INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND ENVIRONMENT: TOWARDS AN ECOFEMINIST APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Since the perceptions of threats have been revised and multiplexed across time, each theoretical tradition within International Security Studies has interpreted environmental threats and security very differently, advocating competing standing points to answer the essential questions of who or what is to be secured and what is to be secured against. Despite the diversity of academic studies on environmental security, more systematic work still needs to be done to explore the linkage between ecofeminism and security. Thus, this study firstly exhibits the evolution of different approaches to environmental security and consequently shows how the lens of ecofeminism provides transformative insight into the human and nature relationship for planetary security and justice.

Keywords: *Ecofeminism, Environmental Security, Climate Change, Ecological Security, Sustainable Development.*

Jel codes*: F50; F64; N40; Q54*

ULUSLARARASI GÜVENLİK VE ÇEVRE: EKOFEMINIST BİR YAKLAŞIMA DOĞRU

ÖZET

Tehdit algıları zaman içinde değiştiğinden ve çok yönlü hale geldiğinden, Uluslararası Güvenlik Çalışmaları içindeki her bir teorik gelenek, çevresel tehditleri ve güvenliği çok farklı yorumlamış, kimin veya neyin güvence altına alınacağı ve neye karşı güvence altına alınacağı gibi temel soruları yanıtlamak için birbiriyle çatışan dayanak noktalarını savunmuştur. Çevresel güvenlik üzerine yapılan akademik çalışmaların çeşitliliğine rağmen, ekofeminizm ve güvenlik arasındaki bağlantıyı ortaya koymak için daha sistematik çalışmalar yapılması gerekmektedir. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma, öncelikle çevresel güvenliğe yönelik farklı yaklaşımların gelişimini ortaya koymakta ve sonuç olarak ekofeminizm yaklaşımının gezegensel güvenlik ve adalet için insan ve doğa ilişkisine nasıl dönüştürücü bir bakış açısı sağladığını göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Ekofeminizm; Çevre Güvenliği; İklim Değişikliği; Ekolojik Güvenlik; Sürdürülebilir Kalkınma.*

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1.INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the global COVID-19 pandemic has been a seismic event that has disrupted national security perceptions. It has brought health to the forefront as a crucial security issue, compelling governments and individuals to reconsider the potential severity of infectious diseases and the role of interconnectivity and interdependency in exacerbating their impact. This crisis has also sparked conversations about the intricate linkages between state, human, and ecological security, highlighting the need for adaptability and resilience in our security approaches.

Amidst the relentless climate change and escalating human activities, the destabilisation of natural and semi-natural ecosystems has significantly jeopardised global ecological security since the 20th century. Numerous researchers have probed into the potential consequences of global warming (Koren et al., 2021: 329-332), such as temperature spikes, heat waves, severe droughts, wildfires, sea level rise, floods, and cyclones, which could impact various regions housing millions of people. The expansion of uninhabitable areas could trigger mass migration, economic turmoil, political unrest and conflict (Ide et al., 2023: 1077-1079). Therefore, climate change is increasingly acknowledged as a pressing security concern. However, there are divergent viewpoints on defining and addressing this issue for the planet's future.

Although the 'securitization' of climate change in international politics has become a rising agenda (Selby and Hoffmann, 2014: 749-750; von Lucke et al. 2014), there is no consensus about how to deal with it as a threat or whose security it threatens. Different assumptions and choices inform different paths to understanding the climate-security relationship. Scholars in International Security Studies (ISS) define security and environment diversely based on their theoretical approaches (Elliot, 2015; De Wilde, 2008; Dalby, 2013; 2002; Daudney, 1999). In other words, different priorities about the main security problems of the day lead to contesting approaches to environmental security and climate implications (Floyd, 2013; Egeland, 2023). The policy implications largely depend on what is securitised and what means are used to ensure climate security (Trombetta, 2008: 585-586).

Security approaches are not just tools; they shape security policies, reflecting identities, values, and the measures adopted to protect those values. Hence, this research delves into various security approaches to enrich the mainstream understanding of environmental security with the contribution of ecological feminism. Ecofeminism is an approach that demands both environmental justice and gender equality from an ecological perspective (Biehl, 1991; Salleh, 1997; Gaard, 2007; Li, 2022; Siegel, 2024). Numerous studies have indicated the gender aspect of climate change (Malome, 2015; Terry, 2009; Hemmati and Röhr, 2009). However, in the literature of ISS, only Nicole Detraz (2009) examined environmental security through a gender lens, but she did not refer to the concept of ecofeminism. Batricevic and Paunovic (2019) attempted to link environmental security and ecofeminism with a specific focus on the vulnerability and susceptibility of women to the impacts of climate change. This

study argues that we need a more comprehensive, inclusive, and transformative concept of ecofeminist security to address planetary insecurities and injustices. By addressing this gap in the literature, the study offers to use a critical ecofeminist approach to contribute to the environmental security debate and provide insight into the global agenda of the "new rescue plan for humanity and the planet" (UN 2015).

In this context, firstly, this study scrutinizes the evolution of international security studies to see the multi-perspectivity in the conceptualisations of environmental security. With a departure from this investigation, it defines three perspectives of environmental security: national security, human security, and eco-system security. Then, it moves to explore the limitations of these accounts of environmental security regarding planetary security and justice. Lastly, it points to how the approach of ecofeminism is helpful in getting rid of '-isms of domination' and broadens our understanding of current developments in international environmental politics.

2. ENVIRONMENT AS A NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUE

The discipline of International Relations (IR) was born after the First World War. Following that, International Security Studies (ISS) was derived as a sub-discipline within IR during the Second World War. The states' survival mode during the chaotic wartime international order contributed to the dominance of the state-centred, military-centred, realist approaches to understanding security. Searching for new methods and explanation frameworks to analyse the insecurities of bipolar rivalry in the first decade of the Cold War urged to enrich debates, which led to the so-called golden age of Security Studies between 1955 and 1965 (Walt, 1991: 214).

In *the Evolution of International Security Studies,* Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen (2009) put forward five driving forces behind the continuities and transformations in the concept of security and the ISS: great power politics, technology, key events, the internal dynamics of academic debates, and institutionalism. As stated by these two scholars, the military, ideological, technological, and strategic power struggle between two superpowers during the Cold War shaped the academic debates and institutionalisation of realist ideas for dealing with dangers and insecurities.

From the traditional realist perspective, the natural environment, like other material resources, exists to serve the state's interests. Moreover, environmental warfare, including the deliberate, systematic destruction of forests or freshwater reservoirs, was seen as a military strategy by the armed forces.

Inevitably, the bipolar framing of the international order manifested itself in the structural-realist approaches and analysis of international politics. Kenneth Waltz (1979), the founding father of Neorealist theory, argued that the international system held a more substantial explanatory power than unit-level factors associated with the state capabilities. The ongoing nuclear arms and space race on both

sides of the Iron Curtain generated technological developments to maximise military power in the logic of deterrence. The Cuban Missile Crisis constituted the peak point of the escalation of the nuclear arms race, bringing the world to the brink of nuclear war. This event became one of the most influential events for the evolution of ISS in the Cold War era. Thankfully, it paved the way for the construction of means of communication between the US and Moscow, which enabled the rise of Peace Research Studies and international arms control in the 1960s.

In the 1970s, the intensification of interdependency and plurality in international relations widened the impact of international organisations, multinational corporations, transnational institutions, and non-governmental organisations. The rise of the globalisation debates empowered the neo-liberal conceptualisations of security (Keohane and Nye, 1977; Gilpin, 1981). At the same time, the Oil Crisis demonstrated the significance of economic security by displaying the Western dependency on the Middle East oil. In this context, Richard A. Falk (1971) was one of the pioneering scholars who emphasised the security of energy resources and the ecological interdependence of humankind.

The 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was the first attempt at global environmental governance to address ecological questions. The conference led to the establishing of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). The effects of transnational pollution (air, water, land) and the thinning of the stratospheric ozone layer developed the international environmental agenda in the 1970s.

In 1983, Barry Buzan from the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute published *People, States, and Fear: The National Security Problem in IR* to show "the underdevelopment of security as a concept in International Relations" (Ibid. 26). He criticised that security was seen narrowly in terms of national power by two dominant approaches of ISS, neo-realism and neo-liberalism. For Buzan, security is "the pursuit of freedom from threat" (Ibid. 37). National security refers to states' ability to preserve their identity and functional integrity in the international system. With a departure from this perspective, he offered a versatile understanding of national security, stretching threat types across the military, political, economic, societal, and ecological sectors. In the context of the ecological sector, writing *Redefining Security*, Richard Ullman proposed the redefinition of national security considering environmental issues.

The link between environment and security was accepted, emphasizing that environmental issues may cause power struggles over natural resources, and lead to violence and conflict (Mach et al., 2019; Floyd, 2008). In this context, the Brandt Report, entitled *North-South: A Programme for Survival* (1980), declared that the degradation of the biosphere on which human life depends poses a severe threat to the future of the ecosystem and human community. However, the report's advocacy of expanding the role of the World Bank for extended free trade arrangements escalated the critics that viewed the report as a strategy of the financial system of international capitalism to deal with the increasing debts of the South (Williams, 1980: 77-86).

The documents such as the 1979 Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution Convention, the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, and the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer reflected a perception shift in understanding environmental security.

The 1987 Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future, also known as the Brundtland Report, took attention to the link between sustainable development and environmental security. Harlem Brundtland (1987) expressed in his statement to the 42nd session of the General Assembly of the United Nations that "it is mass poverty which drives millions of people to overexploit thin soils, overgraze fragile grasslands, and cut down yet more of the rapidly disappearing tropical forests, these great lungs vital for the global climate and thereby for food production."

However, the traditional state-centric security readings prioritised the state as the referent object for security. Accordingly, mainstream approaches to climate security and its implications have focused on responding to climate change by controlling its secondary effects. For example, in 2004, the US administration decided to take more robust border control measures to prevent population displacement in other states from the impact of climate change (McDonald, 2013: 568).

In the second half of the 1980s, the constructivist account of international security, including the Copenhagen School, fundamentally influenced the debates in the discipline. It was argued that anarchy/insecurity is what states make of it (Wendt, 1992); in other words, it is not a given condition of the international system, as the mainstream security approaches argue. Similarly, in *Security Communities*, Emmanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (1998) argued that the international community shapes security politics and constructs the conditions for peace or war. Another constructivist scholar, Peter Katzenstein, published *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. He focused on the role of norms and identities and used cultural explanations to understand how political actors attach meaning to power and security and to explain their behaviour.

3. ENVIRONMENT AS A HUMAN SECURITY ISSUE

The end of the Cold War triggered scholars to think and study IR and ISS differently. In the absence of rivalry to challenge Western powers, International Security Studies began to work on new dangers such as ethnic conflict, migration, terrorism, and climate change.

The view of state security was challenged by the rise of critical approaches in International Relations and the emergence of Critical Security Studies (CSS), which widened and deepened Security Studies. Ken Booth and R. Wyn Jones' works at Aberystwyth University have promoted a variant within the Critical Security Studies, the Welsh School. Publishing in 1991, Ken Booth's paper titled *Security and Emancipation* bloomed to the next stage of thinking about whose security matters in world affairs.

With the intellectual inspirations of Antonio Gramsci and the Frankfurt School, he offered to reconceptualise security studies to guide a 'politics of progress,' a 'politics of hope,' and a 'politics of resistance.' Booth (1991: 319) defined emancipation as "the freeing of people from the physical and human constraints which stop them carrying out what they would freely choose to do." The conceptions of security are defined for individuals and groups in terms of 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want'.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's interest in deepening and strengthening international human rights law and humanitarian law to improve the fundamental individual rights to 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness' contributed to the UN's pioneering role in defining the scope of human rights. In the 1994 United Nations Human Development Report, the declaration of 'human security' broadened the security concept, moving away from the traditional state-centric understanding of security. In this report (Ibid. 22), it was noted that "human security is a child who did not die, a disease that did not spread, a job that was not cut, an ethnic tension that did not explode in violence, a dissident who was not silenced. Human security is not a concern with weapons-it is a concern with human life and dignity". It means that human security is a multi-sectoral concept that encompasses economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political insecurities. For instance, poverty, inequality, innumeracy, political oppression, cultural discrimination, natural disasters, climate change, terrorism, genocide, and ecocide are seen among the critical and pervasive threats and situations to human security (Smith 2020: 79-81). According to this perspective, human security is creating political, social, environmental, economic, military, and cultural systems that give people the building blocks of survival from critical and pervasive threats and situations (CHS: 2003: 4).

In the 1990s, with the rise of Critical Security Studies and the concept of human security, the individual became the appropriate referent object (which is to be secured). Since then, environmental security has been approached beyond the state-centric threat and military nexus as a component of human security (Daoudy 2021).

The UN held the Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. At this Earth Summit, governments agreed to fight global warming for sustainable development. It also provided a platform to discuss formulating international conventions to establish a control mechanism to reduce emissions.

In 1994, Robert Kaplan's essay titled *The Coming Anarchy* contributed to seeing the environment as a national security issue in Washington. Playing a constructive role in the struggle for climate and eco-system protection, President Bill Clinton signed the Kyoto Protocol (1998), which imposed legally binding greenhouse gas emission reductions on the industrialized developed countries. However, President George W. Bush repudiated the Protocol in March 2001, arguing it was harmful to US industry and economy (Lisowski, 2002: 106).

After 9/11, American President G.W. Bush's policy of 'the war against terrorism' became the top agenda of security studies and shadowed the other topics. Despite the rising atmosphere of real politics in international affairs, international environmental cooperation was maintained with events such as the 2002 Johannesburg Conference.

The 2007-2008 UN Human Development Report Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World noted that 'climate change is a massive threat to human development.' In this report, climate change is defined as a human security issue. President Obama's commitment to climate action paved the way for a new comprehensive and binding climate document, the 2015 Paris Agreement. However, with the climate scepticism of President Donald Trump, the White House's decision to withdraw from the Agreement ceased all treaty implementation and has accelerated the erosion of institutions that are engines of global climate action (Jotzo et al., 2018: 813-816).

Even though developed countries are significant actors responsible for climate change, the governments of wealthy countries such as the US have avoided addressing the problem due to the dominance of the state-corporate relationship.

Human activities are causing environmental problems. In other words, humans are the main reason behind climate change. The dilemma is whether humans maintain their habits or change for a better future. Approaching environmental security from the human security perspective limits it to the national borders of human rights. This limited perspective fails to address responsibilities and obligations to the other peoples of the world. It also ignores future generations or other living beings (McDonald, 2018: 162). Its mixture with neoliberal ideas prioritises enduring unsustainable consumer lifestyles. It tends to disregard ecological justice and the rights of vulnerable others.

Moreover, the human security approach reduces the value of the environment to its instrumental usefulness to humans. The environment is seen as a tool or a resource in the service of humans. It aims to ensure natural resources for humans. Like state-centred approaches, the human-centred approach to environmental security has limitations in the face of climate change and climate justice. Beyond these two perspectives, the ecological security perspective is the third way that constitutes appropriate policy responses to climate change.

4. ENVIRONMENT AS AN ECOLOGICAL SECURITY ISSUE

From the traditional state-centric security perspective, the environment is viewed as a source of threat or a threat multiplier. From the human security perspective, it is seen as an instrument or resource in the service of humans. However, an alternative approach aims to secure the environment in and for itself: the ecological security perspective. This environmentalist worldview (Eckersley, 1992) rejects anthropocentrism, which assumes that humans are the ultimate subject of security.

The ecological security perspective challenges the separation between humanity and nature (Liftin, 1999). Both the natural world and the human world belong to the ecosystem. Their interdependency and interconnectedness distinguish them. The concept of environment produces a taken-for-granted understanding of this relationship. It draws an unquestioned perception of a distinct natural world.

Ecological thought attempts to overcome traditional binaries of anthropocentrism vs. eco-centrism. For the long-term survival of life, it emphasises the dynamic inter-relationship between human populations and other species in the ecosystem. Ecological security calls for a political consciousness to secure ecosystems from the threats to equilibrium associated with existing political, social, and economic structures (McDonald 2021). It is defined as "ecosystem resilience and the rights and needs of the most vulnerable across space (populations of developing world), time (future generations), and species (other living beings) (McDonald, 2018: 153)." The eco-centric security perspective normatively advocates recognising the moral obligation to other living beings and future generations.

It should be noted that the war not just destroys human lives and habitations but also biological life, landscapes, and cultures. For instance, in the Gulf War, the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein burnt 600 Kuwaiti oil wells, which caused severe atmospheric pollution. Considering ecological destruction, the scholars discuss the possibilities and challenges of acknowledging environmental destruction and related human rights violations as a new crime at the International Criminal Court (Killean, 2021). Intending to ensure more excellent environmental protection through international criminal law, the attempts of the criminalisation of ecocide (Minkova, 2023) have brought new dimensions to the security-climate relationship.

5. GENDERING ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY: ECOFEMINISM

The first wave of feminism sprouted on the grounds of values such as equality, freedom, and human rights, which were prominent on the international agenda after the French Revolution. Published in this period, Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects (1792)* is one of the pioneering works that have been the source of feminist ideology. By upholding the theory of natural rights, the first generation of feminists emphasized gender equality while highlighting the existential commonalities between men and women. They had sought a social and political transformation by fighting for equality in social, economic, and political rights to vote, work, study, etc. It had been a brutal struggle in Britain. Emily Wilding Davison threw herself under the King's horse on Derby Day 1913 and sacrificed herself for the vote (Walters, 2005: 82-83).

The second wave of feminism, which emerged in the 1960s and continued until the 1980s, criticised the patriarchal system as the basis of the problems of gender inequality and attempted to develop strategies and find solutions for the emancipation of women (Thornham, 2001: 25-36). Unlike

the first wave, in the second wave, the public/private sphere debates gained momentum; the oppression of women's bodies by masculine domination in all areas of social life and how these mechanisms of oppression were internalised, naturalised, normalised and institutionalised were deciphered and struggled to be overcome. Rights and freedoms on sexuality and reproduction became the subject of feminist movements and studies. In February 1969, feminist activist Carol Hanisch stated in her famous article *Personal is Political* that "personal problems are political problems. There are no personal solutions at this time. There is only collective action for a collective solution."

Ecofeminism emerged within the environmental movements of the second wave of feminism to fight against existing patriarchal paradigms of power (Ruether, 1978). This approach simultaneously interrogates the exploitation of women and nature. Francoise d'Eaubonne, in her book *Feminism or Death: How the Women's Movement Can Save the Planet* (published in French in 1974), linked the suppression of women and the suppression of nature and claimed that both the emancipation of women and the emancipation of nature would come together. Ecofeminism goes beyond the -isms (nationalism, colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, anthropocentrism, etc.), which prioritize political boundaries, economic profits, or national interests.

The growing influence of postmodernism in the social sciences in the 1980s reshaped feminist debates, and third-wave feminism emerged. This new wave of feminists emphasised differences instead of a generalising, uniformising notion of womanhood. They have sought to increase the visibility of multiple narratives of womanhood through different individualities, cultures, geographies, and experiences. For instance, Cynthia Enloe in *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (1989) exhibited how gender, ethnicity, nationality, and class diversely determine the everyday lives of women worldwide by reshaping and reconfiguring power relations. Uncovering new manifestations of militarism, Ann Tickner (1993a), Jean Elshtain (1987), and Jan Pettman (1996) called for rethinking security, violence, patriarchy, and gendered power politics, which facilitates recognition and understanding of the 'personal is international' and that the 'international is personal.'

Feminist Security Studies argued that the IR discipline was gender-blind by decoding how women's existence, history, contributions, and narratives were ignored in the academic and political debates. In the 1990s, the academic wave of challenging the traditional military-state-centred approaches encouraged feminists to expand the referent object of International Security Studies to include women.

Scholars of International Security Studies have also long ignored non-Western experiences and conceptualisations. The post-colonialist security perspective highlights the attempt to globalise IR by integrating Global South's perspectives into the discipline. According to Third World theory (Ayoob 1991; Thomas, 1987), Western dominance in world politics reproduces inequalities and insecurities at the local and global levels. Going beyond this, to eliminate inequalities and hierarchies on the planet,

the ecofeminist approach (Warren, 2000; Pandey, 2013; Adams and Gruen, 2014) shows the 'interconnections between all kinds of oppression.'

The 1987 Brundtland Report, *Our Common Future*, did not mention issues related to women's rights or gender equality. But, to build a gender perspective on the environmental agenda, in 1991, the Women's Action Agenda 21 was adopted at the Miami World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet, organized by the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO 2011). Agenda 21 was influential in consolidating the link between women and the environment. The following year, in Rio De Janeiro, women were officially acknowledged as a crucial group for environment management, conservation, protection, and development at the UN Conference on Environment and Development.

In the literature on ecofeminism, there are different approaches to the women and nature relationship (Mellor 1994; Plumwood, 1986). With a specific focus on the woman's body, fertility, and reproduction, some scholars pay attention to the knowledge and experiences of women with Mother Earth (Wilson, 2005: 334-335). Some feminists identify themselves with nature to justify a privileged position in environmental transformation and management. The women's knowledge, experience, and contributions to the climate change debate are indispensable to the search for planetary recovery. However, critical ecofeminists underline the pitfalls of this culturalist perspective, arguing that it reinforces gendered stereotypes and dichotomies that naturalize, normalize, and perpetuate patriarchal hierarchies (Carlassare, 2000). They claim that the recovery of the planet cannot be designed as a "project of women alone" (Braidotti et al., 1994: 9). In terms of climate change, they emphasize the importance of recognizing the gendered nature of everyday experiences related to climate change, which are shaped by various intersecting power dynamics influenced by material factors and cultural norms (Rao et al., 2019).

It is scientifically accepted that climate change deepens the gap between the world's advantaged and disadvantaged people. Climate-dependent livelihoods and natural resources make communities more vulnerable to climate change. Low-income women in developing countries are among the most disadvantaged groups and are more vulnerable to environmental degradation (Denton, 2002: 11). Based on this argumentation, Batricevic and Paunovic (2019) portray women as "more vulnerable" and "more common victims of negative environmental impact". Linking environmental security and ecofeminism, they offer to consider gender aspects of climate change to tackle environmental problems. This study goes beyond the discourse of female victimhood to have a more transformative concept of ecofeminist security in the sense of taking into consideration all disadvantaged individuals, excluded groups, and less-developed states to expand participation in the fight against global injustice and environmental injustice deepened by the effects of climate change. It requires a broader transformation in economic, political, cultural, and international power structures.

This ecofeminist security perspective allows us to see the interconnectivity of Western patriarchal domination and the threat of climate change. This is why ecofeminists have strongly challenged the concept of development, which is viewed as a failed Western project aimed at modernizing the countries in the South (Braidotti et al., 1994: 1). Rather than progress, the development projects have maintained Western-male-class colonialism and have contributed to the spread of different patterns of domination, bringing environmental degradation, deforestation, desertification, global poverty, injustice, and inequality (Ibid. 8-9). While ecofeminists question the concept of sustainable development and its dependence on the global market economy (Rochette, 2002: 150), they propose a more inclusive, pluralistic, holistic, genuinely fair, sustainable development discourse (Shiva, 1989; Agarwal, 1989).

Regarding national and planetary security, ecofeminists imagine anti-militarist societies with nature-friendly technologies and sustainable economies that respect place and culture. For this purpose, it depicts the contradictions and discrepancies in social, economic, and political life and decodes the destructive effects of patriarchy and capitalism on nature, women, and all suppressed groups and cultures for an ecologically just world. For instance, Ann Tickner (1993b) pointed out that the idea of political and economic development legitimized a competitive, profit-seeking tradition and the compulsive producer and consumer behaviour of an imperialist Eurocentric state system. Tickner questioned the accumulation of power and wealth in the international political economy and pointed out that the expansion of the capitalist world economy and the emergence of the modern state depends on the exploitation of nature and women for 'human progress.' She offered an ecofeminist approach to develop "sustainable non-dominating relations with nature and assuring all peoples of an adequate quality of life require an ethic which rests, not on hierarchical relationships, but on the mutual interaction between women and men, as well as between humans and nature (Ibid. 68)."

All in all, the ecofeminist security approach widens our understanding of the origins of insecurities in different aspects of life. It argues that the fight against climate change is only achievable by challenging every form of structural violence to end every form of social, political, and international marginalization, exclusion, and discrimination for a safer planet for every living being.

6. CONCLUSION

Despite the rising awareness that climate change poses a threat to security, there is no consensus on how to respond to this crucial issue. This study demonstrated competing approaches to identifying the relationship between security and environmental change, based on the different definitions of whose security matters, from what threats, which agents are responsible for providing it, and through what means.

According to the traditional state-centred, national security approach, climate change is a matter of security policies and practices only when it threatens state security. Environmental problems such as marine pollution, atmospheric pollution, extreme drought, deforestation, and biodiversity loss threaten international security by fuelling mass migration, humanitarian crises, international conflicts, and instability. From the national security perspective, the necessary measures to counter these threats must be implemented by strengthening military power.

In the human-centred approach to environmental security, the referent object of security is the international society. It is based on the idea that the impacts of the climate crisis on people can be mitigated through the implementation of common principles and action plans in cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations. However, this approach ignores the fact that climate change is caused by industrialisation, consumer culture, and environmental destruction imposed by global capitalism. In other words, from the perspective of human security, the climate crisis is not considered a symptom of the simultaneous exploitation of humans and the ecosystem.

As an alternative approach to climate security, ecofeminism opposes every kind of oppression on the planet, from personal to global level. It accepts the indivisibility of the earth and the interdependency of the ecosystems, valuing other life forms by building a global culture of respect and responsibility. Going beyond the state-centric and human-centric environmental security approaches, ecofeminism gives environmental protection the highest priority. It offers to establish ecological standards to ensure equal ecological security and climate justice for the survival of humanity and the planet.

It can be said that the recent decisions and practices of the United Nations on sustainable development and climate security reflect the idea that 'personal is planetary.' It means that no problem can be solved at the national or global level without entrenching a culture of mutual respect and responsibility at the individual level. For instance, in September 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit as a rescue plan for humanity and the planet. By 2030, it aimed to resolve (UN 2015: 3) 'to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources.' According to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals Report (2023: 23), the impacts of climate change threaten to further hamper progress in gender equality. The report underlined the significance of bridging the geopolitical and economic divides and providing climate finance for developing countries (Ibid. 2). To address the sustainable development goals, it declared critical areas for urgent action and called on governments to (Ibid. 5) "advance concrete, integrated and targeted policies; advance policies and actions to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality and end the war on nature, with a focus on advancing the rights of women

and girls and empowering the most vulnerable", which shows a changing understanding of planetary security towards ecofeminism.

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