Draft Programme of the <u>2020 Workshop of the Environmental Politics and Policy Network</u>, New Zealand Political Science Association

<u>Environmental policy transitions: politics, governance and discourses</u>

Online workshop, via Zoom, 10 December 2020, 8.45 am to 5.30 pm

Chair: AProf Valentina Dinica, Victoria University of Wellington

Sessions	Timeline	Paper title, authors
8.45 am: Welcome from the workshop Chair and introductory remarks on Part I – research sessions (abstracts in appendix)		
9.00 - 10.30 Research session (1): *Transitioning to climate stabilisation - institutional & discourse analyses* Chair AProf Valentina Dinica	9.00 – 9.30	"Do New Zealand Select Committees Still Make a Difference? The Case of the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill 2019". Will Dreyer and Lisa Ellis, University of Otago
	9.30 – 10.00	"Trust in Whom?: Sustaining Trust in New Zealand's Climate Change Commission"**,** David Hall, Auckland University of Technology
	10.00 – 10.30	"Climate activism and policy change in Aotearoa New Zealand: A critical analysis of values, perspectives and actions of climate activists". Priya Kurian, Debashish Munshi, Raven Cretney and Sandy Morrison, University of Waikato
	10.30 – 11.00	"Exploring climate change discourses across five Australian federal elections". Karen Hytten, Massey University
Morning tea break 11.00 - 11.20		
11.20 - 13.10 Research session (2): *Environmental transitions - governance and academic challenges* Chair Prof Priya Kurian	11.20 – 11.50	"Transitioning to a technology driven bioeconomy – discourses on the merits and types of genetic engineering. Valentina Dinica, Victoria University of Wellington"
	11.50 – 12.20	"An Antarctic Tourism Treaty: One Convention to Rule Them All?" Jane Verbitsky, Auckland University of Technology
	12.20 – 12.50	"There's no place like home: The evolution of environmental politics and policy in Aotearoa New Zealand". Julie MacArthur, University of Auckland

Lunch break 12.50 – 1.40		
1.40 Welcome to Part II - introductory comments by session chairs		
1.50 – 3.40 pm Session (3): Teaching innovations, pedagogical challenges. Chair Dr. Jane Verbitsky	Presenta-tions and round-table based on key questions	1.50 - 2.20: "*Online Asynchronous Debates* as summative assessments" Valentina Dinica explaining design, implementation aspects and experiences in undergraduate and postgraduate courses on environmental policy and governance for sustainability and resilience – Victoria University of Wellington (abstract in Appendix) 2.20 – 3.00: Roundtable on controversial scholars / scholarly work and pedagogical implications. Opening statements and question(s) by Prof Priya Kurian 3.00 - 3.40: please make contribution proposals to project assistant and session chair (timeline to be finalised after program decisions have been made; up to two more questions/contributions could be accomodated)
Afternoon tea break 3.40 – 4.00		
4.00 – 5.20 pm Session (4): Presentations, discussions with PhD and Master students Chair: Dr Karen Hytten	Presen-tations	4.00 – 4.20 please make contribution proposal to project assistant and session chair 4.20 – 4.40 please make contribution proposals to project assistant and session chair
	Mento-ring, discu-ssions	4.40 – 5.00 please make contribution proposal to project assistant and session chair 5.00 – 5.20 please make contribution proposals to project assistant and session chair
5.20 Final remark by workshop Chair. Reflections on opportunities for future events and collaborations (please email the Chair and suggestions). **Workshop concludes 5.30 pm**		

Timeline:

- If you wish to contribute to the workshop's Sessions 3 and 4, please email the Project Assistant Ms Amy Ross (myross.kiwi@gmail.com) and the Session Chair your ideas/questions/abstracts and any other necessary details **by Tue 3 November 5.00 pm**. Please indicate clearly for which of the available slots in the programme you are applying – in the above table. See the appendix for the contact details of session chairs.
- Session Chairs make decisions on the final programme for the respective Session, in collaboration with the Workshop Chair, by Tuesday **10 November 5.00 pm**. On that day, our Project Assistant, Amy Ross, will inform all applicants of the outcomes.
- All workshop participants included in the programme will send (final updates on) abstracts, roundtable / discussion questions, presentation summaries to Amy Ross by Tuesday **17 November 5.00 pm.** These will be the versions included in the final programme.

- The final workshop programme will be distributed by Amy Ross to the EPPN network and NZPSA members by **Monday 23 November 9.00 am,** including details on Zoom registration and access information. Reminders will be sent two times before the workshop day.

Appendix - Abstracts

Research Paper 1: Trust in Whom?: Sustaining Trust in New Zealand's Climate Change Commission

Author: David Hall, Auckland University of Technology. Contact: david.hall@aut.ac.nz

Trust is important for political institutions (e.g. O'Neill, 2002; Lauret, 2018). It is also a key epistemic value for science, especially at the science/policy interface (e.g. Douglas 2015; Gluckman, 2018). Consequently, trust is important for epistocratic institutions (Jeffrey, 2018) such as New Zealand's new Climate Change Commission, which is tasked with providing advice to the Minister for Climate Change on emissions reductions targets and policies to achieve them. The Commission's efficacy will depend on sustaining this trust, because the Commission does not have the authority to make law, so must instead derive its authority from its expertise. Yet as the Covid-19 pandemic and associated infodemic has shown, there are novel threats to trust in expertise in the age of digital mass communications. Specifically, the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation through social media raises unpredictable challenges to the epistemic authority of institutions such as the Commission, and democratic institutions more broadly (e.g. Tormey, 2016). This paper will explore these issues and argue that, given the diversity of values in contemporary publics, epistocratic institutions such as the Commission need to find a way to represent diverse policy perspectives in their policy advice, or else risk facing the antagonisms that have characterised climate politics elsewhere.

References

Gluckman, Peter (2018), 'Science, policy and society: an ongoing conversation', Office of the Prime Minister's Science Advisory Committee, June 26, 2018, https://www.pmcsa.org.nz/blog/science-policy-and-society-an-ongoing-conversation/

Lauret, Pierre (2018), 'Why trust Institutions? Hospitals, Schools, and Liberal Trust', *Rivista di Estetica* 68: 41-68.

O'Neill, Onora, (2002), *A Question of Trust: The BBC Reith Lectures 2002*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jeffrey, Anne (2018), 'Limited epistocracy and political inclusion', *Episteme* 15(4): 412-432.

Tormey, Simon (2016), 'The Contemporary Crisis of Representative Democracy: Papers on Parliament no. 66', Senate Occasional Lecture Series, https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Senate/Powers_practice_n_procedures/pops/Papers_on_Parliament_66/The_Contemporary_Crisis_of_Representative_Democracy

Research paper 2: Do New Zealand Select Committees Still Make a Difference? The Case of the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill 2019

Authors: Will Dreyer and Lisa Ellis, University of Otago. Contact: lisa.ellis@otago.ac.nz

Decades of Parliamentary reform in New Zealand has expanded the select committees' independence from the Executive. Despite this, there is evidence the Executive today holds more influence over select committees in the process of examining legislation than previously assumed, suggesting the distribution of power in New Zealand between the legislature and the Executive is becoming more aligned with international norms.

The traditional contrast between New Zealand and the United Kingdom select committees features relatively powerful and independent select committees in the former and a government-dominated system in the latter. However, in the case of the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill 2019, most (Government perspective) recommendations of the Environment Select Committee were aligned with the recommendations of the Minister of Climate Change, through the Departmental Report on the Bill. Using a modified version of the constant comparative method we determine the several policy changes supported by submitters on the Bill were recommended by the select committee without the consent of the Minister. While recent literature on Parliamentary select committees in the United Kingdom shows that select committees may be gaining influence over policy, our research suggests the New Zealand select committee process is moving in the opposite direction.

References:

Glaser, Barney G. and Anselm L. Strauss. (1968). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research.* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Jenkin, Gabrielle, Louise Signal and George Thomson. (2012). "Nutrition policy in whose interests? A New Zealand case study," *Public Health Nutrition* 15(82): 1483-1488.

White, John. (2007). *The Health Select Committee Inquiry into Obesity and Type Two Diabetes in New Zealand: An initial analysis of submissions.* Wellington: Fight the Obesity Epidemic New Zealand.

Research Paper 3: Climate activism and policy change in Aotearoa New Zealand: A critical analysis of values, perspectives and actions of climate activists

Authors: Priya Kurian, Debashish Munshi, Raven Cretney and Sandy Morrison, Waikato University, Contact: priya.kurian@waikato.ac.nz

Climate change poses one of the greatest challenges faced by humanity, with the potential to affect every aspect of our society, economy, and the environment (UNFCCC, 2015). The election of a Labour-led and Greens-supported government in 2017 reset the national agenda for climate action in Aotearoa New Zealand, with a goal of carbon neutrality by 2050 (Davison, 2017). However, the promise of transforming Aotearoa New Zealand from

a laggard to a frontrunner for climate engagement faces significant political, institutional, cultural and social challenges. Against a background of such challenges, climate activism has been on the rise with seemingly greater grassroots involvement than ever before – evident, for example in School Strikes for Climate and Extinction Rebellion movements that have attracted a wider array of participants than traditional environmental organisations. This paper examines the values, perspectives and actions of climate activists to identify potential pathways for transforming climate policy in Aotearoa New Zealand. The paper draws on analysis of 33 interviews with climate activists from around the country undertaken in 2019, as well as of relevant documents. We undertake a discourse analysis of transcripts and documents, all systematically coded to identify key themes around climate action and policy change. Following Hajer (1995), we see discourse as 'a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities' and consider the ways in which 'a particular discourse gets its social power' (p.44).

Research Paper 4: Exploring climate change discourses across five Australian federal elections

Author: Karen F. Hytten, Massey University. Contact: K.Hytten@massey.ac.nz

Australia's federal election in November 2007 featured climate change as a key election issue. The Coalition Government's staunch refusal to take action on climate change is identified as one of the factors that contributed to their electoral defeat. In contrast, climate change was scarcely mentioned in the lead up to the 2010, 2013 and 2016 federal elections. In 2019, climate change re-emerged as a key election issue with environmental organisations and media outlets framing the 2019 election as the "climate change election". As in 2007, the Labor Opposition campaigned on a platform of climate action, and in response the Coalition Government mounted a fear campaign about the economic impacts of Labor's proposed climate change policies. By re-electing the Coalition Government, Australian voters effectively endorsed three more years of inaction on climate change. This paper uses critical discourse analysis to identify and trace climate change discourses in the media through the five federal election campaigns between 2007 and 2019. It explores the main arguments, actors and discursive strategies associated with each discourse, how climate change was constructed during each campaign, and the implications of these constructions for the development of Australia's climate change policy.

Research Paper 5: Transitioning to a technology driven bioeconomy – discourses on the merits and types of genetic engineering

Author: Valentina Dinica, Victoria University of Wellington. Contact: Valentina.Dinica@vuw.ac.nz

Environmental pressures reaching crises points, from local to global levels, generated alternative economic visions, including that of bio-economies driven by innovative clean biotechnologies, renewable resources and ecologically benign production processes. This paper synthesises the literature on bioeconomy visions differentiating between a natural bioeconomy (NBE) and a genetically-engineered bioeconomy (GEBE). This distinction is explained from a strong sustainability perspective. Consistency with the outcomes envisaged by strong sustainability is essential for any new vision to be acceptable as genuinely alternative to current, untenable, economies. Several distinctive features are extracted from the literature for each model,

along for sustainability dimensions: environmental, business and industry innovations, consumption changes and social innovations. These considerations form the conceptual framework of the paper, which is used to address two empirical questions, using New Zealand as case-study. First, what discursive patterns are deployed to explain and persuade others about the merits, promises, dangers and uncertainties associated with various genetic-engineering technologies, applications and genetically modified organisms? Second, what discourse coalitions can be distinguished, regarding technology-driven bio-economy visions? The paper utilises discourse analysis theory to address the empirical research questions. The discourse analysis approach adopted is that proposed by Maarten Hajer in his 1995 book The Politics of Environmental Discourse: Ecological Modernisation and the Policy Process. Discursive patterns are explored by means of Hajer's main theoretical concepts: storylines and metaphors. The second research question identifies coalitions by drawing on analyses on storylines, metaphors and discourse hegemony. Empirical data is collected from publicly available written, audio and video materials. The paper concludes with reflections on the prospects for discourse institutionalisation for the two main bio-economy visions discussed.

Research Paper 6: An Antarctic Tourism Treaty: One Convention to Rule Them All?

Author: Jane Verbitsky, Auckland University of Technology. Contact: jane.verbitsky@aut.ac.nz

More than five decades have passed since tourism, then a marginal activity, first appeared on the agenda of Antarctic Treaty regime meetings. In the intervening period, tourism – involving both Antarctic Treaty System (ATS) and non-ATS actors - has grown to become the single largest human activity in the white continent, responsible for generating 56,168 visitors to Antarctica in the 2018-2019 season alone. Despite this, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have been unable to agree upon a policy framework for Antarctic tourism, relying instead on a combination of self-management initiatives by the industry group, International Association of Antarctic Tourist Operators, and the 1991 Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty to direct tourism and tourist activities.

This paper suggests the coronavirus pandemic of 2020 that has halted Antarctic tourism offers an unprecedented opportunity to consider the introduction of a dedicated tourism treaty designed to address lacunae in this largely unregulated Antarctic policy domain. The paper considers the extant regulations, gaps and holes in Antarctic tourism management, arguments for and against a stand-alone treaty, inter-relationship with other Antarctic Treaty instruments, and sketches the core principles and elements that could be implemented in a tourism-specific treaty.

Research Paper 7 - There's no place like home: The evolution of environmental politics and policy in Aotearoa New Zealand

Author: Julie MacArthur, University of Auckland. Contact: j.macarthur@auckland.ac.nz

The study of envioronmental politics and policy has never been more urgent. Wildfires are currently raging across western North America, global heat records continue to be broken and according to the 2020 WWF Living Planet Report wildlife populations have plunged by more than 68% globally in the past fifty years. The related fields of politics and public policy are focused on understanding the relationships of power and exercise of collective

authority as they shape and reshape our world (Rosenbaum 2016). In Aotearoa New Zealand this scholarship takes place across many disciplines and faculties and lacks a cohesive displinary voice. Those that teach in these areas rarely attend the same conferences or publish in the same journals, which can lead to scholars talking past, rather than to eachother.

It can also lead to a sub-discipline where students are taught material imported from research on international contexts, rather than embedded in the unique social, political and biophysical realities of tūrangawaewae, or the place we stand. In this paper I take a synthetic look at the core themes of environmental politics and policy scholarship about Aotearoa New Zealand, highlighting the predominant disciplinary approaches, assumptions and key policy challenges in the past 50 years. I first ask what, if anything is unique about the study of environmental politics and policy in New Zealand? Secondly, does it even matter that there isn't a strong disciplinary, or sub-disciplinary research community? The aim of this research is to contribute to a conversation about what is, and isn't, distinctive about the developments and debates in this somewhat fractured field.

Session 3 presentation: "Online Synchronous Debates as summative assessments: sharpening critical thinking in an online context"

Presenter: Valentina Dinica, Victoria University of Wellington

In environmental policy, academics often use essays and policy reports as 'summative assessments', to stimulate and measure student progress on critical thinking, creative thinking and communication skills. I argue that essential policy-relevant skills may be more effectively developed with the help of Online Asynchronous Debates (OAD). They are interactive, team-based assessments, mediated by digital technologies. I present a case-study on an OAD application in a New Zealand, in an environmental policy course, delivered for undergraduate degrees in public policy. I explain the rationale and the limited international practice with OAD, the particular design I developed for the undergraduate course and the role of OAD in the pedagogical plan for the delivery of the chosen course learning objectives. I also discuss the systems put in place to support student preparation, a range of experiences across the spectrum (for the lecturer and for students) and the student feedback on OAD over two years of application. The assessment was delivered, by means of Campus Pack Blog software (2018) and Blackboard Blog software (in 2019). The evidence so far shows that student performance was higher relative to the other assessments in the course. Students reported to have felt challenged by this assignment, especially the rebuttal phase, which they enjoyed the most. Most students obtained their highest scores in the rebuttal phase. My presentation will also articulate several design and implementation warnings and offer troubleshooting suggestions.