



The Ecopolitics Podcast – Episode 2.5: Global Ecopolitics After COVID-19: Social Movements and International ENGOS (TRANSCRIPT)

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Guests: Jen Allan (Cardiff University)

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INTRO: There's no denying COVID-19 has had a major impact on the climate movement. After non-governmental organizations worked so hard to access global climate decision-making, being without the ability to organize protests and the like has left the movement disconnected from the major decision-makers again. But it's an important year for climate decisions. In this episode, we speak with Dr. Jen Allan, Lecturer in the School of Law and Politics at Cardiff University to get a better sense of how NGOs are navigating COVID, and the potential opportunities that may arise for climate decisions post-COVID.

[00:00:00] **Jen Allan:** We used to always think about climate change as this environmental issue that would have effects at some point in the future. Like the Kyoto Protocol doesn't have the word people or communities or women or anything with limbs other than maybe a tree. And now, because of all these connections that these new NGOs made to make sure that they could get into the climate space and be recognized, it's like putting a human face on climate change.

[00:00:32] **Ryan M. Katz-Rosene:** Hello. Welcome to the Ecopolitics Podcast season two Global Ecopolitics. This is a podcast for university students tackling some of the big questions in the field of global environmental politics. I'm Ryan Katz-Rosene from the University of Ottawa and my co-host for the show is Dr. Peter Andrée from Carleton university.

[00:00:55] Peter, can you set up today's episode?

[00:00:57] **Peter Andrée:** Sure. Thanks, Ryan. On today's show we're delighted to be speaking with Dr. Jennifer Allan of Cardiff University. It's about global ecopolitics during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, including current discussions about the idea of a Green New Deal. This is a topic by the way that we also touched on in season one shows with Paul Pelkey and Sherilyn McGregor and we're looking forward to getting into it in more depth today with Jennifer. We'll also talk with Jennifer about the role of environmental social movements, particularly international non-government organizations or ENGOS, if you put the 'e' in front there, which makes up an important part of these social movements.

[00:01:35] And how they shape international environmental policies, like the Paris Accord and others. So we have a lot to talk about with Dr. Allan, and I'm just going to go right ahead

and jump into our first questions. Jennifer, welcome to the show. I'm wondering if we can start with you telling us a little bit about your involvement in one of these international environmental non-government organizations, which is the International Institute for Sustainable Development.

[00:02:01] Specifically, I believe you've been working with the Earth Negotiations Bulletin, which is connected to the IISD and this is a reporting service that reports on what is happening and analyzes what's happening in international environmental negotiations. You're the second guest that we know of who's worked with the ENB and I wonder if you can tell us a bit about what the ENB is about and your experience working there and how maybe that shaped your interest in research trajectory in global environmental politics?

[00:02:33] **Jen Allan:** Sure and thanks for having me. You probably have had other ENBers, we're a pretty big network over the years because it's been going since, gosh, almost 28 years now. So the whole idea of the ENB is that there needs to be more transparency in global environmental governance because these meetings happen and countries send their delegates and then decisions are made and often some of the people most affected by those decisions, well, they aren't there.

[00:03:06] So that was one of the first kind of reasons for having the ENB is to tell civil society and communities and even government actors that are at home, that'll have to implement these decisions, what on earth was going on and what their countries were saying on their behalf? Over the years, we've realized that there's a second really important reason for the ENB, and that's countries have different capacities when it comes to negotiations. So some countries will have three or four or five delegates, but the problem is for something like a global climate negotiation, there might be 10 negotiations happening all at the same time. And so until we figure out how to clone people, those delegations, those countries just can't be effectively represented.

[00:03:56] And they won't know what discussions were happening across all of those rooms, all those negotiations. So the ENB has really become a tool for those smaller delegations, usually from developing countries, to keep on track of what's happening in negotiations and to be able to more effectively participate.

[00:04:16] **Ryan M. Katz-Rosene:** That's really useful, Jen, and I'm wondering, know, you mentioned climate negotiations and that's the example that we hear a lot about these days, but we're wondering, what are some of the environmental issues that ENB has covered that don't deal with that climate change?

[00:04:34] **Jen Allan:** Yeah, it's true. It's climate these days, and for very good reasons, it's extremely important. But yeah, I'm one of those people that tries to fly the flag for a few other causes. So I have been to negotiations for chemicals and wastes. So some chemicals for example, are almost rewriting, the climate is rewriting our planet, but some chemicals are rewriting our bodies in a way. They're affecting our hormonal systems, our intellectual development in some cases. So, there's really important issues that we have to address and some wastes will be with us for generations.

[00:05:13] ENB also covers forests and biodiversity and desertification. Some of the science bodies, like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change or its biodiversity sister, the IPBES. Basically ENB does almost all of the global environmental and negotiation processes, most of them we've covered since the very beginning as well.

[00:05:37] **Ryan M. Katz-Rosene:** That's very cool, but I'm going to bring it back to climate. Now, I'm wondering since you have covered a range of these agreements, and I think you've also covered specifically some negotiations on climate, I'm wondering if you can tie this back to some of your recent work on NGOs. You published a book last year called *The New Climate Activism: NGO Authority and Participation in Climate Change Governance*.

[00:06:03] So, it's clear, I think you've developed a really keen understanding of what's happening behind the scenes at these negotiations, particularly when it comes to the role of NGOs. So I'm wondering if you can just tell us a little bit about your book and why is it that some NGOs have become successful in linking their various causes to the climate movement where others may not have been so successful?

[00:06:27] **Jen Allan:** Yeah, absolutely. The idea for this book, I'll just tell you a little story, was it hit me in 2013 and I was with ENB, I was walking into the negotiation venue. We were in Warsaw so the venue was the national football stadium or for North Americans, the soccer stadium and was walking in for a late night shift and someone dressed as a polar bear handed me a condom and on it said, 'Use this to save the planet'.

[00:06:57] And so that was strange. You see polar bears around negotiations - oh sorry - you see people dress like polar bears around the negotiations quite a bit. But not usually trying to link population. And then I realized that there was Gender Day where we were encouraged to wear pink or red and there was Youth Day and there were NGOs representing all sorts of issues at the climate negotiations. And I started doing a little bit of looking when I got home from Warsaw and I realized that most of these groups hadn't been there before, or if they had been there, they were recent additions, like maybe since the mid 2000s.

[00:07:40] So this kind of started me on the research project that led to the book. So I tracked what NGOs were attending global negotiations and global climate negotiations. And I found this trend of about, between 2000-2005 and especially picking up 2007, that you saw the civil society, like the NGO presence, just diversify.

[00:08:10] And there was people representing all sorts of issues from cities to indigenous peoples to development and women's rights and workers' rights. And you just saw this splintering into many different issues and it really started to show that climate change wasn't just an environmental issue anymore. And so I started to track these trajectories of some of these groups.

[00:08:36] And some of them were trying really hard to be recognized, for example, public health NGOs, but they were being ignored and lost in the shuffle. And so the ones that were successful they kind had three main advantages. The first was that they could make a link between their issue and climate change that everybody in their network could get behind. So you didn't see a lot of competition, you saw them linking to something very specific and

saying, look, gender matters for adaptation, women are disproportionately affected by climate change. And by linking to something specific, negotiators in the climate arena could also more easily work that in to the discussions rather than just saying gender matters for everything.

[00:09:29] The second thing they had was allies. So inside the climate negotiations already, there were actors that were willing to help these newcomers get oriented in the new space, find other allies, find rules, it's a weird kind of social environment the climate negotiations, so provide these introductions.

[00:09:54] So the UN Environment Program, for example, really helped labor unions in the early days. And then the third thing they had was they could find a foothold in to some of the rules that govern how NGOs are supposed to act in this space or how they access the space, like the negotiations. So for some, they could say, well, we're a major group, according to the Rio Earth Summit Agenda 21, therefore we should have special status as an NGO in the climate negotiations.

[00:10:31] So labor and gender, they were able to do that. The climate justice movement didn't really have that. So instead they argued that the Climate Action Network, they don't represent all environmental NGOs. They only represent maybe about 11 to 14% of them, so why do they get all those benefits? So they split that constituency into Climate Justice Now and Climate Action Network. So they found their own way in. So those three resources were really helpful for them.

[00:11:05] **Ryan M. Katz-Rosene:** That's really fascinating. So, on your analysis, would you say that these civil society were at large and, you talked about a lot of NGOs that aren't specifically environmental NGOs, they deal with a whole range of issues.

[00:11:18] Is it fair to say that civil society is having a role, perhaps even a powerful role, a major role in shaping climate governance today? Or is it the case that maybe states and corporate players are still dominating the tone and direction of the discussion?

[00:11:35] **Jen Allan:** I think NGOs, especially these NGOs and social movements have done something really remarkable in the climate space, that they have transformed our thinking about climate change.

[00:11:47] So now we view it as fundamental to our society that we're all implicated in this now. And I think it's really done a lot to empower movements. I think it's done a lot to bring awareness to the issue and create big coalitions. More specifically, like now we do actually have negotiations about gender and climate change.

[00:12:09] So there are specific rules around these issues. I think the fundamental thing is that these NGOs have just transformed what we view climate change as in how important it is to our everyday lives.

[00:12:25] **Peter André:** This is really interesting, Jennifer, I feel like we've just done a circle where we started by talking about how there are a number of environmental issues besides climate, you mentioned a trade in hazardous waste and chemicals, for example, that deserve

attention alongside the climate issue, because they're so important to what's happening to the environment and to people. And now we're talking about climate and climate negotiations and how organizations that are working on a wide range of other issues have been able to bring their issues into the climate discussion.

[00:12:59] So these political dynamics are constantly shifting. It's really interesting. And now I want to turn to something, a big wrench that has just been thrown into, well, that might be one way of looking at the climate politics, which is COVID. You know, it kind of came on us in the last year.

[00:13:17] Some would say as a big surprise, others would say this, we might have predicted that this was going to be coming, something like this, but nonetheless, here we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic as we record this. It seems like there was growing momentum around addressing climate change after Greta Thunberg trip by boat to the Americas to participate at the COP26 in Chile.

[00:13:41] And now we can't really gather, and we can't have these mass manifestations that show politicians how much this issue is important to people, at a time when it seems like the climate movement is especially needed to make that point. Can you tell us a bit about how do you see what's happened to this movement in the context of the pandemic?

[00:14:04] How has COVID impacted the discussions? Has the conversation shifted from the streets into the digital realm? What do you think has happened?

[00:14:13] **Jen Allan:** Yeah, there's nothing, there's many things that this pandemic has certainly affected and the ability to mobilize is a big one. There've been a few small demonstrations here and there. Currently right now, since I'm speaking to you from the UK there are some protesters that are occupying a site where a large high-speed rail network is supposed to be put in, actually they dug tunnels underneath it. So there is pockets of activism still happening, but we can't get 50,000 people together, like the people that marched through the streets of Madrid at the last climate negotiations meeting in, gosh, 2019 already.

[00:14:58] So it's tried to move online, but that's just very different, you don't get the same feeling of comradeship and togetherness as you do when you're shoulder to shoulder with strangers and friends alike, so COVID has really hurt that. It's also hurt any efforts of as you say, putting pressure on governments, because this is just such a crucial year for climate change.

[00:15:27] The Paris Agreement started working in 2020, and countries were encouraged to submit updated pledges to the Paris Agreement. And very few countries did, especially very few major emitters. And then there was this climate summit that brought together 42 additional, kind of, pledges and promises of all types.

[00:15:50] But very few of those, if any actually, resulted in a formally submitted pledge to the Agreement and so now all those are late. So we need that pressure more than anything right now and it just is next to impossible to do. So, I think if there's anything to take from

this right now, it's activism is an incredibly creative space and I'm sure that there are ideas brewing.

[00:16:20] It's just, waiting to see what those might be, because the digital space doesn't really put pressure on governments in the same way that large protests, or maybe even civil disobedience might.

[00:16:33] **Peter André:** Because you've spent a lot of time looking at the climate movement, I wonder if you can give us some more examples that give us a sense of the effectiveness of the movement and how it has been effective?

[00:16:46] You've already talked a bit about how the climate justice movement in particular has been transforming the narrative. You've talked about how various NGOs have piggybacked onto the climate issue to point out how gender, for example, is really important to climate adaptation. What are some of the other ways that you've seen this movement have an impact in recent years?

[00:17:10] **Jen Allan:** I think there's a few, like we have seen the movement impact some of the rules of the Paris Agreement, especially mobilizing for things like 1.5 degrees as the goal. It's interesting, that one, because the Paris Agreement doesn't say 1.5 degrees is the goal, it says, I'll get some of these words wrong because it's very long winded, but it's something like: limit global temperature rise to two degrees and pursue all efforts to stay well below 1.5.

[00:17:41] But now we only talk about 1.5. Everyone from NGOs to UN Secretary General Guterres. We only talk about 1.5 degrees, and I think NGOs have been really a key set of actors in that one. I think they've also brought new tactics to how we protest for climate and how we advocate for, or try to pressure governments on climate change.

[00:18:09] It used to be that most climate activists were, I guess kind of insiders, like they would provide technical expertise to design a market mechanism, or maybe they would dress up like a polar bear or something like that. You didn't really see them getting out on the streets as much. And then when the climate justice movement showed up, a lot of those folks had their roots in the anti world trade organization movements, and they knew how to protest and they knew how to do civil disobedience, and they brought that tool kit to climate change.

[00:18:50] And now we see extinction rebellion doing similar things where, it's civil disobedience and it's causing disruption in the name of the global climate. And even, Fridays for Future and Greta Thunberg's movement having mass protests for climate is also something that, you know, even before 2009, didn't really happen.

[00:19:11] So I think that's another way that these NGOs have been really influential is by bringing a whole bunch of new kind of tactics in expanding the toolkit of activism for climate change.

[00:19:26] **Peter Andréé:** These are really good examples, Jennifer, both about how the NGO movement and its protest tactics has perhaps changed and evolved and how that's shaping public discussion over climate.

[00:19:38] And then you've provided examples where either these movements are influencing texts like what's in the Paris Accord, or maybe how it's interpreted, maybe, the example of the 1.5 degrees. I wonder, some of your students, some of our students are skeptical sometimes about like, how does that then translate eventually to shifting a civilizational path, our energy mix, how we use land, how we live, how we relate to one another?

[00:20:06] And I wonder if, you know, what are the links between what a movement does to protest and influence what happens in an international conversation and the changes on the ground in how we live and commute and so, on that actually start reducing greenhouse gases and get us towards this idea of net zero by 2050? Just a small question.

[00:20:31] **Jen Allan:** Just a small question. Yeah. You know, and on that very small question, I don't even think you'd get the same answer from different people in the climate movement. Some of them would say, you know what, we're here to show everyday people how they can be a bit greener, cutting down on some meat, commuting with public transit, using less plastic, for example.

[00:20:52] We're here to show that climate change matters for everyone and everyone matters for climate change. And then you'd have some, like extinction rebellion, that would say, I don't care if you recycle, because the problem is the oil companies pumping out more unrecyclable plastics. So it's this debate that always exists on so many environmental issues.

[00:21:16] Is it about the system? And the system in terms of market forces, in terms of concentrations of power, or is about everyday people making changes because they want to live a little greener and some movement, some parts of the movement, are going different directions on that, but it this fault line that exists down the middle.

[00:21:38] And so in some ways you can see, like there was a paper out recently about the Greta Effect, which tried to suggest that maybe people who are more aware of Greta Thunberg lived a little more environmentally friendly. I think you could probably also argue that people that tended to live a little more environmentally friendly or a bit more aware of Greta Tunberg.

[00:21:58] So there might need to sort of - let's put it this way: that's a great paper for anyone in a methods class. But some of them really are putting the pressure on fast fashion and banks. And I think actually the interesting thing there is it's where those two sides of that fault line come together. So putting pressure on fast fashion has actually led to a huge amount of public awareness about the fact that fast fashion is one of the top three greenhouse gas emitting sectors in the world.

[00:22:30] So my students want to write and talk and think about fast fashion and its environmental impact in a way that they didn't want to do and it wasn't on the radar even just three or four years ago. So it's this interesting sort of unintended consequence of

focusing on some of these big systemic players and problems, and the fact that really most change, especially on environmental issues, but on others, is elite driven change. So by focusing on that, some of these movements have actually done the opposite and encourage people to buy, less fast fashion and less disposable clothing.

[00:23:09] **Peter Andrée:** That's a really interesting example. I've also noticed the rise of papers in my courses, on the fashion industry and how interesting it is that when those students then look for: so what's the multilateral agreement that deals with this issue?

[00:23:22] They hit a bit of a wall and it shows how, yeah, the conversations in the public sphere and among young people are maybe ahead of where some of these international conversations are at right. On this question of the sort of dualism between individual change and collective action, often driven by the public sector, working with the corporate sector in some combination, how do you feel about that dualism?

[00:23:49] Because it sounds like you think that these are two sides of the same coin.

[00:23:56] **Jen Allan:** I do in a lot of ways. And I have to admit I'm going to not have a great answer for you because I struggle with this every day. You know, I struggle with going to the grocery store and having everything just coated in plastic.

[00:24:10] The UK is so much worse than Canada for this. And then at the same time, realizing I could cut down all my plastic use and, stick myself with the few fruits and vegetables that aren't covered in plastic, but then I would ultimately not be making much of a dent here. So it's something I struggle with and it's something I struggled with in my teaching as well.

[00:24:32] And I think that most of it is that we have to push for the big systemic changes, especially on things like climate change and on plastics particularly, and certainly on something like chemicals. There's very little I can do to reduce the body burden of chemicals because I was born with some toxic persistent chemicals in my body, like we all were, and because some of these chemicals are used without any labeling or without any knowledge on the part of the consumer. So for some of these big issues, it has to be that there has to be some form of change towards restructuring the incentives and making sure that using up environmental resources and then polluting the environment afterwards isn't cost-free, that there are real sort of changes that have to be made at a structural level.

[00:25:32] But at the same time, we can't abolish individual responsibility. And it's, you mentioned COVID, it's a similar analogy in that we want people to stay at home and self isolate if they are potentially infectious, but if that person needs to make a living, they can't do that necessarily.

[00:25:52] And so we need to create incentives that help people do the right thing. So with climate change, if we could make it easier, and create incentives for people to do the right thing through better public transport, through working from home, all sorts of things that people could do, then I think people would actually do it.

[00:26:12] You just can't make it difficult and annoying and sort of something that only us hippies do. It has to be, we have to help people do the right thing and the way to do that is thinking about smart, structural change.

[00:26:27] **Ryan M. Katz-Rosene:** Well, you said you didn't have a good answer for us on that question, but I would counter that it is a good answer and, I struggle with that and I'm sure Peter does too. I think we all struggle with coming up with a nuanced answer and ultimately we have to because this is the way that question is presented, and maybe we take some responsibility here, but you know, it's often this collective or individual. And I think your answer points out that's maybe too simplistic of a way of looking at it.

[00:26:53] I do want to bring it back to COVID and end up our episode talking about some of the post-COVID recovery, which is another area of your research. But I have to ask a quick question about something you said, you mentioned, there's environmental protestors occupying a high-speed rail project.

[00:27:11] And as here in North America, there's a fairly common sense notion that, high-speed trains are what we want. High-speed trains are good for the environment, quote-unquote 'good for the environment', and this is an example I often do like to speak to my students about. So can you just tell us, know, what's compelled environmental activists in the UK to occupy a high-speed rail project?

[00:27:33] **Jen Allan:** Yeah. This has been such a learning curve for me moving here, cause I had the same idea when I came here 'Ooh, great. Yes. High-speed rail that will link the Northern part of the UK'. Well, Northern sort of Manchester to London, like that's brilliant. Of course people could go between them much more easily, fewer people in cars.

[00:27:52] There are some people saying, 'Yes, this is good for the global climate'. It'll reduce emissions. But a lot of environmental protestors are pointing out that this is going to damage several endangered habitats and ancient Woodlands. Even a few of them that are internationally listed as sort of areas of special biodiversity.

[00:28:10] This is going to literally train right through them. It's also creating disruption for a lot of communities because some smaller communities are actually being asked to move. So some houses are being bought to make room for the train or for some of the stations. There's also concerns that it might not actually reduce emissions because it's going to help link up some big airports.

[00:28:34] So you could fly into Manchester, but say you live in London, take the train down to London. And so it might actually make international travel easier, which could increase our emissions. So it's really this thorny issue of, how this thing was cited, the fact that it's massively overrun costs already, the developer is saying that they're going to plant, I think it's 7 million trees, to make up for all the ones they cut down.

[00:29:03] And they're doing an experiment with one of the ancient Woodlands where they're, actually quite literally, scooping the whole thing up and are going to try to replant it all. Like they're even taking the original soils, they're making sure that the same animals are coming. It's this relocation project on a scale that's never been tried before that the

developers are saying, 'Look, we're protecting the ancient Woodland', but several ecologists had said, 'Well, I mean, this ancient Woodland grew up in this place and this very specific kind of area for a reason. You can't just scoop it all up and hope the microbiome, for example, comes with you'. So it's, yeah, it's really overturned and complicated. My view as a North American coming over of, 'Yes! More rail. We need more rail'.

[00:29:54] **Ryan M. Katz-Rosene:** Yeah. It's absolutely fascinating. I should state my bias here. I actually wrote my PhD about the environmental political economy of high-speed rail in Canada, or at least, failed efforts to bring high-speed rail to Canada. And I really hope somebody is writing a PhD about that in the UK context. It's quite amazing. But I do have to bring it back to COVID. So, many of these meetings that are supposed to occur within the realm of multilateral environmental governance have either been postponed or they've just gone virtual in some instances, but there's a number of limitations involved in trying to shift a large conference to the virtual setting.

[00:30:33] And, know, there's also this question of like, how do civil society groups, the ones that you've been studying at these environmental negotiations, how do they participate in a virtual plenary? But anyway, I'm just curious to hear your sense on the COVID impact on the way we meet and the way we organize conferences and the way countries are participating in multilateralism today. Is this something that is going to be sustained after COVID? Are we going to see fundamental differences in the way that multilateralism occurs or do you think we're going to go back to just a business as usual, so to speak, way of putting together these big international environmental agreements?

[00:31:17] **Jen Allan:** It is really a terrible, sad irony that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change has the largest climate footprint or carbon footprint of any UN body or agency. Everybody needs to go. It's this must-do event on your calendar. Upwards of 20 to 25,000 people show up and most of them aren't local because it's a traveling circus.

[00:31:41] Sorry, it's a traveling important event that happens in different countries every year. It rotates throughout the five UN regions. So there has been questions raised, like maybe all this experience that we're gaining with online forms of multi-lateralism could help us with this footprint problem. But I think really it's very limited.

[00:32:05] The only bodies that have actually met virtually and taken some decisions have been small bodies with maybe 30 members or so with a very defined mandate and a very defined set of tasks. Anything bigger than that or anything where you're really doing kind of negotiation in the pure sense of coming up with new rules, that hasn't happened online.

[00:32:30] Because developing countries have refused, and they refuse not to be stubborn, but for very good reasons, like these online meetings tend to be organized around North American or European time zones. So China, for example, would be up in the middle of the night, trying to negotiate. Internet problems have caused, just delays across all the online meetings I've gone to in the last year where you can't hear someone or they drop off the call. Also UN meetings have official languages where there's simultaneous interpretation happening and there's only a couple of programs that are capable of doing that, and they're all still pretty glitchy. So there's a whole bunch of sort of equity and access issues that lead

developing countries to say, 'Wait, we are not comfortable with negotiating new rules online'.

[00:33:28] So I think in the future, we might see some of these smaller bodies, maybe alternating between online meeting and an in-person meeting. But I think the big sort of rulemaking ones like the COP, for example, the big annual one, that one, I think we're going to continue to see people flying from all over the world.

[00:33:48] I think the COPs are actually going to get smaller in the future, just because the Paris Agreement is adopted. There's a few rules still to negotiate, but I personally view them as tempests in a teapot. So, there isn't as much to do there. So I think the media will go less often. NGOs might lose interest a bit. Countries won't need giant, a hundred plus people on their delegation, some of them. So, I think there will be a natural curve or some of these COPs will get a bit smaller, but probably that's not COVID related.

[00:34:21] **Peter Andrée:** That's a really interesting answer, Jennifer.

[00:34:23] And on just continuing this COVID path for sort of a last set of questions. There's been a lot of talk about a just green recovery post-COVID. But historically we've seen that post-recession recovery, say after the global financial crisis, resulted in the largest single year hike in emissions ever.

[00:34:46] So, how do we ensure that this time the recovery is truly green and truly just? I know you've written on the idea of net zero COVID recovery. What are the prospects of a COVID recovery that also addresses climate change issues and some of the other major environmental concerns that you've discussed today?

[00:35:06] **Jen Allan:** I think there is a huge potential here, especially because we're also thinking through a lens of what's just, and that's new from the last time that we were arguing for a green recovery. So even things, like one of the options that we came up with or that we analyzed, was improving broadband.

[00:35:27] And that might sound silly until you realize a lot of people have been working from home and have shown that we can do it. And so that reduces all of us, all the emissions related to all of us sitting in vehicles, waiting to get to work, and it could help with allowing people that live in some parts of the country to have a job in, say a metropolitan center, because they don't need to pay high rent and commute in. So there's a lot of things that you wouldn't necessarily think of as a green recovery option that could be a green and maybe even just recovery option. I think there's also potential because I hope, and I see some signs of this, that the old conversation around, either you have the environment or you have jobs - and it's one or the other - I think that's finally starting to dissipate and politicians from across the spectrum, to left, have been realizing that green technologies, green initiatives, whether it's installing renewables or upgrading the electricity grid or creating nature based solutions to protect from floods, all of those create jobs.

[00:36:48] And they create high skill jobs and they create entry-level jobs. And so if you need to create jobs quickly, and if you need to create jobs that can't be outsourced, that you're creating jobs in your country, environmental projects can do that. And there's a growing

recognition of that by a lot of key economies, including here in the UK, that there wasn't in 2008, 2009.

[00:37:16] The part that gives me pause on this, as much as I'm a cheerleader, is that I know that habits and status quo and doing what seemed to work last time is a really powerful force in policymaking. And so that's why, again, it's difficult to mobilize, but even think tanks and politicians and the UN keeping up these conversation of a green recovery is so important because, banks especially say central banks and central bankers, they're not the most risk acceptant people, to put it mildly. They're going to look to what worked in 2008, 2009, and say, 'Can we do that again?' And the global climate can't afford them to do it again. We can't lock in more emissions by building fossil fuel plants, but we can really leverage this as an opportunity for a timely tailored spend in green technologies, in green resilience building and in other activities that will allow us to live greener lives.

[00:38:26] **Peter Andrée:** I think those are great answers. And I think you're right on, on both fronts, that there is going to be a bit of path dependency that these conversations really have to try and minimize in terms of those big spend, dirty projects that might be part of the COVID recovery in some places.

[00:38:44] But your other point, I think is right on as well. I've been following environmental politics for a number of years now, and I feel like the conversation about how to create economic benefit and environmental benefit, and now social benefits, at the same time through certain kinds of investments.

[00:39:04] I think you're right, that nut has finally been cracked to a large extent. And I'm hoping that we're moving past the economy versus environment debates that slowed so much of this thinking down for the last couple of decades. I just want to thank you so much for joining us today, Jennifer, and it's been a broad ranging discussion.

[00:39:27] Some of my takeaways, this idea that NGOs that can link their issues to climate change can have a huge impact in and have been changing the conversation about climate change, is really interesting. And how they do that through building allies and through finding footholds within those negotiations.

[00:39:47] I'm looking forward to reading your book and getting more into those questions. And then this whole conversation we've touched on climate and COVID from a number of different perspectives, both about how COVID has maybe impacted the movement for addressing climate change and climate justice. But as you say, these movements are creative and we're looking forward to seeing how they continue to have their voices heard.

[00:40:11] And then also how COVID and post-COVID economic recovery is tied in with addressing climate and other issues. It's been a really interesting conversation. So it's been a real pleasure having you with us today, Jennifer and I will pass it to Ryan to take us out.

[00:40:30] **Ryan M. Katz-Rosene:** Sure. Well, I also echo my thanks.

[00:40:32] A quick reminder to our listeners that this podcast is made available under a Creative Commons License, 2.0 Canada. So, share it and use it widely, we just ask that you

provide an appropriate attribution. Follow us on Twitter @EcoPoliticsP with a capital 'P'. Jen, where can people follow you on Twitter?

[00:40:48] **Jen Allan:** Oh, I'm terribly creative. It's just my name @JenIrisAllan.

[00:40:52] **Ryan M. Katz-Rosene:** Jen Iris Allan. Okay. Please do get in touch folks. Our website is ecopoliticspodcast.ca and the Global Ecopolitics Podcast is produced by Nicole Bedford. A support with transcription and captioning is provided by Kika Mueller. And Adam Gilbert helps us with artistic design and digital support.

[00:41:11] See you all in our next episode. Stay tuned. .