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**Common but Differentiated Responsibilities: Agency in Climate Justice**

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**Abstract:** Ethical challenges concerning climate change most often involve two issues that are tightly connected. The first is considerations about the just distribution of entitlements and burdens, and the second concerns the fair differentiation of responsibilities. The distribution of entitlements and burdens can be assessed by relying on one or combinations of principles of climate justice. Although the fairness of any differentiation of responsibilities must rely on these principles of justice, the applicability of these principles and the demands they make strongly depend on the agents bearing the responsibility and what policy domains are at issue. Not all agents can be ascribed the same responsibilities, and not all measures for climate action can or should be realized by the same differentiation of responsibilities.

This paper examines how the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities depends on the domain and level of climate policy. It is not only the subjects of responsibility that may change, depending on whether mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage, or geoengineering policy is at issue. The different policy domains also determine different objects of responsibility. Since the responsibility bearers are embedded in complex nets of responsibilities, the level of climate policy defines different institutions and principles of accountability. Common but differentiated responsibilities is not only the starting-point of climate justice but also shapes what combinations of principles of justice are most appropriate, depending on the domain and level of climate policy at scrutiny.

**Keywords:** common but differentiated responsibilities, collective agency, collective responsibility, climate justice

**Biography:** I studied philosophy and German language, received my PhD in 2010, managed to programme Advanced Studies in Applied Ethics at the University of Zurich and since 2018 I’m assistant professor and director at the University of Fribourg Environmental Sciences and Humanities Institute. In my research I specialise in the challenges of environmental governance, environmental and climate justice as well as in international climate policy.