

Space Resources: A Non-Extractivist Future?

Thursday, 22 June 2023 13:15 (1h 30m)

Space resources must be a key focus of any Summit of the Future. The coming ‘scramble’ for lunar resources raises urgent questions for the future of the governance of the global commons (connected to similar questions in Antarctica and the deep seabed). Additionally, if, as space advocates argue, space resources represent a bonanza that will provide for a glorious human future, then it is vital to give thought to how the interests of those future generations can be or will be incorporated into the space resource governance regime. It is also necessary to consider the structural inequalities in the international system, the likelihood that the benefits of space resources will not be enjoyed by ‘humanity’, and appropriateness of viewing space resources as solution to resource ‘scarcity’. Further, as has been seen time and time again, an understanding of resources as limited often gives rise to conflict and space may prove to be no different. Space resources matter beyond consideration of the consequences for space. Space resource governance raises, and touches upon, many of the issues facing the world more broadly – namely the appropriate and sustainable use of resources in the face of an ecological catastrophe. This multidisciplinary panel of space governance and ethics scholars will discuss some of the aspects of space resource governance and the implications for broader global governance that are vital for any Summit of the Future.

Track Classification: Astropolitics Working Group