From "Non-Conceptual Interdependence" to Global Coexistence: Restructuring Climate Governance via the *MadhyamakŌvatŌra*

Yingluo Wang
Senior Researcher, Western Regions Wisdom (Sichuan) Culture and Art Research Institute, Shinawatra University (SIU), Thailand

Abstract:

The contemporary global climate crisis and rapid biodiversity loss stem fundamentally from an anthropocentric, subject-object dichotomy that instrumentalizes the natural world. While conventional environmental ethics attempt to bridge the divide between humanity and nature, they frequently stumble into essentialist traps—such as reifying nature—or fail to supply a rigorous, Middle-Way framework for international governance. Drawing upon CandrakẠrti's *MadhyamakŌvatŌra* (Entering the Middle Way), this paper uses the core doctrines of "emptiness of intrinsic nature" (*svabhŌva-·ˈnyatŌ*) and the non-duality of emptiness and dependent origination (*pratẠtyasamutpŌda*) to construct a PrŌsaṅgika-Madhyamaka approach to global climate governance.

We argue that environmental degradation represents a societal-scale manifestation of grasping at intrinsic existence (*svabhŌvagrŌha*). By employing the *MadhyamakŌvatŌra's* refutation of the four extreme modes of origination (*caturkoṭi-utpŌda*: self-origination, other-origination, both, or neither) and its realization of freedom from conceptual proliferation (*prapañca*), this study deconstructs the ontological illusion that isolates human agency from natural systems. Within the horizon of dependent origination and emptiness, climate dynamics, carbon footprints, and ecological networks do not exist as autonomous causal entities; rather, they operate as a seamless, mutually conditioning matrix where appearance and emptiness are indivisible (*snang stong dbyer med*).

On this doctrinal foundation, we reformulate the ecological principle of the "non-duality of sentient beings and their environments" (*yẠnzhèng bù'èr*). Rather than framing environmental policy as a transactional negotiation between separate human and non-human actors, this paradigm reveals an interdependent nexus rooted in selflessness (anŌtman). Bridging the ultimate wisdom (*prajñŌ*) of the Sixth Ground (*AbhimukhẠ*) with the compassionate engagement (*karuṇŌ*) and skillful means (*upŌya*) of the preceding stages, this paper outlines actionable principles for climate justice, international resource allocation, and biodiversity conservation—offering a Buddhist framework for post-industrial ecological ethics.

Keywords:

MadhyamakŌvatŌra, Dependent Origination and Emptiness, Freedom from Conceptual Proliferation (*Nisprapañca*), Non-duality of Environment and Agent, Climate Governance, Middle-Way Ecological Ethics.