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Foreign direct investment, stock market capitalization and sustainable development: Relative impacts of domestic and foreign capital

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1 **Foreign direct investment, stock market capitalization and sustainable development:**
2 **Relative impacts of domestic and foreign capital**

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24 It is well acknowledged that achieving sustainable development goals without negatively
25 impacting a country's economic activity is complicated. The question of whether foreign or
26 domestic capital can be used to address the financial demands of the nations who lack the
27 financial resources for a green transformation should now be resolved. Based on this, the main
28 goal of this research is to analyze the impacts of domestic and foreign capital on carbon
29 emissions for a heterogeneous panel of 42 countries for the period from 1990 to 2017. Aside
30 from capital accumulation, the environmental impact of elements such as economic growth,
31 urbanization, trade openness, and energy usage are also studied. The newly developed quantile
32 via moment approach is utilized to isolate the impacts according to the countries' emission
33 levels. Finally, the impact of these variables on the recently constructed sustainable
34 development index is investigated in order to ensure its robustness. The findings of the study
35 reveal that the environmental efficiency of domestic capital accumulation in countries with low
36 emission levels is higher than in countries with high emission levels. Foreign capital, on the
37 other hand, has no substantial effect on emission levels in all quantiles.

38 **Keywords:** Stock market capitalization; foreign direct investment; carbon emissions,
39 sustainable development

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**Foreign direct investment, stock market capitalization and sustainable development:
Relative impacts of domestic and foreign capital**

ABSTRACT

It is well acknowledged that achieving sustainable development goals without negatively impacting a country's economic activity is complicated. The question of whether foreign or domestic capital can be used to address the financial demands of the nations who lack the financial resources for a green transformation should now be resolved. Based on this, the main goal of this research is to analyze the impacts of domestic and foreign capital on carbon emissions for a heterogeneous panel of 42 countries for the period from 1990 to 2017. Aside from capital accumulation, the environmental impact of elements such as economic growth, urbanization, trade openness, and energy usage are also studied. The newly developed quantile via moment approach is utilized to isolate the impacts according to the countries' emission levels. Finally, the impact of these variables on the recently constructed sustainable development index is investigated in order to ensure its robustness. The findings of the study reveal that the environmental efficiency of domestic capital accumulation in countries with low emission levels is higher than in countries with high emission levels. Foreign capital, on the other hand, has no substantial effect on emission levels in all quantiles.

Keywords: Stock market capitalization; foreign direct investment; carbon emissions, sustainable development

76 **1. Introduction**

77 Although the period of the industrial revolution is widely accepted as the origin of climate
78 change and global temperature anomalies, when global average temperature values are
79 evaluated in a baseline for the period 1850-2019, it is clear that the period after 1990 is when
80 the temperature increase accelerated significantly (Morice et al. 2012). The fact that this
81 increase occurred primarily as a result of a rise in cumulative carbon emissions demanded
82 adopting actions to reduce carbon emissions, particularly in the context of climate change
83 mitigation. In this approach, particularly in the recent several decades, international efforts to
84 find a solution to the problem of climate change have been made, first with the Kyoto Protocol
85 and later with the Paris Climate Agreement. In actuality, the Paris Climate Agreement's primary
86 goal is to keep global average temperature rises below 2 degrees Celsius relative to pre-
87 industrial levels; additionally, the goal has been set at 1.5 degrees Celsius (UNFCCC, 2015).
88 However, even when carbon emissions are separated from population-sourced emissions, an
89 increase is evident in the post-Kyoto Protocol period, which might be considered the
90 predecessor to worldwide efforts. Carbon emissions per capita grew from 4.49 tonnes in 2005
91 to 4.72 tonnes in 2019 (Ritchie and Roser, 2020).

92 The inability to combat climate change is attributed to a number of issues, including: i)
93 developed countries do not provide enough financial assistance to developing countries for the
94 transformation in question, ii) developing countries do not invest the funds required for
95 transformation in productive areas, and iii) developing countries prioritize economic expansion
96 over environmental protection. In order to address potential finance challenges for developing
97 countries, the Paris Climate Agreement prioritizes the goal of stabilizing financial flows on the
98 road to low-emission and climate-resistant development (UNFCCC, 2015). Countries, on the
99 other hand, should encourage local capital and foreign direct investments to tackle climate
100 change and mitigate the danger of worldwide financial instability. In fact, without international
101 financing, it is impossible to achieve an environmentally sustainable change without causing
102 economic harm to the country. On the other hand, the promise of low environmental regulation
103 by developing countries' economies, whose economic development strategies are based on
104 foreign capital inflows, to pollution-inducing industries that adhere to strict environmental
105 policies in developed countries makes combating global climate change even more difficult.

106 Aside from the notion that a developed and stable financial system could harm the environment
107 (Tamazian et al. 2009; Tamazian and Rao, 2010; Boutabba, 2014; Omri et al. 2015; Charfeddine
108 and Khediri, 2016; Javid and Sharif, 2016; Shahbaz et al. 2016; Haseeb et al. 2018; Hafeez et
109 al. 2018; Moghadam and Dehbashi, 2018; Shahbaz et al. 2018; Phong, 2019; Zakaria and Bib,
110 2019; Le and Ozturk 2020; Bui, 2020; Tahir et al. 2020; Kayani et al. 2020; Destek and Manga,
111 2021), it is well known that studies have found that financial development plays a critical role
112 in the fight against climate change, thanks to the efficient use of financial resources for access
113 to and development of renewable and environmentally friendly technologies (Jalil and Feridun
114 (2011); Shahbaz et al. (2013); Shahbaz et al. (2013); Chang (2015); Destek (2015); Salahuddin
115 et al. (2015); Lee et al. (2015); Rizwan Nazir et al. (2018); Olowu et al. (2018); Zaidi et al.

116 (2019); Destek (2019); Umar et al. (2020); Godil et al. (2020); Samreen and Majeed (2020);
117 Baloch et al. (2021). Domestic credits are frequently utilized as a measure of financial
118 development in these researches, indicating that the environmental consequences of domestic
119 capital vary by country. Although there is a substantial literature on the consequences of foreign
120 capital on the environment, there is no consensus at this time. The "pollution haven hypothesis"
121 refers to the argument that developing countries are seen as a pollution haven, and that foreign
122 investors will shift their investments to these countries to take advantage of the loose
123 environmental regulations in these countries, causing an increase in foreign direct investment
124 inflows to accelerate environmental degradation. On the other hand, the "pollution halo
125 hypothesis" states that firms that transfer current high technology to rich countries with inflows
126 of foreign capital help developing countries create environmentally friendly technology.
127 According to this evidence, the environmental impact of foreign capital varies by country.

128 The previous findings that the comparative environmental impacts of domestic and foreign
129 capital differ for countries with similar development levels provide a foundation for
130 determining whether these differences are due to the countries' current production structures,
131 or, in other words, their current emission levels, rather than the countries' development level.
132 In this vein, the goal of this research is to compare the environmental implications of domestic
133 and foreign capital in 42 countries with varying levels of pollution (low, medium, high emission
134 level) using with quantile-based approaches for the period of 1990-2017. It is possible to
135 distinguish and observe the environmental impact of various capital accumulations for countries
136 with varying emission levels in this way. In addition, the effects of domestic and foreign capital
137 on a country's sustainable development are evaluated for robustness check.

138 The study makes a five-fold contribution to the literature. i) This is the first study to look at the
139 effects of domestic and foreign capital on the environment for a heterogeneous panel ii) Unlike
140 earlier researches, the methodology utilized in this one allows for discrimination based on the
141 countries' emission levels rather than their development levels. As a result, policy
142 recommendations will be differentiated based on the countries' emission levels, rather than their
143 degree of development. iii) The impact of variables such as economic growth, urbanization,
144 trade openness, and energy consumption are also separated according to the emission levels of
145 the countries in the study, in addition to domestic and foreign capital accumulation. By include
146 these variables in the empirical model, the omitted variable risk is reduced. iv) A second
147 empirical model is evaluated in the study for robustness check, in which the recently established
148 sustainable development index is utilized as the dependent variable instead of carbon emissions.
149 v) This is also the first study to examine the role of domestic and foreign capital in sustainable
150 development.

151

152 **2. Literature Review**

153 Although many studies have been done on the environmental implications of domestic and
154 foreign capital, none have been done to compare these effects based on the countries'
155 development or emission levels. When looking at the literature listed in Table 1, it is clear that
156 the impact of domestic and foreign capital is either investigated for a panel of countries with

157 similar development levels or on a country-by-country basis. Once we separate the findings
158 from prior studies according to the countries' emission levels, it is impossible to draw definitive
159 conclusions, particularly on the consequences of foreign capital. For instance, Jun et al. (2018)
160 discovered that foreign capital has a growing impact on China's carbon emissions while the
161 emission-reducing effect of foreign capital for China has been established by Zhang and Zhou
162 (2016) and Sung et al. (2018). Similarly, Sadorsky (2010), Paramati et al. (2016), and Sarkodie
163 and Strezov (2019) found that foreign capital has a negative impact on the environment in
164 emerging economies, while Destek and Okumus (2019) discovered that foreign capital has a
165 contribution on the environment in a panel of similar countries. Salahuddin et al. (2017) found
166 that foreign capital has a negative impact on the environment in Kuwait, whereas Al-Mulali
167 and Tang (2013) found that foreign capital has a positive impact on the environment in the Gulf
168 Cooperation Council, and Sbia et al. (2014) found that foreign capital has a positive impact on
169 the environment in the United Arab Emirates. For Turkey, there is a comparable inconsistency.
170 Foreign capital has an emission-increasing effect, according to Seker et al. (2015) and Kaya et
171 al. (2017), but foreign direct investments have an emission-reducing effect, according to Ozturk
172 and Oz (2016) and Mert and Caglar (2020).

173

[INSERT TABLE I HERE]

174 It is feasible to draw a separate conclusion when the environmental consequences of domestic
175 capital are compared according to the countries' development levels. Namely, Sadorsky (2010)
176 identified the carbon emission-enhancing effect of domestic capital for 22 emerging countries
177 and there are also some studies validating the emission increasing effect of domestic capital as
178 follows: Zhang et al. (2011) for China, Abbasi and Riaz (2016) for Pakistan, Paramati et al.
179 (2016) for 20 emerging market economies, and Zhang et al. (2019) for China. However, the
180 contribution of indigenous capital to the environment was identified by Shahbaz et al. (2018)
181 for France and Raghutla et al. (2021) for the top-10 investment countries. These researches
182 suggest that when a country's development level rises, domestic capital begins to have a
183 pollution-reducing effect. Indeed, Paramati et al. (2017) discovered that increasing domestic
184 capital increased carbon emissions in developing countries while decreasing carbon emissions
185 in developed countries. However, when prior researches are examined anew, it is impossible to
186 establish that the environmental impact of domestic capital varies depending on the countries'
187 emission levels.

188 When the previous researches are reviewed, it is clear that the environmental effects of domestic
189 and foreign capital are often studied either on a country-by-country basis or for countries of a
190 specific development level. Few studies have looked at the impact of domestic and foreign
191 capital on carbon emissions in countries of various development levels. On the other hand, no
192 research has been done on the environmental impact of domestic or foreign capital based on
193 disparities in emission levels across countries rather than the countries' development levels. In
194 addition, most of these studies focus on the efficiency of either domestic or foreign capital, with
195 no comparison of the two variables' environmental efficiency. The fact that this study analyzes
196 both variables' environmental activities and is based on a classification of countries based on
197 their emission levels is significant in terms of filling a gap in the literature.

198 **3. Empirical Strategy**

199 **3.1. Data**

200 The study consists of 42 countries (Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada,
201 Chile, China, Colombia, Egypt, Arab Rep., France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India,
202 Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco,
203 Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Singapore,
204 South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, United States) that are
205 heterogeneous in terms of carbon emissions and sustainable development levels and covers the
206 annual data from 1990 to 2017. To assess the environmental effectiveness of domestic and
207 foreign capital at different emission levels, we considered carbon dioxide emissions as a
208 function of economic growth, domestic capital, foreign capital, urbanization, trade openness
209 and energy consumption following the studies of Paramati et al. (2017), Shahbaz et al. (2018)
210 and Zhang et al. (2019). Here, we show carbon emissions (CO) in metric tons per capita to
211 represent environmental pollution, real GDP per capita in US dollars to represent economic
212 growth (GDP), market capitalization of listed companies as a percentage of GDP to represent
213 domestic capital (DC), foreign direct investment inflows as a percentage of GDP representing
214 foreign capital (FC), percentage share of urban population in total population representing
215 urbanization (URB), percentage share of total exports and imports in GDP representing trade
216 openness (TRA), and per capita energy consumption (EC) data in quad btu. In addition, the
217 sustainable development index (SD) newly developed by Hickel (2020) is also used as a
218 dependent variable in a second model for compare how carbon emissions and sustainable
219 development index affected by different types of capital. Hickel (2020) defines the sustainable
220 development index as the expanded version of the human development index with the
221 ecological activities of the countries. In the process of collecting datasets, GDP, FC, URB and
222 TRA data are obtained from the World Development Indicators database published by the
223 World Bank. DC data were downloaded from the World Financial Development database of
224 World Bank, CO data is sourced from OurWorldInData, EC data is collected from the Energy
225 Information Administration database, and SD data is downloaded from the Sustainable
226 Development Index database developed by Hickel (2020).

227 **3.2. Methodology**

228 To estimate our empirical models, we apply Quantile via Moment approach² developed by
229 Machado and Silva (2019) due to several crucial reasons. First, our variables are highly
230 heterogeneous across countries and over time. Any standard panel data –based techniques often
231 fail to capture cross-sectional heterogeneity and variation over time.

232 The advantage of our approach is that it allows the use of methods that are only valid in the
233 estimation of conditional means, such as differencing out cross sectional effects in panel data
234 models, while providing information on how the regressors affect the entire conditional
235 distribution. These informational gains are perhaps the most striking feature of quantile
236 regression (see, e.g., Chamberlain, 1994, and Buchinsky, 1994) and were emphasized, for

² See Appendix A for detailed explanation of Quantile via Moment procedure.

237 example, in the surveys by Koenker and Hallock (2001), Cade and Noon (2003), and Bassett Jr
238 and Koenker (2018). Besides, greatly facilitating the estimation of complex models, our
239 approach also leads to estimates of the regression quantiles that validate a crucial requisite often
240 ignored in empirical applications (see also He, 1997, and Chernozhukov et al., 2010).

241 In addition, we also used Driscoll-Kraay estimation technique of Driscoll and Kraay (1998) to
242 check the robustness of the findings. The reasons of using that estimation technique are that
243 using this technique both allows cross-sectional dependency among observed countries and our
244 sample is suitable for DK estimation because we have the data which seems cross-sectional
245 dimension is greater than time-period ($N > T$) condition.

246

247 **4. Empirical Findings**

248 The effects of domestic and foreign capital on both carbon emissions and the sustainable
249 development index are explored for different quantiles using the quantile regression approach
250 in the empirical procedure for two different empirical models. Table 2 shows the results of a
251 quantile via moment analysis that looked at the impacts of economic growth, domestic capital,
252 foreign capital, urbanization, trade openness, and energy consumption on carbon emissions for
253 countries with various emission levels. Once it comes to economic growth, it's been determined
254 that it raises carbon emissions for all quantiles. This finding is consistent with the studies of
255 Malik et al. 2020; Bekun et al. 2021; Adedoyin et al. 2021; Bekun et al. 2022; Destek and
256 Aydin, 2022; Caglar et al. 2022. When the positive coefficients for the Q70-Q90 quantiles are
257 compared to the positive coefficients for the Q10-Q60 quantiles, it is clear that the positive
258 coefficients for the Q70-Q90 quantiles are lower. This means that the negative environmental
259 effects of economic growth are greater in countries with low emissions than in countries with
260 high emissions. If it concerns to the environmental implications of urbanization, it is obvious
261 that as the degree of urbanization rises, carbon emissions rise for all quantiles, whereas the
262 environmental effects of urbanization do not differ significantly depending on the countries'
263 emission levels. This finding is also validated by some previous studies as Zhang and Zhou,
264 2016; Behera and Dash, 2017; Solarin and Al-Mulali, 2018. Furthermore, increases in trade
265 openness and energy use are found to raise emission levels for all quantiles. The negative impact
266 of both elements on the environment are observed to be greater in countries with low emission
267 levels. This result confirms the previous studies as follows: Tamazian and Rao 2010; Seker et
268 al. 2015; Solarin et al. 2017; Zafar et al. 2019; Destek and Okumus, 2019; Khan et al. 2020;
269 Xie et al. 2020.

270 In connection with the main purpose of the study, we observe the environmental effects of
271 domestic and foreign capital at different emission levels and it is concluded that an increase in
272 domestic capital decreases as found in Paramati et al. 2017; Shahbaz et al. 2018; Raghutla et
273 al. 2021 emission levels for Q10-Q30 quantiles while increasing emission levels in line with
274 some previous studies (Sadorsky, 2010; Paramati et al. 2016; Zhang et al. 2019) for Q50-Q90
275 quantiles. This suggests that, in comparison to countries with higher emission levels, domestic
276 capital is steered towards more environmentally favorable investment areas in countries with

277 lower emission levels. On contrary, the environmental effects of increased foreign capital are
278 statistically insignificant for all quantiles, and hence for all emission levels.

279 **[INSERT TABLE II HERE]**

280 Table 3 shows the findings of a quantile via moment analysis that looked at the effects of
281 domestic and foreign capital on sustainable development, as well as the impact of economic
282 growth, urbanization, trade openness, and energy consumption indicators for various quantiles.
283 On the surface, domestic capital appears to reduce sustainable development in almost all
284 quantiles, while foreign capital appears to have no statistically significant influence.
285 Furthermore, economic growth and energy use are found to impair sustainable development in
286 all quantiles. Similarly, it is observed that it has a negative impact on sustainable development
287 in practically all trade openness quantiles. Once the results are divided into quantiles, the
288 negative coefficient of economic growth in the Q10-Q60 quantiles is more noticeable than in
289 the Q70-Q90 quantiles. This means that economic growth has a higher negative impact on
290 sustainable development in countries with a low level of sustainable development than in
291 countries with a high level of sustainable development. When looking at the effects of
292 urbanization on sustainable development, the Q40-Q90 quantiles show a positive and
293 substantial influence. The negative impact of increased urbanization on sustainable
294 development, on the other hand, is determined in the Q10 quantile. While urbanization in
295 countries with low levels of sustainable development undermines sustainable development,
296 urbanization in countries with high levels of development is in line with sustainable
297 development goals, according to this conclusion. The impact of trade openness on sustainable
298 development, on the other hand, can be divided into three categories. In other words, the
299 negative effect in the Q10-Q30 quantiles is smaller than in the Q40-Q60 quantiles. Surprisingly,
300 in the Q70-Q90 quantiles, the negative effect was statistically insignificant. According to this
301 study, the adverse effect of trade openness on sustainable development increases as the degree
302 of development rises, and after reaching a particular level of development, the detrimental effect
303 of trade openness decreases. In line with economic growth, the negative impact of energy
304 consumption on sustainable development is inversely proportional to the development levels of
305 countries.

306 In line with the main purpose of the study, the effects of domestic and foreign capital are
307 analyzed for countries with various levels of sustainable development, and it is found that
308 domestic capital has a negative and significant influence on all quantiles except Q10-Q50
309 quantiles. The negative effect in the Q20-Q40 quantiles is substantially higher than the negative
310 effect in the Q60-Q90 quantiles, which is worth noting. As a result, the harm caused by domestic
311 capital to sustainable development lessens as the level of sustainable development rises. On the
312 other hand, it is established that the influence of foreign capital is statistically insignificant for
313 all quantiles. This finding reveals that foreign capital inflows have not yet had a significant
314 impact on the sustainable development of countries.

315

316 **[INSERT TABLE III HERE]**

317 **5. Robustness Check**

318 Additionally, we employ the Driscoll-Kraay (DK) robust estimator to determine the robustness
319 of the empirical findings. The reason for choosing this estimator is that the number of countries
320 in the study panel is greater than the number of periods in the study, and the DK estimator
321 produces accurate results in this case. Before DK estimation, we check the possible cross-
322 sectional dependency among countries for all variables and present the results in Table 4. Based
323 on the findings, it is concluded that the null of cross-sectional independency is strongly rejected
324 for all variables. This finding gives us a chance to use DK estimation technique.

325 **[INSERT TABLE IV HERE]**

326 According to the result shown In Table 5, economic growth and foreign capital have no
327 statistically significant effect on carbon emissions when carbon emissions are employed as a
328 dependent variable. Additionally, domestic capital accumulation results in a rise in carbon
329 emissions. Similarly, urbanization, increased trade openness, and increased energy use all
330 contribute to a rise in carbon emissions. The results of DK estimate are typically compatible
331 with the Quantile via moment results presented in the preceding section.

332 **[INSERT TABLE V HERE]**

333 Table 6 shows the DK estimator results for the second model, which uses the sustainable
334 development index as the dependent variable. Economic expansion, according to the findings,
335 is detrimental to long-term development. This conclusion suggests that measures aimed at
336 boosting economic growth come at the expense of social and environmental indices. Increases
337 in domestic capital have a negative impact on sustainable development. This finding can be
338 attributed to the fact that domestic investors make investments based only on economic
339 considerations, with environmental concerns remaining in the background. Increased
340 urbanization helps to promote sustainable development. As a result, it is clear that the examined
341 countries' urbanization policies are either ecologically benign or that the benefits of
342 urbanization in terms of social and economic indices outweigh the environmental costs of
343 urbanization. Foreign capital, trade openness, and energy consumption, on the other hand, have
344 statistically insignificant effects on sustainable development.

345 **[INSERT TABLE VI HERE]**

346 In general, our finding as economic growth increases emissions is compatible with the studies
347 of Aliyu (2005); Tang (2009); Hitam and Borhan (2012) and Blanco et al. (2013). The finding
348 that economic growth increases carbon emissions less in high-emission countries than in low-
349 emission countries highlights the fact that environmental awareness has begun to rise in
350 countries where environmental pollution has reached critical levels, and that the rate of emission
351 increase is being attempted to be avoided. Furthermore, Solarin et al. (2017), Behera and Dash
352 (2017), Zhang and Zhou (2016) and Destek (2021) all found that increasing urbanization
353 increases carbon emissions, similar to our findings. Surprisingly, despite the environmental
354 damage that urbanization generates, it appears that urbanization benefits to sustainable
355 development in countries with high levels of sustainable development. This finding

356 demonstrates that urbanization and improved environmental quality can coexist, particularly in
357 countries that prioritize sustainable urbanization.

358 When the findings are connected to trade flows, the finding that increasing trade openness
359 increases emissions is consistent with the researches of Kaya et al. (2017); Xie et al. (2020);
360 and Tamazian and Rao (2010). The fact that increased trade openness is more harmful to the
361 environment, especially in low-emission countries, indicates that low-emission countries that
362 produce products with high emission potential, and that as the trade volume of these products
363 increases, so do the emissions of low-emission countries. The influence of energy consumption
364 on carbon emissions has been determined, and this finding is compatible with Seker et al.
365 (2015); Paramati et al. (2016); and Shahbaz et al. (2018). The fact that the negative
366 environmental effects of energy consumption are stronger in low-emission countries, analogous
367 to trade openness, suggests that fossil energy consumption-based production has begun in
368 countries with relatively low emissions. The fact that pollution-intensive production has been
369 shifted to low-emission countries to avoid the impediments of global agreements to reduce
370 environmental damage suggests that pollution-intensive production has been shifted to low-
371 emission countries to avoid the impediments of global agreements to reduce environmental
372 damage.

373 Domestic capital raises carbon emissions in countries with high levels of emissions, while it
374 reduces carbon emissions in countries with low levels of emissions. This result is consistent
375 with the findings of the Paramati et al. (2017), which indicated that domestic capital increases
376 carbon emissions in developing nations with high emissions while decreasing carbon emissions
377 in developed countries with low emissions. Considering that countries with greater levels of
378 emissions place a larger priority on economic growth than environmental sensitivity, the panel
379 found that these countries are hesitant to impose environmentally friendly laws on corporations
380 listed on national stock exchanges. The rate of rise in carbon emissions is lower in countries
381 with strong capital markets over the sample period. The conclusion is that the restrictions in
382 place in these countries are effective, and that the growth in domestic company activity reduces
383 emissions. When looking at the findings for foreign capital, it is found that an increase in foreign
384 capital has no substantial impact on carbon emissions, regardless of whether the country has
385 high or low emissions. This observation is in line with the findings of Shaari et al. (2014);
386 Liobikiene and Butkus (2019); and Wang et al. (2021). The obtained result reveals that in
387 countries hosting foreign investments, an effective policy in terms of environmental sensitivity
388 of foreign investment is not followed.

389

390 **6. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations**

391 This study compares the contribution of domestic and foreign capital accumulation to the fight
392 against environmental pollution in the 1990-2017 period for 42 countries that are heterogeneous
393 in terms of environmental damage. In this direction, the effects of economic growth, stock
394 market capitalization, foreign direct investments, energy consumption, urbanization and trade
395 openness on carbon emissions are examined in this study. While doing this, the quantile via
396 moment approach is used to observe whether the said effects change according to the emission

397 levels of the countries. Also, for robustness check, the effect of the same independent variables
398 on the newly developed sustainable development index is also examined.

399 The results of the research can be summarized as follows: i) economic growth increases carbon
400 emissions less in high-emission countries than in low-emission countries, ii) increasing
401 urbanization increases carbon emissions and environmental effects of urbanization do not differ
402 significantly depending on the countries' emission levels, iii) increases in trade openness
403 increases carbon emissions and the environmental pollution increasing effect of trade openness
404 is greater in low emission-countries. iv) raising energy consumption harms environmental
405 quality and this harmful effect is greater in countries with low emission levels. v) domestic
406 capital raises carbon emissions in countries with high levels of emissions, while it reduces
407 carbon emissions in countries with low levels of emissions, vi) increase in foreign capital has
408 no substantial impact on carbon emissions, regardless of whether the country has high or low
409 emissions, vii) economic growth has a higher negative impact on sustainable development in
410 countries with a low level of sustainable development than in countries with a high level of
411 sustainable development. viii) urbanization in countries with low levels of sustainable
412 development undermines sustainable development, ix) the adverse effect of trade openness on
413 sustainable development increases as the degree of development rises, and after reaching a
414 particular level of development, the detrimental effect of trade openness decreases, x) the harm
415 caused by domestic capital to sustainable development lessens as the level of sustainable
416 development rises, xi) foreign capital inflows have not yet had a significant impact on the
417 sustainable development of countries.

418 In regard with policy implications, the following measures should be taken based on our
419 findings: i) Intense environmental awareness-raising activities should be carried out in countries
420 with low emissions, in other words, based on the unconscious destruction of the environment
421 in countries where pollution does not reach critical levels. The fact that the environment is a
422 more important goal than wealth should be imposed on these countries. ii) all observed
423 country's policy makers are required to take measures to reduce the environmental damage of
424 domestic capital accumulation. Various incentives and tax exemptions should be provided for
425 domestic capital to fund or invest in projects developed in clean energy or energy efficiency
426 areas. These tax revenues should be spent on the green transformation of these producers by
427 imposing additional taxes on domestic producers who are responsible for relatively more
428 emissions. iii) Instead of transferring foreign capital to countries with lax environmental
429 regulations, governments should lead their green transformation.

430 The study has some limitations. i) Due to insufficient data, panel results are obtained, but
431 country-specific coefficients are calculated and country comparisons cannot be made. In future
432 studies, obtaining country-specific findings with the expansion of data sets will make policy
433 recommendations more detailed. ii) In this study, the effect of foreign direct investments is
434 found to be statistically insignificant. On the other hand, the interaction effects of possible
435 factors that could make the impact of foreign capital on sustainable development significant are
436 not taken into account. In future studies, the moderating effects of social, economic and political
437 factors should be examined by including them in the empirical model.

438 **Author contributions:** **Mehmet Akif Destek:** writing original manuscript, conceptualization,
 439 writing review, supervision and editing. **Kazi Sohag:** formal analysis, methodology, writing
 440 original manuscript, writing review and editing. **Sercan Aydin:** reviewed, supervision,
 441 corrected mistakes. **Gamze Destek:** correcting mistakes, reviewed, writing original manuscript.

442 **Data availability:** The datasets will be provided, if required

443 **Declarations**

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449

450

451 **Appendix A**

$$452 \quad Y = \alpha + X'\beta + \sigma(\delta + Z'\gamma)U \quad (1)$$

$$453 \quad E(U) = 0 \text{ and } E(|U|) = 1 \quad (2)$$

$$454 \quad Q_y(\tau|X) = \alpha + X'\beta + \sigma(\delta + Z'\gamma)q(\tau) \quad (3)$$

455 where $q(\tau) = F_U^-(\tau)$, so $\Pr(U < q(\tau)) = \tau$

$$456 \quad Q_y(\tau|X) = \alpha + \delta q(\tau) + X'(\beta + \gamma q(\tau)) \quad (4)$$

$$457 \quad \beta_l(\tau, X) = \beta_l + q(\tau)D_{X_l}^\sigma \quad (5)$$

$$458 \quad D_{X_l}^\sigma = \frac{\partial \sigma(\delta + Z'\gamma)}{\partial X_l} \quad (6)$$

$$459 \quad E[RX] = 0$$

$$460 \quad E[R] = 0$$

$$461 \quad E[(|R| - \sigma(\delta + Z'\gamma))D_\gamma^\sigma] = 0 \text{ a} \quad (7)$$

$$462 \quad E[(|R| - \sigma(\delta + Z'\gamma))D_\delta^\sigma] = 0$$

$$463 \quad E[I(R \leq q(\tau)\sigma(\delta + Z'\gamma)) - \tau] = 0$$

$$464 \quad R = Y - (\alpha - X'\beta) = \sigma(\delta + Z'\gamma)U \quad (8)$$

465 $D_{\gamma}^{\sigma} = \frac{\partial \sigma(\delta + Z'\gamma)}{\partial \gamma}$ (9)

466 $D_{\delta}^{\sigma} = \frac{\partial \sigma(\delta + Z'\sigma)}{\partial \delta}$ (10)

467 $E[UX] = 0$

468 $E[U] = 0$

469 $E[(|U| - 1)D_{\gamma}^{\sigma}] = 0$ (11)

470 $[(|U| - 1)D_{\delta}^{\sigma}] = 0$

471 $E[I(U < q(\tau)) - \tau] = 0$

472 $U = \frac{Y - (\alpha + X'\beta)}{\sigma(\delta + Z'\gamma)}$ (12)

473 $Y = D'_{\beta_D} + C'_1\beta_1 + \sigma(D'\gamma_D + C'_1\gamma_1)U$ (13)

474 $D_l = \mathcal{D}_l(C_1, C_2, U^*) \text{ for } l = 1, \dots, k_D$ (14)

475 where $\mathcal{D}_l(\cdot) : \mathbb{R}^{k_1+k_2+1} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \sigma(\cdot)$

476 Let's have $X' = (D', C_1), C' = (C'_1, C'_2), \beta' = (\beta'_D, \beta'_1)$ and $\gamma' = (\gamma'_D, \gamma'_1)$

477 $Pr\{Y \leq S_y(\tau|X)\} = Pr\{Y \leq S_y(\tau|X)|C\} = \tau$ (15)

478 $S_y(\tau|C) = X'\beta + \sigma(X'\gamma)q(\tau)$ (16)

479 $\frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} \sum_1^n C_i \left(\frac{Y_i - X'_i \hat{\beta}}{\sigma(X'_i \hat{\gamma})} \right) = 0$ (17)

480 $\frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} \sum_1^n C_i \left(\frac{|Y_i - X'_i \hat{\beta}|}{\sigma(X'_i \hat{\gamma})} - 1 \right) = o_p$ (18)

481 $\frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} \sum_1^n \psi_i \left(\frac{|Y_i - X'_i \hat{\beta}|}{\sigma(X'_i \hat{\gamma})} - 1 \right) = o_p(1)$ (19)

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