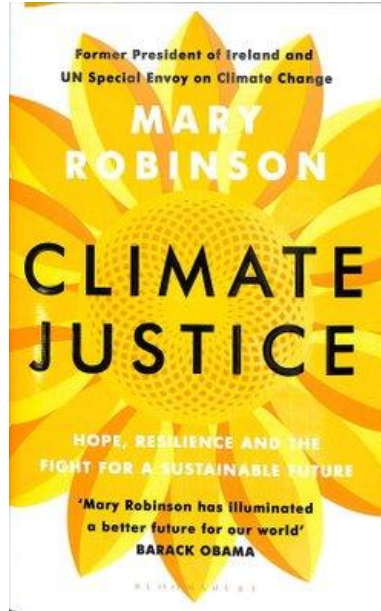


October Green Blades Rising Book Review
by John Hanson



Climate Justice (Hope, Resilience, and the fight for a sustainable future), Mary Robinson, 218, Bloomsbury Press.

The title of Mary Robinson's book sets the theme concisely. She powerfully and anecdotally brings together the threat of climate change and how it affects real people, threatening, not only their way of life, but their very lives. Robinson effectively puts skin on the problem that the warming of the planet is posing for millions of people globally, mostly poor and disenfranchised populations who are victims and not causes of climate change.

Mary Robinson is a former President of Ireland, served on the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights, helped shaped the Paris climate accord, and currently is president of the Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice.

Robinson weaves the disastrous threat of climate change with the real life stories of people whose lives have been disrupted by climate change, and what they are trying to do about it. She includes people from Africa, Australia, Alaska, Biloxi, Mississippi, Costa Rica (the highest per capita use of renewable energy in the world), the Pacific island of Kiribati, Viet Nam, the nomadic Saami people of northern Europe, and a farmer in New Brunswick, Canada. The personal stories Robinson outlines reveal two things. There are real threats to the very existence of some peoples and their traditional ways of life. Secondly, Robinson shows how the individuals she writes about are finding ways to combat climate change and educate people on how to live more sustainable lives. It is a wake up call to the rich, industrial countries of the world to curtail fossil fuel usage, develop technologies to transfer to sustainable and renewable energy resources, and understand how their continued disregard of the real threats of climate change may make the planet uninhabitable for all if the energy status quo is not changed.

In her concluding chapter, Robinson describes what the Paris accord of 2015 was all about. "The Paris Agreement was not just a historic turning point in the race to avert the potentially disastrous consequences of an overheated planet, but a resounding endorsement of the principles of climate justice. It was, as I would tell a reporter later that night, in every

sense an 'agreement for humanity.' The architects of the agreement acknowledged the importance of climate justice in the text and made commitments on human rights and gender equality, agreed on a framework for monitoring national progress, and persuaded rich countries to provide financing for climate action in poorer countries." That was a reminder to me that the Paris Agreement, if heeded, helps all nations of the world understand that the only way to keep our planet habitable for future generations is to make sure that all people, in all corners of the planet and every economic status can live healthy, sustainable, and vibrant lives.