



Law Research Briefing OCTOBER 2025

Influencing the Just Transition in Asia-Pacific

Professor Darren McCauley

The transition away from fossil fuels is increasingly in doubt among governments because of claims that it costs too much. Professor Darren McCauley addresses this problem by quantifying the wider negative impacts of delaying the transition and the gains from acting now. He developed the DEEPER model and framework to integrate global policy and legal data into metrics that go beyond price alone. DEEPER enables policymakers, regulators, investors and regional planners to compare social, environmental and legal risks and benefits. The work is targeted at the Asia Pacific where resource pressures are rising. The model has been published in leading journals such as *Global Environmental Change*, *Ecological Economics* and *Environmental and Sustainability Indicators*.

He has published papers whose DEEPER model is being used by international organisations to evaluate justice metrics in global emissions reduction efforts. This uptake helps those organisations identify disparities and design equitable climate strategies. His research supplies quantitative tools that influence policy and strategic decisions. The model and general approach to just transition was recently adopted by United Nations bodies and Asia Pacific Bank and think tanks following my Newcastle publication in 2023. That paper built on his earlier framing of a just transition published in 2018. These contributions have strengthened stakeholder capacity to quantify justice and to embed equity in climate governance (McCauley and Pettigrew, 2023, McCauley and Heffron, 2018).

Prof McCauley's research has directly informed policy and programme development at international organisations. His findings are cited in the United Nations ESCAP report on digitalisation and AI for SDG 7 and the energy transition (UN ESCAP, 2024). They underpin guidance in the Asian Development Bank report on a just transition to a low carbon and climate resilient future (ADB, 2025). They also shape analysis by the Stockholm Environment Institute on energy transition policies in Southeast Asia and China (SEI, 2025). These citations indicate that his work has supported policy design, diagnostic frameworks and recommendations used by multilateral agencies and leading think tanks.



Darren McCauley's research and publications are focused on environmental and energy policy, particularly in the field of energy justice, just transition and sustainability, with his work influencing policy frameworks and strategies at various levels. His research has a wide and deep impact on international and national policies and strategies. It is based upon a continuous engagement with a wide range of diverse external and internal stakeholders, establishing strong links with national and international industry, regulatory bodies, policy makers, and world-leading research institutions.



darren.mccauley@ncl.ac.uk



<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/law/people/profile/darrenmccauley.html>



McCauley D, Pettigrew K., 2023, Building a just transition in Asia-Pacific: Four strategies for reducing fossil fuel dependence and investing in clean energy. *Energy Policy* 2023, 183, 113808
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2023.113808>