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GLAWCAL COMMENT

THE RELEVANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA 2030

Based on:

Pawletta, Barbara. “Legal Framework for the Interstate Cooperation on Development and Transport of Fossil Natural Resources of the Caspian Sea” *The Journal of World Energy Law & Business*, 2020.

AgLAWcal comment on Pawletta, Barbara. "Legal Framework for the Interstate Cooperation on Development and Transport of Fossil Natural Resources of the Caspian Sea" The Journal of World Energy Law & Business, 2020.

In its article 'Legal framework for the interstate cooperation on development and transport of fossil natural resources of the Caspian Sea', author Barbara Janusz- Pawletta presents a powerful argument right at the very beginning of the introduction. The article itself is an analysis of several provisions of the Caspian Sea Convention and places its focus on how the Convention both regulates the access to fossil fuel resources and protects the environment of the Caspian Sea. She considers the Sustainable Development Goals as clear and concise vision for sustainable development, and follows with a powerful statement, that if we understand the vital importance of natural resources for development, then it is of the foremost importance the focus on sustainable development. We cannot overstate the importance of this affirmation. Each nation has the right to develop to improve the standards of life of its citizens and reach the level of developed states. On the other side, the externalities over the environment derived from a predatory capitalism based on unrestricted consumerism and the idea of unlimited growth are driving the global ecosystem to the limits, and this system bears the seeds of its own destruction.

Scientific consensus around climate change and its anthropogenic origins is almost unanimous, despite the claims of certain negationist sectors. Thus, an apparent contradiction rises, for development efforts seem to clash with environmental protection. I state, however, that there is no contradiction. The incompatibility is not between environment and development itself, but with the current model of development. Against the common straw-man argument wielded against it, environmentalism does not inherently oppose development, but instead advocates for a long term sustainable one. As Hoffman and Andonova affirm in its article 'From Rio to Rio and Beyond: Innovation in Global Environmental Governance', the goal of key global South actors such as Brazil and Colombia in the road to the Rio Earth Summit and the Sustainable Development Goals was to avoid an excessive focus on just green economy, as they saw it as a way for Northern nations to block Southern development and bring economicism in the relations between humans and nature. This argument is key to understand that a model should be found that protects the environment while at the same time allowing underdeveloped nations to improve its situation. Therefore, we go back to the statement by Janusz-Pawletta that the SDGs are a powerful tool to achieve that objective. Indeed, the SDGs represent a remarkable achievement, and its wide scope and holistic view offer a solid ground to build upon. Nonetheless, some caution may be desirable, for they are not absent flaws. The SDG are intertwined is defectiveness may be significantly diminished if only achieved partially. I believe that bilateral and multilateral agreements that consider the SDGs and its values are an inestimable mechanism to achieve sustainable development, and the Caspian Sea Convention is a perfect example of this.



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Email: research@glawcal.org.uk

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