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WINS Seminar

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**Title of the presentation: Unexpected Effects of a Diminishing Carbon Budget – The Colombian Coal Resource Curse**

**Abstract**

This is an ongoing work by Katharine Farrell, Roman Mendelevitch and Andrea Cardoso. The COP21 Paris agreement has brought about a clear commitment to reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to a level that will most likely keep the increase of global mean temperature below 2°C. Meeting this target implies a drastic reduction in the use of, and therefore also in the demand for carbon-based fuels, including coal. We argue that the energy transition will have regionally differentiated negative environmental and social impacts. Specifically, we consider that the Colombia coal is high energy content anthracite, which has both a strong current market and a unique international profile in terms of its extraction, transport and use costs. We see the Colombian Coal Curse as a particular case where "the poor sell cheap" and the localized externalities are disconnected from internationalized revenues. In the presentation, Andrea Cardoso will explain the local effects of the expansion of coal mining in the Caribbean region of Colombia. The key socio-environmental costs identified are those arising from pollution, public health risks, groundwater depletion, land and ecosystem services losses, community displacement, loss of sacred territories and cultural heritage, damages from transportation and shipping, and coal reserve loss. The analysis of the social cost of coal reveals that the coal exportation to Europe is anchored in environmental injustices and democratic deficits associated with both coal mining and coal-fired power plants, and irreconcilable tensions between public health, economic gain and the political power of the coal global market.

**Short bio**

Dr. Andrea Cardoso Diaz is an ecological economist from Business and Economics Faculty of the University of Magdalena, Santa Marta, Colombia. She holds a European Joint Master's degree in Water and Coastal Management from University of Plymouth, UK and the University of Cadiz. She received her M.Sc. and Ph.D. in environmental studies from Institute of Environmental Science and Technology from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Her research is focused on the political ecology of the global coal and climate justice.