What should we do when current needs conflict with long-term sustainability?

Ethics in an energy crisis:

Mark Budolfson
Center for Ethics in Society

Blake Francis
Philosophy

Hyunseop Kim
Center for Ethics in Society
Today’s objectives:

• Consider key ethical issues in energy policy
• Reflect on how technological solutions involve value judgements
Pakistan
Pakistan

Population: 182.5 million
Urban: 36.2%
Below poverty line: 23%

GDP*: $230.525 billion
*nominal GDP in 2012

Median age: 22.2

(CIA Factbook)
The energy crisis in Pakistan

- Load-shedding up to 20 hours/day
- Wealthy shielded from effects
- Industry impacts
- Civil strife
The energy crisis in Pakistan

• Load-shedding up to 20 hours/day
• Wealthy shielded from effects
• Industry impacts
• Civil strife
Possible solutions:

Hydro, wind, solar, nuclear, coal?
Pakistan’s 2013 plan:
coal.
Overview

• Ethics & enlightened self-interest (Mark)
• Urgency & independence (Hyunseop)
• Climate change & burden-sharing (Blake)
• Conclusions
Ethics and enlightened self-interest

Mark Budolfson
Center for Ethics in Society
Should Pakistan implement “no-new-coal” energy policies?
Empirical facts do not settle what *should* be done
Should Pakistan implement “no-new-coal” energy policies?

Perspective: What is best for Pakistan
One view about what is best for a nation: Maximize GDP

Maximize near-term GDP, partly by minimizing energy prices
Problems with GDP as a proxy for national self-interest

GDP ignores:

• future costs and benefits
• externalities
• non-market assets
• wealth distribution
Problems with GDP as a proxy for national self-interest

GDP ignores:
• future costs and benefits
• externalities
• non-market assets
• wealth distribution
Problems with GDP as a proxy for national self-interest

GDP ignores:

• future costs and benefits
• externalities
• non-market assets
• wealth distribution
Problems with GDP as a proxy for national self-interest

GDP ignores:

• future costs and benefits
• externalities
• non-market assets
• wealth distribution
In the quest to increase GDP, we may end up with a society in which citizens are worse off.

(Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, 2010)

Joseph Stiglitz & Amartya Sen
Nobel Laureates in Economics
GDP or GPI?

GDP ignores, GPI includes:

- long-run value of resources
- externalities
- non-market assets
- wealth distribution

(Victor, Comment in Nature, 2010)
Should Pakistan implement “no-new-coal” energy policies?
Overview

• Ethics & enlightened self-interest (Mark)
• Urgency & independence (Hyunseop)
• Climate change & burden-sharing (Blake)
• Conclusions
Urgency and independence
from Pakistan’s point of view

Hyunseop Kim
Center for Ethics in Society
Should Pakistan turn away from coal and go for renewables?
Individuals’ right to energy
The threat of social disorder
Negative effects of coal on Pakistan
It is their country!
Pakistan’s vulnerability to climate change
Urgency and independence

• Individuals’ right to subsistence energy
• The serious threat of social chaos
• Respect for the autonomy of Pakistan’s energy policy
• Unfair to demand unilateral action by Pakistan on climate change
Overview

• Ethics & enlightened self-interest (Mark)
• Urgency & independence (Hyunseop)
• Climate change & burden-sharing (Blake)
• Conclusions
Climate change and burden-sharing

Blake Francis
Philosophy
The global trouble with coal
Is Pakistan ethically obligated to implement “no-new-coal” energy policies?
The World in CO2 Emissions

Pakistan’s emissions (2009)

(The Guardian, 2010)
Claim: polluters should pay
adaptation costs
mitigation costs
Claim: high emitters should pay
Claim: the entire world should pay

Global emergency

(IPCC 2013)
Should Pakistan implement “no-new-coal” policies?

No.

• Polluting countries should pay

• Compensation
  o adaptation
  o mitigation
Should Pakistan implement “no-new-coal” policies?

No.
• Polluting countries should pay
• Compensation
  o adaptation
  o mitigation

Yes.
• High emitters should pay
• Climate change urgency
Global burden-sharing: Open questions

• Who is responsible: individuals or nations?
• Does emergency response override fairness?
Overview

• Values & enlightened self-interest (Mark)
• Urgency & independence (Hyunseop)
• Climate Change & burden-sharing (Blake)
• Conclusions
Conclusions:
The importance of ethics in the energy debate

Mark Budolfson
Center for Ethics in Society
Is Pakistan ethically obligated to implement “no-new-coal” energy policies?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethical Question: What should Pakistan do?</th>
<th>Two Ethical Perspectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enlightened Self-Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Global Point of View</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ethical Obligations of Individuals

Ethical Question:
What should you do?

Two Ethical Perspectives:
Enlightened Self-Interest
The Global Point of View and Social Responsibility
“We may learn something about the renewal of societies if we look at the kind of people who contribute most to that outcome - the innovators.”

-John W. Gardner
What values lie behind the decisions of innovators?
How do your decisions reflect:

• how you want to live your life? (enlightened self-interest)
• your concern for the world? (social responsibility)
Consider taking:

Justice and Climate Change, Spring, Blake Francis, PHIL 23M

Collective Action: Ethics and Policy, Spring, Mark Budolfson, PHIL 73

Food, Politics, and Global Justice, Spring, Mark Budolfson/Priya Fielding-Singh

Introduction to Global Justice, Spring, Hyunseop Kim, PHIL 76

Introduction to Environmental Ethics, Winter, Julie Rose, PHIL 178M
Citations


Elzen, M. J., et. al. (2013). "Reduction targets and abatement costs of developing countries resulting from global and developed countries’ reduction targets by 2050." Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change 18(4): 491-512.


