

I. Abstract

In the midst of a world grappling with interconnected global challenges, climate change has surged to the forefront as a growing concern demanding urgent resolution. This research delves into the intricate interplay of historical legacies, power dynamics, and the pursuit of sustainability within the context of cobalt mining—a pivotal facet of the global green energy transition. The research navigates the nexus between climate justice, an unrelenting growth paradigm, and extractivism, with a particular focus on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) using an exploratory case study approach to determine whether green extractivism can serve as a threat multiplier. The findings unveiled an intricate tapestry wherein historical imprints and power dynamics converge, shaping the violent trajectory of cobalt extraction which has reemerged in the post-Paris era. The case of the DRC underscores the discord between sustainability aspirations and the unfettered pursuit of economic growth. The ecological toll of cobalt mining, particularly its resonance within the Congo Basin rainforest, reveals alarming environmental consequences while economic realities expose a paradox wherein growth comes at grave human and environmental expense. The country's contemporary dependence on cobalt fuels an overreliance that further amplifies inequalities, mirroring the historical subjugation perpetuated by exploitative practices. This research overall, underscores that the cobalt crisis transcends a localised ecological issue, instead embodying the global debate surrounding climate justice, equitable development, and power dynamics. To forge a sustainable path forward, confronting historical injustices, fostering inclusivity, and recalibrating the balance between growth and sustainability are imperative, necessitating a radical transformation which re-evaluates growth paradigms, embraces de-growth principles, and prioritises authentic climate justice as crucial steps to disentangle the legacy of colonial and climate violence from the pursuit of genuine sustainability. The insights gleaned from this research have far-reaching implications for addressing similar challenges in other contexts, offering a blueprint for navigating the complexities of extractivism and climate justice within a rapidly changing world.

Keywords: *climate colonialism, green extractivism, sustainability, climate justice, cobalt extractivism, environmental security, green energy transition, de-growth theory*