EurSafe News

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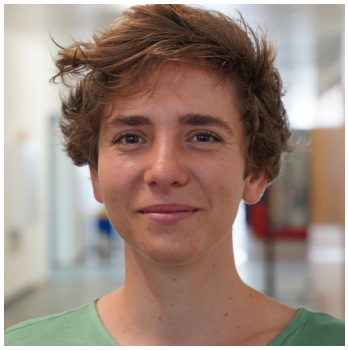
Dear EurSafe members,



The report published by working group III of the IPCC in April this year received little public attention due to other crises, although its findings are alarming. While the effects of climate change are becoming more and more visible, climate change action and policies are lagging behind. Responding to climate change means addressing the question of how we can adapt to changed climatic conditions. Among the main messages of the report of working group III is the appeal to transform current systems – such as energy and food systems – to both decrease emissions and adapt to the changes in the environment. This transformation poses deep moral challenges.

Responding to climate change also means figuring out the responsibilities that climate change creates and how they should be met. If we strive for climate justice, who should undertake the efforts to undergo transition, how should the burdens of transition and adaptation be distributed, and what criteria should be met by climate change policies?

I am happy to say that this newsletter under the title *'Responding to Climate Change'* addresses both these aspects in its various contributions. First, and on the topic of this year's conference, Teea Kortetmäki's contribution *'Just Transition in Food Systems'* gives us an introduction to how the term 'just transition' is approached under the lens of

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ethics in food systems. Given the challenges of conceptualizing justice and ethics in the context of transition, she points to various tasks that philosophers and ethicists can and should take up.

Second, Laura García-Portela's contribution *'Climate change, human rights and burden-sharing'* puts questions of climate change responsibility in the spotlight. How are climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies motivated from an ethical perspective, and how can they be shared? Laura provides us with an insight into possible answers to both these questions, by making an appeal to human rights and proposing a bundle of principles for burden-sharing.

Third, Simon Meisch and co-authors' piece *'Changing climate, changing beekeeping'* illustrates a case of what such a response to climate change could look like, drawing on the example of beekeeping. As both beekeeping and food production are influenced by climate change, the project *BeeWare* aims at mobilizing the knowledge and practices of beekeepers in order to respond to climate change.

To point to an inspiring publication for a broad audience on the question of climate justice, I included my short review of *'What Climate Justice Means and Why We Should Care'* by Elizabeth Cripps, senior lecturer at the University of Edinburgh, published in February this year.

As the conference in Edinburgh will be ongoing when this newsletter is published, Donald Bruce outlines the aims of the conference. Writing this in July 2022 after having read through the program listing such a variety of talks, I want to thank them in advance for the organization of this conference and for encouraging discussions on these timely topics.

Regarding our member's section, I'd like to thank Franck Meijboom for his update from the board and Tristan Katz for outlining his is PhD project on questions of wildlife management. I'd like to congratulate Stef Aerts and Mickey Gjerris for their achievements.

Finally, I hope we will be able to enjoy more conferences in person in the next few months – two suggestions are mentioned in the last section. Following up on last year's conference in Fribourg, I am very excited to point out that the topical collection on *'Justice and Food Security in a Changing Climate'* will be published in the Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics, edited by Ivo Wallimann-Helmer, Matthias Eggel, and myself. I'd like to thank all the authors and reviewers for engaging with us in this process.

As climate change is impacting all ways of life, I believe it is an even stronger responsibility of ours to engage with each other across disciplines and to foster dialogues between scientists and beyond to make transformation and adaptation possible. With this in mind, I wish you all insightful and lively discussions at the EurSafe 2022 conference!

With best wishes,

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paper

Just transition in food systems

Teea Kortetmäki

Mitigating climate change will require significant transformations in food systems. This generates a new topic for food ethics: research regarding the ethics and impacts of food system low-carbon transitions. While ethics has long discussed about responsibilities to respond to climate change, this new topic about the impacts of such responses is called just transition and it refers both to public discourse and research on these matters.

Just transition concerns justice in emission mitigation activities and their un/intended side effects. It implies asking who will win and who will lose in the course of (low-carbon) transition and which gains and losses are relevant for justice. Ethics can also study how to define just transition in politics and research, and related entitlements and obligations. The importance of just transition relates to the need to avoid intolerable side effects on the course of much-needed climate action. Because food production and consumption invoke so richly questions relevant to ethics (as EurSafe conferences demonstrate), it is not surprising that the initial energy transition oriented just transition research has become to involve food system considerations.

Themes

Just transition is a buzzword in climate discourses, used by actors with diverging interests. Researchers have begun to identify questions that arise as ethically relevant in food system transitions. Such questions have been approached by systematising the issues within the common theoretical-conceptual frameworks of environmental justice and with respect to focal food system outcomes: food security, livelihoods, and environment (including animal welfare). Several areas of special concern have been proposed along these lines (Kaljonen et al. 2021). They closely relate to many previously addressed food justice and systems-oriented considerations in food ethics and include:

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- Farmers' livelihoods and adaptive capacities to emission mitigation demands;
- Food security and sociocultural tensions related to the demands for dietary changes;
- Participatory justice in circumstances where food related decisions are often made in the markets and by transnational companies; and
- Multispecies justice, including nonhuman animals.

While related questions have received attention in food ethics, the link to climate policies adds a new layer. The transition perspective also highlights temporal dynamics in food ethics: although climate change mitigation will in the long run benefit food producers and food security generally, ill-planned mitigation might actually undermine small-scale farmers' livelihoods or risk food security in the short-term (e.g., Kortetmäki 2019; Schübel and Wallimann-Helmer 2021).

Conceptualising justice

Just transition is understudied in ethics. The just transition research field is occupied by geographers, political and social scientists, and sustainability transition researchers. They often apply justice frameworks and conceptualisations as given. While such conceptual enrichment and borrowing across disciplines are common, it is important to bring in the ethical examination of theoretical frameworks, arguments, and concepts in the context of low-carbon transitions. The 'basic ethics research' is also needed to make sense of the empirical and modelling research on just transitions. For example, which disparities and inequalities matter for justice, which do not? Someone could settle with answers gained solely via surveys or focus group interviews. Yet, this would be problematic: the subjective perceptions of justice may be incoherent, implausible, or represent the defence of achieved benefits and privileged groups. Moreover, the 'common opinion' depicts the view of the dominant groups, dismissing the marginalised voices. Ethics can contribute on its own or by integrating philosophical and other disciplinary approaches. For example, Tribaldos and Kortetmäki (2022) develop the list of just transition principles and criteria for food systems via testing the 'non-philosophical justice claims' (which originate from non-philosophical literature or discourses) against philosophically grounded principles of justice.

Ethics is also needed to make sense of just transition related responsibilities. Systems-oriented food ethics has noted that individuals often have limited capacities to discharge responsibilities for 'ethical or responsible consumption' and how consumption-/market-driven transformations might aggravate inequalities. Responsibilities for making the low-carbon transition just thus create a new topic that also calls attention to the different roles individuals occupy in relation to others: many roles beyond those of producers and consumers are relevant for making the transitions just (Kortetmäki and Huttunen 2022).

Tasks for philosophy

There is a lot to do for ethicists in just food system transitions. The already identified research questions (Kaljonen et al. 2021) include the balancing of local and distant justice concerns and trans-local processes for justice; agricultural innovation (Timmermann 2020); trade-offs related to cultural preferences that maintain high-GHG dietary patterns; and the status and treatment of nonhumans. For example, there is a risk that production animals become increasingly 'quantified' and animal production intensified if GHG emission reductions proceed with policies that enjoy high social acceptance, i.e. challenge the dominant food patterns the least, which would embrace increased poultry production.

I have a hunch that integrative methodology for combining ethics with other disciplines will become increasingly popular in the next decade(s). In many countries, ethicists are already becoming a much-wanted addition to the interdisciplinary and solution-seeking research projects on complex problems. To make collaboration work, ethicists are confronted with two tasks that have not been in their standard routines (according to my perceptions and discussions with colleagues). First, we need to learn and develop good practices for collaborative research with non-ethicists. Second, this necessitates a more explicit articulation and development of methods of ethics to make our work and approaches more comprehensible to non-philosophers.

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paper

Climate change, human rights and burden-sharing

Laura García-Portela

Global warming is leading to increased temperatures, rising sea levels, and more frequent extreme weather events. These planetary changes threaten the livelihood of people across the world and raise many climate justice concerns. There is agreement within the scientific community that we should avoid dangerous climate change. But what counts as dangerous climate change? Climate change is dangerous when threatens or infringes people's ability to enjoy their human rights. Therefore, if our aim is to avoid dangerous climate change we need to keep human rights to the fore.

What are human rights, and what do they mean in the context of climate change? Human rights are moral thresholds. They are fundamental interests to ensure a minimally good life, or, in other words, a life with dignity. How we define the minimum level for each of these fundamental interests has consequences for our definition of dangerous climate change and the scope of our climate change-related duties.

A human rights approach to climate justice involves duties of mitigation, adaptation and compensation. First, our generation has duties to avoid dangerous levels of climate change for the next generation through employing strategies of mitigation. Mitigation involves reducing emissions and removing emissions from the atmosphere (e.g. through reforestation or some forms of geoengineering) in order to keep the global temperate at a safe level.

Second, climate justice also requires adaptation measures to prevent human rights infringements to both current and future generations. Adaptation duties

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Cyclone Sidr and high tide destroy villages in Southkhali in District Bagerhat of Bangladesh, victims waiting for relief goods.

involve adjusting natural and social environments to protect against adverse effects of climate change. For example, if mitigation efforts have not been sufficient to avoid sea-level rise, adaptation duties would require building seawalls to protect those populations living in low-lying areas.

Third, if neither mitigation nor adaptation efforts have been sufficient to prevent or respond to climate change, climate justice requires compensation for those groups whose human rights have been impacted. Taking the example above, if an area cannot be protected from flooding, its population might need to migrate somewhere else. That might require not just assisting them to relocate, but also compensating them for the impact on their human rights.

Climate change-related duties involve certain burdens, which should be distributed in a fair manner according to principles of justice. The so-called 'burden-sharing debate' discusses various climate justice principles, each of which invokes different ethical considerations.

The Polluter Pays Principle affirms that each agent should bear burdens proportional to their emissions record. The more an agent has emitted, the more they should contribute to mitigating, adapting to, or compensating for, climate change related harm. However, some have argued that many of the emissions associated with climate change were produced without fault, and, thus, those who caused them should not be considered responsible. For instance, before the publication of the First IPCC Report in 1990, there was no

general scientific agreement about the adverse effects of climate change. Therefore, the relevant agents are blameless for those emissions. Moreover, transiting to a low-carbon society could not have been achieved as soon as we became aware of the adverse effects of climate change, due to dependencies and lock-in mechanisms created by the reliance on fossil fuels infrastructure. Thus, the 1990 cut-off date could be extended even further, rendering the Polluter Pays Principle almost inapplicable. These objections have been contested by some who have challenged the underlying idea of (moral) responsibility in the climate justice debate.

Many others believe that more important than how much an agent has emitted is whether and to what degree they have benefited from emissions generating activities, which leads to the Beneficiary Pays Principle. This principle holds that each agent should bear the burdens associated with the benefits they obtained from climate change inducing activities. However, calculating how much an agent has benefited from climate change is a difficult task, mainly because both direct and indirect benefits must be considered.
Others stick to a purely forward-looking principle known as the Ability to Pay Principle. This principle affirms that each agent should bear burdens according to their capacity to pay. Determining capacity to pay can be assessed according to different distributive principles. However, the Ability to Pay Principle has the disadvantage of being disconnected from the historical dimension of climate change and, arguably, its application would not provide the necessary incentives to abandon fossil fuels as the main energy and development sources.

Despite their philosophical intricacy, all paths lead to Rome, that is, all these principles are likely to converge into an agreement that highly industrialized countries of the Global North should bear most of the burdens of climate justice, whether because they have caused the problem, because they have benefited the most, or because they have the highest capacity to deal with the problem.

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paper

Changing climate, changing beekeeping

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Currently, apiculture is a niche topic in agricultural and food ethics. Yet, ethical issues arise for both beekeeping as a practice and for food production, which relies heavily on pollination services. Weather and climate impact apiculture directly by affecting honeybees and indirectly through their environment, vegetation, and pests. Against this backdrop, how can beekeepers' knowledge be mobilised to transform their seasonal knowledge and practices in the face of risks related to weather and climate? The *BeeWare* projects is currently addressing this challenge.

Debates on bee losses due to the application of neonicotinoids and other such substances raised public awareness about the relevance of beekeeping for the global agricultural and food sector. Pollination by insects such as the honeybee is a crucial 'ecosystem service and a production practice used extensively by farmers all over the world for crop production'; currently, '87 crops, that is 70 % of the 124 main crops used directly for human consumption in the world, are dependent on pollinators.' (Gallai et al., 2009, 810)
Currently, there is a rising awareness that also weather and climate are strongly influencing beekeeping practices. For example, changes in weather and climate impact honeybees directly by modifying foraging and breeding patterns, but also indirectly through changes in their environment such as the timing of plant blooms.

A warming climate also results in shorter and milder winters, leading to an extended beekeeping season. This increases the length of the honeybee brood rearing period, resulting in higher levels of varroa destructor infestation (varroa destructor is a parasitic mite generally understood to be among the largest threats to beekeeping worldwide). This, in turn, will force beekeepers to adapt in the way they treat pests. Beekeepers are realising that the weather and seasons are changing and that they must change their practices.

Recent developments in numerical forecasting offer a potential strategy for mitigating weather and climate risk. *Forecasts* on timescales longer than a typical weather forecast, ranging from one week to three-months ahead, are increasingly becoming available and dependable. Indeed, these forecasts have already started being used in agriculture, a closely connected industry. These extended range forecasts could help beekeepers make decisions that require prior knowledge of changed conditions weeks in advance, e.g., when to start feeding the bees in spring, when to start queen production, when and where to move their hives to harvest the next plant bloom. Thus, integration of extended range forecasts in beekeeping practices could potentially help buffer weather and climate risk. Yet, despite clear evidence of weather and climate risk, and the accessibility of tools to mitigate it, there exists surprisingly little published research on how this risk impacts beekeeping, which practices are deployed to mitigate it, or how climate services could support these practices (cf. Vercelli et al., 2021).

The *BeeWare* project (2022) is a pilot study (see table 1) meant to address precisely this gap. It collaborates with beekeepers in the Norwegian Vestland region to co-create knowledge and practices for good climate adaptation, especially relative to shifting seasonal rhythms. It deals with the overarching questions

- how beekeepers' knowledge can be mobilised to transform their seasonal knowledge and practices in the face of risks related to weather and climate, and
- how seasonal forecasts as tools can become part of new seasonal practices.

PHASE 1
Conducting semi-structured interviews with beekeepers in Vestland to determine how variability in the current climate impacts beekeeping as a set of practices

PHASE 2
Comparing beekeepers' perceptions with numerical data (observations, extended range forecasts, climate projections) to investigate how knowledge of current and future climate can help mitigate weather and climate risk. In parallel: conduct focus groups with beekeepers to evaluate the use of extended range forecasts in real time.

PHASE 3
Holding a transdisciplinary workshop that brings together stakeholders in beekeeping, pollination, and honey production in Vestland, as well as scientists, to co-produce informed knowledge and practices for mitigating risk related to weather and climate

Table 1: Structure of the BeeWare project.

BeeWare explores how weather and climate risks – amplified by climate change – are challenging apiculture in the Vestland region. It studies how beekeeping is co-produced as a set of social practices, and which values, norms, symbols, meanings, and worldviews underpin this practice (cf. e.g., Velardi et al., 2021). In addition, and in line with a narrative ethical perspective, the project goes beyond mere descriptive ethics by contributing to 'the value-oriented debate about the good life' and providing 'a hermeneutic framework for the normative question of the moral ought" (Haker 2010, 3, own translation; cf. also Meisch, 2019, 6). *BeeWare* engages beekeepers in deliberations about good beekeeping practices and how to act in the face of weather and climate risk. Doing so, it touches on and deals with, a variety of ethical concerns such as co-production, notions of good beekeeping practice, deliberations on good climate change adaptations, and more-than-human agency. Such deliberations are guided by insights into how these practices are embedded in temporal, spatial and multispecies relations.

In May 2022, the project is in its first phase. Our very first findings can only stretch to insights about how beekeeping as a *social practice* (cf. Reckwitz, 2002) is co-produced, how it is seasonally patterned and how climate change is affecting this practice and its seasonal rhythms. At this early stage, three observations seem particularly relevant for us.

First, there is not one practice of beekeeping, but many. We found different forms of bodily performances, ways of understanding the world and making use of knowledge and tools, and varying rhythms and temporalities. Accordingly, also vulnerabilities to climate risks differ.

Second, how beekeeping practices are co-produced depends on the (normative and evaluative) relationship of beekeepers to their bees. The most obvious example is the difference between opposite ends of a spectrum: hobby beekeepers and full-time professionals. What we learnt is that beekeepers see the bees as co-agents in the co-production of practices and seasonal rhythms.

Third, the *BeeWare* project presents a forecast to beekeepers and deliberates with them on how it can become useful. Such a forecast shows the probability of a specific type of weather happening a couple of weeks in the future. It emerged that depending on the specific form of practicing beekeeping, this tool has different relevance for different beekeepers at different times.

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An extended version of this text has been accepted to the EurSafe 2022 conference and will appear in the conference proceedings.

book review

Elizabeth Cripps: 'What climate justice means and why we should care'

Hanna Schübel

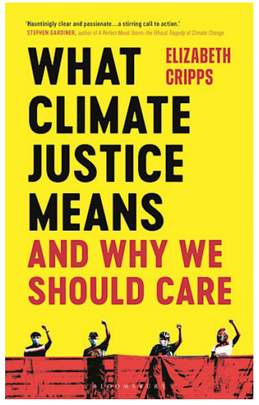
When people appeal to 'climate justice' in politics, activism, or climate ethics, a wide range of things is potentially implied. Connecting many different topics and debates happening also outside of philosophy and climate ethics, What Climate Justice Means and Why We Should Care constructs an understanding of what climate justice means. Elizabeth Cripps uses the sharp notion of harm and basic justice as needle and thread. A web of arguments – or carpet of different discussions – that give a grasp of what is at stake if we hold up a sign saying 'climate injustice' at a protest.

Published in April 2022 by Bloomsbury, the book appeals to our emotions when thinking about the victims of climate change. The many appealing examples leave no doubt that what is coming and what is happening today with regards to climate justice is morally deeply problematic. We are urged to view victims of climate change not as casualties, but instead as individuals with favourite jokes and foods. For Cripps, it is central to acknowledge the 'bleak reality of climate injustice' that is vivid in the examples of individuals losing their homes and lives. Why? Because it is the first step to recognising the responsibility and promote justice.

Even with a conception of basic justice, we are already obliged to address climate change. To make this claim, Cripps starts from basic ideas of morality: that we should not harm another and that if we can save someone from severe suffering, comparatively easy, we should. Climate change constitutes a massive injustice because it constitutes a violation of basic rights: individuals losing their subsistence, safety, food, or lives. This provides the moral argument to act against climate change to prevent harm. Importantly, as Cripps shows, these demands of basic justice go beyond humans, reaching also non-human animals. The sceptical, anthropocentric reader does not have to accept animals as moral agents or the like to accept that there are responsibilities that extend beyond humans because animals suffer from climate change and mass extinction.

To understand climate injustice, we have to consider the injustices that shape our global society. Climate change policies will not bring about climate justice if the values that feed climate injustice are not disembarked: Environmental racism nurtures climate injustice. Gender injustice is ever so prominent in climate harms (e.g., girls and women down more often in flooding) and climate politics (e.g., alluding to the fact that only 33% of the UNFCCC technical and decision-making body are women). Intersectional injustice, irreducible to neither gender injustice nor racism, needs to be considered in order to show that climate change harms not at random. The harms of climate change cannot be understood and addressed without these categories.

What, then, should climate justice include? What is indispensable of the idea we should strive towards? Linking her considerations to the Paris Agreement, Cripps argues that 'Climate justice means systematic change. It requires participation: global, intersectional, and intergenerational. It requires mitigation, adaptation and compensation' (p. 187). While these are global challenges, there is a place for individual action. Being encouraging and understanding but nevertheless demanding, Cripps ends her book with a call for action. While it would be wrong to blame ordinary individuals for climate change individuals living comfortably in countries of the global North have to take responsibility for their privilege and complicity. They can be blamed for supporting very harmful institutions that drive climate change. According to Cripps, people living comfortably do have responsibilities to join with motivated others to engage in collective actions to bring about the needed change.



Topical Collection: Justice and Food Security in a Changing Climate

Reflecting upon the ethical and social implications of climate change for food security is vital for informed decision-making within research and public policy. Discussing questions of potential conflicts and synergies between food security and climate action from an ethical perspective is a central step in providing solutions to these challenges. Following up on contributions from the EurSafe 2021 Conference in Fribourg, this topical collection in the Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics is contributing to this task by offering in-depth deliberation on key concerns of ethics and justice for food security that are resulting from climate change.

Edited by Ivo Wallimann-Helmer, Hanna Schübel and Matthias Eggel, the topical collection will appear this summer and autumn!

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Reference

Cripps, Elizabeth (2022). *What climate justice means and why we should care.* Bloomsbury. London.

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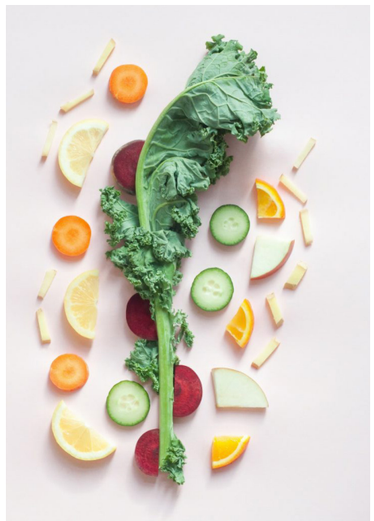
conference 2022

EURSAFE 2022 CONFERENCE

Food system transformation

Ethics, innovation and responsibility

The 2022 conference of EurSafe has taken as its theme the question: How may we transform our food systems to face the challenges of climate, conflict, disease and resource scarcity, in ways that are resilient, just and ethical? Feeding the world's growing population in ways that are effective, ethical and socially just, and protect the natural systems on which all life depends, is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. The vulnerability of our interlinked human systems to external impacts has been brought home by the COVID-19 pandemic. Climate change poses deeper longer term threats. The subject is big and complex, and the papers reflect the many different angles academics are looking at the problem. But our intention was to spread the net knowingly wider, engaging with those on the ground in different localities around the world, from Myanmar to Glasgow. So as well as leading academic input from Professor Lotte Holm from Copenhagen, we hope to have art exhibits from community projects in Edinburgh.



The challenge to reach net zero carbon raises important ethical questions about how we create sustainable and equitable food systems. A variety of papers explore issues about livestock systems, grasslands and land use generally, and our food choices. What about innovations like meat alternatives, seaweed, or genome editing? Our second keynote speaker, Professor Bruce Whitelaw of Edinburgh University is a pioneer in genome editing to tackle animal disease and will ask what is the role of biotechnology innovation in future food systems. Our third speaker Dr Simone van der Burg of Wageningen looks the

Edinburgh University, Scotland

implications of the growing place of digitalisation in agriculture. Animal ethics, as ever, remains a prominent theme for EurSafe, with a range of papers on animal-human relations, animal use in research, and ethical issues in veterinary practice. Our panel session focuses on examples of how transformation is being approached in industry, in a Scottish sustainable dairy unit, and by livestock certification schemes.

We welcome you to the uniquely beautiful and historic city of Edinburgh, and are delighted that we can meet once more in person and share in the diverse, friendly and fascinating community that is EurSafe. Ceud mìle fàilte (Gaelic : a hundred thousand welcomes)

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members' section

Stef Aerts: Visiting professor of veterinary ethics

Former EurSafe board member Stef Aerts has been appointed as Visiting Professor of Veterinary Ethics at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Ghent University (Belgium); a faculty that has topped the Shanghai Ranking for Veterinary Sciences for five consecutive years. This is a new position within the Faculty and will be embedded in the Ethology and Animal Welfare Research Group of Ghent University. The primary objective is educational: animal and veterinary ethics will be embedded in mandatory courses for all first, third, and fifth year students. A secondary, although important, goal is to increase the visibility of ethics as a day-one competence within the faculty as a whole.
www.ugent.be/di/dio7/en/research/ethology

Award for Mickey Gjerris

Mickey Gjerris, bioethicist at the Department of Food and Resource Economics, Copenhagen University, was recently awarded the Ebbe Kløvedal Reich's Democracy Baton. He received the prize for his active engagement in the Danish public debate on building a more sustainable society. The prize is awarded by the Democracy in Europe Organisation (DEO) and the association Grundtvigsk Forum. The baton was passed on to Mickey by the Danish singer/songwriter, Annika Aakjær.
Read more: deo.dk/mickey-gjerris-tale-ved-modtagelsen-af-demokratistafetten-2022

PhD project Tristan Katz: A nonspeciesist approach to wildlife management

Those who are concerned with the welfare of animals often focus on factory farming, animal experimentation, or issues in veterinary science. While these are important, we should also keep in mind that most animals live in the wild, and for many of these animals, their lives will not go any better than those in our care. In recent years a literature on the moral problem of 'wild animal suffering' has grown and sparked many challenging and provocative questions. Surprisingly, the implications of wild animal suffering for conservation and wildlife management has been little explored. That intersection is what I intend to focus on in this PhD, which I began in 2021 under the supervision of Prof Ivo Wallimann-Helmer within the University of Fribourg Environmental Sciences and Humanities Institute.

I've always had a fascination for the natural world and felt most at home in it. But my love for nature was challenged during my Master's studies, when I stumbled upon a lecture on 'wild animal suffering'. During that lecture, I was shown a video titled "what the nature documentaries don't show you". In case you haven't guessed, it was a gruesome series of clips of the likes you'll be glad I don't have the literary skills to portray. On one level, the points delivered in that lecture were unsurprising to a former ecology student: of course nature is competitive and evolution is not 'moral', so why should nature always be peaceful and pretty? And yet, the horrifying footage raised challenging ethical questions: are we to say that there is something wrong with nature, when it causes so much suffering to sentient beings? Should I not value it, even though I find it beautiful and therapeutic to be in?

It may be surprising that in such a controversial topic the empirical facts are rarely disputed. While the causes of suffering in nature are innumerable, the most fundamental problem is that all wild animals reproduce in excess. Doing so has evolutionary value, by allowing for natural selection and enabling the population to expand into a new niche if one becomes available. But the consequence is that in normal conditions those excess individuals do not survive. And reproductive rates are such that most individuals are excess. Most wild animals reproduce at far greater rates than humans: they may have dozens, hundreds, or in some cases even thousands of offspring each year. For populations to remain stable, only one offspring per parent (on average) can survive to have young of its own, and if an animal reproduces multiple times over the course of its life, then we can assume that barely any offspring will survive to maturity. Most die shortly after birth, as this is when they tend to be most vulnerable. Those who survive will not necessarily have it easy either, for they will have survived despite the fierce competition and limited resources that are available.

The reason why these facts are so underappreciated, it has been argued, is because most people have an unrealistic view of nature. As children we are given picture books where nature is depicted as 'idyllic', where animals are portrayed as the freer, happier counterparts to those on our farms. But living without fences does not make one free. Pressure to survive also restricts wild animals' behaviour, and we are often oblivious to their situation not only because we are unable to understand the signs of pain they show, but also because they try to hide their pain from us.
This sobering picture leads one to wonder what, if anything, we can do about it. Indeed, the problem has been described by some as "intractable", due its scale and complexity. Despite these challeng-

es, I believe that the problem is worth working on, not for the present generation perhaps, but for those to come. It may be that the suffering of wild animals cannot be prevented completely, but there are ways to make things better. Already today, some wild animals are vaccinated to prevent the spread of diseases such as rabies. If this can be done, then vaccinations could also be developed to protect against those diseases which cause the worst suffering for wild animals. Reproductive rates can also be lowered through the use of contraceptives, which is already being done in the case of urban-dwelling deer in some parts of the US. Controlling populations in this way ensures that the populations do not exceed the resources available in their area, allowing more individuals to live longer lives. Looking to the future, the development of gene drives (artificially inserted genes which spread through a wild population faster than with normal Mendelian inheritance) promises a way to lower reproductive rates more efficiently, or to wipe out whole populations of parasitic species.

Such large-scale interventions in nature are controversial because they are seen by many as going 'too far'. Accusations of "arrogance", "playing God", and "turning nature into a zoo" are not uncommon. Yet these responses fail to acknowledge just how much we do to shape nature already, and just how severe the problem of suffering in nature is. Unfortunately, ethicists debating this question get bogged down in differences between their theoretical approaches. In the first part of my PhD, which I am conducting within the project 'Principles for Ethical Decision-Making in Environmental Practice', I try to show how common-sense values, captured in the principles of justice, beneficence, non-maleficence and autonomy support large-scale interventions to reduce wild animal suffering, albeit with a precautionary approach.

Wild animal suffering has clear consequences for those working in conservation. Historically, conservation science and practice were primarily conducted for the benefit of humanity, and this led in some cases to the use of rather brutal conservation methods, such as foothold traps, neuromuscular blockers (causing paralysis), harsh poisons and the spread of infectious diseases. Recently, some conservationists have called for a shift to 'compassionate conservation', an approach encouraging conservation via less violent methods. Taking this idea further, I argue that a truly compassionate approach would ditch the goal of conservation altogether, and rather aim directly at promoting animal welfare. In some cases, promoting animal welfare may coincide with conservation. But where animals are faced with natural threats, compassion should motivate other policies, such as the kinds of large-scale interventions already mentioned.

In the last stage of my PhD I want to envisage a utopian form of wildlife management. I want to ask: if we were to re-create an ecosystem in a way that would create the best lives for sentient animals, what would that look like? This question is important, because if we are to take steps to improve nature, we should have an idea of where it is we are hoping to end up. While my ideas here are still undeveloped, I think that quite radical changes will be needed to remedy the harms of nature. My challenge will be to show how those changes are not an arrogant over-extension of humanity's control over nature, but a moral necessity.

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save the date

EurSafe Executive Committee

Update September 2022

When you read this, I hope summer is slowly taking over and brings you some weeks to relax after a period of intensive teaching, exams and (international) meetings. As a board we are looking forward welcoming many of you in Edinburgh in September. We are grateful to have a conference on location again after the many Covid-restrictions of the last two years. Donald and Ann Bruce and their team present you a very interesting program of plenary and parallel sessions that provides ample room for exchange of ideas, discussion and social interaction. All information on the programme and further practicalities are available at www.eursafe2022.ed.ac.uk

At our EurSafe Board meetings on 19 April and 10 June, we discussed the first steps towards the EurSafe conference in 2024. We hope to present the location and theme at the Edinburgh conference. Next, the financial annual report and budget have been discussed. The financial position of the Society is sound due to the committed work by our treasurer, Dirk de Hen. At the same time we discussed the policy to use part of the financial reserve, for instance to support conference organizers to publish the conference book Open Access. This discussion relates to a final topic: the Five-year strategic plan. I am glad to tell you that we finished a version that we would love to present and discuss with you soon! The plan contains directions and concrete step to keep the EurSafe society a living community and attractive platform for all who are professionally involved ethical questions related to food, agriculture, animals and environment.

Finally, I cordially invite you to join the General Assembly on Friday 9 September. As a Society this is an important meeting. It is not just a formal event that we have to organize according to our by-law, but is also an opportunity to meet as members and share your thoughts on important issues such as finance and our strategy. This year we will also have the (re)election of several board members and also will say good bye to some (longstanding) board members. You will be informed about this and the procedure regarding the elections in the next weeks together with the innovation for the General Assembly.

Best regards,

Franck Meijboom
On behalf of the Executive Committee, 30 June 2022

update

30-31 MARCH 2023

2023 NSU Nordic Environmental Ethics Winter Symposium: 'Food and water ethics

website

The Nordic Environmental Ethics NSU Study Circle will hold its third winter symposium on March 30-31, 2023 in Trondheim, Norway. The special theme of this year is food and water ethics. We are happy to organise this event in collaboration with EurSafe and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology colleagues hosting the event, which will take place on the premises of The Royal Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters. Travel/accommodation grants will be available to participants from Nordic-Baltic countries.

Research presentations comprise the heart of the symposium. The program will also include a keynote and a Hyde Park style networking/reception session. (Suggestions for other programs are welcome!) Nordic Environmental Ethics study circle is a part of Nordic Summer University (NSU) series of study circles. It runs biannually 2021-2023 and explores environmental ethics, broadly understood, in the Nordic-Baltic context, encouraging the exchange of ideas and aiming at establishing a more permanent Nordic Environmental Ethics Network.

About the conference special theme: Food and fresh water are vital environmental goods for humans and nonhumans. Food production has significant environmental impacts and is also significantly influenced by environmental conditions and changes. The Nordic context for food production and consumption is very specific due to climatic and geographical circumstances, which however raise many environmental questions, including (but not limited to) the moral acceptability of animal-based food production systems in regions where plant-based agriculture is challenging. At the same time, the abundance of fresh water and sea areas is exceptional and water provides opportunities but also raises questions about the ethics of water use, aquaculture, and fisheries. We welcome any submissions on ethics that relate to these themes.

The final CfP will be published at www.nsuweb.org/study-circles/circle-6-nordic-environmental-ethics, but abstracts can already be submitted to Teea Kortetmäki, teea.kortetmaki@jyu.fi by e-mail.

Welcome to our event and amazing Trondheim!

NSU Nordic Environmental Ethics study circle coordinators

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AnNex
Animal Research Nexus

Trondheim, Norway

The Welcome Collection, London

30-31 MARCH 2023

Researching Animal Research Conference: 'Emerging Voices in the Social Study of Animal Research'

website

The Animal Research Nexus is hosting a conference entitled *Researching Animal Research*. The conference will run from 30th-31st March 2023 at the Wellcome Collection in London. This event marks the formal completion of the Animal Research Nexus programme (2017-2023) which was funded by the Wellcome Trust. The aim of the conference is to renew connections, celebrate collaborations, critically review what we and others have accomplished in this field, as well as open up discussion about the future and explore new challenges. For details about the ARN programme and the conference please see animalresearchnexus.org

On the second day of the conference we are planning a session entitled '*Emerging Voices in the social study of animal research*'. For this session, we are inviting social science and humanities scholars to propose a paper. We're looking for fresh ideas, new faces and innovative, diverse approaches to the social study of animal research, in all its many aspects and applications.

Please feel free to forward this invitation to anyone who you think may be interested. If you have any queries about the session or any of the above, please don't hesitate to contact either Beth Greenhough (beth.greenhough@ouce.ox.ac.uk) or Pru Hobson-West (pru.hobson-west@nottingham.ac.uk). Prof. Kate Millar will also be attending the event if any EurSafe members would like to get in touch (kate.millar@nottingham.ac.uk).

contact


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