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Green Hydrogen Economies in North Africa: Towards a Comprehensive Peace and Conflict Analysis

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Room 124, Institut für Politikwissenschaft
Or join online via Zoom: zoom.us/j/93089750663
930 8975 0663 (Meeting ID), 142311 (Passcode)



Against the backdrop of the Green Deal and the energy crisis triggered by Russia's war in Ukraine, the European Union has accelerated an ambitious transition toward renewable energy, including the import of green hydrogen from North Africa. EU policymakers often frame this shift as a win-win situation. However, civil society actors and scholars have strongly criticized these developments, describing them as forms of "green extractivism" and "green colonialism." They highlight local grievances—such as water scarcity and energy poverty—as well as the broader global inequalities that green hydrogen economies risk reinforcing. In the presentation, she proposes integrating these perspectives into a comprehensive, multilevel analysis of both existing and potential conflicts surrounding green hydrogen economies. This approach systematically incorporates transnational and international dynamics and examines how they intersect with conflicts at the local and national levels. Using Tunisia as a case study, she further demonstrates how relational approaches to social mobilization, combined with a political economy perspective, can help explain processes of scale shifting and issue linkage.

More broadly, these frameworks shed light on how green hydrogen economies interact with and reshape pre-existing political-economic conflicts. At the same time, such a comprehensive analysis can also help develop more socially just, inclusive, and peaceful strategies for managing conflicts related to climate action.

Irene Weipert-Fenner is a senior researcher, coordinator of the research group Regime Competition and executive board member at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt. She studies the energy transition against the background of her expertise on authoritarianism, social movements and political economy conflicts with a regional focus on North Africa.



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