

COP 17

Some Issues before Durban

- the green climate fund
- technology transfer mechanism

India's environment ministry, in a communique to the Secretariat of the UNFCCC in Oct 2011 asked include three contentious issues

- on unilateral trade measures
- intellectual property rights (IPR) and
- equitable access to sustainable development -- in the provisional agenda for COP 17

(http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/experts-back-india-at-climate-change-talks_736894.html)

Run Up to COP 17

Extracts from a presentation by D. Raghunandan, AIPSN-TISS Southern Regional Workshop, Hosur, July 7-8, 2011)

COP 15 at Copenhagen

- huge expectations belied (or betrayed?) that COP15 would respond to gravity of climate crisis
- no agreement for KP 2nd commitment period (2012-)
- no targets? US pushing for “pledge and review”
- pressure on Developing Countries to cut emissions i.e. cut back on growth/development
- basic ethical-legal principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibility all but abandoned

Copenhagen Pledges

- 2°C goal cannot be met. Off-the-record, UNFCCC assessment says 3°C and no peaking by 2015
- Developing Country pledges are about 3x that by Industrialized (A1) Countries’!
- \$100b Fund is also up in the air: vague pledges, includes multilateral funds, loans, pvt. Investment!
 - “bottom up” approach will not work: everyone will head to the bottom, following the US leader
 - “top down” target-based approach necessary because the upper limit (450 ppmv) set by nature!

Priorities towards COP 16/17

- respect finite limit for CO₂ concentrations in the atmosphere; that should be guiding target
- restore KP principles: CBDR = right to development for DCs, so fair share of carbon space
- restore UNFCCC processes and twin-track KP/LCA negotiations, assisted not substituted by other group-processes

Political Challenges towards COP 16/17

- finding agreement between A1 ICs and large DCs.

- bridging differences among large DCs and between them and the other G77/LDCs/SIS
- balancing democratic UNFCCC processes and effective decision-making through caucuses
- solving the US dilemma: Kyoto Protocol was signed without/despite the US. Is it time to do the same with KP-II? (US current and foreseeable pledges are so low that their exclusion would hardly matter!)
- finding common ground between G5 DCs and EU

AOSIS/LDC Perspective

43 SIDS having 0.03% emissions are already impacted by Climate Change even at 0.8°C rise. They are like the “canaries of the climate mines”.

The “cruel irony is that the countries contributing least to global warming would be the most affected”.

Joint assessments/statements with >40 LDCs

- call for 1.5°C/350ppmv target!
- rebuked MEF (ICs AND large DCs) for low targets, fudging baselines and endless mutual argument
- “major emitting developing countries should take on specific emission limitation or reduction targets and must contribute to reduction of GHG emissions in a measurable way”

Big Conceptual Challenges

- since Copenhagen fiasco, there is much groping in the dark; much cynicism, others resigned to no progress
- The “pledge and review” is no solution, as it is only laissez faire which can only benefit the rich and powerful
- Some “radicals” rejecting negotiations process and call for “system change”: But can/must we await total socio-political transformation before tackling climate crisis? Will nature wait for the revolution?
- crying need for new thinking and solutions --- based on recognized ethical-legal principles of equity and polluter responsibility

Carbon Budget Approach

- atmosphere has finite limit for absorbing CO₂, so there is a fixed budget for future CO₂ emissions
- TISS-DSF Model works out national CO₂ budgets based on equitable per capita fair share including historical emissions (1970 or earlier). It should even meet US call for a single framework for all and even account partly for “ignoring” emissions before climate change causes were understood
- above budgets could be translated into emission cut or control trajectories going forward

It also provides the opportunity for thinking through New Developmental Pathways.