Data Annotation Guidelines for "Sustainability Arguments"

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Stance

Stances in text express either the support or opposition to a discussion topic.
The topic is the proposal or initiative under discussion on Reddit.

- A SUPPORT comment would express something similar to "Yes, I agree that eating less is a good idea".
- A REJECT comment would say something similar to "Reducing meat intake is not a good idea".
- A NEUTRAL comment would say a non-arguing comment, such as "Most meat is from chickens"
- The stance is UNDETERMINED if the comment is so short that any stance can be found in it, e.g. "haha"

Annotation Instructions

First, determine whether the discussion topic contains a clear initiative, proposal, or statement that someone could agree or disagree with. Examples of such topics are "we should pay more recycling taxes", "Does anyone else think we need to eat less fish to help the ocean ecosystems?"

If the discussion topic is more sharing information rather than a discussion topic ("Look at this picture", "I found a nice holiday"), annotate it as TOPIC ISSUE.

For comments with a discussion topic, determine whether the comment expresses support for the discussion topic, rejection of the topic, or expresses no clear negative or positive stance towards the discussion topic. Below are some additional instructions.

Implicitness or vagueness
If the stance is (too) vague, only annotate what you can be sure about the author intended. If you have to infer too much, or the comment is so short it is very difficult to obtain any message from it, determine UNDETERMINED.

Sarcasm
Sometimes the sarcasm is very obvious, such as in the comment *"Telling people not to do something definitely works like every time."* > indicating lack of belief, or the sarcastic comment is marked with "\s" for sarcasm
> In these cases, annotate stance by including the sarcasm in your interpretation.
> Otherwise, if you are unsure about the sarcasm, only annotate what the text expresses.

Questions as discussion topics.
In general, treat the question as a proposal that people SUPPORT or REJECT. If this is not possible, determine stance as UNDETERMINED and select "topic issue" in the task.

Examples

Initiative	Comment	Stance
2021-2022 EIB Climate Survey finds 58% of EU citizens believe that their country will fail to drastically reduce its	"Im in favour of them going after companies more rather than	2

carbon emissions but 70% are in favour of **strict government measures imposing changes on people's behaviour to fight climate change**	regular people so much, like the new uk flight tax thing that just means poor people can't travel far"	
2021-2022 EIB Climate Survey finds 58% of EU citizens believe that their country will fail to drastically reduce its carbon emissions but 70% are in favour of **strict government measures imposing changes on people's behaviour to fight climate change**	I'm gonna point out that climate change is not a topic in Chinese society	0
Reconsidering having kids because of climate change? You're not alone	I think my future kids might help the fight against climate change in some way haha	2
Spanish should eat less meat to limit climate crisis, says minister	He's right. High levels of meat consumption and bio industry is a threat to all of humanity	1
Spanish should eat less meat to limit climate crisis, says minister	The climate can go fuck itself if "saving" it means i have to live without living	2

Threat

Online comments in a discussion express whether the discussion topic is a real threat for humanity, the climate, society, nature, or sustainability.
The topic is the proposal or initiative under discussion on Reddit.

- A comment with THREAT would express something similar to "Yes, I think the climate is in danger from too many cars"
- A comment with NO THREAT would say something similar to "I don't think that eating meat is the real issue"
- A NEUTRAL comment would say a non-arguing comment, such as "I enjoy driving"
- The comment is UNDETERMINED if the comment is not understandable, short, or missing.

Annotation Instructions

First, determine whether the discussion topic contains a clear initiative, proposal, or statement that someone could agree or disagree with. Examples of such topics are "we should pay more recycling taxes", "Does anyone else think we need to eat less fish to help the ocean ecosystems?"

If the discussion topic is more sharing information rather than a discussion topic ("Look at this picture", "I found a nice holiday"), annotate it as TOPIC ISSUE.

Then, Determine whether the comment expresses the topic is a THREAT to humanity, the climate, society, nature, or sustainability, that the comment explicitly mentions that there is NO THREAT from the discussion topic, or that is a NEUTRAL comment. Decide UNDETERMINED when the comment is incoherent or not understandable. Below are some additional instructions.

Implicit textual evidence for threat

The mention of threat should be explicit. A comment saying "I like this idea" does not mean there is a THREAT or lack of THREAT expressed. However, a commenter saying "Haha, I just need to learn how to breathe under water" in a topic about rising sea levels is evidence enough of water levels being seen as a THREAT to breathing.

Sarcasm:

- Sometimes the sarcasm is very obvious, such as in the comment *"I will just learn to breath underwater."*, which indicates that this is not something to "just" do. Comments can also express sarcasm with "\s" for sarcasm
  > In these cases, annotate including the sarcasm in your reading.
  > Otherwise, if you are unsure about the sarcasm, only annotate what the text expresses.

- If it is unclear whether the text is sarcastic or not, interpret it as not sarcastic. For instance, a comment such as "I am highly optimistic about coalmines not killing us" can be sarcastic, or not. If no clear indication otherwise, treat it as non-sarcastic.

Topic Drift

- Sometimes, the comment diverges from the topic of discussion into other discussions (e.g. into anti vaxx or covid measures). Annotate these as TOPIC ISSUE if the comment diverges from the topic. If the other topic is used to make a comparison to the topic under discussion, then do annotate it.
- If the topic mentions several initiatives, annotate the one mentioned in the comment.
- If the comment mentions several initiatives or ideas, annotate the most prominent one in the topic.

Examples

Initiative	Comment	Threat
2021-2022 EIB Climate Survey finds 58% of EU citizens believe that their country will fail to drastically reduce its carbon emissions but 70% are in favour of **strict government measures imposing changes on people's behaviour to fight climate change**	I'm gonna point out that climate change is not a topic in Chinese society	0
Spanish should eat less meat to limit climate crisis, says minister	He's right. High levels of meat consumption and bio industry is a threat to all of humanity	1
The road to sustainability: the superhighway built from paper waste instead of cement	this seems like a dumb idea. its a solution for something that is not a problem. Asphalt is one of if not the most recycled material used with close to 99% reused. far far ahead of other stuff like	2

	aluminum.	

Power

Online comments in a discussion mention whether they feel POWER to do the suggested initiative, or NO POWER. Power can be expressed as: feeling confident the action will work, that the idea will lead to success, or that there will be change due to the initiative.

- a comment expressing POWER will say things that express feeling power, whether individual or collective, to change the aspects mentioned in the initiatives, such as "We should go to the streets - protesting really helps!"
- A commenter expressing NO POWER will express feeling no faith or power to actually change things, e.g. "Nothing matters, because the politicians will not listen to us."
- A comment with UNDETERMINED POWER will say things such as "Does Germany have water faucets in parks?"

Annotation Instructions

First, determine whether the discussion topic contains a clear initiative, proposal, or statement that someone could agree or disagree with. Examples of such topics are "we should pay more recycling taxes", "Does anyone else think we need to eat less fish to help the ocean ecosystems?"

If the discussion topic is more sharing information rather than a discussion topic ("Look at this picture", "I found a nice holiday"), annotate it as TOPIC ISSUE.

Then, determine whether the comment expresses POWER to do or change the suggested initiative or proposal. NO POWER if the comment expresses that there is no power to change or do the issue or initiative under discussion. UNDETERMINED power does not mention any power.

More detailed annotation instructions are below.

Note: power is not who is RESPONSIBLE. This is a different issue. People may feel powerless/having no power to restore BECAUSE they feel others are responsible, but simply pointing out who is or is not responsible does not point to the power dimension.

Examples

Initiative	Comment	Power (to restore)
Recycling rate of plastic packaging waste	Recycling plastic is mostly pointless. Far better to reduce the use of plastics in packaging as much as possible.	2
We the Europeans should push the EU and our respective	This may seem like a good measure, but it is really difficult	2

governments to put heavy sanctions on Brazil until they stop intentionally burning the Amazon jungle.	to control, and it will affect the general population much more than the individuals who are setting these fires.	
Major danger for Europeans health: Garbage from the whole Europe are burning right now in Poland - 35 landfill fires in just 2 months	This is what makes me believe we are fucked from a climate perspective. And I don't just mean global warming/ climate change, I mean pollution of ground water and soil as well.	2
If you're an EU citizen, what are the challenges you face when trying to be more sustainable regarding clothing choices?	When you shop for clothes in stores, ask what part of their collection is produced sustainably. This helps you find better clothes, while these customer requests often reach higher management. The brands so far have found their customers mostly not caring about a sustainable or fair choice, taking away incentive for them to change. I'd support EU initiatives for change, but asking the question in stores is a low effort thing every consumer can start doing right now.	1
Spanish should eat less meat to limit climate crisis, says minister	Why would you eat bugs?	0