Dimension*. Aldershot 2004, in: H-Soz-Kult 21.01.2005.