

4

“When You Think about Climate Change, It Is a Social Justice Issue”

Between the Rock of Stability and the Hard Place of Politicization for Muslim Climate Actors

PAUL TOBIN, NAFHESA ALI, SHERILYN MACGREGOR, AND ZARINA AHMAD

The pursuit of significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions is an urgent governance problem, necessitating transformative action. This volume contributes to understandings of a discord between two distinct and often antagonistic, yet not opposite, strategies and worldviews that underpin transformation efforts: those focused on stability and those on politicization. Here, we focus on two forms of stability and two of politicization. We suggest that in both schools of thought – those favoring stability and those for politicization – greater engagement is needed to understand and acknowledge existing patterns of structural inequality. In our chapter, we analyze the lived experiences of communities grappling with this discord, by learning from minoritized faith communities in the UK,¹ namely Muslim individuals pursuing greater climate action (see Hancock 2020; Koehrsen 2021; Tobin et al. 2023). Research to date on Muslim climate action has explored Muslim communities’ climate initiatives within a variety of arenas yet has rarely found instances of strategic climate leadership from Muslim communities within “mainstream” fora (see DeHanas 2009; Gilliat-Ray and Bryant 2011; Koehrsen 2021; Nita 2014).²

In the UK, Canada, Germany, and many other Global North countries, Muslims are the largest religious group after Christians and atheists. Thus, the effective involvement of Muslim communities in the pursuit of countries’ national climate goals, such as net zero plans, is paramount. Yet, despite this importance, scholarship must acknowledge the important role Muslim communities can play without

The support of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is gratefully acknowledged, having funded Paul Tobin via grant ES/S014500/1 during his involvement in this chapter. This chapter draws on work carried out as part of the “Towards Inclusive Environmental Sustainability” project, which is funded by a Leverhulme Trust Research Project Grant.

¹ We use “minoritized” rather than “minority” because it describes the active processes involved in differential allocations of power and resources between groups in society. The same active processes in the hands of more powerful white people lie behind the invisibilization and marginalization of people of color in the UK.

² We follow the understanding of Bell and Bevan (2021: 1208) that the “mainstream” environmental sector comprises more formal and resourced environmental organizations.

othering (i.e. treating as different or not belonging in some way) or instrumentalizing that participation (see Tobin et al. 2023). Muslims face multiple axes of inequality when participating in the climate policy process (Hancock 2015, 2020): Acknowledging *intersectional* inequalities (see Hill Collins 2019; Wilson 2013) is vital for understanding the realities of participation for Muslim communities. Islamophobia intersects with the impacts of racism (Meer and Modood 2019; Muslim Council of Britain 2016), economic inequality (Ali and Whitham 2021), and gendered discrimination (Zempi 2020) to affect Muslim communities' climate activities. In turn, these intersecting structures ensure that Muslim communities should not be considered a monolithic group. Hence, these intersecting inequalities have led to calls for *intersectional* climate justice that facilitates climate action while tackling the surrounding structures of injustice (Amorim-Maia et al. 2022; Mikulewicz et al. 2023).

What are the obstacles to the achievement of long-term, effective climate action via stability and politicization for Muslim communities in the UK? To inform our research, we conducted twenty-one semi-structured interviews between May 2021 and February 2022 with individuals based throughout the UK (listed in the chapter's Appendix).³ Interviewees included nineteen Muslims who engaged in climate action from a wide variety of professions and roles and two non-Muslims who were involved in interfaith activities with Muslim communities. We deliberately interviewed a wide range of individuals to glean as broad an understanding as possible of the realities of Muslim experiences in climate action within the UK. Consistent with our intersectional approach to the analysis, we reflect on our own positionality as researchers who have designed the project and interpret the findings. We note the potential influence of the positionality of interviewers during the data collection process (see Fisher 2015; Merriam et al. 2001), which may shape our interpretations of the data, as well as the topics and scope of the conversations in the first place.⁴

Our analysis explores how the existing inequalities faced by Muslim communities mean that both stability and politicization alike pose challenges, meaning that it is only through a lens of climate justice that transformative climate action can be achieved. In doing so, we highlight that pursuit of long-term climate

³ The UK hosted the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP) 26 in October to November 2021, and there was increased awareness of climate change during this period.

⁴ The first interviewer, A (Ali), conducted six interviews and identifies as a third-generation, British-born Muslim woman with Pakistani heritage. The second interviewer, B (Tobin), conducted fifteen interviews and is a British-born white man who is not a member of the Muslim community. We state which interviewer conducted each interview within the label for each interview; for example, "1B" was the first interview conducted by interviewer B. Finally, coauthors MacGregor and Ahmad did not conduct interviews; MacGregor is a white woman who is an immigrant to the UK and not a member of the Muslim community, while Ahmad is a British-born Muslim woman of South Asian heritage.

action for Muslim communities bears resemblance to being stuck between a rock and a hard place. Our findings are best encapsulated by a point made by one Muslim climate campaigner we interviewed: “we want political influence, but not necessarily through civil disobedience” (9B), yet such political protests have been one of the most high-profile means for climate campaigners to draw awareness to their cause.

In our short section on stability, we focus on two understandings of the concept as outlined in Chapter 1 of this volume. First, we analyze *stability as the status quo* by examining the impacts of structural inequalities and racism on Muslim communities’ involvement in the UK climate movement (and beyond), and hence, the pursuit of *stability as lock-in* threatens to lock in these structural obstacles in the long term. This argument will be unsurprising considering the volume of work that already exists on inequalities within environmental action (Bell and Bevan 2021; Kaijser and Kronsell 2014; MacGregor 2009; Stephens 2020). However, politicization is not a straightforward solution. We analyze how the pursuit of politicization is, in itself, a complex and potentially dangerous process for Muslim communities due to the presence of, among other issues, harsher penalties in the justice system. By listening to the experiences of the Muslims interviewed for this project, we also aspire to represent a second form of politicization, namely *politicization as scholarly praxis*, as we wish for this chapter to represent some small form of intervention regarding existing inequalities. Hence, we draw explicitly from our interviewee data to center Muslim voices at the heart of our analysis. Reflecting on being between a rock and a hard place regarding stability and politicization outlined here, we argue that it is only through an overarching pursuit of intersectional climate justice that the benefits of the two schools of thought may be achieved. In short, as our title highlights, “when you think about climate change, it is a social justice issue” (10B).

Our chapter is structured as follows. First, we begin by outlining the existing research literature on Muslim communities as environmental actors, noting a dearth of studies that can identify Muslim climate actors being able to shape “mainstream” climate activities, despite environmentalism being a core concern of many Muslims. Second, we explore stability, by analyzing two manifestations of the strategy for Muslim communities in the UK. Third, we turn our focus to pursuing re/politicization. While we note that the goals of repoliticization are key to efforts to subvert existing power hierarchies, we emphasize the need for closer consideration of the realities of “othered” experiences to make these efforts effective. Fourth, we look beyond the stability/politicization discord to detail how considerations of intersectional climate justice must be at the heart of climate strategies. Fifth, we discuss “where next” for developing a more inclusive long-term response to climate change and conclude, highlighting three areas for future research.

4.1 Muslim Communities as Environmental Actors

Most people working in the “mainstream” environmental and climate sectors in the UK are white (Bell and Bevan 2021); there is little to zero data on the extent to which Muslim communities work in these sectors. In 2011, though, 92.2 percent of UK Muslims were People of Color (ONS 2011). As such, research on predominantly Muslim communities in the city of Manchester, UK, has shown that they face repeated injustice when liaising with white policymakers (MacGregor et al. 2022). Many Muslims see Islam as an explicitly *environmental* faith, in line with the sentiments favoring sustainability that feature within the *hadith* (discourses). Koehrsen (2021) summarizes the research to date on Muslims and climate action, noting that the UK and Indonesia predominate in the existing literature, but with different foci, as Islam is the majority religion in Indonesia but not in the UK. Minority faith groups’ participation in climate policymaking – and indeed, wider policymaking – reflects different political dynamics to those of Christian communities, which are the largest faith group in much of the Global North and may even be formally affiliated to the institutions of the state, as is the case in the UK. In contrast, minority groups may have been “othered” within such societies (Modood 2019), which in turn affects their political participation.

Regarding Muslims in the UK, research has found that their minoritized status influences the extent to which communities can exert political influence, focusing on local rather than broader leadership or strategic roles. Gilliat-Ray and Bryant (2011) found in 2009–2010 that Muslims engaged in a variety of environmental conservation and sustainable horticulture initiatives, albeit in small numbers. Relatedly, DeHanas (2009) analyzed a radio show during Ramadan in 2007, exploring how guest presenters integrated their faith, environmental protection, and women’s political representation into their hosting of the show. Nita’s (2014) study of Christian and Muslim groups in the Transition Towns Movement during 2007–2010 found Muslims and Christians alike felt marginalized from environmental groups because of their faiths but also from their faith communities for engaging in explicitly green behaviors and activities. Finally, in a comprehensive volume examining the United States and the UK, Hancock (2018) analyzed Islamic environmentalism between May 2012 and July 2013, finding that at that time in the UK, campaigners engaged “in moderate forms of action that effect mostly individual change, not the radical systemic change necessary to realize their vision of the future” (Hancock 2018: 137).

There has been relatively sparse research on Muslim climate actors since those of the late 2000s and early 2010s, yet the years following have been marked by significant, high-profile activity on the part of the climate movement, necessitating further research into this area. Hence, research on Muslim communities in the UK

has shown that they are environmentally active. Yet this research is increasingly out of date and does not explore the experiences of Muslim communities in seeking to play strategic roles in “mainstream” organizations, or how these experiences will shape the pathways employed to secure long-term climate action. Responding to these gaps, we examined the “between-the-scenes” roles of Muslims as “climate intermediaries” in the UK, finding that they were commonly invisibilized (i.e. treated as and made to feel invisible) and instrumentalized by “mainstream” environmental actors, and hence often collaborated through either interfaith work or within Muslim communities (Tobin et al. 2023). This chapter seeks to develop those arguments further, by examining the strategic dilemma in which UK Muslims find themselves because of widespread intersectional inequalities.

4.2 Stability

We focus on two forms of stability: stability of the status quo and, in turn, the dangers of “locking-in” policy solutions that would create a path-dependent route to entrenching these existing inequalities. As noted at the start of this chapter, the following section is shorter than that on politicization, as our findings align with existing research on structural inequalities within environmental action. Nevertheless, it is pertinent to explore these ideas further through the voices of members of Muslim communities, as different marginalized communities face unique structural barriers, and also in the context of considering a conceptual discord between the pursuits of stability and politicization.

4.2.1 *Stability as the Status Quo*

Muslims are the lowest-paid faith community in the UK (see Hancock 2018: 77–79). Multiple interviewees highlighted the high levels of poverty within Muslim communities in the UK as an obstacle to climate action (4B, 6B, 7B, 8B, 12B). As one interviewee (4B) lamented, “if you’re a poor family, your first priority is not being environmentally conscious. Your first priority is eating and working and learning and getting your kids through school.” This struggle ensures that for many Muslim families, participation in climate action feels an impossible task; this situation that has been exacerbated in the UK by more than a decade of government-led “austerity” measures during the 2010s and a cost-of-living crisis in the early 2020s.

Furthermore, and as introduced earlier, intersectional inequalities cut across financial hardships. “Being first/second generation immigrant communities – I think that really impacts how we act on it [climate change]. Secondly, again faith [Islamophobia], and thirdly, gender... those three intersect a lot in my voluntary capacity” (11B). Racism was also a frequent theme for interviewees (3B, 5B, 10B,

11B). For one interviewee wishing to support activities in the local park to become more climate-friendly (5B), the “direct abject racism” of the local council, including being told by a staff member “we don’t want your lot running the park,” meant that their ideas were blocked before getting off the ground. Hence, the pursuit of any form of policy stability that maintains this status quo for many Muslim communities would be unconscionable.

4.2.2 Stability as Policy Lock-In

Considering the existing context of intersecting inequalities faced by Muslim climate actors, locked-in trajectories hold the potential to entrench the above structural dynamics into long-term policymaking. Where policymakers do engage with minoritized communities, it is usually within depoliticized fora that have been designed to match the needs and assumptions of policymakers. Even if Muslim individuals have the capacity to join state-led initiatives, they may still be invisibilized while doing so, doubling the difficulty of climate action and damaging morale (5B, 10B, 12B; see Herzog 2018). Moreover, due to this lack of diversity, even individuals wishing to encourage more inclusive climate action can make suggestions that are not suitable for Muslim climate actors: “[to] the white, middle class, middle-aged individual who’s usually engaged in environmentalism ... it doesn’t even enter their mind for there to be a barrier” (12B). Therefore, policies and activities are designed that cannot be accessed by Muslim communities, despite existing in principle to support marginalized communities.

Examples of policies designed without consideration of Muslim communities’ needs include loan systems that are designed to pay for the installation of solar panels for mosques but are inaccessible due to their reliance on interest payments; grant application processes designed to encourage wider participation but that are too complex for communities to complete without expensive grant-writing support; and a lack of institutional support for gaining planning approval once funding has been won (1A, 4B, 6B; see also Tobin et al. 2023: 10). Collectively, such well-meaning yet ill-fitting policies reflect how the pursuit of “locked-in” stability, without wider representation within the policymaking process, will likely result in policies being locked in that cannot be used by their policy targets. In short, because of existing inequalities, and their potential to be locked in, none of our interviewees suggested that maintaining stability or the status quo would be beneficial paths to follow.

4.3 Re/politicization

Having briefly established the challenges posed by two forms of stability for Muslim climate actors, re/politicization offers a means of bringing critical perspectives

into climate strategies. Re/politicization of climate action holds the potential for Muslim communities to shape the assumptions of policymakers behind the scenes, generating more effective policy outputs that may address intersecting inequalities. However, re/politicization efforts in the UK must also consider the lived realities of Muslims as othered communities, and the complex power inequalities therein. In this section, we begin by exploring the most high-profile politicizing strategies employed by the “mainstream” climate movement, namely protests and civil disobedience, finding that many Muslims are also reluctant to engage in activities that entail political conflict, due to their already marginalized positions. Yet, of course, the diversity within Muslim communities in the UK means that this sentiment is not universal. We then examine less politically charged means for Muslims to participate in climate change politics, finding that obstacles also exist in these arenas, too.

4.3.1 Protests, Marches, and Civil Disobedience

One of the most high-profile means for climate campaigners to politicize their cause has been through the usage of protests, demonstrations, and marches, such as the Fridays for Future school strikes movement led by Greta Thunberg (see Tosun and Debus, Chapter 2, this volume). More dramatically, others have pursued civil disobedience strategies, as seen through the disruption to sporting events led by, among others, Just Stop Oil (Kinyon et al. 2023). While there are more avenues for politicization available to campaigners than just protests, the high-profile and high-participation nature of protests means that this case is especially important for examination when discussing the realities of politicization. Many of our interviewees expressed disquiet at the thought of participating in these politicization strategies, for two main reasons.

First, multiple interviewees suggested that the spaces for protests and disruptions were created by people who appeared to be from a narrow range of privileged backgrounds, which limited the appeal of participation (3B, 4B, 7B, 12B, 14B). One Muslim climate organization leader (7B) wondered if “people like me didn’t do this sort of stuff [protests and marches], because when I walked past, the many, many, many, many people who were there were all white and middle class.” Here we see that the white-led nature of the environmental movement that we noted in Section 4.1 (see Bell and Bevan 2021) hinders involvement in “mainstream” activities for Muslims of color. Relatedly, the legacy of being from an immigrant family also influenced the willingness of our interviewees to participate in political protests: “I have very specific reasons for not taking part in protests. I was brought up in Pakistan ... you would go there [to protests] and you would find that there were other ideas, or other demands and other things that had infiltrated that” said

one interviewee (14B). As such, with protests being a dominant manifestation of climate action for many social movements, the design of protest activities by predominantly white campaigners in the UK, who bring their own understandings of what it means to protest, can make this form of activism exclusionary to Muslim communities. Indeed, one interviewee also noted the desire to avoid being involved in anything controversial, suggesting that being rebellious is counter to their desire to “just want to live a normal life, take care of their family” (4B), and indeed that many Muslim communities are conservative regarding disruption (also 6B, 9B).

Second, consolidating the difficulties of participating in protest activities is the influence of structural inequalities against Muslim communities (sustained by Islamophobia) that permeate the justice system. Interviewees discussed that institutional racism within the justice system added an extra level of inaccessibility to involvement in political protests (3B, 10B, 11B; see also Shankley and Williams 2020). Summarizing this sentiment, a Muslim business leader (3B) reflected:

a lot of people were saying the XR movement was very much a white middle class movement. People that hoped to be arrested. And I know when I went down there, I wasn't keen to get arrested. Was I gonna wear a hooded top well?

This reflection on avoiding wearing a hooded top both to reduce the likelihood of being targeted by the police and to fit in with “mainstream” environmental actors featured in multiple interviews (3B, 4B, 10B, 12B, 14B). As a result, one Muslim climate campaigner (10B) who had previously participated in protests found that they could no longer take part in “actions” as they had become more disruptive: “We’ve been stopped, as young Asians, by police and treated differently compared to how we would have seen our white friends being treated.” These reflections matter: Protests are one of the few means for environmental movements to influence policymakers, yet the messages these events carry are inherently streamlined due to the lack of diverse participation within them. “You will get off with a warning, I will get a criminal record” (11B) summarized one community activist.

Still, as explained in the introductory section of this chapter, let us not homogenize the Muslim experience in the UK. Other interviewees challenged the idea that Muslims would not feel welcome at protests. Indeed, the geographical origins of interviewees’ familial heritage influenced this perspective. In contrast to the above-mentioned interviewee whose family originated in Pakistan, another interviewee’s family had come to the UK from Bangladesh: “we’ve got this huge, rich history of protest, [including] the role that women played ... So this idea that we don’t want to protest, it isn’t a space for us, is nonsensical really” (11B). Furthermore, one Muslim climate campaigner (10B) who works at a “mainstream” environmental organization explained proudly the role they had played in co-planning the biggest climate march to date at that point, around the Paris climate conference in 2015.

Moreover, Extinction Rebellion has been supported by a specifically Muslim-led group, XR Muslims, since 2019, that has participated in protests. As a result, rather than querying whether protests can ever be accessible for Muslim climate actors, “[t]he question should be, ‘what can we do to make our protests inclusive?’ ... [but] the question is never framed in that way. It’s always about, ‘well, why don’t you come?’” (11B). As a result of this current inaccessibility, we must look also beyond protests and marches despite their status as one of the more high-profile forms of politicization.

4.3.2 Pursuing Politicization through Non-protest Channels

Many Muslim climate actors pursue other strategies for politicizing climate policymaking beyond protests (3B, 7B, 9B, 10B, 12B). For instance, one interviewee seeks to combine

the deeply pragmatic and the deeply radical. Radical in the change that I want to see ... But pragmatic in understanding that ... we need people pulling in every single direction, because actually there’s no one route to social change ... [as well as] join marches, join activist circles, do civil disobedience ... we need everybody and we need lots of theories of change. (10B)

As a result, we found a variety of approaches in play. Muslim climate actors have tried to build coalitions with other communities to then influence policymaking through more institutionalized means, particularly by working with other minoritized groups, such as LGBTQ+ activists (7B, 12B), Indigenous communities (7B), and other faith groups, such as Sikhs (3B, 7B, 9B, 12B). Indeed, this interfaith work enables Muslim communities to collaborate with like-minded actors while potentially benefiting from greater access to resources (12B; see also Tobin et al. 2023). In line with these values, for example, the environmental nongovernmental organization (ENGO) Muslims Declare was established in 2021 with the goal of prioritizing participatory events that bring together business leaders, politicians, experts, faith leaders, campaigners, and individuals through public fora, exhibitions, assemblies, and workshops (Muslims Declare 2023).

Nevertheless, despite the potential benefits afforded by coalition building, interviewees also expressed a preference for working in Muslim-only spaces, because otherwise, they “can’t find a safe space” (3B). One Muslim climate campaigner (9B) explicitly sought to avoid including any form of civil disobedience in the activities of their Muslim-only organization, and instead they try to build from a common set of shared understandings: “it’s trying to find a narrative that really connects with the worldview that most Muslims are in within the UK. Their precarity, their sense of fear” (9B). Muslims’ unique positionality within UK climate

politics means that because “we can’t engage with mainstream organizations, we’re just going to do our own” (12B). Building on this point, another Muslim climate campaigner noted that “I would rather play my part with my own small group that I can influence, and hopefully it will eventually have that ripple effect and impact more people. But I’m not prepared to go out and do protests and things” (14B). Yet this approach resonates with the realities explored earlier regarding stability as the status quo; by feeling forced to undertake climate politicization in a siloed community, Muslim climate actors possess limited resources and face limited access to influential policymakers, which in turn perpetuates the lack of representative or effective policies that can then be locked in without Muslim involvement. Hence, as we explore next, many of our interviewees emphasized that their activities need to be understood as part of a wider campaign pursuing intersectional climate justice, regardless of the exact strategy in place.

4.4 Next Steps: The Pursuit of Intersectional Climate Justice

Many of our interviewees brought up the concept of justice without it having been suggested by the interviewer (2B, 3B, 7B, 9B, 10B, 11B, 12B, 13B). A Muslim leader of a not-for-profit climate organization noted that climate change is only one part of a broader conversation: “I see my work on climate as sitting within this larger, package of progressive social justice causes” (7B); for another, “I don’t think about climate change as an environmental issue anymore” (10B). Interviewees discussed the need to bring in climate justice together with wider issues such as inequality toward LGBTQ+ communities (7B), gender inequality (7B, 9B, 10B, 11B), and racism (2B, 3B, 5B, 10B, 11B). These areas of injustice were understood to be differing manifestations of the same coloniality and oppression (3B, 5B, 7B, 9B). Indeed, this oppression is arguably the root cause of the obstacles to participation in climate action.

When you look at climate change protests, I would say it isn’t our shared cultural heritage that is really a barrier ... I think it is racism. And I don’t think there’s enough anti-racism practice or approach into how environmental sustainability, resistance, activism, or protesting is practiced. (11B)

That is, by encompassing climate action *within* wider justice issues and tackling those at the same time, subsequent changes can then be made that facilitate, for example, protests, which in turn makes more high-profile disobedience tactics for politicization available to Muslim communities.

Of course, as with each of the areas discussed, there is diversity of opinion within Muslim communities regarding the role for justice and how to manifest its importance. “Even within the Muslim climate sphere there might be those of us [where]

the model is conservation and nature, and for some of us the model is justice” (7B). Indeed, this distinction in priorities brings its own disagreements and discord. One campaigner noted that for their organization, it became very difficult to strategize for environmental campaigns because some wished to stick to the science-based nature of climate change while others wished to focus on oppression and justice (9B). Lastly, there was also frustration that when white and non-Muslim allies in the climate movement did shift their attention to climate change as a justice issue, there was obliviousness regarding their complicity in these structural dynamics (11B). As such, even efforts toward championing greater engagement with justice issues as a means of bridging any divide between stability and politicization bring their own delicate areas for reflection, engagement, and action.

4.5 Conclusion: Where Next for Muslim Climate Actors and for Research?

Our chapter has shown how the pursuit of stability may perpetuate existing inequalities and encourage the locking-in of climate strategies that Muslim communities are excluded from shaping, resulting in effectual policy design. However, in pursuing repoliticization strategies, many interviewees highlighted experiencing similar such inequalities. Engaging in political activities as a Muslim citizen/individual in the UK is rife with difficulty. In the case of political protest, institutionalized discrimination ensures that any civil disobedience activities by Muslims result in a higher probability of arrest, and worse conditions following such an arrest. Due to these lived experiences, the appeal of political conflict must be weighed against a more vulnerable strategic position. Our findings support the argument that wider consideration of justice issues is needed within climate policy design; as leadership (slowly) diversifies from the current status quo, policy structures that support increasing critical engagement from invisibilized communities will enable more representative and effective policies to be designed. Without this expectation, policy design emphasizing “policy stability” may lock in the predominant assumptions around engagement and representation, which currently marginalize large numbers of people. We thus bring the realities of depoliticized climate politics as faced by invisibilized communities into conversation with one another and analyze the impacts of minoritization in shaping Muslim communities’ strategies for climate action.

Despite these obstacles to participation, our research with Muslim communities also highlighted myriad instances of climate action. These activities included national-level strategic oversight that had rarely been identified by the existing literature that was mostly carried out in the late 2000s and early 2010s. We suggest three research questions for future investigations that may build on our

work. First, to what extent are activism and advocacy around climate change in Muslim-majority contexts relevant or motivating for Muslims in the UK? Second, which initiatives have been especially successful in encouraging Muslim individuals to design policy, and how can such strategies be adapted and applied in other contexts? Finally, to what extent have these initiatives involved deliberate and official anti-racism or decolonizing strategies on the part of white-dominated institutions?

Appendix: Descriptions of Interviewees

- 1A: June 22, 2021, Muslim councillor.
- 2A: June 18, 2021, Muslim resident and local campaigner (climate volunteer).
- 3A: July 13, 2021, Muslim climate organization movement builder.
- 4A: June 18, 2021, Muslim mosque trustee, solicitor, and chair for local council of mosques.
- 5A: October 12, 2021, Muslim councillor and executive member.
- 6A: July 5, 2021, Muslim councillor.
- 1B: May 18–19, 2021, city-level not-for-profit employee.
- 2B: October 21, 2021, Christian faith leader and city-level interfaith board member.
- 3B: November 1, 2021, Muslim business leader.
- 4B: November 2, 2021, Muslim faith representative leader.
- 5B: November 10, 2021, Muslim local organizer.
- 6B: November 18, 2021, Muslim local organizer.
- 7B: December 1, 2021, Muslim not-for-profit climate organization leader.
- 8B: December 1–13, 2021, Muslim business leader in the environmental sector.
- 9B: December 13, 2021, Muslim climate campaigner.
- 10B: January 14, 2022, Muslim climate campaigner and organization leader.
- 11B: January 14, 2022, Muslim community activist and enabler.
- 12B: January 19, 2022, Muslim community leader.
- 13B: January 19, 2022, Muslim faith representative and climate spokesperson.
- 14B: January 31, 2022, Muslim climate volunteer.
- 15B: February 2, 2022, Muslim civil servant.

References

- Ali, N. and Whitham, B. (2021). Racial capitalism, islamophobia, and austerity. *International Political Sociology* 15(2), 190–211.
- Allan, J. I. (2020). *The New Climate Activism: NGO Authority and Participation in Climate Change Governance*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Amorim-Maia, A. T., Angelovski, I., Chu, E., and Connolly, J. (2022). Intersectional climate justice: A conceptual pathway for bridging adaptation planning, transformative action, and social equity. *Urban Climate* 41, 101053.

- Bell, K. and Bevan, G. (2021). Beyond inclusion? Perceptions of the extent to which Extinction Rebellion speaks to, and for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and working-class communities. *Local Environment* 26(10), 1205–1220.
- De Cordier, B. (2009). Faith-based aid, globalization and the humanitarian frontline: An analysis of Western-based Muslim aid organizations. *Disasters* 33(4), 608–628.
- DeHanas, D. N. (2009). Broadcasting green: Grassroots environmentalism on Muslim women’s radio. *The Sociological Review* 57(2), 141–155.
- Fisher, K. T. (2015). Positionality, subjectivity, and race in transnational and transcultural geographical research. *Gender, Place and Culture* 22(4), 456–473.
- Gilliat-Ray, S. and Bryant, M. (2011). Are British Muslims “Green”? An overview of environmental activism among Muslims in Britain. *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 5(3), 284–306.
- Haluza-DeLay, R. (2014). Religion and climate change: Varieties in viewpoints and practices. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 5(2), 261–279.
- Hancock, R. (2015). “Islamic” environmentalism in Great Britain. In T. Peace, ed., *Muslims and Political Participation in Britain*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 103–123.
- Hancock, R. (2018). *Islamic Environmentalism: Activism in the United States and Great Britain*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Hancock, R. (2020). Muslim environmentalists, activism, and religious duty. In M. Peucker and M. R. Kayikci, eds., *Muslim Volunteering in the West*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 141–160.
- Herzog, B. (2018). Invisibilization and silencing as an ethical and sociological challenge. *Social Epistemology* 32(1), 13–23.
- Hill Collins, P. (2019). The difference that power makes: Intersectionality and participatory democracy. In O. Hankivsky and J. S. Jordan-Zachery, eds., *The Palgrave Handbook of Intersectionality in Public Policy*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 167–192.
- Kaijser, A. and Kronsell, A. (2014). Climate change through the lens of intersectionality. *Environmental Politics* 23(3), 417–433.
- Kinyon, L., Dolšák, N. and Prakash, A. (2023). When, where, and which climate activists have vandalized museums. *npj Climate Action* 2(1), 27.
- Koehrsen, J. (2021). Muslims and climate change: How Islam, Muslim organizations, and religious leaders influence climate change perceptions and mitigation activities. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 12(3), 702.
- MacGregor, S. (2009). A stranger silence still: The need for feminist social research on climate change. *The Sociological Review* 57(2 suppl), 124–140.
- MacGregor, S., Ali, N., Ahmad, Z. et al. (2022) Better policy through symmetry? Examining the whiteness of green governance in Manchester. Proceedings of the Nordic Environmental Social Science (NESS) Conference, Gothenburg, June 7–9. <https://research.manchester.ac.uk/en/publications/better-policy-through-symmetry-examining-the-whiteness-of-green-g>
- Meer, N. and Modood, T. (2019). Islamophobia as the racialization of Muslims. In I. Zempi and I. Awan, eds., *The Routledge International Handbook of Islamophobia*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 18–31.
- Merriam, S. B., Johnson-Bailey, J., Lee, M. Y. et al. (2001). Power and positionality: Negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures. *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 20(5), 405–416.
- Mikulewicz, M., Caretta, M. A., Sultana, F. and Crawford, N. J. W. (2023). Intersectionality and climate justice: A call for synergy in climate change scholarship. *Environmental Politics* 32(7), 1275–1286.
- Modood, T. (2019). *Essays on Secularism and Multiculturalism*. London: ECPR Press.

- Muslim Council of Britain (2016). *British Muslims in Numbers: A Demographic, Socio-economic and Health Profile of Muslims in Britain Drawing on the 2011 Census*. London: Muslim Council of Britain. www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MCBCensusReport_2015.pdf
- Muslims Declare (2023). Our story. Website. www.muslimsdeclare.org/about/
- Newell, P. (2006). *Climate for Change: Non-state Actors and the Global Politics of the Greenhouse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nita, M. (2014). Christian and Muslim climate activists fasting and praying for the planet: Emotional translation of “dark green” activism and green-faith identities. In R. G. Veldman, A. Szasz and R. Haluza-DeLay, eds., *How the World’s Religions Are Responding to Climate Change: Social Scientific Investigations* (1st ed.). Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 229–243.
- ONS (Office for National Statistics) (2011). Muslim population in the UK. www.ons.gov.uk/aboutus/transparencyandgovernance/freedomofinformationfoi/muslimpopulationintheuk/
- Shankley, W. and Williams, P. (2020). Minority ethnic groups, policing and the criminal justice system in Britain. In B. Byrne, C. Alexander, O. Khan, J. Nazroo and W. Shankley, eds., *Ethnicity, Race and Inequality in the UK: State of the Nation*. Bristol: Bristol University Press, pp. 51–72.
- Stephens, J. C. (2020). *Diversifying Power: Why We Need Antiracist, Feminist Leadership on Climate and Energy*. Washington, DC: Island Press.
- Tobin, P., Ali, N., MacGregor, S. and Ahmad, Z. (2023). “The religions are engaging: Tick, well done”: The invisibilization and instrumentalization of Muslim climate intermediaries. *Policy Studies* 44(5), 627–645.
- Wilson, A. R. (2013). *Situating Intersectionality: Politics, Policy, and Power*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Zempi, I. (2020). Veiled Muslim women’s responses to experiences of gendered Islamophobia in the UK. *International Review of Victimology* 26(1), 96–111.