

St Antony's International Review

New Directions in Climate Change Politics

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Notes on Contributors

David Benson is Lecturer in the School of Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia.

Christopher Wayne Frazier-Crawford Boerl is a PhD student in the Department of Politics and International Relations at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Jonathan Gaventa is a researcher at E3G (Third Generation Environmentalism) in London.

Nina Hall is a DPhil student in International Relations at St Antony's College, University of Oxford.

Anne Hammill is a project manager and researcher at the International Institute for Sustainable Development, Winnipeg, Canada.

Andrew Jordan is Professor of Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia.

Robert O. Keohane is Professor of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University.

Michael MacLeod is Assistant Professor of Political Science at George Fox University, Oregon.

Richard Matthew is the founding director of the Center for Unconventional Security Affairs and an Associate Professor in the Schools of Social Ecology and Social Science at the University of California at Irvine.

Frances C. Moore is a Master of Environmental Science candidate at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

Fabian Teichmüller holds an MPhil in Comparative Government from St Edmund Hall, University of Oxford.

Five years have passed since the Oxford-based *St Antony's International Review* (*STAIR*) published its first issue on "The Future of International Cooperation." Subsequent issues investigated topics as diverse as human security, the international politics of oil, democratization, the political implications of the internet, religion and world order, human trafficking, the politics of nuclear technology, and the role of transnational corporations in global governance. Marking *STAIR's* fifth anniversary, this tenth issue concentrates on the global politics of climate change. In the wake of the Copenhagen summit, the future of international co-operation in this particular area remains uncertain. New directions are needed, and the contributions to this issue provide an excellent starting point.

After five years of successfully publishing themed issues, *STAIR* is also pursuing new directions. Future issues will contain both a general and a themed section. While the themed section will continue to draw on the strengths of providing a focused cross-disciplinary dialogue on one particularly important and timely global issue, the general section will allow contributors to analyse a broad range of other pressing contemporary topics in international affairs. In taking this step, the *Review* hopes to attract a broader audience and to provide more opportunities for potential contributors. At the same time, *STAIR* remains deeply committed to offering a forum in which emerging scholars can publish their work alongside established academics and policymakers. The present issue here is testament to this endeavour, featuring research articles by a masters and a doctoral student as well as an introductory essay by Professor Robert O. Keohane of Princeton University.

We are also very pleased to announce a new partnership with IngentaConnect, an established market leader in online publishing, which will provide access to all issues of *STAIR* on the internet. *STAIR* has much to offer, not only to students, academics, and policymakers, but also to journalists and anyone interested in international affairs. We hope that the journal will soon be available to many new readers thanks to the ability for institutions to subscribe online to *STAIR*. For further information, please see www.stair-journal.org.

Initially set up by graduate members of St Antony's College, the *Review* is now officially registered as a University of Oxford society. And while it attracts graduate students from all colleges in the University, the journal continues to be firmly rooted in St Antony's. The College

has supported *STAIR* in numerous ways over the last five years, and we would particularly like to thank the Warden, Professor Margaret MacMillan, for all her support, not least in her role as Senior Member of *STAIR*'s Executive Committee.

Finally, we are delighted to announce that Dr Alexander Betts and Dr Matthew Eagleton-Pierce, the two founding Co-Editors, and Dr Noa Schonmann, founding Managing Director, have recently joined *STAIR*'s Advisory Board. All three have continually provided advice to new members of *STAIR*. We wish to say many thanks to them, as well as to all Advisory Board members, and to everyone involved with *STAIR* over the past five years.

We hope that you will enjoy this issue, and that you will continue to support our endeavours in the future. ■

Editorial Introduction: New Directions in Climate Change Politics

DIARMUID TORNEY AND ANNIKA GREUP

The world has never faced a challenge as complex and as difficult to address as climate change. At a fundamental level, it raises the question of how we produce and consume energy in all aspects of human activity. The causes and implications of climate change are manifold, and the associated distributional issues—between developed and developing countries and over the relationship between current and future generations—make it an exceptionally difficult problem to address politically.

Many civil society organizations had hoped that the Copenhagen climate change summit of December 2009 (COP15)¹ would be the most important international summit in a generation. They will have been disappointed by the outcome, and any reasonable assessment of the summit must conclude that much remains to be done if humanity is to successfully tackle climate change. However, even if the outcome was less substantive than many had hoped for, the summit brought together 115 heads of state, making COP15 the biggest gathering of world leaders outside of the United Nations in New York and certainly the most eagerly anticipated environmental conference in recent history.

Climate change has been the subject of scientific research since at least the 1960s, and of international policy-making since the 1980s. In recent years the issue has steadily gained prominence, especially in Europe.² Climate change issues are increasingly being addressed by a wide variety of actors in diverse institutional settings, as evidenced by the fact that an estimated forty-five thousand people registered to attend the Copenhagen summit, representing national governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, business groups, and a range of other actors.³

This degree of political activity, combined with the daunting complexity of the problem, make the politics of climate change a fruitful research area on which to focus this issue of the *St Antony's International Review* (STAIR). Indeed, multiple past issues of STAIR have featured articles on the topic.⁴ The articles in this issue address several themes at the cutting edge of research on the politics of climate change: the need to consider innovative institutional approaches; the growing role and influ-

ence of a range of non-state actors such as business groups, cities, and institutional investors; the increasing prominence of policies concerning adaptation to current and future impacts of climate change; and the domestic politics of climate change within key states. By way of introduction to this issue, we will first discuss the outcomes of the Copenhagen summit, and then outline the articles featured in this issue.

Assessing Copenhagen

At the centre of international co-operation on climate change are the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the associated Kyoto Protocol.⁵ Though often criticized, the Kyoto Protocol remains the “high watermark” of international co-operation on climate change. Since the Copenhagen summit aimed to achieve agreement on an international treaty to follow on from the Kyoto Protocol and to remedy its perceived shortcomings, achieving a successful outcome was always going to be a demanding task.

The “Copenhagen Accord,” the negotiated text that emerged in the final frantic day of the negotiations, contained little in terms of specifics on any of the central negotiating topics.⁶ The Accord included a goal of limiting the rise in global mean temperature to 2 degrees Celsius—thereby rejecting a stronger target of 1.5 degrees proposed by some developing countries—but contained no concrete commitments by any parties that would suggest that this aspirational goal will be achieved. Much was made of the commitment to financial assistance from developed to developing countries—approaching \$30 billion for the period 2010–2012 and \$100 billion per year (from both public and private sources) by 2020. However, promises of financial transfers from developed to developing countries have been weakened or broken repeatedly over many decades.

The Copenhagen summit will also be remembered for a number of other reasons. The sheer numbers of delegates and the capacity constraints of the conference venue led to the exclusion of most civil society delegates for the final days of the conference. The negotiations themselves were characterized by splits in what had been previously a largely cohesive “G77 plus China”—a group of 130 developing countries. Of course, the G77 has always comprised a group of states with hugely differing circumstances and goals, but it was in Copenhagen that these differences first came to the fore. Another feature of the summit, which was almost unprecedented in international negotiations, was the involvement of heads of state in line-by-line negotiations of the text of the Co-

penhagen Accord—rather than merely rubber-stamping a deal already agreed by government officials. In the final twist of the summit, the closing COP15 plenary session was unable to agree to endorse the Accord, instead passing a motion to “take note” of the text.

The response to the Copenhagen Accord in the days and weeks following the conclusion of COP15 varied greatly. Some condemned the outcome, which they claimed was not “fair, ambitious, and legally binding,”⁷ and which would result in “climate chaos” for developing countries and future generations. Others described it as a useful starting point—perhaps forgetting that the multilateral climate change regime is approaching its third decade—and as a better result than a complete breakdown of the negotiations, which appeared likely in the final days of the summit. There are many reasons underpinning these vastly differing assessments of the COP15 outcome. A crucial factor is the choice of benchmark against which we measure the outcome. Should it be measured against the actions that climate science suggests are necessary to prevent the more severe impacts of climate change, or by the existing political realities and the scope for incremental action?

If we base our assessment of the outcome on the recommendations of climate science, we are likely to be disappointed. While climate models—like any predictions of the future behaviour of a complex and dynamic system—are characterized by uncertainty, the available scientific evidence strongly suggests the need to quickly and very significantly reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Any realistic assessment must conclude that the Copenhagen outcome does not set us on this path.⁸ Therefore, if we base our assessment on climate science, we have good reason to be deeply pessimistic.

Another approach to assessing Copenhagen takes its cue from existing political realities, stressing entrenched sectoral and national interests, and the short time horizons of most political actors. According to this perspective, the expectations of a strong and binding legal agreement in Copenhagen were at best naïve, and possibly a dangerous distraction. This view contends that calls for a “legally binding” agreement misunderstand the function of law in the international system and its potential to constrain powerful states. Based on these premises, and on the belief that a deal of some sort was preferable to a complete collapse of the negotiations, it is possible to view the outcome of Copenhagen in significantly more positive terms.

These are, to some extent, caricatures of opposing views of the global politics of climate change, which emphasize how and why they diverge. In reality, our thinking on the problem of climate change must contain elements of both. As scholars and observers of international affairs, our

view should take account of existing political realities. But we also need to be driven by what climate science tells us is necessary, as well as by concerns of justice and equity.

Rethinking the Governance of Climate Change

Whether we view Copenhagen as a failure or a partial success, it is clear that much remains to be done in addressing the problem of climate change, and that the essential difficulties are primarily political and social rather than technological. Therefore, there is a pressing need for continued analysis of the global politics of climate change, and it is for this reason that this issue of *STAIR* focuses on the theme.

This issue opens with an introductory essay by Robert O. Keohane, in which he challenges us to think about alternative institutional approaches to addressing climate change. Building on the observation that leaders, like others, seek esteem, Keohane argues that institutions could be created that seek to capitalize on leaders' desire to be held in high regard by others. Such an "economy of esteem" would require the setting of high standards of behaviour against which actions impacting climate change could be measured, and devising a system for evaluating the performance of individual states and other actors. A system such as this could, through the creation of prominent prizes to reward stringent environmental policies or through a rating system, create competitive incentives for states and other actors to implement progressive climate change policies. This approach, Keohane emphasizes, would not depend on altruism on the part of leaders—outcomes, rather than motivations, are what matter. As he notes, developing and developed countries have differing responsibilities in addressing the climate change problem, making it more difficult to agree on appropriate standards of behaviour that should be rewarded. He is also careful to point out that the creation of such an "economy of esteem" should be seen as a complement, not a substitute, to existing international institutional arrangements such as the UNFCCC process.

The outcome of Copenhagen illustrates an interesting tension at the heart of Keohane's proposal. COP15 clearly demonstrates the need to "think outside the box" when considering institutional mechanisms to address climate change. However, the summit also demonstrated that it may not be enough to hope that heads of state will want to be perceived by their domestic audiences as leaders in the climate field. Of course, heads of state returning home from Copenhagen were eager to avoid being blamed for the modest outcomes of the summit and many admit-

ted to being somewhat disappointed by the Accord. However, it remains to be seen whether relying on leaders' desires to be held in high esteem can generate the sorts of politically difficult policy measures that will be required to tackle climate change in the years ahead.

New Actors

Another theme addressed within this issue concerns the emergence of new actors addressing climate change—indeed COP15 saw record numbers of participants other than national government representatives. These new actors span the public and private sectors, as well as the global, national, and sub-national levels. Given the significant disillusionment with the intergovernmental negotiation process caused by the Copenhagen summit, the emergence of new actors and sites of political action might be a welcome trend and may become increasingly important.

Jonathan Gaventa confirms that a range of non-state actors are now active in addressing climate change, forming transnational networks and keenly participating in international climate summits. Such negotiations have over the past years turned into “environmental mega-conferences” bringing together state and non-state actors. Gaventa focuses on the involvement of business groups and city coalitions at the 2007 Bali conference and shows how they present themselves as indispensable if we are to address climate change successfully. Cities can work to lower carbon emissions locally even when national and international efforts are lacking. They present themselves as leaders and define climate change as an issue that can be solved through improved spatial planning. Businesses, on the other hand, present themselves as partners of government and see climate change as a market and technological failure, solutions to which involve investment and innovation. Non-state actors thus reinterpret the problem of climate change in ways that give them legitimacy in seeking to resolve it. Gaventa also concludes, however, that there was little discursive space in Bali for more radical voices, such as those proposing more fundamental changes to consumption patterns and global institutions. Cities and businesses mainly reinterpret and address climate change within existing frameworks.

Beyond international conferences, how are private actors working to address climate change? Michael MacLeod examines how the power of investors is being used to change corporate behaviour. Institutional investors, such as pension and mutual funds, control trillions of dollars of capital and invest in tens of thousands of companies around the world. As demand for socially responsible investment has increased,

and as norms on what constitutes acceptable behaviour by business have changed, institutional investors have created collective arrangements to promote principles associated with responsible investment. Several of these “investor-driven governance mechanisms,” as MacLeod calls them, aim to address climate change. The Carbon Disclosure Project, for example, asks the largest companies in the world, on behalf of their primary shareholders (i.e., institutional investors), to disclose their carbon emissions. By examining the Carbon Disclosure Project, the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies, and shareholder activism on climate change, MacLeod discusses how and why these mechanisms of private governance of climate change have emerged, and aims to begin a discussion on whether they might offer a viable alternative to public governance.

A Growing Emphasis on Adaptation

Another relatively recent change in how the issue of climate change is being addressed worldwide, which can be witnessed at the global as well as the national and local levels, relates not to the actors involved but to the type of measures being proposed. Whereas resources and efforts have traditionally been put into reducing carbon emissions, thereby “mitigating” climate change, the last decade has seen an increasing emphasis on “adaptation”—measures aimed at adapting to current and future consequences of climate change. Such measures are taken in conjunction with mitigation efforts and might, for example, aim at preparing for—and thereby reducing harm caused by—floods or droughts. The failure of key states to commit to significant emissions reductions at the Copenhagen summit suggests that the importance of such efforts is likely to increase even further.

In an article that traces the growing emphasis on adaptation through the four assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (the UN organization charged with assessing the science of climate change), Frances C. Moore explains how adaptation came to be defined as a legitimate area of policy intervention. One important factor has been the construction of the concept “adaptive capacity,” that is, the capacity of communities or countries to adapt to possible, but unspecified, future impacts of climate change. By focusing on developing adaptive capacity, rather than already aiming to adapt to specific impacts, immediate measures could be justified before climate change impacts are fully known. Unfortunately, however, much disagreement remains over the correct framing of adaptation and the norms that should guide

adaptation policy. Moore shows how development organizations and, to a lesser extent, developed countries emphasize the similarities between adaptation and development aid. For development organizations, this is a way of expanding their mandate and capturing additional adaptation funding. Opposed to this discourse of “adaptation as development” stands the interpretation of “adaptation as equity” advanced by developing countries, in which the issue of adaptation funding serves to discuss developed countries’ compensation of developing countries for climate change impacts, historically caused by the industrialized world. Moore illustrates how these two different interpretations of adaptation lead to disagreements in the international climate negotiations, for example regarding who should have a final say in how adaptation money is governed and used. As adaptation becomes increasingly central to international climate change governance, these differences of interpretation are likely to become even more prominent.

As climate change adaptation measures become more prevalent, they increasingly overlap with existing policies in developing countries. Peacebuilding is one such policy area, and the integration of peacebuilding and adaptation strategies is the subject of Anne Hammill and Richard Matthew’s contribution to this issue. Climate change is increasingly seen as a potential cause or amplifier of conflict, which could undermine peacebuilding operations and could therefore call for a shift in peacebuilding approaches. Hammill and Matthew examine the opportunities and challenges related to integrating adaptation and peacebuilding into a unified approach, for example by avoiding development strategies which might be vulnerable to the consequences of climate change. While the adaptation and peacebuilding processes are similar in many ways, and there are opportunities especially to integrate adaptation in the socio-economic (development) aspect of peacebuilding, there are also important differences that complicate integration. The consequences of policies to promote peacebuilding and adaptation to climate change play out in very different time frames, with the threat of conflict relapse being much more immediate than the threat of not adapting to future climate change impacts. What is good for peacebuilding might not be good in terms of adaptation—such as resettling communities in areas less prone to conflict but with higher vulnerability to potential impacts of climate change. These challenges need to be more carefully explored.

In response to Hammill and Matthew, Nina Hall expands upon the discussion of the link between climate change and conflict, questioning the assumption that climate change impacts will necessarily result in increased conflict. She maps out the ways in which different actors (non-governmental organizations, national governments, and UN organ-

izations) attempt to link the issues of climate change and conflict, and their motives for doing so, in order to position Hammill and Matthew's contribution within a highly politicized debate.

Change and Continuity in the European Union and the United States

A final theme addressed in this issue of *STAIR* concerns the domestic politics of climate change in the European Union and the United States—the “oldest” important players in global climate change politics. The importance of internal politics in these parts of the world was again evident in Copenhagen: The US failure to offer concrete and ambitious reduction targets was largely due to domestic difficulties on this issue, and perceptions of the EU being marginalized in the negotiations partly due to internal reasons highlight the importance of examining EU politics.

David Benson and Andrew Jordan discuss the expansion of EU climate policy and its future under the Lisbon Treaty, which reforms the institutional structures of the EU. The treaty has been actively promoted on the grounds that it addresses several critical “new” challenges facing the EU, such as immigration, energy security, and, not least, climate change. Does the treaty indeed introduce institutional changes that will enhance the capacity of the EU to confront the challenge of climate change? Benson and Jordan outline the historical expansion of climate policy at the EU level, discuss the amendments relating to climate change that the Lisbon Treaty introduces, and assess how the treaty might affect future policy expansion. They argue that the capacity of the EU to continue its leadership in the international negotiations will grow, that new powers for solidarity and civil protection may increase internal co-ordination of responses to climate-related events, that existing federalization processes will accelerate through the linkage of climate and energy objectives, and, finally, that the integration of climate change concerns into other policy sectors could also grow. On the other hand, however, they suggest that while some amendments could have significant effects, others simply institutionalize existing practice. The impacts of the Lisbon Treaty by itself on the capacity of the EU to deal with climate change should therefore not be overrated.

Which other factors should be taken into account in order to explain how the EU addresses climate change? In a response to Benson and Jordan, Fabian Teichmüller argues that examining the expansion of written policy does not suffice. Equally important are the implementation of such declared climate change policies and the preferences of individu-

al EU member states. After evaluating Benson and Jordan's theoretical framework, Teichmüller highlights the sometimes tenuous link between written policy and its implementation by examining the cases of the EU Emissions Trading System and EU emissions reductions. Such an analysis sheds light on the challenges that the EU and its member states may face in the area of climate policy in the coming years.

Christopher W. Boerl addresses one specific change in US domestic climate politics: the growing support of evangelical Christians for measures aimed at combating climate change. Increasing numbers of American evangelicals support the "Care of Creation" movement and adopt the environment as a matter of theological importance. Facing much opposition from Republicans as well as conservative Democrats, and having to cope with additional difficulties related to the economic downturn, US President Obama could, according to Boerl, use this "unexpected" potential ally in addressing climate change. The article therefore provides an account of the American creation care movement—explaining its origins and describing the activities of climate-focused evangelical organizations and the increasing support for climate measures shown by religious leaders. Boerl argues that a growing base of younger evangelicals might prioritize fighting climate change over supporting traditional Republican issues. This could lead Republicans as well as conservative Democrats to re-evaluate their environmental position in order to maintain or gain evangelical support.

The articles in this issue are followed by an interview with Maas Goote, lead negotiator for the European Union in the international climate change negotiations. While elaborating on the politics of climate change during and after the Copenhagen summit, he reflects on several of the topics addressed in this issue from a practitioner's perspective. He provides an insight into the roles key actors played during the international climate change negotiations, addresses the role of the media, and elaborates on the actions of the European Union. In relation to the articles in this issue, he comments on the impacts of the Lisbon Treaty, on the framing of adaptation in the international climate change negotiations, and on the advantages and disadvantages of the large numbers of non-state actors present in Copenhagen. The interview finishes with a look to the future. Goote emphasizes the need to address climate change in a step-by-step manner and hopes that the Copenhagen Accord will be strengthened in the coming year. He thinks that we should have high ambitions but avoid unrealistic expectations.

Concluding the issue are four book reviews, which give a sense of the breadth of current scholarship on the global politics of climate change. The first two books represent a policy-oriented approach to the

issue, dealing with the economics of climate change and possible policy options, and with how domestic politics in different countries feed into the international negotiations, respectively. The second two address climate change from constructivist and sociological perspectives, looking at the norms underlying debates in various countries and the causes of disagreement over climate change. Representing different approaches to the same problem, the reviewed works give an indication of the importance of analysing the issue of climate change from diverse perspectives.

Collectively, the articles in this issue of *STAIR* illustrate the valuable contribution of the humanities and social sciences to debates about climate change. The Copenhagen summit has shown us that we have a long way to go if we are to successfully address the problem of climate change, and this issue of *STAIR* demonstrates that scholars of international affairs can play an important role in understanding the multiple and complex dimensions of this extraordinary challenge. ■

Notes

¹ Formally, the title of the conference was: Fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP15 and COP/MOP5).

² Causes of this increased awareness and prominence include: the occurrence of “extreme” weather events such as the European summer heat wave of 2003; the publication by the British Government of the *Stern Review*, which estimated the cost of inaction to be in the region of five to twenty per cent of global GDP per annum; the release of Al Gore’s Oscar-winning movie “An Inconvenient Truth”; and the publication by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of its *Fourth Assessment Report* in 2007. See United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), “Impacts of Summer 2003 Heat Wave in Europe,” *Environment Alert Bulletin*, Nairobi, March 2004; Nicholas Stern, *The Economics of Climate Change: The Stern Review* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); and IPCC, *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

³ See Sarah Mukherjee, “‘Jaw-Dropping’ Queue for Climate Summit,” *BBC News*, December 15, 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/8413046.stm> (accessed January 23, 2010).

⁴ See Joshua Busby, “Climate Change and Collective Action: Troubles in the Transition to a Post-Oil Economy,” *St Antony’s International Review* 2, no. 1 (2006): 35–55; Milan Illyckyj, “Climate Change, Energy Security, and Nuclear Power,” *St Antony’s International Review* 4, no. 2 (2009): 92–112; and Philipp Pattberg and Okechukwu Enechi, “The Business of Transnational Climate Governance: Legitimate, Accountable, and Transparent?” *St Antony’s International Review* 5, no. 1 (2009): 76–98.

⁵ Agreed in 1992, the UNFCCC aims “to achieve ... stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.” The Kyoto Protocol, agreed in 1997, set emissions reduction or limitation targets for a group of developed and transition economies. See UN, “United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,” 1992, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf>; and UN, “Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,” 1998, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.pdf> (both accessed January 23, 2010).

⁶ See UNFCCC, “Copenhagen Accord of 18 December 2009,” Decision -/CP.15, advance unedited version, <http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/cop-15/application/pdf/cop15-cph-auv.pdf> (accessed January 23, 2010).

⁷ Many NGOs at COP15 argued for an agreement that would be “fair, ambitious, and legally binding.”

⁸ Although there is disagreement over what exactly should be the target long-term level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, what is reasonably clear is that the sum of all the proposed national commitments does not come close to achieving any of the more realistic estimates of a safe level of greenhouse gases.

The Economy of Esteem and Climate Change

ROBERT O. KEOHANE¹

ABSTRACT

As a complement to existing institutional approaches to addressing climate change, it is worthwhile to think “outside the box” by considering innovative institutional solutions. The concept of an “economy of esteem” can provide the basis for a new approach that would seek to capitalize on leaders’ desire for positive recognition by others rather than on material rewards or sanctions. Such a system could, through the creation of prizes or through a rating system, create competitive incentives to implement progressive climate change policies. Since it would require agreement on appropriate standards of behaviour, the setting of high standards, and an evaluation mechanism, such a system will not be easy to implement. Nevertheless, faced with a problem as serious as climate change we should be considering all potential strategies, rather than concentrating on only one path.

Taking effective measures to combat climate change will require much more international co-operation, under more difficult conditions, than the human race has ever managed to maintain. Apart from wartime alliances, the most successful venture at global co-operation has been the international regime for the liberalization and regularization of trade regulations, centred on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Development of this trade regime was arguably much easier, however, than the creation of an effective global climate change regime. In the case of trade, non-participants in the regime could be excluded from the benefits of trade liberalization, although even then it took almost fifty years for the formal procedures of the WTO to be instituted. In the case of global climate change, by contrast, no particular state can be excluded from the benefits of other states’ actions to reduce their emissions, since what matters is the total accumulation of greenhouse gases in the global atmosphere.² This situation generates incentives for negotiators to hold out for extreme positions and to attempt to “free-ride” on any agreement that is reached. Moreover, each state has incentives to understate how much its citizens care about climate change and to reduce its own contributions, while encouraging others to increase theirs.

Robert O. Keohane, “The Economy of Esteem and Climate Change,”
St Antony’s International Review 5, no. 2 (2010): 16–28.

Thus climate change creates an especially difficult set of bargaining problems. However, credible projections about the dangers of climate change suggest that, to avoid serious harm to the global climate, effective action to put global emissions on a downward path must begin almost immediately.³

Related to these bargaining problems is the issue of compliance. The operation of institutionalized reciprocity ensures that non-complying states can be excluded from at least some of the benefits of the trade regime. Enforcing compliance in the climate change regime, on the other hand, is more difficult, since what is at stake is a global, common-pool resource. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Kyoto regime does not have strong or credible compliance mechanisms. More generally, a recent large-scale study of environmental regime effectiveness showed that these regimes seemed to make a positive difference, but there was considerable variation in effectiveness and much room, overall, for improvement.⁴

Much ingenuity, both academic and practical, is currently being devoted to resolving these deep political problems and their technical manifestations. Undue pessimism would be both unwarranted and counter-productive.⁵ Nevertheless, the political issues inherent in responding effectively to climate change are serious and persistent. When problems seem intractable, it can be worthwhile to think “outside the box”—that is, to consider alternative ways of framing the problem. That is the purpose of my introductory essay to this special issue of the *St Antony's International Review* on climate change. This is not a research article. Instead, it seeks to introduce a new line of thinking into ongoing discussions of the politics of climate change by focusing on how human desires for esteem could be used to combat climate change. This essay proceeds in three parts: an explication of the idea of an “economy of esteem” and how it could apply to the mitigation of climate change; some suggestions about how such an economy of esteem could be implemented; and, finally, some pitfalls that would have to be avoided for such a process to work.

The Esteem Idea and its Attractions

Several years ago Geoffrey Brennan and Philip Pettit developed the concept of an “economy of esteem.” They argue that “social esteem is a good in pursuit of which people compete and a good that they even manage in some measure to exchange.”⁶ In the economy of esteem, incentives are provided not by material rewards and deprivations, or rewards and

punishments administered by the state, but by the attitudes that other people form in response to the actions of protagonists. Brennan and Pettit coin the phrase “the intangible hand” as a parallel to Adam Smith’s “invisible hand.” The intangible hand “operates when a pattern that is thought desirable overall materializes as a result of people’s seeking of esteem.”⁷ Since people seek honour and respect, this intangible-hand process can be incorporated into the design of institutions. Brennan and Pettit defend, at length and to good effect, the proposition that esteem can provide a compelling set of motivations for actions (good or bad), independent of material incentives or coercion.

The esteem-based approach resonates with constructivist perspectives on world politics, because it emphasizes the role of social norms—in this case, norms conferring honour and respect. Norms are shared expectations about appropriate behaviour; esteem and disesteem are generated by the conformity, or lack thereof, of behaviour with such norms.⁸ Experimental work in game theory strongly reinforces the proposition that people do not act purely for materialistic motives but often trust others, reciprocate trusting behaviour, and seek to follow social norms.⁹

Although its basis lies in social norms involving protecting the planet and doing one’s fair share, the esteem-based approach is also consistent with the proposition that most actions by governments, and their leaders, are motivated by self-interest. Both leaders of states and attentive publics in states like to be praised as exemplary leaders in a common human endeavour; and they do not like to be stigmatized as either unable or unwilling to meet common standards. As Abram and Antonia Chayes argue, “even in the absence of material inducements, the threat of exposure or shaming is a powerful spur to action.”¹⁰ Furthermore, those individuals and groups within laggard societies that favour meeting international standards with respect to a domain of activity can use the international pressure as leverage within their societies. So even a totally amoral leader who is personally immune to exposure or shaming may, in order to gain popular support or acquire a favourable reputation, behave as if he cared about either intrinsic values or about honour. As Machiavelli said almost five hundred years ago, even if a leader does not have admirable qualities, “it is very necessary that he should seem to have them.”¹¹

Furthermore, esteem is partly a “positional good,” in the sense used long ago by Fred Hirsch.¹² In other words, at least part of the benefit of being esteemed is being esteemed more than others. So there is an inherently competitive dimension involved, and a potential incentive for competitive individuals to seek esteem. Thus an emphasis on esteem does not at all imply a social theory that elevates altruism to a prevailing hu-

man motivation. Actors who are responding to esteem-based incentives could internalize the values of the norms on which esteem is based, but they could also be pure egoists. For their performance, it may not matter how hypocritical they are.

Since leaders have incentives to appear better than they are, it is very difficult in practice to determine why, when they behave according to prevailing norms, they do so. They may be normatively committed to a set of actions; they may have been socialized to believe in these actions as appropriate without making an independent normative judgment; or they may simply be behaving strategically. The key point for the present discussion is not to determine leaders' motivations—which are likely to vary from leader to leader and situation to situation—but to argue that both egoistic and socialized leaders may seek to meet clear normative standards. A fully worked-out theory of the economy of esteem and climate change would specify the conditions under which leaders, with whatever mix of motivations, would be inclined to respond to esteem-based appeals. For such appeals to work, standards of good performance have to be clear and widely accepted, and it needs to be generally understood that others also understand and support the standards. That is, the standards, and the fact that the standards are widely supported, need to be common knowledge.

Comparing human rights with climate change helps to illuminate both the potential, and the difficulties, of applying the economy of esteem concept to climate change. Recent work on human rights can be interpreted coherently in terms of the economy of esteem. Incentives for leaders to implement the provisions of human rights treaties include the desire for esteem and aversion to disesteem. Increasing external esteem may help attract foreign investment and other economic benefits. Even more important, apparently, is the potential for esteem to attract domestic support, and the desire of leaders to avoid such a severe loss of esteem that they risk losing office. The major apparent effect of human rights treaties is to enable publics in countries with human rights abuses, but not extreme oppression, to mobilize around treaties and their governments' failures to comply with them.¹³

By contrast, on climate issues the standards for acquiring or losing esteem are less clear. Human rights standards can be formulated generally: For example, no country, regardless of its economic situation or its past behaviour, is entitled to engage in torture. Standards of appropriate action on mitigation of climate change, however, are subject to disagreement on the ultimate purpose of the actions, as well as being necessarily comparative. Advocates of sustainable development seek to use the spectre of climate change as a wedge for holistically changing the relation-

ship of human beings to nature, whereas others are looking for a way (for instance, through carbon capture and storage) to continue existing practices without altering the climate.

The comparative point is also clear. Each country's emissions of greenhouse gases necessarily affect all other countries adversely. Since reducing emissions to zero is impossible, the question immediately arises of what the appropriate level of emissions is, relative to those of other countries. Responding to climate change therefore necessarily entails distributional allocations: If one country does less than is considered its "fair share," others either suffer more climate change damage or have to do more. As a result, issues of relative contributions are much more salient in the climate issue area.

The Rio Convention of 1992 and the Kyoto Protocol of 1997 fudged this issue by enunciating the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities," without specifying what those responsibilities were. Industrialized countries, which were assigned binding targets in the Protocol, emphasize the "common" part of this phrase, while developing countries, which avoided binding targets, emphasize "differentiated." They argue that any contributions they make should be fully compensated by financial aid from industrialized countries, in part on the grounds that their past emissions are vastly lower than those of states that began industrialization much earlier. These claims clearly have some normative weight.¹⁴ From the standpoint of an economy of esteem, these distributional, historical, and ethical questions complicate the issue. Whereas support for human rights may seem to be intrinsically praiseworthy, devoting more of one's own people's scarce resources to limiting climate change—especially when poverty is pervasive—could be seen as praiseworthy only insofar as these efforts do not constitute more than the country's "fair share."

As a result, applying the economy of esteem approach to climate change involves a two-stage process: first, establishing a high standard of praiseworthy performance on climate change (implying agreement on the components of such performance); and second, evaluating actions by countries and firms according to that standard. That is, operational norms need to be created on climate change; it is not simply a matter of ensuring the application of minimal norms nominally accepted by almost everyone, as with human rights. Once these norms were accepted, however, climate change may in some ways be more amenable than human rights to an economy of esteem approach. For instance, monitoring emissions is probably easier than in the human rights area, since to an increasing extent, given technical change, emissions can be monitored without the co-operation of a country's government. In addi-

tion, the self-interest of publics in other countries in ensuring that other major economies reduce their emissions may be more likely to sustain attention to activities in faraway places on climate change, which may directly affect their own welfare, than on human rights.

Let me stress that I am not proposing esteem as a *substitute* for either coercive enforcement or market-based measures. What I am suggesting is that institutional designers might be able to create more positive incentives for a variety of actors by exploiting the human desire for esteem—for positive recognition—and the human dislike for being singled out as socially irresponsible. Adding esteem to the mixture of incentive structures is not going to solve the climate change problem, but I suggest that it could help in significant ways. As noted above, even if a person has no innate sense of social responsibility, he is likely to wish to be seen as socially responsible. Hypocrisy is, as Dr Johnson said, the tribute that vice pays to virtue: although personally unattractive, it can be a socially positive force.¹⁵ Creating an economy of esteem for climate change does not constitute an “architecture” for a comprehensive international climate change regime, but it could motivate leaders who have a substantial margin for choice to behave in more constructive ways.

Mechanisms for Creating an Economy of Esteem

One essential mechanism for creating an economy of esteem for climate change would be the institution of a number of prominent awards and prizes. In the eighteenth century, the British and the French governments established such prizes for technological innovations, with some success, and some contemporary examples of major prizes for technological innovation also exist.¹⁶ But the value of such prizes should not be limited to technological innovation. On the contrary, they could also be awarded for other activities that promoted mitigation of climate change, including advances in natural science knowledge, efforts to reduce emissions through modifications to human behaviour, the invention or successful operation of social institutions that mitigate climate change or help people adapt to it, and the exercise of effective political and rhetorical leadership. Indeed, it is quite possible to imagine a situation in which a large variety of awards, prizes, and competitions for many different kinds of socially beneficial actions existed, and were well-publicized.

One of the advantages of creating such an economy of esteem for climate change is that it could be done in a decentralized way. It would not require co-ordinated agreement by states, and it would not even rely entirely on government action. Foundations and wealthy individuals could

establish the necessary prizes on the model of the Nobel Prizes, which are given with funds from Alfred Nobel's will (and for the economics prize from the Sveriges Riksbank) and are administered by the Swedish Royal Academy. Foundations or other non-profit organizations could establish ratings systems for evaluating the action, or inaction, of states and firms. Since there is no need to wait for government action or international agreement, the institution of such prizes, awards, and competitions could begin immediately. Indeed, unlike the bargaining situation with respect to public goods, there would be first-mover advantages for individuals and foundations establishing prizes, since they could preempt especially attractive areas of activity and gain more publicity than their followers.¹⁷

One step beyond prizes would be to establish a ratings system, which would rank states, or firms in an industry, from best to worst performers, on the model of the Transparency International ratings of states with respect to corruption. Partial steps in this direction have already been taken, with respect to firms, by the Carbon Disclosure Project, which provides information from over two thousand corporations and other entities about their greenhouse gas emissions, although it does not supply ratings.¹⁸ Such a ratings system would be designed to induce firms, through concern either about profitability or the personal esteem in which their leaders were held relative to their peers, to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. There is evidence that, under certain conditions, firms are quite responsive to such rankings.¹⁹ However, it must be admitted that the effects of corporate social responsibility rankings are limited to certain classes of firms.²⁰

A bolder effort would be to rate countries. Suppose a prominent "tote-board" were established, on which the comparative performances of the world's countries were prominently displayed—available to all on the web, and publicized in the mass media.²¹ Since states already compete in a variety of ways, including for investment and tourism, these ratings could become part of that competition. States that get very low ratings might well pay an economic price, or fear doing so. Those that had a democratic and green reputation, such as Costa Rica, would likely benefit. Highly publicized rankings could affect decisions by firms about where to invest, by civil society organizations about which locations to choose for conventions, and by tourists in making their travel plans.

The impact of such a tote-board could be enhanced if high rankings on it were associated both with prizes and areas of profitable economic activity. Ideally, high rankings on this tote-board would be a condition for eligibility to serve in prestigious capacities, such as hosting prominent international sports events—like the Olympics, the Winter Olym-

pics, and the World Cup—that are run by non-governmental organizations.²² Perhaps other non-coercive linkages to the tote-board could be constructed to reinforce the incentives to perform well.

For such a tote-board to be of any value, the organizations or networks assembling the rankings would have to be regarded, worldwide, as legitimate. The raters would have to be regarded as impartial and expert, but this criterion should not lead to dominance of the rating entities by rich democracies. Nationals of poor countries, even of authoritarian ones, would have to be adequately represented.²³ Their difficult task would be to construct indicators of effort that take into account factors such as historical and per-capita emissions, and at the same time provide strong incentives for vigorous action now and in the future. They would have to consider what counts as mitigation—with respect to issues of carbon sinks, such as forests, as well as with respect to industrial emissions of greenhouse gases. They would need to establish valid “business as usual” baselines and techniques for measurement that could be carried out with or without the consent of national governments, as is currently happening on the project level in the Clean Development Mechanism. Such tasks would be difficult and complex, but they are essential for effective monitoring, for the awarding of prestigious prizes, and especially for a credible rating system.

Problems and Objections

Beyond vague general principles that can be interpreted in plastic ways, there is little normative agreement in contemporary world politics. Climate change at least has the advantage, from this point of view, of threatening the welfare of everyone on the planet, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or support for democracy. So, at one level, protecting the integrity of the planet is a shared goal—a “common responsibility.” But as we have noted, disagreement begins at this point, with the allocation of *specific* responsibilities. Furthermore, resentment at power and wealth disparities, at colonialism and what is seen as neo-colonialism, and in general at intervention and domination by the West, is very deep. Any prize or ratings system for the evaluation of states’ or leaders’ performances on environmental issues will be severely criticized as biased and illegitimate.

Even apart from historical resentments and political conflict, any institution to evaluate performance on climate change will face a fundamental problem of moral disagreement and uncertainty. Even among people with similar political backgrounds and views, disagreement ex-

ists about appropriate trade-offs between combating climate change and pursuing other values. In 2004, for example, a group of prominent western economists brought together by an organization known as the “Copenhagen Consensus” rated climate change at the bottom of a list of pressing world problems.²⁴ The analysis was heavily criticized by other commentators in the West. Cross-cultural disagreement is likely to be much more severe.

In my view, the best response to such criticism is to pay careful attention to what Allen Buchanan and I have called the “epistemic aspects of legitimacy.” In particular, the process by which ratings are derived must be fully transparent and the criteria must be publicly justified. Furthermore, there need to be mechanisms for accountability through which the ratings agency responds to criticisms and is willing to revise the criteria as a result.²⁵ In the end, the institutions constructing the ratings would have to be widely perceived as having the right to do so, and to make rules for the allocation of prizes. But they need not be *universally* approved, since this is impossible. Having reached conclusions through a transparent process, leaders of these institutions would need the courage to publicize them in full knowledge of the fierce criticism that would ensue.

Nothing about this process will be easy. The difficulties, in fact, are illustrated by recent controversies over the Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership, which the Prize Committee of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation decided not to give in 2009. The fact that the prize was not given could be seen as positive—a reflection of the integrity of the Prize Committee. But a controversy also arose about the criteria themselves and their provenance. The Mo Ibrahim Foundation decided not to use the ratings criteria developed by researchers at Harvard on whom they had previously relied, but rather to compile the index “in partnership with African academics and researchers.”²⁶

This experience illustrates that success in a ratings endeavour is hardly guaranteed. But it does not provide a compelling reason to dismiss the idea of harnessing the economy of esteem for improving policies on climate change. Faced with such a serious problem, we should be considering all potential strategies, rather than concentrating on only one path. Perhaps readers of this essay will be able to improve on the formulation here to make prizes and ratings more credible as a worthwhile course of action.

It seems clear that climate change is a more serious global problem than virtually anyone realized fifteen years ago, and that it is infused with politics. Multilateral institutions need to be designed and constructed that are sensitive to power realities, that take advantage of politicians' time horizons, and that continue to generate scientific knowledge. Domestic institutions need to be built that mesh well with these multilateral institutions. Mobilizing domestic publics, lobbying legislatures, crafting and passing legislation through compromise, manipulation, and clever, resolute bargaining will all be necessary. Compromises on pure ethical principles may, as is so frequently the case in world politics, need to be made. And an unprecedented degree of international co-operation will be required.

I have suggested in this essay that more is needed: that it could be worthwhile to think "outside the box"—that is, to reflect on how a decentralized economy of esteem for climate change action could be constructed. The desire of people, including leaders of states, for the esteem of others is a powerful potential motivation for taking action on a global common-pool resource such as the quality of our climate. It will be difficult to institutionalize an economy of esteem, but it is worthwhile considering—and certainly superior to "wringing our hands" about impending disasters. A complex of institutions and practices to mobilize an economy of esteem could contribute to an effective response to the most important ecological challenge of our time. ■

Notes

¹ I am indebted for valuable comments on earlier versions of this paper to Jessica Green, John Gerard Ruggie, and three anonymous referees.

² In other words, the quality of the global climate is a "common-pool resource." See Robert O. Keohane and Elinor Ostrom, eds., *Local Commons and Global Interdependence: Heterogeneity and Cooperation in Two Domains* (London: Sage, 1995), esp. 13–5.

³ The Working Group III contribution to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that if global mean temperature increases are to be held within 2.0–2.4 °C, the peaking year for carbon dioxide emissions must come by 2015. See IPCC, Working Group III, *Climate Change 2007: Mitigation of Climate Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 15, Table SPM.5.

⁴ See Edward L. Miles, Arild Underdal, Steinar Andresen, Jørgen Wettestad, Jon Birger Skjærseth, and Elaine M. Carlin, *Environmental Regime Effectiveness: Confronting Theory with Evidence* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 435.

⁵ For the most recent academic attempt to analyse climate architecture and make suggestions, see Joseph S. Aldy and Robert N. Stavins, eds., *Post-Kyoto International Climate Policy: Implementing Architectures for Agreement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). This is a follow-up volume to Joseph S. Aldy and Robert N. Stavins, eds., *Architectures for Agreement: Addressing Global Climate Change in the Post-Kyoto World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁶ Geoffrey Brennan and Philip Pettit, *The Economy of Esteem* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 81.

⁷ Brennan and Pettit, *Economy of Esteem*, 265.

⁸ See John Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1995); John Gerard Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on International Institutionalization* (London: Routledge, 1998); Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). I thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting explicit mention of this point.

⁹ See Elinor Ostrom, *Understanding Institutional Diversity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), chaps. 2 and 3; Joseph Henrich, Robert Boyd, Samuel Bowles, Colin Camerer, Ernst Fehr, Herbert Gintis, Richard McElreath, Michael Alvard, Abigail Barr, Jean Ensminger, Natalie Smith Henrich, Kim Hill, Francisco Gil-White, Michael Gurven, Frank W. Marlowe, John Q. Patton, and David Tracer, "'Economic Man' in Cross-Cultural Perspective: Behavioral Experiments in 15 Small-Scale Societies," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 28, no. 6 (2005): 795–855.

¹⁰ Abram Chayes and Antonia Handler Chayes, *The New Sovereignty: Compliance with International Regulatory Agreements* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 230.

¹¹ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (New York: Norton, 1977 [1513]), chap. XVIII, 50.

¹² Fred Hirsch, *Social Limits to Growth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976).

¹³ See Andrew Moravcsik, "The Origins of Human Rights Regimes: Democratic Delegation in Postwar Europe," *International Organization* 54, no. 2 (2000): 217–52; Beth Simmons, *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹⁴ For a discussion of justice issues involved with climate change, see J. Timmons Roberts and Bradley C. Parks, *A Climate of Injustice: Global Inequality, North-South Politics, and Climate Policy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).

¹⁵ See Judith N. Shklar, *Ordinary Vices* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1984); Ruth N. Grant, *Hypocrisy and Integrity: Machiavelli, Rousseau, and the Ethics of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

¹⁶ See Richard G. Newell and Nathan E. Wilson, "Technology Prizes for Climate Change Mitigation," Discussion Paper, Resources for the Future, Washington, 2005.

¹⁷ This suggestion should be distinguished from the formation of voluntary "clubs" of firms and/or NGOs, such as are found in industries as diverse as diamonds, shipping, and apparel; or the operation of clubs by governments. For an interesting new volume on these issues see Matthew Potoski and Aseem Prakash, eds., *Voluntary Programs: A Club Theory Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009).

¹⁸ See Carbon Disclosure Project, <http://www.cdproject.net> (accessed January 16, 2010).

¹⁹ Some good work has been done on certification agencies, involving—like this proposal—private institutions that create standards and rate performance relative to them. Most of these activities, however, seek to hold business firms accountable to standards set by non-governmental organizations. See for instance, Errol Meidinger, "The Administrative Law of Global Private-Public Regulation: The Case of Forestry," *The European Journal of International Law* 17, no. 1 (2006): 46–87. John Gerard Ruggie has done some outstanding work as the Secretary-General's Special Representative on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, and is working on a new book manuscript on this subject. See his homepage at Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, <http://www.business-humanrights.org/Gettingstarted/UNSpecialRepresentative> (accessed January 16, 2010).

²⁰ David Vogel reviews the evidence on whether "corporate virtue pays" and "finds little support for the claim that more responsible firms are more profitable." However, two categories of firms seem to be responsive to corporate social responsibility concerns: those with a social responsibility identity and those that have been targeted by activists or fear being so targeted. David Vogel, *The Market for Virtue: The Potential and Limits of Corporate Social Responsibility* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), 45, 73.

²¹ The phrase comes from Marc A. Levy, "European Acid Rain: The Power of Tote-Board Diplomacy," in *Institutions for the Earth: Sources of International Environmental Protection*, eds. Peter M. Haas, Robert O. Keohane, and Marc A. Levy (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993), 75–132.

²² I say "ideally" because the political difficulties in using environmental performance as such a standard would be immense.

²³ For instance, the seven co-chairs of the three Working Groups of the IPCC are from the following countries: Argentina, China, Cuba, Germany, Mali, Switzerland, and the United States. See IPCC, "Working Groups / Task Force," <http://www.ipcc.ch/working—groups/working—groups.htm> (accessed January 16, 2010).

²⁴ See Copenhagen Consensus Center, <http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com> (accessed January 16, 2010).

²⁵ See Allen Buchanan and Robert O. Keohane, "The Legitimacy of Global Governance Institutions," *Ethics and International Affairs* 20, no. 4 (2006): 405–37.

²⁶ For the Foundation's view, see Mo Ibrahim Foundation, "The Ibrahim Index," <http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/en/section/the-ibrahim-index> (accessed November 7, 2009); see also Robert I. Rotberg and Rachel M. Gisselquist, *Strengthening African Governance: Index of African Governance, Results and Rankings 2009* (Cambridge, MA: World Peace Foundation, 2009).

Environmental Mega-Conferences and Climate Governance beyond the Nation-State: A Bali Case Study

29

JONATHAN GAVENTA¹

ABSTRACT

The international response to climate change includes not only formal agreements between nation-states, but also more disparate interventions by a range of actors beyond the governmental arena. These non-state actors—including business groups and city coalitions—operate both within and beyond their own local jurisdictions and increasingly form transnational networks and actively participate in international climate negotiations. This article presents a case study of the engagement of transnational networks of cities and businesses at the 13th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties held in Bali in December 2007. The Bali meeting acted not only as a process to agree on a “roadmap” to a post-Kyoto climate agreement, but also as an “environmental mega-conference” that brought together state and non-state actors and opened up a discursive space around the issue of climate change. Using tools of discourse analysis to examine webcasts of parallel events at the Bali conference, this article considers how non-state actors use this discursive space to position themselves vis-à-vis the international regime, make claims for resources and power, and frame the issue of climate change through narratives that facilitate policy intervention at a particular scale. The analysis suggests that the narratives advanced by business and city networks at the conference reinterpret climate change in ways that give them legitimacy and traction in seeking to resolve it, but stop short of challenging dominant discourses of ecological modernization that underpin the current regime of international climate governance.

As the architecture for a new global agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol is developed, international climate conferences such as the recent United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP) in Copenhagen have become a focus for academics and campaigners alike. Formally, UNFCCC conferences serve as fora for nation-states to negotiate and agree on an international climate change regime. Yet, the significance of international climate summits goes well beyond the formal agreement; they form a site for intervention for a range of state and non-state actors, a gathering point

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for transnational environmental networks, a media swarm, a forum for the debate of policies and ideas, and an important opening in discursive space in which different understandings of the problem of climate change and its solutions are articulated and contested.

Using the 2007 COP in Bali as a case study, this article investigates how non-state actors—notably transnational networks of cities and businesses—make use of the discursive space opened up by international climate conferences to position themselves vis-à-vis the international climate regime, frame problems, advance narratives, and gain traction within the policy response to climate change. I use tools of discourse analysis to provide a close reading of the unfolding of these strategies within two parallel events at Bali: the Bali Global Business Day, and the launch of the World Mayors and Local Governments Climate Protection Agreement. Focusing on such events provides not only an illustration of the micropolitics of international conferences, but also a window into questions of power, resources, and the broader discursive politics of climate governance beyond nation-states.

Context: Bali as Environmental Mega-Conference

The formal role of the Bali UNFCCC COP was to establish a “roadmap” to guide climate negotiations until the December 2009 Copenhagen conference on a successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol. Discussion points included a shared vision for long-term co-operative action, mitigation, adaptation, technology development and transfer, and financing.² The effectiveness of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol in combating climate change has been subject to protracted debate, but even opponents of the Kyoto process view Bali as a milestone towards “locking down” the future climate regime.³

Such formal negotiations and agreements have tended to be the main focus of both climate and international relations scholars. UNFCCC conferences are conceived as building blocks of an international climate regime and as arenas of contested power between states, but the analysis rarely goes beyond the “conference chamber.” This focus on regimes has been criticized for overlooking the role of non-state actors and governance beyond formal agreements. Such critiques have informed a growing literature on new sites and forms of governance, from transnational municipal networks to new environmental policy instruments and private regulation by businesses and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).⁴ Until recently, however, there has been relatively little focus on the role

that international conferences play for governance outside the formal regime.⁵

Yet, it seems clear that the significance of international climate conferences such as Bali and Copenhagen go well beyond the outcomes of the UNFCCC negotiations. Over 10,000 delegates from 191 countries attended the Bali conference, including nearly 5,000 NGO representatives and almost 1,500 journalists.⁶ The event brought together negotiators, diplomats, scientists, campaigners, celebrities, environmental and development networks, business representatives, and delegations of cities, states, and regions. In addition to formal plenary sessions, the conference was host to over 200 official side events, dozens of exhibits, and many more informal events, receptions, networking opportunities, parties, and protests.

These diverse functions are characteristic of what Seyfang and Jordan term “environmental mega-conferences.”⁷ Such events are significant not because of the official agreements reached, but because they help set global agendas, facilitate “joined-up” thinking, and provide global leadership for national and local governments. Environmental mega-conferences “highlight attention. They mobilise governments, NGOs and businesses. They generate earnest analyses and novel assessments, which gain airtime when they would otherwise be ignored. They stimulate international agreements and media attention. They create dust and turmoil.”⁸

Adopting such a perspective for UNFCCC meetings enables a closer attunement to “the more complex, messy, multilevel processes of governance” occurring in practice.⁹ Through this turmoil—and by combining opportunities for networked interaction with intense media coverage—these events also help to open up discursive space around climate change. In this perspective, understanding the importance of international climate conferences implies broadening our attention beyond a narrow focus on the formal negotiations to one including consideration of the dozens of concomitant fringe meetings and side events. As Lovell notes, for many participants, the parallel meetings have become more important than the formal negotiations: “In this sense the formal UN climate negotiations are a ‘side event’: they are not necessarily directly relevant to non-state actors except as a way of bringing the large international community of people working on climate change together.”¹⁰

As well as connecting with other actors, parallel meetings and side events provide opportunities for participants to discuss emerging issues, publicize their activities and work, and form alliances with other groups. They are figuratively and literally performances: staged events involving formal presentations before an audience and providing a setting for

actors to both articulate their particular perspective and perform their relevance to the broader regime. Such events are thus appropriate entry points for the analysis of climate discourses and legitimization strategies of non-state actors.

Actors: Transnational City and Business Networks at Bali

This study focuses on two parallel events involving non-state actors in global climate governance: the Bali Global Business Day and the launch of the World Mayors and Local Government Climate Protection Agreement. They are of interest not only because of the growing academic literature on the potential of non-state actors in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but also because of claims made by cities and businesses themselves to be “more effective, efficient and faster” at tackling climate change than nation-states.¹¹ While dozens of events involving different configurations of business and city actors were held, these two events were chosen for analysis as they represent the highest profile of the business and local government parallel events, and because organisers sought to gain a wider audience through making webcasts of the events available on the internet.

The Global Business Day, held on December 10, 2007, was the largest business event at Bali and the first event of its kind. Organized jointly by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the International Chamber of Commerce with ten other partners, the event involved three hundred participants and speakers from business, the UNFCCC, governments, and business-friendly NGOs. The Business Day is representative of a shift in business engagement with international climate negotiations. As has been well-documented, throughout the 1990s, groups linked to carbon intensive industries (such as the Climate Council and the Global Climate Coalition) played a powerful role in attempting to discredit climate science and undermine progress towards an international agreement.¹² However, an approach has since emerged in which business groups frame climate change “as an opportunity rather than a burden” and are more willing to accept regulation.¹³ This shift has been associated with underlying economic and structural factors, including the threat of climate change to the banking and insurance industries, markets for new technologies and energy efficiency savings, and opportunities for accumulation through new market mechanisms.¹⁴ Others have pointed to the question of how businesses are becoming important

actors in environmental governance in their own right, through new systems of private and voluntary regulation.¹⁵

This shift in position is far from total. There remains considerable divergence both between and within industries. Companies remain open to charges of “greenwash” and of “placing greater emphasis on management processes, policy influence, and market image” than on emissions reductions.¹⁶ Hence, as well as an opportunity for networking and articulating the business perspective on climate change, the Bali Business Day can be viewed as an effort to establish credibility.

After a two-day meeting of mayors and local government representatives, the World Mayors and Local Government Climate Protection Agreement was launched at Bali on December 12, 2007 by the four major transnational city environmental networks: the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), the Cities for Climate Protection, the United Cities and Local Governments, the World Mayors Council on Climate Change, and the C40 Climate Leadership Group. The declaration commits signatories to work towards a sixty per cent reduction in worldwide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, including an eighty per cent reduction by 2050 for industrialized countries—in sharp contrast to the failure of the official negotiations to agree on a quantified emissions reduction target. The city agreement follows a similar declaration by regional governments at COP11 in Montreal and previous commitments by ICLEI and C40 members.

The agreement occurred in the context of growing recognition of cities “as a critical arena in which the governance of climate change is taking place.”¹⁷ Many municipal governments have adopted self-styled leadership roles—often as a counterpoint to the absence of national action on climate—and can act as “national exemplars” to catalyse wider policy shifts.¹⁸ This trend has been accompanied by the rise of transnational environmental networks of sub-national governments, which share knowledge and best practice, shape discourses, influence international regimes, and are themselves important sites of environmental governance.¹⁹

These developments have not been uncontroversial. Urban initiatives have met resistance from businesses, and some commentators suggest they may even yield perverse results.²⁰ Municipal action is often contingent on local leadership, financial resources, and institutional capacity; the rhetoric of these initiatives is not always matched by reality.²¹ Despite regular presence at UNFCCC conferences, local governments have no formal role in the international climate regime and only limited recognition from nation-states. Thus, as well as representing an accord between

cities, the Climate Protection Agreement also serves as an opportunity for local governments to showcase the importance of municipal action.

It is problematic to view either of these events as representative of city or business interests or indeed to view cities or businesses as cohesive or bounded actors. Cities and businesses attended the Bali conference in a variety of constellations, including as part of NGO and national delegations or alongside celebrities such as George Clooney. Businesses have deeply conflicting interests and strategies; cities have different priorities, ruling parties, capabilities, and governance structures. The discourses employed are not inherent to business or city actors, but are the result of previous discursive struggles.

Yet, while this complexity may limit the generalizability of the analysis, it also invites the questions of how particular self-identified business or city actors gain the legitimacy to speak for businesses or cities in general. The parallel and side events at Bali offer an important platform for transnational networks to present their cohesiveness and legitimacy and obscure conflict and difference. As recognized by participants, such events represent “a stimulus for us in the business community to get this coherent voice” and “an unprecedented coming together” of local governments “with a unified voice.”²²

Methods

Discourse is a site of struggle. It is a terrain, a dynamic linguistic and, above all, a semantic space in which social meanings are produced or challenged.²³

In “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight,” Clifford Geertz sought to recast cultural practices as an “assemblage of texts” or stories that people “tell themselves about themselves.”²⁴ Performances become viewed as reworkings of broader social meanings which researchers “strain to read over the shoulders” of participants.²⁵ Beyond the simple geographical coincidence, a wider analogy can be drawn between Geertz’s famous essay and the Bali climate conference. The parallel events at Bali involve diverse constellations of actors in climate governance presenting their perspectives of what is and should be happening in the field of climate governance. These presentations thus represent stories that climate actors “tell themselves about themselves” as a way of influencing future action on climate change.

These stories serve to frame the issue of climate change in ways which enable and constrain particular paths of action and create or disrupt coalitions of actors. Storylines position “subjects and objects vis-à-vis one another” in relationships such as “opposition, identity, similarity, and

complementarity.”²⁶ This positioning can naturalize certain interpretations, masking “an implicit theorization of how the world works and also an elaboration of the nature of its inhabitants.”²⁷ Framings of environmental issues such as climate change “do not flow deterministically from problems fixed by nature,” Jasanoff and Wynne argue, but rather “build upon specific models of agency, causality and responsibility.”²⁸ Reading “over the shoulder” of participants in the Bali parallel events can thus provide insights into how problems in global environmental politics are constituted and how relationships between different governmental and non-governmental actors are construed.

This study uses techniques of discourse analysis to elucidate the articulations of such framings. Discourse is conceptualised as “an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices.”²⁹ The research process involved the analysis of video footage of presentations to parallel events at Bali, accessed through webcasts on the UN website and YouTube.³⁰ The presentations were repeatedly viewed, then transcribed and coded according to recurring themes and phrases, with particular attention to areas of convergence or opposition between the two sets of events. In accordance with the focus on problem-framing and positioning of actors, a specific focus was given to the use of metaphors and relational language in talking about climate change. The analysis followed an iterative process in which initial findings were tested against further viewings of the material.

The availability of webcasts of international events is a recent development which significantly widens the possibilities for analysis. As Marshall McLuhan observed, any new media serves to amplify certain characteristics while obscuring others.³¹ Webcasts concentrate attention on the deliberate public discourse of speakers and are thus more able to capture the strategic nature of political discourse than interviews or similar techniques. Focusing on spoken discourse also allows for closer attention to authorship than textual analysis. It allows access to the events for those not present at the conference and enables simultaneous events to be observed by a single researcher. Unlike participant observation, presentations can be viewed repeatedly to enable a closer reading of particular events and discourses.

However, there are also limits inherent to this approach: by focusing on deliberate public discourse, there is limited access to the context of the performances or to informal or “backstage” discourses that could be gained through participant observation. Unlike interviews, there is no opportunity to seek clarification or question speakers. This serves

to shift the analysis away from broader epistemic issues of how climate discourses are internalized and understood by different actors, and more towards the specific questions of how climate issues are presented by actors explicitly seeking to influence debate and the effects this may have on reshaping the politics of climate change.

More fundamentally, as with other constructivist approaches, this form of discourse analysis offers limited access to understanding the implications of regime formation or material or institutional power.³² However, the analysis does not preclude or obviate such approaches, but may offer a useful complement to political economy or institutionalist approaches. Power structures are unstable and constantly changing; the operation of discourse becomes essential to understanding how particular formulations of problems and constellations of actors are maintained.³³ The analysis of public discourse is particularly relevant for the study of overtly political events such as the Bali climate summit, as it provides a “thick description” of public and strategic attempts by specific actors to influence climate politics—an area that appears to be often overlooked.

Strategies for Positioning and Legitimacy

Environmental politics becomes an argumentative struggle in which actors not only try to make others see the problems according to their views but also seek to position other actors in a specific way.³⁴

Both the Bali business day and the cities agreement can be read as attempts by business and city actors to position themselves as important players on the global stage of climate governance. Indeed, this is recognized by participants:

[Cities] are the second biggest delegation here in Bali and we need the international community to recognize us.³⁵

When it comes to intergovernmental negotiations ... business [is] still a side event, or a luncheon speech or a cocktail. This does not match, in my view, the strong interest that governments are expressing today for the active co-operation and support for business to find the solutions for climate change.³⁶

Yet, the audience, language, and type of relationship sought vary sharply. In an echo of Stopford and Strange’s model of “triangular diplomacy,” Business Day participants sought not only business-to-business discussions, but also influence in business-state relationships and international agreements.³⁷ The dominant language is one of “co-operation” within a “public-private partnership.”³⁸ “It’s about saying, ‘this is what business

and governments can do together.”³⁹ Businesses are positioned as investors, innovators, delivery agents, and a source of “tremendous knowledge” and policy advice. Governments are positioned as arbiters of the broader policy framework and as limiting factors on business initiatives. Deployment of carbon capture and storage, for example, is not hindered by technology, scale, or access to capital; “it’s government policy that’s the principal roadblock.”⁴⁰

Business actors gain legitimacy for this positioning through reference to their economic and structural power: participants “represent a market value ... of seven trillion dollars” and “reach out to half of the world’s population every day with a product or service.”⁴¹ Moral authority is also claimed by emphasizing the actions that individual companies and the business community are already undertaking “to create the foundations for a low-carbon economy.”⁴²

Participants in the local government event engage in a very different positioning strategy. The speakers address themselves not only to the international arena, but also to national governments and their domestic constituents. The language employed is not of partnership, but of leadership. Cities are “tremendous laboratories of innovation and successes” that are “not waiting for national governments to take action on climate change.”⁴³ Within this positioning, cities are portrayed as enablers of action for others: they “empower local businesses” and can “motivate our citizens to change their daily life.”⁴⁴ This is contrasted with limited progress in the international arena and by the “irresponsible and neglectful federal government”: cities have “a sense of urgency that seems to be lacking in the nations here.”⁴⁵

The city actors draw their legitimacy not from material resources, but from institutional capacity and a democratic mandate. The local government bodies “represent many people all over the world,” including over 100,000 local governments in Europe, and are thus “near to our citizens”: “we want to be the political voice of local governments and also citizens in our cities.”⁴⁶ Cities are also positioned as closer to the effects of climate change, in a form of experiential authority: they “have the most direct access to effectively reduce impacts to climate change” and “are directly accountable to our citizens—when there are droughts, storms, floods, and sea level rises, they turn to us.”⁴⁷

Within both narratives, presenters make strong claims about the actions that cities and businesses are already taking and their potential for achieving emissions reductions independently of the international regime. Both present themselves as crucial to the solutions:

Climate change requires a new industrial revolution. Who else can deliver that if not business?⁴⁸

If the emissions trend in cities is not reversed, we will fail in our quest to save the planet.⁴⁹

Yet, while highlighting their own potential and power as global actors on climate change, both also attest to their own powerlessness and inability to achieve effectiveness without interventions from nation-states. “Business can’t succeed in a society that fails,” but needs “enabling frameworks,” “government support for R&D [Research and Development],” and “the elimination of barriers” to markets.⁵⁰ For cities to reduce emissions, “national governments [must] empower and resource us to act ... If governments don’t give us the means to deliver deep cuts, we cannot avoid catastrophic impacts from climate change.”⁵¹ Both events are used to present wish lists of government policies that the actors would like to see and to advance claims for greater power or financial resources.

This serves to position cities as facilitators of action who nevertheless depend on powers and financial resources from central governments to be successful. Similarly, it locates businesses as innovators and investors who rely on partnership with governments to produce enabling frameworks in which they can act. While articulating the case for climate actors beyond the formal regime, such narratives also ultimately reaffirm the continuing dominance of nation-state power.

Framing and Narratives

Business and industry want to shape the discussion on climate change through constructive input.⁵²

As James Scott and subsequent authors have observed, governments tend to frame problems at a single level so that they become “legible” or tractable within their jurisdictions.⁵³ Yet, this mode of “seeing like a state” is not a singular process, nor is it unique to states: non-state actors in environmental governance also adopt these practices. Though ostensibly discussing the same geophysical phenomenon, city and business actors narrate and frame climate change in different ways, as each seeks to understand the problem as solvable on their own terms.

Local government actors narrate climate change as a spatial problem, attributable to geographical locations such as urban areas and solvable through planning policy. Within this storyline, eighty per cent of greenhouse gas emissions are produced in cities, making them key sites for

intervention: “Worldwide, the battle against climate change will be won or lost in urban areas.”⁵⁴ Climate change is attributed to “policies that promote sprawl” and “dependence on the automobile.”⁵⁵ Cities thus have the “power to tackle climate change on the ground” due to their “ability to manage land use through planning, to manage development, [and] to register building codes.”⁵⁶ Heavy emphasis is placed on spatial development frameworks and other planning policies, as “there is a necessity to plan and develop in a way that will anticipate likely impacts.”⁵⁷

Such storylines echo previous analyses of how city discourses construct climate change as a local issue in order to make local and global sustainable development agendas seem mutually reinforcing.⁵⁸ Central to this strategy of localization is “issue bundling”: climate is linked to other local concerns to make the issue salient at a local level. Thus, in the cities event at Bali, carbon reduction is linked to “better public health, better sustained economic development, better quality of life for all, and greater national security,” alongside issues such as air pollution, traffic congestion, preservation of open spaces, and waste management.⁵⁹

By contrast, the spatial dimension is largely absent from business narratives on climate change. The dominant lens is that of the economy; emissions are attributed to sectors and technologies rather than locations. Climate change is portrayed as a problem of “market inefficiencies,” exacerbated by a failure of technology and regulatory policy.⁶⁰ An efficient “low-carbon economy” is the end goal; “the key challenge is to make the low-carbon future the lowest cost future.”⁶¹ Measures that would disrupt economic growth or reduce consumption are dismissed: “We do not need to lose SUVs or the big motors like the S-Class Mercedes—we can solve the problem by efficiency.”⁶² The solutions are presented as investment, innovation, and technology, including: “A price of carbon for a functioning carbon market; ... more use of market mechanisms; strengthened R&D; ... clean coal solutions, including carbon capture and storage, revival of nuclear and big hydro, reformed and broadened CDM [Clean Development Mechanism], and new policy tools.”⁶³

As with local authorities, businesses engage in “issue-bundling” techniques, but these relate the issue of climate change to broader economic priorities rather than to local environmental concerns. Businesses pursue “the triple objectives of growth, jobs, and environmental improvements”; this can be achieved by “using market forces, promoting open trade and investment, [and] avoiding trade-restrictive measures.”⁶⁴ The dominant frame is thus one of “market environmentalism,” a deeply contested but increasingly prominent narrative that “promises both economic and environmental ends via market means.”⁶⁵

While there are significant differences in the framing of climate change between the two sets of actors, both place their narratives within the wider discourse of “ecological modernization.” As previous authors on discourses of environmental governance have identified, “ecological modernization” is a central narrative around which discourse coalitions congeal.⁶⁶ It forms a “win-win storyline” which emphasizes “the compatibility of economic growth and environmental protection, a liberal market order and sustainable development.”⁶⁷ At the parallel events in Bali, the discourse of ecological modernization was ubiquitous. Both events focused heavily on cost savings, new technologies, and “win-win solutions”; climate change mitigation is “perfect business sense” and “makes economic sense” for cities.⁶⁸ Emphasis in both narratives was on efficiency improvements, technological gains, and operation through existing institutional structures. There was little discursive space at either event for more radical voices on climate change such as those proposing more fundamental changes to consumption patterns and global institutions. Indeed, there is a risk that introducing more fundamental challenges to the existing order could jeopardize the positioning strategies that seek to establish city and business actors as legitimate participants in climate debates.

While there is considerable divergence in the types of policies, technologies, and actions sought, by maintaining the dominant discourse of ecological modernization, these narratives reinforce the existing regime and help maintain the continuity of the material and institutional structures that underpin it. Thus, within this particular discursive “site of struggle,” we witness not a clash of hegemonic discourses, but rather a jockeying for position and legitimacy, a bidding process for resources and power, and a subtle attempt to reframe the scale and focus of climate change discourses while leaving the broader terms of the debate unquestioned.

Conclusions

This article has sought to trace the engagement of transnational networks of cities and businesses in international climate politics through the analysis of parallel events at the 2007 Bali UNFCCC conference. It understands international climate conferences such as Bali and Copenhagen not solely in terms of the consequences of official negotiations, but rather as an opening of discursive space, a locus for the messy and complex processes of climate governance beyond the formal regime, and

a forum through which different interpretations of the climate change problem are advanced and contested.

Using tools of discourse analysis to address webcasts of parallel events at the conference, I have examined the positioning strategies and sources of legitimacy enrolled by business and local government actors, and the framings and narratives of climate politics that they advance. The analysis showed that the business groups locate themselves as partners of governments and the international regime to gain a stake in shaping policy; local governments position themselves as leaders and enablers of action in order to leverage finance and greater power. Both claim moral authority by pointing to their action on climate change outside of the Kyoto process, while nevertheless lobbying for more resources from national governments and a greater role within the UNFCCC negotiations.

The analysis also demonstrated that both sets of actors frame the problem of climate change in ways that allow them to gain traction in resolving it. Cities reinterpret climate change as a spatial phenomenon, linked to planning; for businesses it becomes a market and technological failure, bound up with economic and regulatory policy. Yet, these reframings acts as refinements rather than as a rejection of orthodox climate politics. Both actors advance different lenses for understanding climate change without challenging the dominant frame of ecological modernization. Both assert the potential of climate action beyond the formal regime, while simultaneously exposing the enduring power of nation-states as the arbiters of policy frameworks. The performances thus attest to both the strength of non-state climate governance and to its fragility. ■

Notes

¹ Jonathan Gaventa worked in the Greater London Authority for four years and is now a Researcher at E3G (Third Generation Environmentalism). This article was written in a personal capacity. The author would like to thank Heike Schroeder, Peter Newell, and two anonymous reviewers for helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

² See Raymond Cléménçon, "The Bali Road Map: A First Step on the Difficult Journey to a Post-Kyoto Protocol Agreement," *The Journal of Environment and Development* 17, no. 1 (2008): 70–94.

³ Gwyn Prins and Steve Rayner, "The Wrong Trousers: Radically Re-Thinking Climate Policy," Mackinder Centre and James Martin Institute joint discussion paper, James Martin Institute, Oxford, 2007, 1.

⁴ See, e.g., Harriet Bulkeley and Michelle Betsill, *Cities and Climate Change: Urban Sustainability and Global Environmental Governance*, (London: Routledge, 2003); Ian Bailey, "Market Environmentalism, New Environmental Policy Instruments, and Climate Policy in the United Kingdom and Germany," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97, no. 3 (2007): 530–50; and Benjamin Cashore, "Legitimacy and the Privatization of Environmental Governance: How Non-State Market-Driven (NSMD) Governance Systems Gain Rule-Making Authority," *Governance* 15, no. 4 (2002): 503–29.

⁵ An exception to this is Heather Lovell, "More Effective, Efficient and Faster? The Role of Non-State Actors at UN Climate Negotiations," Tyndall Briefing Note 24, Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, December 2007, <http://www.tyndall.ac.uk/sites/default/files/bn24.pdf> (accessed January 17, 2010).

⁶ See UNFCCC, "List of Participants," UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, Thirteenth Session, Bali, December 3–14, 2007.

⁷ The term "environmental mega-conference" was originally used in relation to multi-issue events such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002—see Gill Seyfang, "Environmental Mega-Conferences—From Stockholm to Johannesburg and Beyond," *Global Environmental Change* 13, no. 3 (2003): 223–8; and Gill Seyfang and Andrew Jordan, "The Johannesburg Summit and Sustainable Development: How Effective Are Environmental Conferences?" in *Yearbook of International Co-operation on Environment and Development 2002/2003*, eds. Olav Schram Stokke & Øystein Thommessen (London: Earthscan, 2002), 19–39. Given the broadening scope and international attention to UNFCCC conferences, they also appear to have reached "environmental mega-conference" status.

⁸ Andrew Jordan and Timothy O'Riordan, "Institutions for Global Environmental Change," *Global Environmental Change* 13, no. 3 (2003): 223.

⁹ Melisa Leach, Gerald Bloom, Adrian Ely, Paul Nightingale, Ian Scoones, Esha Shah, and Adrian Smith, "Understanding Governance: Pathways to Sustainability," STEPS Working Paper 2, STEPS Centre, Brighton, 2007, 13.

¹⁰ Lovell, "More Effective," 2.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² See David Levy, "Business and the Evolution of the Climate Regime: The Dynamics of Corporate Strategies," in *The Business of Global Environmental Governance*, eds. David Levy and Peter Newell (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 73–105.

¹³ Charles Jones and David Levy, "North American Business Strategies towards Climate Change," *European Management Journal* 25, no. 6 (2007): 428–40, 428.

¹⁴ See David Levy and Peter Newell, "Business Strategy and International Environmental Governance: Toward a Neo-Gramscian Synthesis," *Global Environmental Politics* 2, no. 4 (2002): 84–101.

¹⁵ See, e.g., Andrew Jordan, Rüdiger Wurzel, and Anthony Zito, "The Rise of 'New' Policy Instruments in Comparative Perspective: Has Governance Eclipsed Government?" *Political Studies* 53, no. 3 (2005): 477–96.

¹⁶ Jones and Levy, "North American Business Strategies," 430.

¹⁷ Michelle Betsill and Harriet Bulkeley, "Looking Back and Thinking Ahead: A Decade of Cities and Climate Change Research," *Local Environment* 12, no. 5 (2007): 447–56, 447.

¹⁸ See Carolyn Kousky and Steven Schneider, "Global Climate Policy: Will Cities Lead the Way?" *Climate Policy* 3, no. 4 (2003): 359–72; Peter Koehn, "Underneath Kyoto: Emerging Subnational Government Initiatives and Incipient Issue-Bundling Opportunities in China and the United States," *Global Environmental Politics* 8, no. 1 (2008): 53–77; Ted Rutland and Alex Aylett, "The Work of Policy: Actor Networks, Governmentality, and Local Action on Climate Change in Portland, Oregon," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 26, no. 4 (2008): 627–46; Mike Hodson and Simon Marvin, "Understanding the Role of the National Exemplar in Constructing 'Strategic Glurbanization,'" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 31, no. 2 (2007): 303–25.

¹⁹ See Bulkeley and Betsill, *Cities and Climate Change*; Gard Lindseth, "The Cities for Climate Protection Campaign (CCPC) and the Framing of Local Climate Policy," *Local Environment* 9, no. 4 (2004): 325–36.

²⁰ See Jones and Levy, "North American Business Strategies"; Jonathan Weiner, "Think Globally, Act Globally: The Limits of Local Climate Policies," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 155 (2007): 1961–79.

²¹ See Bulkeley and Betsill, *Cities and Climate Change*; Betsill and Bulkeley, "Looking Back and Thinking Ahead."

²² Bjorn Stigston, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007; and Nicky Gavron, World Mayors and Local Government Climate Protection Agreement Launch, December 12, 2007.

²³ Gill Seidel, "Political Discourse Analysis," in *Handbook of Discourse Analysis: Volume 4*, ed. Teun Van Dijk (London: Academic, 1985), 43–60, 44.

²⁴ Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight," in *Myth, Symbol and Culture*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York: Norton, 1971), 1–37, 26.

²⁵ Geertz, "Deep Play," 29.

²⁶ Roxanne L. Doty, *Imperial Encounters: The Politics of Representation in North-South Relations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 11.

²⁷ Doty, *Imperial Encounters*, 10.

²⁸ Shiela Jasonoff and Brian Wynne, "Science and Decision-Making," in *Human Choice & Climate Change: Volume 1, The Societal Framework*, eds. Steve Rayner and Elizabeth Malone (Columbus: Battelle, 1998), 1–87, 5.

²⁹ Martin Hajer and Wytse Versteeg, "A Decade of Discourse Analysis of Environmental Politics: Achievements, Challenges, Perspectives," *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning* 7, no. 3 (2005): 175–84, 175.

³⁰ See UN Webcast, "United Nations Climate Change Conference," <http://www.un.org/webcast/unfccc/2007/index.asp?go=06071212>; and "Balibusinessday's Channel," *YouTube*, <http://www.youtube.com/user/balibusinessday> (both accessed January 17, 2010).

- ³¹ See Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).
- ³² See Peter Newell, "Business and International Environmental Governance: The State of the Art," in *The Business of Global Environmental Governance*, eds. David Levy and Peter Newell (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 21–45; Melissa Leach and James Fairhead, "Fashioned Forest Pasts, Occluded Histories? International Environmental Analysis in West African Locales," *Development and Change* 31, no. 1 (2000): 35–59, 36.
- ³³ See Robert Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory," *Millennium* 10, no. 2, (1981): 126–55.
- ³⁴ Maarten A. Hajer, *The Politics of Environmental Discourse: Ecological Modernization and the Policy Process* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 53.
- ³⁵ Nicky Gavron, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.
- ³⁶ Bjorn Stigson, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.
- ³⁷ See John Stopford and Susan Strange with John Henley, *Rival States, Rival Firms: Competition for World Market Shares* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- ³⁸ Paul Peeters and Bjorn Stigson, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.
- ³⁹ Steve Lennon, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.
- ⁴⁰ Preston Chiaro, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.
- ⁴¹ Bjorn Stigson, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.
- ⁴² Steve Lennon, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.
- ⁴³ David Cadman and Rocky Anderson, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.
- ⁴⁴ Rocky Anderson and Bärbel Dieckmann, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.
- ⁴⁵ Rocky Anderson and Nicky Gavron, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.
- ⁴⁶ Bärbel Dieckmann, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.
- ⁴⁷ Michelle Wyman and Nicky Gavron, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.
- ⁴⁸ Teresa Presas, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.
- ⁴⁹ Nicky Gavron, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.
- ⁵⁰ Bjorn Stigson and Nick Campbell, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.
- ⁵¹ Nicky Gavron, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.
- ⁵² Klaus Mittelbach, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.

⁵³ See James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

⁵⁴ Nicky Gavron, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.

⁵⁵ Rocky Anderson, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.

⁵⁶ Nicky Gavron, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.

⁵⁷ Prima Naidoo, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.

⁵⁸ See Lindseth, "Cities for Climate Protection Campaign"; Koehn, "Underneath Kyoto."

⁵⁹ Rocky Anderson, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.

⁶⁰ Paul Peeters, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.

⁶¹ Steve Lennon, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.

⁶² Klaus Mittelbach, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.

⁶³ Bjorn Stigson, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.

⁶⁴ Nick Campbell, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007.

⁶⁵ Karen Bakker, "Neoliberalizing Nature? Market Environmentalism in Water Supply in England and Wales," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 3 (2005): 542–65, 543.

⁶⁶ See Hajer, *The Politics of Environmental Discourse*.

⁶⁷ Bakker, "Neoliberalizing Nature?" 543; Karin Bäckstrand and Eva Lövbrand, "Planting Trees to Mitigate Climate Change: Contested Discourses of Ecological Modernization, Green Governmentality and Civic Environmentalism," *Global Environmental Politics* 6, no. 1 (2006): 50–75, 53.

⁶⁸ Steve Lennon and Bjorn Stigson, Bali Business Day, December 10, 2007; and Michelle Wyman, World Mayors and Local Governments event, December 12, 2007.

Private Governance and Climate Change: Institutional Investors and Emerging Investor-Driven Governance Mechanisms

MICHAEL MACLEOD

ABSTRACT

Private actors and instruments are increasingly important in addressing the problem of climate change. In global finance, institutional investors (especially pension and mutual funds) control trillions of dollars of capital and invest in tens of thousands of companies around the world. Increasingly, these investors are incorporating environmental and social governance principles into their operations as part of the growing movement towards socially responsible investment (SRI). The emergence of what I call “Investor-Driven Governance Mechanisms” (IDGMs)—collective arrangements by institutional investors designed to promote principles associated with socially responsible investing—is an important, though largely neglected, phenomenon in world politics. This article examines and explains the significance of IDGMs as instruments of private environmental governance in addressing climate change, focusing on three specific case studies: the Carbon Disclosure Project, the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES) organization, and shareholder activism on global warming. Using these examples, I make two primary arguments. First, such investor-driven mechanisms have emerged because of both the rational demands of the market and the perceptions of increased material risks to investors (a “logic of consequences”), but also due to changing norms within the investment community on what constitutes acceptable behaviour by business, given climate change (a “logic of appropriateness”). Second, although IDGMs are driven by institutional investors, their operationalization is conditioned by the presence and/or activities of other actors, specifically civil society organizations and governments. I also make a preliminary evaluation of the potential effectiveness of such private governance arrangements of climate change, noting how difficult it might be to adequately assess these non-state mechanisms.

In the study of world politics, we have traditionally focused on states—their power, and their willingness to co-operate (or not) on global issues such as the environment and climate change.¹ However, it has now become axiomatic that non-state (“private”) authority is as worthy of serious examination as conventional state-based governance.² A number of recent important scholarly contributions stress the significance of private agents and arrangements in environmental governance: Some focus

Michael MacLeod, “Private Governance and Climate Change: Institutional Investors and Emerging Investor-Driven Governance Mechanisms,” *St Antony's International Review* 5, no. 2 (2010): 46–65.

on the critical influence of the business sector specifically, while others examine the development of what they call “non-state market driven” environmental governance systems in particular industries such as forestry.³ These commendable efforts, however, largely neglect the critical role of the financial sector in private environmental governance, including that of climate change.

One particularly interesting financial phenomenon is the recent and rapid growth in socially responsible investment (SRI), which can be defined as “financial investment which takes account of social, ethical and environmental criteria thereby considering a social as well as a financial return.”⁴ For scholars of world politics, exploring SRI as a mechanism of global governance is a valuable enterprise for two key reasons. First, it involves transnational actors—mostly institutional investors but also civil society organizations—engaging in various types of collective action to increase the accountability of international business, the dominant economic force of our era. Second, the rise of SRI reflects an ongoing contestation of ideas concerning the business-society relationship in which a growing segment of the investor community (propelled in part by pressure from civil society and state policies or state-based initiatives) is attempting to shape new norms of corporate behaviour by redefining investor and fiduciary responsibilities.

One of the central concerns in the agenda of socially responsible investors is environmental sustainability and, more recently, the specific issue of climate change and how business (the key contributor to greenhouse gas emissions) can and should respond to this problem. Under the umbrella of SRI, a diverse range of governance mechanisms have recently emerged as a response to the unwillingness or inability of states to adequately address the climate change problem. Understanding the connection between SRI and the governance of climate change responds to recent calls first for more general research on private environmental governance and its relevance to the study of global politics, and second for more specific research documenting and analysing emerging forms of climate change governance.⁵

This article examines what I call “investor-driven governance mechanisms” (IDGMs)—private, non-state arrangements with institutional investors as the central actor—and their role in governing what many believe to be the most pressing environmental issue of our time: climate change. The first section explores the significance and theoretical context of SRI, identifying the growth in economic and political power of institutional investors and the increased propensity of investors to engage with corporations. After examining competing explanations, I make two arguments. First, the emergence of IDGMs can be explained by the grow-

ing effort of socially responsible investors to redefine “materiality” in the investment equation so that environmental considerations are incorporated and considered alongside traditional financial risk assessment. These arrangements are a rational, strategic outcome based on a “logic of consequences,” reflecting mainstream explanations of governance institutions. However, IDGMs also reflect a “logic of appropriateness,” in the sense that such governance mechanisms are generated by the changing dynamics of socially constructed norms underlying the behaviour of actors. Second, the creation and operation of such investor-driven arrangements also depends on the presence and activities of civil society and governments, reflecting the reality that private governance is highly complex and dynamic.

The second section of this article explores in detail three specific—and quite different—investor-driven governance mechanisms focused on climate change. These IDGMs perform a variety of typical private governance functions such as information sharing, agenda formation, capacity building and implementation, and/or a semblance of rule setting.⁶ The case studies include: a centralized organization designed to institutionalize co-operation and co-ordination on a range of environmental issues amongst investors and other actors (the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies, CERES, formed in 1989); a less centralized institution designed to leverage the power of investors on a specific issue for information sharing purposes and to develop longer term investor-business relations (the Carbon Disclosure Project, CDP, created in 2000); and a network-based, issue-specific, ad hoc alliance of investors and other actors designed to engage corporations directly through the use (or threatened use) of shareholder engagement (in this case shareholder activist campaigns on climate change). These IDGMs share a common goal—to institutionalize private environmental governance between investors and corporations and, more specifically, to mitigate the problem of climate change by influencing the behaviour of multinational corporations. These three case studies have been chosen because, while they are all examples of the private governance of climate change, they represent different expressions of how the financial community is utilizing its particular form of power. Thus, they offer some powerful insights into the development and efficacy of private governance. In each of these case studies, I examine their emergence and operation as governance arrangements designed to steer behaviour on climate change, highlighting the similarities and differences between them.

The third section evaluates the theoretical explanations of the development of climate change investor-driven governance mechanisms,

SRI and Investor-Driven Governance

Modern SRI began with small groups of investors motivated by moral (often religious) or financial concerns—for example, avoiding investment in companies that produced weaponry for the US military as a way to protest American involvement in Vietnam. The evolution of SRI since the 1970s is a transformation that highlights the complexities of contemporary global governance.⁷ First, it shows the blurring lines between the domestic and international spheres, as investment capital increasingly attempts to link local corporate activities with global responsibilities. Second, SRI reflects the expansion of actors in the international system, from a few dedicated mutual funds mainly in the United States to several hundred across the world today, the rise of global institutional investors involved in promoting SRI principles in their activities, and the emergence of a global civil society attempting to influence financial capital. Third, the socially responsible investor is motivated by a variety of transnational issues—from human rights related concerns, such as apartheid in South Africa, to environmental sustainability and similar issues—and is involved in the exercise of private authority in issue areas where public authority is seen as unwilling or unable to act (for example, on climate change).

The primary actors involved in SRI are institutional investors (mainly mutual and pension funds) who are increasingly acting collectively to develop reasonably robust mechanisms to steer the behaviour of corporations towards non-traditional goals. These are IDGMs, a form of the private regulation of global corporate conduct, which use the particular financial power of investors to promote increased corporate accountability and responsibility. To be designated as private “governance” mechanisms, collectivities must purposively steer the behaviour of market actors in a more structured manner. Governance functions include information sharing, capacity building and implementation, rule setting/creation, institution building, and monitoring and enforcement.⁸

What explains the rise of SRI and the emergence of IDGMs? Existing literature from the study of world politics is very scarce on SRI, let alone on specific examples of IDGMs. One perspective is that SRI reflects calls for greater corporate social responsibility, an attempt to fill the growing gap between the size and power of global firms and markets, and the ability and/or willingness of states to regulate them adequately. There

is thus a functional demand logic to private environmental governance in which the resources and interests of different actors are leveraged in specific issue areas—such as climate change—to fill governance gaps.⁹ This has coincided with the emergence of a shareholder rights movement since the late 1980s that has made institutional investors into more active owners, especially those in the Anglo-American common-law countries. Moreover, the definition of what constitutes adequate and effective corporate governance has expanded over time to include concerns with corporate activities that affect the entire market system, i.e., it has expanded the definitional boundaries of fiduciary obligation to include social and environmental concerns that were previously thought to be non-pecuniary.

Simply put, then, one argument for the rise of SRI and the creation and evolution of IDGMs as institutions of private governance is that they are clearly a rational, strategic outcome based on a “logic of consequences,” that is, investors recognize the material benefits of acting collectively to leverage their financial power to change corporate behaviour on certain issues. On climate change, for example, it makes good business sense to create mechanisms that mitigate its impact. This explanation is in keeping with the mainstream rationalist conception of institutions in the discipline of International Relations as more or less formal rules created by agents assumed to be acting rationally to maximize their utility.¹⁰

Another potential explanation for the rise of SRI and emergence of IDGMs focuses on the need to reorient marketplace norms of what constitutes acceptable behaviour for corporations in a global economy. This view emphasizes the extent to which a “logic of appropriateness” generates the formation and evolution of governance mechanisms in any given area, i.e., it stresses that the behaviour of actors, and the institutions they create, are shaped by socially constructed norms. This sociological conception places an emphasis on the intersubjective nature of institutions. According to this approach, norms—usually defined by constructivist scholars of world politics as socially shared expectations, understandings, or standards of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity—are both “regulative” (ordering and constraining behaviour) and “constitutive” (generating agents, endowing them with certain capabilities and powers, and determining their underlying identities, interests, and preferences).¹¹

With respect to SRI and IDGMs, therefore, an alternative constructivist explanation suggests that IDGMs, and the norms they incorporate, help to socialize—and legitimize—investors and, to some extent, civil society organizations as agents to govern corporate behaviour in spe-

cific ways. It explains how and why investors have come to re-define acceptable profit-making behaviour by corporations in the first place. The socialization of institutional investors might be the result of *internal* debates within the investor community itself (what is the right way for corporations and investors to act in light of contradictory evidence of whether SRI actually makes sound business sense?) and/or *external* pressure from civil society organizations as well as states and intergovernmental actors.

The above two alternative explanations can be complemented by a set of actor-based explanations for the emergence of IDGMs: the respective roles of civil society and governments. The rise of civil society organizations as powerful actors in world politics has been relatively much explored (as compared to institutional investors) in recent years and has been recognized as a politically significant force. Their impact has been well-articulated, especially in shaping global policy agendas, and hinges mainly on their ability to marshal information and moral authority as well as to establish and strengthen global norms.¹²

Prior to the early 1990s, the principal targets of civil society organizations were states and intergovernmental actors. Since then, activists have been directly pressuring corporations to enact socially responsible policies in a variety of areas, particularly human rights and environmental sustainability. While confrontational tactics are still used, there is a definite shift by many civil society organizations towards multi-party relationships, partnerships with companies, and ad hoc coalitions to coordinate strategies.¹³ The specific influence of civil society activism on the financial community has been explored much less. Some contributions have pointed to their relative effectiveness in achieving the ultimate goal of changing corporate behaviour in specific issue-areas.¹⁴ The presumption from much of this literature is that the presence and involvement of civil society in private governance increases its legitimacy and therefore, by implication, the probability of the creation of governance mechanisms. In other words, according to this argument, civil society organizations are critical to the emergence and functioning of SRI and the private governance of the environment. The creation and development of IDGMs is closely linked to the involvement of civil society.

The role of states and intergovernmental actors in creating private governance seems, on the surface, a paradox. The general assumption, as noted, is that private governance arises from the lack of involvement by public authority in certain issue areas, thus provoking a response to "fill the gap." Moreover, private governance by its very definition seems to exclude governmental actors. However, some literature conditions this exclusion and suggests a different perspective. For those generally scepti-

cal of the relevance of private governance in the first place, the role of states has never been a question: when such mechanisms emerge, it is because governments simply prefer other actors and structures to take the lead in managing a particular issue area. Others make a strong argument that private governance exists as the core of an emerging “global public domain” that exists outside of state-based governance structures and is composed of non-traditional (non-state) forms of authority.¹⁵ Ruggie argues that, as a result, governments are not necessarily irrelevant; in fact, they sometimes choose to enter this space in various ways, acting to codify certain practices designed to enhance the accountability of private-based initiatives. Thus, states and governmental actors can be critical to the rise of SRI and the emergence of IDGMs.

In the next section, we explore the emergence and development of three specific IDGMs in order to assess the above explanations. To what extent are these IDGMs the result of perceived governance gaps, i.e., driven by rational, strategic considerations? To what extent is their emergence and development a reflection of powerful sets of expectations regarding acceptable behaviour by investors and corporations? To what extent do other actors—civil society organizations and governments or their agencies—play a role in the creation and operation of investor-driven arrangements? The three IDGMs examined in the next section share a common goal—to institutionalize private environmental governance between investors and corporations and, more specifically, to mitigate the problem of climate change by influencing the behaviour of multinational corporations.

Climate Change Investor-Driven Governance Mechanisms

The Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)

The CDP was launched in 2001 largely as the result of the effort of two individuals in the United Kingdom—Paul Dickinson and Tessa Tennant—with extensive ties to the investment, business, and non-governmental organization (NGO) communities. In 2000, they agreed that a new approach was needed to convince corporations to take the problem of climate change seriously, especially since it was apparent that international regulation of global warming was highly problematic at best. Using the investment community to leverage its influence on corporations was evident; Dickinson says: “we came to the conclusion that if you could get 100 people in a room and stop climate change it would have to be the

chief executives of the 100 largest fund managers because they exercise control over all the world's corporations."¹⁶

After informal consultations with the investment community, UK government officials, and NGOs, it was determined that the best approach would be to request the world's largest companies to disclose their carbon emissions on behalf of their primary shareholders, i.e., institutional investors. Initial funding was provided via a newly established organization, "The Carbon Trust", a non-profit, business-led entity created by the UK government to help businesses and public organizations reduce their carbon emissions. Institutional investors were interested in acting collaboratively to leverage their power because of a lack of awareness of the financial implications of climate change, and the need for reliable data on corporate greenhouse gas emissions and overall climate change management strategies. Prominent civil society organizations were also intrigued enough to participate in the creation of the CDP: the Rockefeller Foundation (United States) was established as the principal financial backer and was later joined by similar foundations around the world such as the Home Foundation (Netherlands), The Nathan Cummings Foundation (United States), Network for Social Change (United Kingdom), Polden Puckham Charitable Foundation (United Kingdom), and the Turner Foundation (United States). A prominent advocacy NGO, WWF (United Kingdom), also became—and remains—a critical supporter.

Operationally, the CDP began in earnest in the fall of 2001 with a secretariat established in London, in part because most of the original interested institutional investors are located there or on mainland Europe. By the end of March 2002, thirty-five institutions controlling over \$4.5 trillion of assets signed up as participants. In May, the CDP wrote to the chair of the board of each of the 500 largest companies in the world as measured by market capitalization (the FT500). Each was asked to complete a seven-point questionnaire to identify the business implications of their corporation's exposure to climate change and what is being done to address these risks. The initial report was made publicly available via the CDP's website beginning in February 2003, with separate presentations made in London, New York, and Hong Kong to increase publicity.

CDPI, as it is known, generated a response rate of 47 per cent (those corporations fully completing the questionnaire), or 245 of the 500 largest companies by market capitalization; in total, 72 per cent of the 500 firms approached replied (acknowledging the request, whether it resulted in agreement to respond completely or not). Of those corporations who responded, 80 per cent acknowledged that climate change could bring a financial risk. Subsequent launches of the CDP have been un-

dertaken annually, each year reflecting a significant growth in number of signatories (investors) and the size of assets represented. In addition, the CDP now approaches the world's leading corporations in a variety of equity markets: the US 500, Electric Utility 265, Canada 300, Germany 200, Japan 150, Australia 100, New Zealand 50, France 120, FTSE 100, FTSE 250,¹⁷ Brazil 50, Asia 40, and others. With CDP4, for the first time major US financial institutions—including AIG, Goldman Sachs, and Morgan Stanley—were amongst the signatories.

This effort by the CDP to catalyze corporate support for climate change policies from American firms constitutes a “tipping point” in the United States amongst corporations and the general public. In 2006, there was a dramatic rise in responses from US companies, with 58 per cent answering the questions, up from 42 per cent in 2005. Many of the country's largest corporations participated for the first time, including Walmart, Boeing, Home Depot, and American Express. A recent study suggests that the CDP has reached “critical mass” both in terms of the number of signatories engaged, as well as the size of investors represented, and has had a difficult-to-quantify but positive effect on company disclosure, climate change risk management attention and action, and investor-company dialogue.¹⁸

The CDP is an investor-driven governance mechanism whose functions are relatively limited at this stage, primarily acting as a vehicle for information sharing. Nevertheless, it also acts as a critical agenda setter in climate change governance as it mobilizes the power of the majority of the world's institutional investor community. The CDP originated from the perception of a clear public governance deficit on climate change. And although the CDP's mandate is based upon investors believing that there are material benefits to participating in the organization, the evidence also supports the contention that the CDP acts as a norm building enterprise in which climate change is being constructed as a legitimate threat to the overall business environment. Civil society organizations play only a secondary role in the institution—and governments even less so, though there is still a small presence.

Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES)

On March 24, 1989, the oil tanker *Exxon Valdez* struck a reef off Alaska in Prince William Sound. One of the worst man-made environmental disasters, the *Valdez* incident is considered to be a major catalyst in the environmental movement in the United States and beyond. Less known today is the response to the accident by some of the shareholders of Exx-

on. Investors faced significant losses resulting from a clear case of corporate malfeasance and their pressure on Exxon was the result of a newly organized collective effort amongst various interests. Shortly after the incident, leading investors, environmental groups, religious organizations, public pension trustees, and public interest groups gathered to form the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES). Some of the best known environmental NGOs, such as the Sierra Club and WWF were involved at the genesis of CERES.

The original members of this organization sought to create new levels of corporate environmental responsibility by using the direct leverage of investment capital. The CERES Principles, a standard of environmental conduct, was the vehicle by which the organization established itself as the premier network of investors and civil society groups, asking corporations to adhere to and report on a list of ten environmental sustainability principles. It also actively promoted globalizing a model of corporate environmental reporting with the successful establishment of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) in 1997. While the Principles and the GRI may be the most visible component (and legacy) of the CERES organization, operationally the emphasis has expanded steadily into using its wide network of coalition members to produce and disseminate information on a specific environmental issue: climate change.

Since 2001, CERES has produced and commissioned a wide range of studies that specifically discuss the issue of climate change as a risk for business and investors, with at least 26 such reports published since 2003. Typical of these reports is the assertion that “[t]he bottom line ... is straightforward: climate change represents a potential multi-billion dollar risk to a wide variety of U.S. businesses and industries.”¹⁹ The 2006 report “Corporate Governance and Climate Change: Making the Connection” analyzes how the top one-hundred global companies are addressing the growing financial risks and opportunities from the global warming problem.²⁰ These and other reports are evidence of the systematic attempt by CERES since 2001 to alter the existing discourse on climate change within the business community, promoting global warming as a critical business risk and a important financial concern to be taken seriously in the media. The 2003 CERES annual report makes explicit reference to the organization’s communication goal to “‘change the conversation’ from the assumption that climate change solutions will hurt the economy to recognition that inaction is the greater business risk.”²¹ The CERES approach to the climate change issue has been to act both as a knowledge producer and a knowledge broker.²²

One of the key investor-related outputs by CERES on global warming was the historic “Institutional Investors Summit on Climate Change”

held at the United Nations headquarters in New York City on November 21, 2003. The CERES organization, the State of Connecticut Treasurer's Office, and the United Nations Foundation brought together fifteen institutional investors representing more than one trillion dollars in invested capital to examine the financial risk of global climate change. The result was the creation of a permanent new operation under the auspices of CERES, the Investor Network on Climate Risk (INCR). Part of the INCR's mandate is to encourage greater and more co-ordinated shareholder activism on the part of institutional investors in the climate change area. By the second summit in 2005, the INCR tripled its number of participants and quadrupled the size of assets represented. In the fall of 2006, INCR released what it called a "Global Framework for Climate Risk Disclosure," emphasizing the need for adequate corporate climate disclosure.

In sum, the CERES organization has become the central nexus (US based but internationally-focused) of pension and mutual funds, environmental organizations, and other public interest groups working to advance environmental sustainability within the corporate world, and includes quasi-public representatives (trustees of state and city pension funds, some of whom are elected officials) as its members. CERES is a centralized institution of private environmental governance, an investor-driven mechanism of private governance, purposively attempting to steer the behaviour of market actors in a structured manner. It performs various governance functions such as rule creation/setting (through its Principles), information sharing, agenda setting (through its climate change program), and capacity building as it seeks to advance discourse on climate change and substantially transform business operations. These are all achieved primarily via the power and influence of the institutional investor community. In addition, the investors within CERES believe that the presence of civil society organizations helps more than it hinders the ability of the organization to persuade and affect corporations in advancing environmental responsibility.

Shareholder Campaigns on Climate Change

Shareholder activism occurs when owners of equity in publicly-traded companies use their power to facilitate change in corporate behaviour. The two basic options here are the use of shareholder resolutions (proxy voting at annual general meetings of corporations) or engagement in dialogue—usually in private—with the management of companies on various issues. The trend for both types of shareholder activism is: (a)

a substantial increase in the number of resolutions and/or in the frequency/intensity of the communication between institutional shareholders; and (b) a growing concern beyond traditional corporate governance issues, such as executive compensation, towards the core SRI concerns, especially human rights and the environment.

The predominance of one strategy or the other, the formal or informal, depends in part on the national regulatory context (what are the rules and regulations on voting resolutions, for example) and on the general political and cultural context. Highly publicized scandals, malfeasance, or corporate activities might lead to a proliferation of shareholder resolutions which are more public and therefore often seen as likely to have a visible impact on corporate strategy and behaviour, as opposed to private, behind-the-scenes dialogue. In the United States, the use of shareholder resolutions is much more common than in the United Kingdom and has recently become much more prevalent, not only because corporate governance rules make it relatively easier to bring resolutions forward, but also because the direct, public, and “democratic” aspect of such resolutions seems akin to the prevailing American social and political culture. In Canada, the situation is more akin to the United States since corporate governance rules are closer to the US model given the integrated nature of both economies.

Shareholder activism, under different guises, has taken place for decades. US shareholders have been actively pressuring companies to address social issues through the proxy voting process for many years, although it was not until the 1960s that such activism became more prevalent. In the 1990s, shareholder groups started to press for corporate management systems that could generate increased social and environmental accountability. Companies were asked more frequently to implement environmental and social reporting, to adopt formally recognized codes of conduct, and to implement international standards such as ISO 14001 and the labour standards of the International Labour Organization.

The most obvious manifestation of shareholder activism is the record increase of proxy resolutions in recent years. Headlines report record numbers of resolutions being brought forward at company annual meetings.²³ There has been a dramatic increase in the total number of shareholder resolutions filed each year since 1999 in the United States and Canada. It is noteworthy that the increase in shareholder resolutions has occurred despite the fact that these votes are non-binding and in any case rarely—if ever—receive a majority of investor support (especially those that are SRI-related). They have become the focus of intense preparation among increasing numbers of institutional investors and civil society

groups, and coalitions among them. The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) is an international coalition of 275 faith-based institutional investors including denominations, religious communities, pension funds, healthcare corporations, foundations, and dioceses with combined portfolios worth over one-hundred billion dollars. It has become the central node in the US shareholder activist network.

The first shareholder resolutions related to climate change were introduced at US company annual meetings in 1994. From fewer than five per year in the mid-1990s, the numbers have risen to between thirty-five and forty annually, representing about one-third of all SRI-related proposals. A similar increase has occurred in Canada; twenty per cent of shareholder proposals in 2005 were concerned with global warming. Proportionally, climate change resolutions are now among the top SRI-related issues alongside human rights, global labour standards, toxics, and genetically modified organisms in recent years. The years 2001–2002 were the key turning points for advancing climate change to the front of the shareholder activism agenda. In the United Kingdom, for example, major institutional investors created the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change (IIGCC) in 2001 as a co-ordination mechanism to act on the issue and encourage companies to change their behaviour. In May 2004, representatives from a consortium of public pension funds led by the IIGCC announced their intention to attend the general meetings of a number of FTSE 100 companies to persuade them to report on their carbon emissions; this intention arose from an increasing concern amongst investors of the importance of addressing global warming.

In North America, shareholder activism on climate change has been most noticeable in the dramatic increases in the introduction of proxy resolutions, as noted. The number of global warming shareholder proposals filed with companies in 2004 and 2005 were triple the number in 2000 and 2001. Many of these actions have resulted in positive results; in 2004, resolutions raised against six US petroleum companies (which included ChevronTexaco and Marathon Oil) received record voting support, as high as thirty-seven per cent. Under the threat of another set of resolutions in 2005, all six entered into discussions with various shareholder and civil society groups, led by members of the ICCR. The threatened resolutions ended up being withdrawn with an agreement by the companies to disclose their potential financial exposure from climate change and to develop strategies to improve their strategic positioning on the issue.

In summary, shareholder activism—when investors, exercise their power to influence corporate activities and behaviour—is a growing phenomenon in most Western countries. This is happening despite the

fact that such activism is largely ad hoc in nature compared to the creation of specific organizational structures and mandates (such as the CDP and CERES). It does not possess a central secretariat, although the ICCR has certainly acted as a central organizational node in the US context. It is also growing despite the fact that shareholders are still considerably weak due to constraints and legal rules that insulate management from shareholder intervention. While pressure from various quarters in each country to reform relevant regulations continues, shareowner activists are counteracting the other limitation of shareowner action—its ad hoc and non-comprehensive nature—in different ways, as evident in the campaigns on climate change.

What is the significance of shareholder activism in world politics, especially the recent campaigns on climate change? Unlike CDP and CERES, shareholder activism is highly decentralized and lacks the traditional features of a governance institution, i.e., a more or less permanent structure. Nevertheless, I argue that the shareholder activism on climate change represents an IDGM; it is an attempt to purposively steer the behaviour of corporations in a structured manner. In terms of governance functions, such activism represents at least an emerging and economically efficient form of information sharing that is increasingly relevant to many investors and some management. It is also clear that shareholder activism on climate change has had a significant agenda-setting function, helping to transform the debate over the financial and societal impact of climate change.

Assessing Explanations for Climate Change IDGMs

IDGMs on climate change are based on the principles associated with SRI. Such investment is an example of the power of finance being used as a tool of economic and social power, of one element of the private sector—institutional investors whose holdings cross all industries and whose collective clout is increasingly being exercised—attempting to change the behaviour of industry and capitalism as a whole.

Theoretically, there are a number of possible explanations for the creation and development of IDGMs associated with climate change. The assertion that such arrangements have emerged because of perceived governance gaps in state-based regulation does seem to be true, although this does not tell the whole story. For example, although the creation of CERES had nothing to do with climate change, the CDP and shareholder activism campaigns on climate change originated in the midst of great dissatisfaction with both international and national public govern-

ance on this specific issue. More specifically, IDGMs are more likely to emerge and develop if investors believe that there are material benefits of adopting IDGM principles as part of their fiduciary responsibility. In the case of the CDP, the participating signatories argue that the exercise of information disclosure is important for the problem of climate change, although they also admit that the CDP's output is currently only moderately useful to them at best. Despite this, the CDP continues to increase dramatically in terms of the number of investors involved and the portion of assets represented. In part, this is because there is a clear momentum based in part upon the material benefits of participation for investors, but it is also a reflection of the CDP as a norm-building exercise in which climate change is being portrayed as a legitimate threat to business operations.

In CERES, the recent organizational focus on climate change portrays it as a financial issue with a profound impact on the overall economy. At the same time, CERES is a vehicle through which norms of corporate environmental responsibility are re-defining the identities of investors and acceptable profit-making behaviour for corporations. In the case of shareholder activism, institutional investors have emphasized the business case for raising their specific concerns, and are required to frame the language of specific resolutions as relevant to the business operations of the company, which investors express as part of their fiduciary duty. But many shareholding groups participate in the process because they believe it is the right thing to do morally or ethically.

In all of the case studies above, therefore, it is evident that both a "logic of consequences" and a "logic of appropriateness" are motivating investors to develop and institutionalize governance mechanisms on climate change. The advocates of incorporating social and environmental criteria and standards into the investment equation have been increasingly persuasive in making the case (especially recently amongst pension funds) that to be a "responsible" investor is not contradictory to maintaining fiduciary responsibilities.

To what degree is the presence and activity of civil society organizations associated with the emergence of IDGMs? The evidence seems largely supportive of this possibility. CERES has institutionalized the involvement of civil society within its activities, and such groups are key to the growing emphasis on climate change. In the case of shareholder activism on climate change, civil society activism has been important in helping to co-ordinate and legitimize the intensification of the exercise of shareholder rights in this area. In the case of the CDP, civil society has played a much more modest role; it does offer financial support, and there are representatives serving on the board, but the mechanism

is largely about the specific work of investors leveraging their collective financial clout as a way to get corporations to disclose carbon-relation information.

To what extent is government involvement important in the emergence and operations of these climate-based IDGMs? The CDP was the beneficiary of some critical UK government funding in its creation, but its development has been shaped more by the willingness of increasing numbers of the world's leading institutional investors to take collective action on the climate change issue. In the case of CERES, state-based facilitation is limited but is found in the presence of trustees of some of the most notable US public pension funds who are key coalition members. Probably the most mixed message of state involvement in advancing private governance via IDGMs comes from shareholder activism on climate change. There have been some regulatory changes—in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom—that directly or indirectly have strengthened the power and ability of shareowners to influence corporations, yet most assessments argue that the measures by individual states have been limited in effect.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of IDGMs: Some Preliminary Comments

Measuring the effectiveness of private governance arrangements is fraught with methodological problems, as such mechanisms (including IDGMs) carry out a wide variety of functions, ranging from advocacy and awareness-raising, to information sharing, capacity building and implementation, rule creation, agenda setting, and even monitoring and enforcement. Some have noted that evaluating the potential effectiveness of private governance institutions is a notoriously difficult slippery slope, even though it is recognized as crucial to their future as vehicles of governance.²⁴ Others point to important structural limitations on the effectiveness and scope of most private economic governance.²⁵

Any realistic assessment of private governance must take into consideration the actual policy alternatives or lack thereof—especially at the global level—in any one particular issue area.²⁶ Thus, in the cases of IDGMs explored here, which focus on mitigating the problem of climate change, I argue that it is possible to evaluate the extent to which a particular IDGM has been effective within the parameters of its self-described mandate by asking what it has done (what is the *output* of the IDGM?) and what has been the result in terms of changed behaviour (what is the *outcome* of the IDGM?) in light of a lack of governance alternatives.²⁷

Among the case studies examined here, it appears that CERES is clearly ahead of the others on the first count. Since the early 2000s, CERES has made climate change a central component of its broader mandate to promote corporate environmentalism; as noted, in sheer output the organization has produced numerous reports and studies on the business risks associated with global warming. Moreover, CERES has been a key organizational mover in the shareholder activism campaign on global warming in the United States (helping to co-ordinate with the ICCR) and has recently established an international consortium on standardizing climate risk-related reporting by corporations with the CDP. The CDP is a distant second to CERES on climate-related output (although it is expanding its reach on a yearly basis and wants to do more with its reports), while the shareholder campaign on global warming is largely limited to producing shareholder resolutions on an annual basis or engaging in dialogues with corporations behind the scenes.

On the relative *outcome* of these governance mechanisms—how they have impacted actual corporate behaviour on climate change, and which one has made more of a difference—the evaluation is more elusive and deserving of much more research. Some assessments reveal a clear perception among both investors and solicited corporations that the CDP's annual request has been reasonably successful in leveraging the power and influence of institutional investors over corporate behaviour and is certainly highly visible to both proponents and opponents alike. However, as noted, there is also some reluctance to proclaim the CDP as an unequivocal success when the information it gathers has not yet been used to provoke substantive commitments by corporations to mitigate their carbon footprint. Similarly, shareholder activism on climate change seems to have produced positive results, though these have not been assessed systematically.

The CERES organization has arguably had the most sustained impact of all of these IDGMs in changing corporate behaviour on climate change. It has developed more and deeper governance functions than the other two IDGMs, with a reputation for being the premier organization to address corporate environmental responsibility and the climate change problem in the United States and worldwide. More recently, CERES and its associated organization INCR have exerted considerable pressure on the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and its disclosure requirements for companies and investors.²⁸ Perhaps not coincidentally, CERES has gone the furthest of all three IDGMs in incorporating the participation of civil society into its organization and activities, and has helped to frame the climate change debate as an (indirect) public policy issue, with the assistance and leverage of quasi-public officials such as

Conclusion

This article was an attempt to ascertain how and why certain financial-based mechanisms of private governance of climate change have emerged, and to begin a discussion on whether they might offer a viable alternative to public-based governance. Using the power of investors to change corporate behaviour is not necessarily new, but the IDGMs analysed here are certainly quite innovative in their creation and operation and have had an impact on the business community. Theoretically, IDGMs illustrate both logic-driven, strategic thinking by investors as well as their intent and ability to construct new meanings of what is considered to be appropriate behaviour by corporations. Beyond their central actor (institutional investors who are increasingly powerful transnational financial entities), the development of IDGMs also depends in varying degrees on the presence and activities of civil society and governments. While it is tempting to laud IDGMs as a potentially effective way to hold corporations accountable for their behaviour on the issue of climate change, much more research and evaluation is required before we can do so. ■

Notes

¹ For example, see Oran R. Young, ed., *Global Governance: Drawing Insights from the Environmental Experience* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997).

² See A. Claire Cutler, Virginia Haufler, and Tony Porter, eds., *Private Authority and International Affairs* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999); Rodney Bruce Hall and Thomas J. Biersteker, eds., *The Emergence of Private Authority in Global Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

³ See David Levy and Peter Newell, *The Business of Global Environmental Governance* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005); Peter Newell and David Levy, "The Political Economy of the Firm in Global Environmental Governance," in *Global Corporate Power*, ed. Christopher May (London: Lynne Rienner, 2006), 157–78; Benjamin Cashore, Graeme Auld, and Deanna Newsom, *Governing Through Markets: Forest Certification and the Emergence of Non-State Authority* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).

⁴ Leo McCann, Aris Solomon, and Jill Solomon, "Explaining the Growth in UK Socially Responsible Investment," *Journal of General Management* 28, no. 4 (2003): 15–36, 15.

⁵ See Robert Falkner, "Private Environmental Governance and International Relations: Exploring the Links," *Global Environmental Politics* 3, no. 2 (2003): 72–87; Liliana Andonova, Michele M. Betsill, and Harriet Bulkeley, "Transnational Climate Change Governance," paper presented at the International Studies Association 48th Annual Convention, Chicago, IL, USA, February 28, 2007.

⁶ See Andonova et al., "Transnational."

⁷ See James N. Rosenau, *Along the Domestic-Foreign Frontier* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Virginia Haufler, "Global Governance and the Private Sector," in *Global Corporate Power*, ed. May, 85–104; Levy and Newell, *Business*.

⁸ See Liliana Andonova, "International Institutions, Inc: The Rise of Public-Private Partnerships in Global Governance," paper prepared for the Conference on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change, Berlin, December, 2–3, 2005.

⁹ See David Vogel, "The Private Regulation of Global Corporate Conduct," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA, August 31, 2006; Matthew J. Hirschland, *Corporate Social Responsibility and the Shaping of Global Public Policy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

¹⁰ See James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders," in *Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics*, eds. Peter J. Katzenstein, Robert O. Keohane, and Stephen Krasner (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 303–30; John Duffield, "What Are International Institutions?" *International Studies Review* 9, no. 1 (2007): 1–22.

¹¹ See Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," in *Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics*, eds. Katzenstein, Keohane, and Krasner, 247–77; Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle Against Apartheid* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).

¹² See Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); P.J. Simmons, "Learning to Live with NGOs," *Foreign Policy* 112 (1998): 82–96; Ann Florini, ed., *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for Peace Press, 2000).

¹³ See Gary Gereffi, Ronie Garcia-Johnson, and Erika Sasser, "The NGO-Industrial Complex," *Foreign Policy* 125 (2001): 56–65; A. Rani Parker, "Prospects for NGO Collaboration with Multinational Corporations," in *Globalization and NGOs: Transforming Business, Government, and Society*, eds. Jonathan P. Doh and Hildy Teegen (London: Praeger, 2003), 81–106; Jem Bendell and David F. Murphy, *Partners in Time? Business, NGOs and Sustainable Development* (Geneva: UNRISD, 1999).

¹⁴ See Steve Waygood, *Capital Market Campaigning: The Impact of NGOs on Companies, Shareholder Value and Reputational Risk* (London: Risk Books, 2006); P. Martin, "Democracy in the Marketplace?" paper presented for the ISA Workshop "Finance as Power: The Second Wave," Philadelphia, November 17, 2005.

¹⁵ John G. Ruggie, "Reconstituting the Global Public Domain – Issues, Actors, and Practices," *European Journal of International Relations* 10, no. 4 (2004): 499–531.

¹⁶ Interview with Paul Dickinson, <http://www.onearthresearch.co.uk/content/view/72/111/> (accessed August 20, 2009).

¹⁷ The FTSE 100 is a share index of the one-hundred most highly capitalized UK companies listed on the London Stock Exchange. The FTSE 250 is a share index of the 101st to 350th most highly capitalized UK companies on the London Stock Exchange.

¹⁸ Greg Shopoff, "Carbon Disclosure Project," unpublished manuscript, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, 2006.

¹⁹ CERES, "Value at Risk: Climate Change and the Future of Governance," CERES Sustainable Governance Project Report, prepared by Innovest Strategic Value Advisors, Inc., Boston, MA, April 2002, 2.

²⁰ See CERES, "Corporate Governance and Climate Change: Making the Connection," prepared by Douglas G. Cogan of the Responsibility Research Center, Washington, DC, March 2006.

²¹ CERES, *2003 Annual Report* (Boston, MA: CERES, 2004), 8.

²² See Philipp Pattberg, "The Institutionalization of Private Governance: How Business and Nonprofit Organizations Agree on Transnational Rules," *Governance* 18, no. 4 (2006): 589–610.

²³ See Gretchen Morgenson, "The Shareholder Spring," *The New York Times*, April 27, 2006; and Dashka Slater, "Resolved: Public Corporations Shall Take Us Seriously," *The New York Times Magazine*, August 12, 2007.

²⁴ See Andonova, "International Institutions, Inc."

²⁵ See Cutler et al., *Private Authority*.

²⁶ See Vogel, "Private Regulation."

²⁷ This is an adaptation of Frank Biermann and Steffen Bauer's model used to assess state-based international environmental organizations. See Frank Biermann and Steffen Bauer, "Assessing the Effectiveness of Intergovernmental Organisations in International Environmental Politics," *Global Environmental Change* 14, no. 2 (2004): 189–93.

²⁸ See Evan Lehman, "SEC Turnaround Sparks Sudden Look at Climate Disclosure," *The New York Times*, July 13, 2009.

“Doing Adaptation”: The Construction of Adaptive Capacity and its Function in the International Climate Negotiations

FRANCES C. MOORE

ABSTRACT

Adaptation as an area of policy intervention has risen rapidly up the international agenda over the last decade and is now seen as a fundamental piece of any comprehensive response to climate change. Institutions are now beginning to mobilize funding for adaptation and to implement adaptation projects. However, the rapid development of adaptation policy means that disagreements remain over the correct framing of adaptation and the norms that should guide adaptation policy. This paper traces the framing of adaptation through the four Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports, particularly the construction of “adaptive capacity,” which first appears in the Third Assessment Report. Situating adaptation in the wider climate negotiations reveals the concept of adaptive capacity being used in two competing adaptation discourses: The “adaptation as development” discourse is frequently articulated by development agencies and emphasizes the similarity of development and adaptation interventions, while the “adaptation as equity” discourse is more common in developing country submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and is closely related to rich nations’ compensation of poorer nations for climate change impacts. The areas of conflict and consensus around adaptation policy in the international negotiations reflect the ways in which these two framings either support or contradict each other. As adaptation is formalized and institutionalized, the gaps between these two discourses will become increasingly apparent. Some compromise will need to be reached if there is to be consensus over what it means to “do adaptation.”

It increasingly appears that anthropogenic climate change will emerge as the defining environmental issue of the twenty-first century. Not only are business-as-usual impacts projected to be relatively severe by the end of the century, but actions taken over the next decade will likely be critical to determining whether or not certain hypothesized “climate thresholds” are passed.¹ Given the magnitude of this problem, a large, international policy-making process is being mobilized to address it. This process produced first the United Nations Framework Convention on Cli-

Frances C. Moore, “‘Doing Adaptation’: The Construction of Adaptive Capacity and its Function in the International Climate Negotiations,” *St Antony’s International Review* 5, no. 2 (2010): 66–88.

mate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992 and subsequently the Kyoto Protocol in 1997.

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There are three possible responses to the problem of climate change: mitigation, adaptation, and inaction. Mitigation is the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to slow or halt their build-up in the atmosphere and reduce future climate change. Adaptation refers to planned or autonomous changes in response to, or in anticipation of, climate change impacts, which lessen the damage caused by those impacts. The final and default option is to suffer damages from climate change. The future response to climate change will almost certainly be a mixture of these three possibilities. Despite the fact that climate change impacts are already happening and are likely to intensify even with the most strenuous mitigation efforts, adaptation has only slowly come to prominence in the international climate policy discourse. While the global carbon market that funds mitigation activities amounted to around fifty billion dollars in 2007, under two hundred million dollars has been approved for dedicated adaptation projects.²

Adaptation is now gaining increasing prominence in the international climate negotiations, and a growing number of agencies and researchers are turning their attention toward the question of what it means to adapt to climate change. Studies have estimated the level of funding that will be required in developing countries at \$10–86 billion per year.³ Even if adaptation is not funded at this level, there will likely be substantial future financial flows that need to be disbursed in some way. The recent proliferation of studies, reports, and analyses of adaptation represent a negotiation over the legitimate ways of spending this money—taken together they can be understood as creating an emerging consensus on what it means to “do adaptation” as a policy intervention.

This paper will explore the rapid development of climate change adaptation discourse and situate it in the wider world of international climate negotiations. In particular, it looks at how adaptation came to be defined as a legitimate area of policy intervention and the role the concept of adaptive capacity plays in divorcing climate change adaptation from climate change impacts. It is suggested that the concept is serving both to translate development interventions into adaptation interventions, and as a means of depoliticizing negotiations over compensation for climate change damage. The interaction of these two functions is reflected in the areas of consensus and conflict over adaptation funding, and successfully negotiating them could be a key aspect of international negotiations on climate change.

The IPCC and the Construction of Adaptive Capacity

Central to the current understanding of climate change is the idea that it is a global problem. In the dominant construction of the issue, we, as a global society, are all responsible to a greater or lesser degree for the problem, and we, as sharers of a common climate system, all stand to suffer from its consequences. This “global thinking” is manifest in the major forum for climate negotiations, the UNFCCC.⁴ Up to 45,000 people attend the annual Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC, including over 190 national delegations, representatives from indigenous peoples, civil society organizations, business, and academia. Demeritt argues that this global approach to climate change arises from scientists’ reduction of global warming to a problem caused by the universal physical properties of greenhouse gases.⁵ Focusing strictly on the radiative effects of greenhouse gases makes each molecule of carbon dioxide essentially interchangeable.⁶ This process foregrounds the role of carbon dioxide in global geochemical cycles and the global radiation budget, while analytically separating carbon emissions from the social and economic contexts that give them meaning.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is key to this analytical division between the technical science of climate change and its social, political, and historical context. The IPCC is charged by the UNFCCC with producing periodic, comprehensive assessments of the published scientific research on climate change in order to inform policy, but is itself prohibited from making any policy-prescriptive recommendations. As such, the IPCC acts as a “boundary organization,” straddling the scientific and political realms.⁷ Its reports are written largely by scientists, but the important “Summary for Policymakers” is approved line-by-line by parties to the UNFCCC. The IPCC works to maintain boundary demarcations between science and policy, despite operating in both domains.⁸ The result is a report that is a partial, political description of climate change, that nevertheless carries great authority in international negotiations because of its construction as global scientific knowledge.⁹ Studying how the IPCC represents adaptation can reveal the dominant understanding of the issue because the IPCC, as evaluator of existing academic sources and an authoritative voice in itself, both reflects the scientific discourse on adaptation and is an important shaper of the policy discourse.

In the First Assessment Report released in 1990, adaptation is discussed only under the chapters Coastal Zone Management and Resource Use and Practice.¹⁰ Adaptation is seen as a “response strategy” that deals

with the residual climate damage occurring after mitigation (called “limitation” in this report), which is the primary and most important response.¹¹ The report portrays adaptation as the implementation of a series of policy measures and “adaptation options,” all of which are fairly specific responses to expected climate impacts. Examples include expanding crop distribution and storage, research into heat- and drought-tolerant crop varieties, and building coastal protective infrastructure.¹² The global distribution of impacts (and so of required adaptation response) is not addressed.

The IPCC Second Assessment Report, published in 1995, describes a more nuanced adaptive response to climate change. Adaptation is discussed in subsections of chapters describing climate change impacts on different sectors, though in comparison to the First Assessment Report, a wider variety of sectors and regions are included, such as mountain regions, deserts, fisheries, and financial services.¹³ The Second Assessment Report recognizes both policy interventions for adaptation and the spontaneous adaptive responses of communities, households and individuals. To give an example, it states that “[h]istorically, farming systems have adapted to changing economic conditions, technology and resource availabilities and have kept pace with a growing population.”¹⁴ The Second Assessment Report not only recognizes the dynamic relationship between society and a constantly changing environment, but also acknowledges social and economic pressures apart from climate change such as population growth (as in the above quote), technological change, and other environmental concerns.¹⁵ The report briefly raises the idea of capacity to adapt in the context of the relationship between vulnerability on the one hand, and socioeconomic variables and institutional infrastructure on the other. In general, however, adaptation is still conceived of as a specific response to a specific climate change impact.¹⁶

Between the Second and Third Assessment Reports, the latter released in 2001, is a fundamental shift in the way adaptation is conceived. For the first time, a whole chapter is devoted to climate change adaptation.¹⁷ This chapter outlines a thorough theoretical framework for understanding adaptation, complete with an extensive new vocabulary including such terms as “exposure unit,” “system of interest,” and “stimuli for adaptation.” Figure 1 reproduces Table 18-1 from the Third Assessment Report and demonstrates the degree to which adaptation as an abstracted concept had been developed up to that point. By 2001, climate change adaptation had become a legitimate area for policy intervention in itself—in the world of climate change policy it now made sense to simply talk about “adaptation,” rather than adaptation *to* a specific impact, *in* a specific place. This decontextualization of what is at

heart a very rooted, local process, allows adaptation to fit far more readily into the global policy-making space in which international climate negotiations occur.

Figure 1: Bases for characterising and differentiating adaptation to climate change

Table 18-1: Bases for characterizing and differentiating adaptation to climate change (Smit et al., 1999).

General Differentiating Concept or Attribute	Examples of Terms Used	
Purposefulness	Autonomous Spontaneous Automatic Natural Passive	Planned Purposeful Intentional Policy Active Strategic
Timing	Anticipatory Proactive Ex ante	Responsive Reactive Ex post
Temporal Scope	Short term Tactical Instantaneous Contingency Routine	Long term Strategic Cumulative
Spatial Scope	Localized	Widespread
Function/Effects	Retreat - Accommodate - Protect Prevent - Tolerate - Spread - Change - Restore	
Form	Structural - Legal - Institutional - Regulatory - Financial - Technological	
Performance	Cost - Effectiveness - Efficiency - Implementability - Equity	

Table 18-1 from Working Group 2 of the IPCC Third Assessment Report, demonstrating the work that went into conceptualizing and abstracting climate change adaptation between the Second Assessment Report in 1995 and the Third Assessment Report in 2001.

An important way in which adaptation can be theoretically abstracted from its geographical and temporal context is by using the concept of adaptive capacity. Chapter 18 defines adaptive capacity as “[t]he potential of a system to adapt to ... climatic stimuli or their effects or impacts” and devotes about half its discussion to explaining and exploring this concept.¹⁸ Relevant sections include “determinants of adaptive capacity” (economic resources, technology, information and skills, infrastructure, institutions, and equity) and “enhancing adaptive capacity.” Although the report states that scholarship on the determinants of the capacity to adapt to climate change is limited,¹⁹ the sections nevertheless repeatedly connect adaptive capacity and development:

It is widely accepted that wealthy nations are better prepared to bear the costs of adaptation to climate change impacts and risks than poorer nations ... Clearly

adaptive capacity to deal with climate risks is closely related to sustainable development. Enhancement of adaptive capacity is fundamental to sustainable development.²⁰

Although not explicitly stated in the chapter, the implication is that development interventions also enhance adaptive capacity.

The general picture conveyed by the Third Assessment Report is that adaptation is a conceptually coherent area of policy intervention, that it can reduce the impacts from climate change, that it is influenced by adaptive capacity, and that adaptive capacity is closely connected to development. Such a picture represents a radical reorientation from how adaptation was conceived of in the First and Second Assessment Report. Instead of taking the impacts of climate change as the starting point of analysis and asking what can be done to adapt to those impacts, this reorientation takes the ability of a society to adapt to *any* kinds of adverse impacts as the starting point, and asks what can be done to enhance that ability. In this understanding of adaptation, the actual specific impacts of climate change become almost irrelevant, except to the extent that they will occur and will be relatively severe.²¹ The implication for policy is that by enhancing adaptive capacity it is possible to begin adapting to climate change impacts both before those impacts have occurred and before we are sure what they will be.

The wider political context in the period between the Second Assessment Report in 1995 and the Third Assessment Report in 2001, during which adaptation was developed as an independent policy space, is also significant. The description of adaptation in the IPCC is not a single perspective, but is a distilled version of the more general academic discourse around adaptation over the time it was written. Not only does the IPCC evaluate thousands of published sources for its analysis, but as a boundary organization straddling scientific and political spheres it both informs and is informed by policy needs.²²

During this time, negotiations over the Kyoto Protocol (signed in 1997 but not ratified by enough countries to bring it into force until 2004) were continuing, with many of the operational details hammered out at COP7 in Marrakesh in 2001. A major element of these negotiations involved getting developing countries to buy into the flexible mechanisms of the Protocol,²³ which in turn meant operationalizing the promise of adaptation funding to vulnerable countries promised in Article 12 of the Protocol.²⁴ Doing this required a common, decontextualized understanding of adaptation, that could be made sense of in the global negotiating arena and that justified immediate spending on adaptation. In this context, the description of adaptation in the Third Assessment Report and

the construction of adaptive capacity can be understood to feed directly into the international climate negotiations.

Adaptive Capacity Since the Third Assessment Report

Since 2001, much work has gone into developing and researching the concept of adaptive capacity. Several studies in particular have looked at developing indicators for adaptive capacity. In general, these confirm the statements in the Third Assessment Report that the level of adaptive capacity is closely related to the level of development, especially when using the more general definition of development as it relates to quality of life and institutional governance, rather than strictly economic growth. For example, Brooks et al. found that significant indicators of vulnerability (often defined as the inverse of adaptive capacity) included calorific intake, literacy rate, life expectancy, maternal mortality, and political rights.²⁵ Similarly, Yohe and Tol suggest six determinants of adaptive capacity including governance, resource availability (including wealth), education, and property rights.²⁶ Smit and Wandel state that factors influencing adaptive capacity include managerial ability, access to financial, technological, and information resources, and infrastructure.²⁷

Although the link between adaptation and development remains generally well accepted, additional studies have complicated the basic relationship. The IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, published in 2007, includes the chapter "Assessments of Adaptation Practices, Options, Constraints and Capacity."²⁸ This includes sections on the regional differences in adaptive capacity within countries, the interaction of adaptive capacity with other stresses such as globalization, changes in adaptive capacity over time, and the relationship between gender and adaptive capacity. Although these nuances complicate the concept of adaptive capacity, they reinforce it as some objective quality of a society that can be measured and influenced by policy. They also tie adaptive capacity more closely with development, by linking low adaptive capacity with marginal groups (such as women or the rural poor) already of particular interest to development practitioners.

Since the Third Assessment Report, some agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also begun funding and implementing pilot adaptation projects. The three adaptation funds currently operating through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) require that projects be funded through an implementing agency.²⁹ Current implementing agencies are the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). These institutions have

responded to the need to begin spending adaptation funds by developing new institutional capacity, centered on climate change adaptation. The UNDP, for example, opened a climate change adaptation division in 2005, has since developed an “Adaptation Policy Framework,” and now has over fifty adaptation projects in its portfolio. Other large development NGOs, such as Oxfam and Care, have also begun releasing policy statements and implementing projects related to adaptation.

To summarize, between the Third Assessment Report in 2001 and the present, a large volume of work on the subject has solidified the status of adaptation and adaptive capacity as a conceptually coherent domain of research and policy. These studies have tended to cement the connection between low adaptive capacity and low levels of development, not only at the national scale, but also within countries and communities. This conceptual link has been reinforced “on the ground” both by the mobilization of the development NGO community around the issue and by the almost exclusive use of development institutions to implement adaptation projects (UNEP being the one exception with only two adaptation projects currently in its pipeline).

This understanding of adaptation as enhancing adaptive capacity is a particular one—it was not discovered, but was constructed in a process clearly traceable in the treatment of the issue in successive IPCC reports. Adaptation to climate change (as opposed to climate variability or climate hazards) is not something that can be measured—not only is it a situated, local process without any obvious outcome variable, but it, like climate change itself, will also occur over long time scales making it difficult to observe on much shorter policy cycles. This is not to say that it is untrue that poor countries will suffer more from climate change and be less able to respond, but only that this is a partial framing of adaptation. The next sections will look at the institutional forces that might be able to explain how enhancing adaptive capacity came to be a dominant framework for adaptation, and will ask what role it might be playing in the international climate negotiations.

Making Adaptation Legible for Policy-Making

In “Seeing Like a State,” James Scott suggests that states routinely reduce complex, heterogeneous social realities to a simplified representation that reflects the administrative interests of the state in the social process in question:

No administrative system is capable of representing *any* existing social community except through a heroic and greatly schematized process of abstraction and

simplification ... State agents have no interest—nor should they—in describing an entire social reality ... Their abstractions and simplifications are disciplined by a small number of objectives.³⁰

Moreover, this simplified representation allows autonomous processes at the local level, which would otherwise be so complex as to defy effective policy-making, to become legible to the centralized state, and so subject to manipulation and control. Scott argues that states then impose this greatly simplified representation back onto the observed reality, thereby transforming this reality using the reductionist logic that centres around a few areas of state interest.

These insights may be useful in understanding why adaptive capacity has become so prominent in the climate change adaptation discourse. Fundamentally, the process of adapting to a changing climate is small-scale process of adjustment at the community, household and individual level. It involves personal judgments on the relative trade-offs involved in changing behavior, investing in new resources, or simply suffering damage. Moreover, it is a process that is constantly at work in resource-dependent societies as communities adjust to natural variations in resource availability.

Anthropologists, archeologists, and other social scientists have long documented adaptation of human societies to the changing environment around them.³¹ Examples of adaptations to past climate change include the adaptive migration of farmers in Oklahoma in response to the dust bowl of the 1930s, and a shift in diet toward caribou and other wild animals in the Norse Greenland settlements in the 12th and 13th centuries.³² Significantly, autonomous adaptations to anthropogenic climate change are also beginning to be documented in the most seriously affected regions. Ford describes Inuit communities changing hunting behaviors and carrying more safety equipment because of thinner sea ice in Autumn.³³ Thomas et al. document awareness of recent changes in precipitation patterns related to climate change among small-holder farmers in South Africa, as well as adaptations such as short-term cropping strategies and an increased focus on livestock instead of agriculture.³⁴

In addition, economists modelling the costs of climate change have always recognized this autonomous form of adjustment and adaptation that happens without policy-making entities noticing, incorporating it into models as reduced impacts from climate change. For example, the baseline (no climate change policy) run of William Nordhaus' economic model of climate change assumes that "[i]ndividuals and firms would adapt to the changing climate, but governments are assumed to take no action to curb greenhouse gas emissions."³⁵ Sir Nicholas Stern was criti-

cized by several economists for not fully including autonomous adaptation to climate in his economic model, resulting in a higher estimate of damage than previous studies. In other words, the economic studies that are informing climate change policy-making already assume that a significant amount of adaptation will occur automatically and at almost no cost.

There is clearly an understanding in the academic literature that independent, autonomous adaptation to a changing environment already occurs in resource-dependent societies, and will continue to occur in the face of climate change. Yet this formulation has all but disappeared in the international adaptation discourse. Instead, with the construction of adaptive capacity, the focus moves away from adaptation that will occur naturally, and toward adaptation that will *not* occur, because of the limits posed by adaptive capacity. The single variable of adaptive capacity thus not only simplifies the complex process of human adjustment to the environment (making adaptation *legible* to policymakers), but at the same time also defines a limit to autonomous adaptation that justifies policy intervention (making adaptation *relevant* to policy makers). The framing of adaptation in terms of adaptive capacity can thus be read as not only enabling policy intervention in climate change adaptation, but also as requiring it.

This construction of the simplified, abstracted variable of adaptive capacity seems to make adaptation legible for policy-making through the same mechanisms of reduction and homogenization described by Scott. Scott suggests, however, that states tend to simplify the complex social reality along lines that reflect the interests of the centralized state. Reflecting on what these state interests might be, Scott gives taxation and conscription as primary examples.³⁶ However, such simple, centralized objectives cannot be relevant in the case of climate change adaptation. The international climate policy regime is not a monolithic state with a single interest, but a negotiated domain still very much in a state of flux. As such, it is likely that the rapid rise to prominence of the adaptive capacity framework results from the fact that this framing serves the interests of many stakeholders. I suggest that the concept of adaptive capacity may currently be serving two purposes in the international negotiations; it helps development organizations expand their mandate and position themselves to capture potentially large flows of additional funding, and it helps developing countries demand large financial transfers from the North to the South using apolitical, scientific language that is admissible in the negotiations.

Currently many development organizations are creating adaptation programs and policies that will help position themselves as the obvious choice for adaptation implementation. As an extremely new area of policy intervention, there is as yet no consensus on which institutions will primarily operate in climate change adaptation. There is, however, consensus on the large amount of funding that will be required for adaptation. Although less than \$200 million has been dispersed so far, official estimates of the required adaptation funding lie between \$10 to \$41 billion to “climate-proof” development projects, to more than \$50 billion for current adaptation needs, and up to \$86 billion for needs in 2015.³⁷ These numbers are comparable in magnitude to the total official development assistance budget that amounted to \$104 billion in 2006.³⁸ Having adaptation projects already on the ground that only need to be “scaled-up” once adaptation funding is increased, means these organizations will be well placed to capture substantial additional funds.

Adaptive capacity plays an important role in this positioning process. Because adaptive capacity might be conceivably limited by any factor of development, almost any development project could be reframed as an adaptation project. As mentioned earlier, Brooks et al. find that statistically significant variables associated with vulnerability include literacy, caloric intake, life expectancy, maternal mortality, the female-male literacy ratio, civil liberties, and political rights.³⁹ Using this rationale, development projects that address education, food security, health, gender equality, and political reform, might all be described as enhancing adaptive capacity. Development organizations are thus able to use their existing personnel, knowledge base, infrastructure, and expertise for adaptation projects. Addressing adaptive capacity as the most important element of adaptation allows them to “do adaptation” in precisely the same way as they currently “do development.”

Using his twenty year experience of a rural livelihoods development project in India, Mosse argues that political realities on the ground mean that policy changes rarely affect the implementation of development projects, but that a successful development project is one able to articulate itself coherently in the dominant policy paradigm.⁴⁰ He suggests that development practitioners actively represent their projects as consistent with current understandings of “good policy,” in order to mobilize funding and political support. He gives the example of a rain-fed farming project in India that was originally articulated within the policy of participatory development then in vogue, but that went through a “crisis of

representation" at a mid-term review when the theory behind this policy paradigm was challenged.⁴¹ To continue support and funding, project managers rearticulated their work to represent the current policies of governance, state partnerships, and pro-poor measures.

This process of policy adjustment and accompanying re-articulation of development projects is currently apparent in the adaptation discourse. Though Mosse talks about the relationship between on-the-ground projects and central policy, the re-articulation currently taking place with respect to adaptation is between existing development domains and the emerging domain of adaptation policy. For example, brochures available at a talk on Development and Climate at COP14 in December 2008, linked climate adaptation with the whole spectrum of development. Titles included: "Linking Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction"; "Climate Change and Children"; "Reforestation, Afforestation, Deforestation, Climate Change and Gender"; "Climate Change Adaptation at UNDP"; and "Community Based Adaptation in Action." The availability of these brochures (and of associated speakers on adaptation from UNDP, the World Bank, the World Food Programme, UNICEF, Oxfam, and others) at the most important conference for defining adaptation policy, suggests an evolving and symbiotic relationship between the development community and adaptation discourse. Unlike the top-down model described by Mosse, in which projects respond to centralized policy changes, the development sector is both responding to the gradually solidifying consensus on what it means to "do adaptation," and is shaping that consensus to reflect more closely those activities that it is already able to do. In this process, the concept of adaptive capacity serves as a rhetorical means of translating between development and adaptation logic, and is able to make a similar suite of projects relevant in both policy spheres.

In addition to serving as a translation mechanism between development and adaptation, the concept of adaptive capacity is also being used as a technical, depoliticized means of introducing equity considerations into the climate change process. In "The Anti-Politics Machine" James Ferguson argues that development organizations represent the issues they are trying to address (such as poverty or environmental degradation) as apolitical problems that justify the kinds of technical interventions that development projects are set up to provide.⁴² He suggests that the formulation of development as a universally beneficial, apolitical intervention, prevents it from articulating (and so addressing) the fundamental political causes of poverty, but does enable it to affect otherwise highly politicized ends, such as the extension of state control into remote rural areas.⁴³ Though situated in a very different context, the adaptive

capacity construct may be used in similar ways, as developing countries employ it to justify the demand for large financial transfers from the North to the South.

Equity considerations have had a tenuous position in the international climate negotiations. The climate change problem is fundamentally “unfair” in that relatively rich countries in the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and former Soviet Union, with twenty per cent the world’s population, account for seventy-five per cent of the warming problem.⁴⁴ Per capita emissions in the United States are two hundred times those of the developing world; the average air conditioner in Florida is responsible for more carbon emissions in a year than a Cambodian is in a lifetime.⁴⁵ In addition, all developed countries are signatories to the UN Declaration on the Human Environment under which states have the “responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction” (Article 21). However, because per capita emissions (a crude measure of a state’s responsibility to mitigate emissions) roughly reflect global lines of wealth and power, reaching an equitable agreement, which would require the interests of poorer “victim” states to be given greater weight than the interests of powerful large emitters, is politically extremely difficult.

After the signing of the UNFCCC in 1992, there was significant discussion over what equity principles should guide climate change mitigation policy. The resulting Kyoto Protocol, however, specified emissions reduction requirements as a percentage of emissions in 1990, instead of basing emissions reductions around the principle of equitably shared emission rights. Moreover, to ensure ratification by the number of countries required to bring it into force, concessions were made on the level of mandated emissions reductions so that the resulting requirements ranged somewhat arbitrarily from an 8 per cent cut below 1990 levels for most European countries to an 8 per cent increase for Australia, to a 10 per cent increase for Iceland. Mitigation negotiations since Kyoto have revolved more around establishing the carbon market flexible mechanisms and around the incorporation of deforestation emissions into emissions reduction efforts, than around the key ethical principles of emissions allowances.

Although explicit questions of equity and climate change have been largely pushed out of the mitigation discussions, addressing equity issues will be critical to an effective future climate agreement. Developing states are unlikely to undertake ambitious (or, perhaps, any) future mitigation commitments if developed countries do not acknowledge in some concrete way the harm they have caused through past and ongoing

ing emissions. An important part of such an acknowledgement would be financial compensation for climate change damage. Such compensation involves large transfers of money from the North to the South, and therefore is highly politically sensitive in Northern countries. Developed countries are already failing to meet the Monterrey Commitment of allocating 0.7 per cent of GDP to development assistance, suggesting even small levels of wealth transfer are politically difficult in rich countries. Adaptation is clearly related to compensation for climate change damage: The countries suffering the most from climate change impacts also have the greatest need to adapt and so will be entitled to higher levels of funding for adaptation. The end result of the growing prominence of adaptation in the international climate negotiations, combined with the growing consensus, is the conclusion that a large sum of money is needed. Should this money come primarily from the developed countries, then there will be some kind of financial transfer from developed countries most responsible for the problem to developing countries most vulnerable to the impacts.

The likely outcome of the adaptation discussions will thus indirectly address the fundamental ethical issue of compensation for climate damage. Because the responsibility for climate change in large part reflects the global distribution of wealth and power, explicit discussion of compensation for damage related to climate change is unlikely to gain political traction. Talking instead about the technical details of adapting to climate change, rather than about who is liable for climate change damage, creates a politically acceptable space in which details of the North-to-South financial transfers might be hammered out. This will go some way toward implicitly incorporating equity considerations into a future climate change agreement.⁴⁶

The role of the IPCC as a “boundary organization” in endorsing adaptation as a scientifically legitimate area of policy intervention is particularly important in this respect. The IPCC operates as a way of separating climate change science from its social, historic, and economic context.⁴⁷ By endorsing adaptive capacity as a scientific, measurable, and improvable quality of a society and by drawing the connection with levels of development, the IPCC creates an apparently apolitical discourse around adaptation. This discourse separates the practice of climate change adaptation from the almost inextricably related questions of who will have to adapt and who will pay for it, and thus can be used as a proxy for more explicitly political issues within the negotiations.

The adaptive capacity concept in particular serves an important role in creating the scientific, apolitical space for equity discussions in the international climate negotiations. While adaptation is originally con-

ceived as being related to specific climate change impacts and so encompassed a relatively narrow range of interventions (as in the IPCC First and Second Assessment Reports as outlined above), the construction of adaptive capacity as essentially equivalent to level of development admits an almost unlimited number of interventions, and so is flexible enough to function as a rhetorical code for other related but politically complicated issues of equity and liability.

Comments made at the UNFCCC meeting in Poznan highlight the fluid nature of the adaptive capacity concept that allows it to serve the interests of multiple stakeholders.⁴⁸ The United States emphasized the importance of national governments, insurance, and the private sector in building adaptive capacity (which could be understood to mean less direct adaptation funding would be required). Colombia stated that even middle-income countries are vulnerable to the effects of climate change, and that indicators of vulnerability and adaptive capacity should be nationally driven to identify the communities with least adaptive capacity within countries (implying that middle-income countries are equally entitled to adaptation funding as the traditionally understood “victim” states of least-developed countries and small island states). Micronesia stated that adaptation funding was required to “build capacity for SIDS [Small Island Developing States] to diversify [their economic base],” so suggesting that almost any economic development in resource-dependent countries would “count” as adaptation. These various and competing conceptions of adaptive capacity suggest it is functioning as a surrogate in the negotiations for issues of who should pay whom, and how much, for climate change damage. Just as development interventions are represented as apolitical and therefore unproblematic, “enhancing adaptive capacity” provides a politically neutral framework for pursuing the otherwise highly politically sensitive end of rich countries paying poor countries for the impacts of their greenhouse gas emissions.⁴⁹

This analysis has highlighted two functions that the concept of adaptive capacity is serving in the international climate negotiations. One is as a means of translating development activities into adaptation activities, which serves to expand the mandate of development organizations and allows them to position themselves to capture the potentially large flows of funding for adaptation. The second is to provide a technical, scientific, and therefore apolitical surrogate for discussions over compensation for climate change impacts, justifying large financial transfers from developed to developing countries, which are politically problematic, but justified on the grounds of equity. The next section will look at how these two functions are interacting in the climate negotiations, in ways that at times reinforce and at times contradict each other.

Examining disagreement between stakeholders on a particular issue can be illuminating because disagreements can highlight underlying social forces at work that create controversy.⁵⁰ The two ways in which adaptation is interpreted interact in the international climate negotiations to create areas of consensus and controversy. This section will look at the areas of general agreement on adaptation as well as the areas where disagreement still exists, in order to highlight how these two understandings of adaptation are interacting in the negotiation process.

Looking first at the areas of broad agreement on adaptation policy, it is clear that the basic connection between adaptation and development is not seriously challenged. As outlined above, this theme is taken up not only by academia, development NGOs, and multilateral aid institutions, but is also apparent in national submissions to the UNFCCC on the issue. Developed country submissions emphasize the similarities of development and adaptation activities, while developing countries tend to frame the lack of adaptation as a threat to their development strategy.⁵¹ However, both take the basic connection as well established.

Another area of broad agreement is that a substantial amount of money will be needed to fund adaptation in the developing world, and that developed countries should be responsible for this. National submissions to the UNFCCC on the means to support adaptation have included the proposal that 0.5 per cent of GDP of developed countries should be committed to support adaptation (from the G77 and China, the developing country negotiating bloc), that there be a two dollar tax on each ton of carbon emissions with an exemption on "subsistence" emissions from developing countries (from Switzerland), and that a portion of the emissions allowances given to industrialized countries be auctioned to provide funding for adaptation (from Norway). Thus the areas of general agreement on adaptation are that it is related to development, that substantial amounts of money are needed in the developing world, and that these funds should come from developed countries. These three points all support both the "adaptation as development" meaning (in that they justify a substantial increase in development funding) and the "adaptation as equity" meaning (in that they justify large resource transfers from North to South).

The most serious areas of conflict in adaptation discussions largely reflect developing country frustration with the way development currently operates. Most disagreements revolve around access to adaptation

funding, control over use of the funds, and their relation to official development assistance (ODA). These conflicts came to a head in the spring of 2006 when discussions over how the Adaptation Fund (AF) should operate broke down. The AF is automatically funded through a two per cent levy on Clean Development Mechanism projects and developed countries had assumed that it, like the other adaptation funds, would be operated by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Developing countries objected that donor countries have veto power over the use of adaptation funds and that GEF operating procedures (which require the use of implementing agencies and project-by-project approval) are slow and bureaucratic.⁵² The governance structure of the AF was finalized at the UNFCCC meeting in Nairobi in 2006, where it was decided that the AF would be under the direct authority of the UNFCCC (as opposed to the GEF) and where a "one-country-one-vote" voting structure was adopted, giving developing countries majority control over resource allocation.⁵³ Although the AF Board has not yet begun to distribute money, there is considerable optimism that this governance structure could provide a model for future adaptation funding.

Remaining issues of disagreement over adaptation funding apparent at COP14 revolved around issues of access and additionality. Developing country negotiators expressed frustration with the slow bureaucracy of GEF and emphasized the need for "direct access," particularly given the need to dispense large volumes of funding. Part of the innovative nature of the new Adaptation Fund is its mandate to operationalize the principle of direct access to funds for developing countries.

Also emphasized was the need for adaptation funding to be additional to development funding. The voluntary nature and low reliability of development funding were mentioned repeatedly, as was the failure of most countries to meet the target of 0.7 per cent of GDP committed to ODA and the low and inadequate level of voluntary funding contributed to adaptation funds to date. National submissions to the UNFCCC on adaptation funding from developing countries emphasize its fundamentally additional nature, with some stating that voluntarily contributed funds should not count as fulfillment of developed countries' obligations to "assist developing country Parties ... in meeting costs of adaptation" (Article 4).⁵⁴ Development professionals and organizations, on the other hand, tend to resist the idea that adaptation funding should be additional (and so subject to separate governance structures) arguing that it detracts from the effectiveness of adaptation funding, which should instead be "mainstreamed" into development assistance.

These questions of governance, access, and additionality are areas of controversy because they run counter to the way that development

has traditionally been done. As such they highlight areas in which the meaning of “adaptation as development” conflicts with the meaning of “adaptation as equity” in the ongoing negotiations. If international adaptation funding is really about equity, then the funds are an entitlement of developing countries. Developed countries’ claims that they should oversee and control the distribution of those funds—in the same way they oversee the “gift” of development aid—are then greatly diminished. If instead doing adaptation is simply about doing development, then adaptation funds could legitimately go through proven development institutions such as the World Bank or national development agencies. It seems likely that there will be no clear winner between these two frameworks any time soon, but that some innovative new governance structures, such as the Adaptation Fund, will arise out of the negotiations to accommodate a compromise between both the equity and development frameworks.

Conclusion

Adapting to the impacts of climate change is not an obvious area for policy intervention because much of it will occur autonomously and there are few examples of policy mechanisms that can improve adaptation. This paper has examined how and why adaptation came to be defined as a legitimate policy sphere in the interval between the IPCC Second and Third Assessment Reports, a process that appears to be linked to the negotiations over the Kyoto Protocol that required a way of justifying the commencement of adaptation funding. Key to this justification is the construction of adaptive capacity as a crucial determinant of a society’s ability to adapt to future climate change. Adaptive capacity both simplifies the complex process of social adjustment to a changing environment, making it legible to policymakers, and also defines a limit on that adjustment to make it relevant to policy. Moreover, by shifting the focus of adaptation interventions from the impacts of climate change to the current level of vulnerability, adaptive capacity justifies immediate intervention before climate change impacts are fully known or realized.

I argue that using the concept of adaptive capacity has become a primary means through which adaptation becomes legible for policy-making for two main reasons: It serves as translation between development and adaptation activities, so expanding the mandate of development organizations and helping them capture additional adaptation funding, and it serves as a technical and apolitical proxy for discussions over reparations for climate change damage in the international negotiations. These two functions in some ways complement, and in some ways

conflict with, each other; and the areas of consensus and disagreement in the current adaptation discourse reflect these interactions.

Funding climate change adaptation is now high up on the agenda of the international climate negotiations as government leaders work on a successor to the Kyoto Protocol that expires in 2012. Getting adaptation funding “right” will go a long way towards dispelling the atmosphere of distrust and suspicion that characterizes relations between developed and developing countries in the climate negotiations. Understanding how areas of disagreement over adaptation funding arise from conflicts between the “adaptation as development” and the “adaptation as equity” meanings, can help produce a result that provides a firmer foundation of trust and respect in future negotiations. Adaptation funding should not be used simply as a way of expanding the mandate of development; rather developing countries, as the primary stakeholders in these negotiations, should have the final say in how the money is governed and used. If done right, these discussions will provide a forum for critical reflection on the successes and failures of development as it is currently carried out. Furthermore, the resulting agreement on the governance of adaptation funds may serve as a constructive model for improving development funding more generally. ■

Notes

¹ See Malte Meinshausen, “What Does a 2°C Target Mean for Greenhouse Gas Concentrations? A Brief Analysis Based on Multi-Gas Emission Pathways and Several Climate Sensitivity Uncertainty Estimates,” in *Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change*, eds. Hans J. Schellnhuber, Wolfgang Cramer, Nebojsa Nakicenovic, Tom Wigley, and Gary Yohe (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 265–79.

² See Global Environment Facility (GEF), “GEF Project Database,” <http://www.gefonline.org> (accessed December 12, 2008); Point Carbon, “A Review of 2007,” *Carbon Markets Monitor*, January 2008.

³ See World Bank, *Clean Energy and Development: Towards an Investment Framework* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2006); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2007/2008 – Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World* (New York: UNDP, 2007), 188–90.

⁴ Gustavo Esteva and Madhu S. Prakash, “From Global Thinking to Local Thinking,” in *The Post-Development Reader*, eds. Majid Rahnema and Victoria Bawtree (New York: Zed, 1997), 277–89.

⁵ See David Demeritt, “The Construction of Global Warming and the Politics of Science,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 91, no. 2 (2001): 307–37, 313.

⁶ See *ibid.*, 315.

⁷ See Clark Miller, "Hybrid Management: Boundary Organizations, Science Policy, and Environmental Governance in the Climate Regime," *Science, Technology and Human Values* 26, no. 4 (2001): 478–500.

⁸ See Cathleen Fogel, "Biotic Carbon Sequestration and the Kyoto Protocol: The Construction of Global Knowledge by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change," *International Environmental Agreements* 5, no. 2 (2005): 191–210.

⁹ See *ibid.*, 208.

¹⁰ See IPCC, *Climate Change: The IPCC Response Strategies* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1991), 129–60, 161–207.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, xliv.

¹² See *ibid.*, 192, 198, 148.

¹³ See IPCC, *Climate Change 1995: Impacts, Adaptations and Mitigation of Climate Change: Scientific-Technical Analyses* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 191–213, 159–69, 511–37, 539–59.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 452.

¹⁵ See *ibid.*

¹⁶ See *ibid.*, 5.

¹⁷ See IPCC, *Climate Change 2001: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 877–912.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 894.

¹⁹ See *ibid.*, 895.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 895, 899.

²¹ See Karen O'Brien, Siri Eriksen, Ane Schjolden, and Lynn Nygaard, "What's in a Word? Conflicting Interpretations of Vulnerability in Climate Change Research," CICERO Working Paper 4 (2004), Oslo, <http://www.cicero.uio.no/media/2682.pdf> (accessed January 2, 2010), 2–4.

²² The close relationship between the academic discourse on adaptation reflected in the IPCC and the requirements of policymakers is demonstrated by the phrase "adaptive capacity." The choice of the word capacity makes it directly applicable to the UNFCCC, a key principle of which is that nations' responsibilities under the convention are related to "their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective *capabilities* and their social and economic conditions" (UNFCCC Article 3, emphasis added).

²³ The flexible mechanisms, specifically the Clean Development Mechanism, allow developed countries to partly satisfy their emission reduction requirements by financing projects to lower emissions in developing countries.

²⁴ M. J. Mace, "Adaptation under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change: The International Legal Framework," in *Fairness in Adaptation to Climate*

Change, eds. W. Neil Adger, Jouni Paavola, Saleemul Huq, and M. J. Mace (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 53–76.

²⁵ See Nick Brooks, W. Neil Adger, and P. Mick Kelly, “The Determinants of Vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity at the National Level and the Implications for Adaptation,” *Global Environmental Change* 15 (2005): 151–63.

²⁶ See Gary Yohe, and Richard S. J. Tol, “Indicators for Social and Economic Coping Capacity—Moving toward a Working Definition of Adaptive Capacity,” *Global Environmental Change* 12 (2002): 25–40.

²⁷ See Barry Smit and Johanna Wandel, “Adaptation, Adaptive Capacity and Vulnerability,” *Global Environmental Change* 16 (2006): 282–92.

²⁸ IPCC, *Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 719–43.

²⁹ These three funds are the Special Climate Change Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund, and the Strategic Priority on Adaptation.

³⁰ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 22.

³¹ See Emilio F. Moran, *Human Adaptability* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1979); Susanna Davies, *Adaptable Livelihoods: Coping with Food Insecurity in the Malian Sahel* (London: Macmillan, 1996).

³² See Robert McLeman, “Climate Change and Adaptive Human Migration: Lessons from Rural North America,” in *Adapting to Climate Change: Thresholds, Values, Governance*, eds. W. Neil Adger, Irene Lorenzoni, and Karen O’Brien (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 296–310.

³³ See James D. Ford, “Sea Ice Change in Arctic Canada: Are There Limits to Inuit Adaptation?” in *Adapting to Climate Change*, eds. Adger, Lorenzoni, and O’Brien, 114–28.

³⁴ David S. G. Thomas, Chasca Twyman, Henny Osbahr, and Bruce Hewitson, “Adaptation to Climate Change and Variability: Farmer Responses to Intra-Seasonal Precipitation Trends in South Africa,” *Climatic Change* 83, no. 3 (2007): 301–22.

³⁵ William D. Nordhaus, *A Question of Balance: Weighing the Options on Global Warming Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 67.

³⁶ See Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 3.

³⁷ Estimates from World Bank, *Clean Energy*, 144; UNDP, *Human Development Report 2007/2008*, 192; Oxfam, “Adapting to Climate Change: What’s Needed in Poor Countries and Who Should Pay,” Oxfam Briefing Paper, Oxfam International, Boston, MA, 2007.

³⁸ See Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Statistical Annex – Development Co-operation Report 2007* (Paris: OECD, 2008).

³⁹ See Brooks, “Determinants of Vulnerability,” 157.

⁴⁰ See David Mosse, "Is Good Policy Unimplementable? Reflections on the Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice," *Development and Change* 35, no. 4 (2004): 639–71.

⁴¹ Mosse, "Good Policy," 659.

⁴² See James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 254.

⁴³ See *ibid.*, 255.

⁴⁴ Frances C. Moore and Michael C. MacCracken, "Lifetime Leveraging: An Approach to Achieving International Agreement and Effective Climate Protection Using Mitigation of Short-Lived Greenhouse Gases," *International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management* 1, no. 1 (2009): 42–62, 44.

⁴⁵ See UNDP, *Human Development Report 2007/2008*, 43–4.

⁴⁶ An unusual example in which the relationship between adaptation funding and compensation for climate change damages is made explicit in the formal language of the negotiations is the Bolivian submission to the UNFCCC: "These [climate change] impacts are the direct result of current atmospheric concentrations, which have been caused predominantly by emissions from developed countries. Developed countries are thus responsible for compensating developing countries for their contribution to the adverse effects of climate change as part of an 'adaptation debt' owed by developed countries to developing countries." Despite being referenced by some developing country negotiators, this explicitly political adaptation language has gained little traction.

⁴⁷ See Demeritt, "Construction," 313.

⁴⁸ Notes made by the author at the COP14 meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Climate Action, Contact Group on Enhanced Action on Adaptation and its Associated Means of Implementation, December 9, 2008.

⁴⁹ In this respect, adaptive capacity is related to vulnerability, a concept that has both a longer history within the academic literature and a more overtly political function in the negotiations. This is because adaptation funding under the UNFCCC is committed to "developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change" (Article 4.4). Identifying countries that are vulnerable to climate change is therefore both a scientific and a normative or political enterprise.

⁵⁰ See M. R. Dove, "The Theory of Social Forestry Intervention: The State of the Art in Asia," *Agroforestry Systems* 30, no. 3 (1995): 315–40.

⁵¹ See submissions summarized in Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action, "Ideas and Proposals on Paragraph 1 of the Bali Action Plan," UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Bonn, Germany, 2008.

⁵² See Benito Müller, *Climate of Distrust: The 2006 Bonn Climate Change Adaptation Fund Negotiations* (Oxford: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, 2006).

⁵³ See *id.*, *Nairobi 2006: Trust and the Future of Adaptation Funding* (Oxford: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, 2007).

⁵⁴ See *id.*, *International Adaptation Finance: The Need for an Innovative and Strategic Approach* (Oxford: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, 2008), 10–1.

Peacebuilding and Climate Change Adaptation

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ANNE HAMMILL AND RICHARD MATTHEW

ABSTRACT

Over the last twenty years, peacebuilding has evolved as an important way of promoting sustainable development in conflict-affected societies. More recently, climate change has been identified as both an immediate and a long-term threat to sustainable development, as well as a potential amplifier of conflict. This has several implications for peacebuilding. Specifically, climate change may increase the need for peacebuilding, undermine existing peacebuilding operations, and call for a shift in peacebuilding approaches and priorities. This suggests that the more systematic use of climate data is needed to inform early peacebuilding decisions that commit societies to certain longer-term development pathways, and greater emphasis should be placed on early-warning or disaster risk reduction tools and strategies. This article examines the challenge of integrating peacebuilding and climate change adaptation into a unified approach to support the transformation of post-conflict states. We begin with a discussion of the process of peacebuilding and how it has evolved since its introduction to the international lexicon in 1992. We then outline potential links between climate change and conflict. A third section defines climate change adaptation, after which we explore its areas of convergence with peacebuilding. We conclude by exploring some of the opportunities, challenges, and trade-offs related to integrating these two processes. Throughout these discussions, we illustrate our argument with examples from our own field research.

The double-headed problem of climate change and violent conflict thus has a unified solution—peacebuilding and adaptation are effectively the same kind of activity, involving the same kinds of methods of dialogue and social engagement, requiring from governments the same values of inclusivity and transparency. At the same time as adaptation to climate change can and must be made conflict-sensitive, peacebuilding and development must be made climate-sensitive.

—Dan Smith and Janani Vivekananda, 2007¹

Over the last twenty years, peacebuilding has evolved as an important way of promoting sustainable development in conflict-affected societies. This approach calls for strategies that simultaneously provide basic security, encourage socio-economic recovery and growth, and address the conditions, attitudes, and actions that drive violent conflict in order to prevent its recurrence.² More recently, climate change has been identi-

Anne Hammill and Richard Matthew, "Peacebuilding and Climate Change Adaptation," *St Antony's International Review* 5, no. 2 (2010): 89–112.

fied as both an immediate and long-term threat to sustainable development, as well as a potential amplifier of conflict. Changes in precipitation patterns, sea level rise, and increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme events, are already having ecological impacts that affect the viability of local livelihoods and the productivity of key economic sectors, as well as human health, settlement, and migration patterns.³ In fragile settings, these impacts may test and overwhelm the governance structures and other institutions needed to provide basic services and to protect people from injury and loss, thereby weakening people's confidence in the social order and increasing the risk of conflict.⁴ This has several implications for peacebuilding. Specifically, climate change may:

- (1) Increase the need for peacebuilding by tipping unstable areas—even those that are relatively stable—into openly violent ones. In other words, climate change impacts may overwhelm critical capacities and become the triggers that escalate tensions into open conflict.
- (2) Undermine existing peacebuilding by compromising the ability of post-conflict societies to transition to sustainable development. For example, climate change impacts may destabilize the natural resource base upon which many post-conflict societies rely for economic recovery and sustainable livelihoods.⁵ Dwindling resources may also increase competition and tensions in volatile settings. And, similar to the point above, changing climate conditions (particularly in the form of more frequent and intense extreme events) may overwhelm already weak capacities, thereby frustrating societies and pushing them back towards the brink of conflict.
- (3) Call for a shift in peacebuilding approaches and priorities so that societies are able to cope with the additional stress of climate change impacts. This may mean the more systematic use of climate data—where possible—to inform early peacebuilding decisions that commit societies to certain longer-term development pathways (e.g., land use planning, resource prospecting, and sector investment). It may also mean greater emphasis on early warning or disaster risk reduction tools and strategies.⁶

If peacebuilding is to deliver security and development dividends, then the process must take into account the implications of climate change in order to maximize opportunities for reducing—or at least avoid inadvertently increasing—vulnerability to stresses that may heighten the risk of

conflict. This article examines the challenge of integrating peacebuilding and climate change adaptation into a unified approach to support the transformation of post-conflict states. We begin with a discussion of the process of peacebuilding and how it has evolved since its introduction to the international lexicon in 1992. We then outline potential links between climate change and conflict. A third section defines climate change adaptation, after which we explore its areas of convergence with peacebuilding. We conclude by exploring some of the opportunities, challenges, and trade-offs related to integrating these two processes. Throughout these discussions, we illustrate our argument with examples from our own field research.

Peacebuilding

The end of the Cold War was widely regarded as an opportunity to revive and revise a post-war peace agenda that had been severely compromised by decades of ideological and military rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁷ In response to this opportunity, the United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali published “An Agenda for Peace” in 1992.⁸ This report stimulated interest in peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding on the part of academics, policymakers, and practitioners around the world. This interest was remarkably productive. In 2003, Jacob Kreilkamp argued that in a single decade the “U.N. peacekeeping work has undergone a richly documented transformation.”⁹ According to Kreilkamp, the end of the Cold War led “not only to a break in the Security Council deadlock, but also to a rethinking of the limits of sovereignty, and saw the United Nations assuming new responsibilities and goals in the interests of the Charter’s mantra of ‘international peace and security.’”¹⁰

In an attempt to clarify the nature of this transformation, Michelle Maiese argues that since 1992, two distinct ways of understanding peacebuilding have evolved:

According [to] the United Nations ... peacebuilding consists of a wide range of activities associated with capacity building, reconciliation, and societal transformation. Peacebuilding is a long-term process that occurs after violent conflict has slowed down or come to a halt. Thus, it is the phase of the peace process that takes place after peacemaking and peacekeeping.

Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs), on the other hand, understand peacebuilding as an umbrella concept that encompasses not only long-term transformative efforts, but also peacemaking and peacekeeping. In this view, peacebuilding includes early warning and response efforts, violence prevention,

advocacy work, civilian and military peacekeeping, military intervention, humanitarian assistance, ceasefire agreements, and the establishment of peace zones.¹¹

In this article, we adopt the narrower definition used within the United Nations (UN) system and thus focus on the sort of transformation described by Kreilkamp. Even with this limitation, however, it is impossible to find a single definition of peacebuilding that is used consistently throughout the United Nations. This is partly because the definition is evolving in response to lessons learned from a growing body of peacebuilding missions. It also reflects, however, differences in the understandings and approaches of the many UN agencies involved in these various missions. These differences can prove a challenge to integrating new practices and values into peacebuilding, as the priorities, capacities, and operational modes of the many individual agencies involved in peacebuilding vary.

A third definitional problem is that, even when one adopts a narrow definition, the lines separating peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding are not permanent and impermeable. Peacemaking generally refers to a diplomatic effort that may involve UN, governmental, and non-governmental actors, and which is aimed at bringing the various parties that are engaged in violent conflict together to explore, firm up, and agree to implement a peace agreement that ends hostilities. Such an agreement in turn creates the setting for peacekeeping. This is a process that is usually multilateral and that typically involves dispatching military forces into a conflict zone to monitor and perhaps assist with the implementation of a peace agreement, to deter hostile parties from resorting to violence during this period, and to provide safe spaces for non-military activities to begin. While these phases are conceptually distinct, in practice there is often considerable overlap. The dialogue established through international diplomacy for the peacemaking phase may, for example, be needed during later phases. The processes of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) that are often central to peacekeeping may continue even after the peacekeeping mission has officially ended and a peacebuilding programme has started. Furthermore, a peacebuilding effort may find itself engaged in addressing the challenges of conflict relapse and needs to always focus on conflict prevention.

With these caveats in mind, we have elected to build our argument around the 2004 Utstein study of peacebuilding, which is reiterated in the conceptualization of peacebuilding published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2008.¹² The Utstein study, carried out by the Peace Research Institute of Oslo, examined 336

peacebuilding projects implemented over a ten-year period by the four Utstein governments.¹³ In these two reports, peacebuilding is structured into four mutually reinforcing areas or pillars of activities.¹⁴

Pillar 1: The social, economic, and environmental dimension looks at the socio-economic drivers of conflict such as wealth asymmetries, marginalization of particular social groups or geographical areas, environmental degradation, and competition over natural resources. Activities under this pillar include repatriating and reintegrating refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs); constructing or repairing infrastructure as well as rehabilitating key government functions (e.g., water and sanitation); developing and providing longer-term public services such as education and healthcare; generating employment through investments in the productive sectors; and seeking international assistance to build technical and financial capacity.

Pillar 2: The governance and political dimension is concerned with consolidating the legitimacy, capacity, and effectiveness of key institutions in the country. Activities under this category include state-building (understood as measures to reconstruct and strengthen political authority and administrative capacity); capacity development for civil society; transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption programmes; and various democratizing initiatives such as promoting elections, power sharing, and participatory processes.

Pillar 3: The security dimension focuses on the protection and provision of state and personal security. This is typically achieved through programmes that support disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants into local communities; small arms control; humanitarian mine action to clear mines, destroy existing supplies, support victims, and raise awareness about the continued risks and impacts of landmines; and Security System Reform (SSR) to rebuild and improve the security and justice apparatus of a country, including its military, police, judiciary, and penal services.

Pillar 4: The truth and reconciliation dimension concerns processes designed to encourage dialogue, peaceful resolution of disputes, healing, and justice.

These pillars of peacebuilding are not internally monolithic. The priorities and needs within each pillar vary throughout a society, and one needs to carefully consider and manage differences and continuities

across national, provincial, and local levels of political, economic, and social organization. For example, in post-conflict Sierra Leone, considerable emphasis has been given to the reform of the mining and minerals sector.¹⁵ At the national level, the objectives include preparing revised and new legislation to govern this sector, negotiating new concession agreements with foreign investors, and making this sector a centre-piece of vastly improved accountability, transparency and participation. At the provincial level, the objectives vary considerably, in part because the minable ore and diamond deposits are not evenly distributed across the provinces. The Eastern Province, for example, borders Liberia and was a focal point of Revolutionary United Front (RUF) activity. It has the country's principal diamond fields in the Tongo and Koidu districts. At this level of social organization, it is the relationships between the new district councilors, private mining companies, artisanal miners, and the chiefs and paramount chiefs (who are the traditional custodians of the land) that are at the center of reform initiatives. At the local level, communities that are directly alongside mining operations typically have a list of very specific concerns and priorities focused around issues such as the provision of community services, employment opportunities, compensation, environmental impacts, and displacement. And, of course, the decade-long war affected communities in different ways, such that the demands for reconciliation, truth, and justice vary from one village to the next. Effective peacebuilding thus requires that attention be given to priorities and opportunities at each level of activity and that the reforms initiated across sectors and across levels of social organization be harmonized as much as possible.

Is it possible in the space of a few years to generate a framework for peacebuilding that is contextually sensitive across various layers of society, and to implement enough projects within this framework to help the country transition towards security and development? A considerable amount of the process of peacebuilding involves negotiation among the various stakeholders—UN agencies, donors, private investors, other non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society, and the government itself—about (a) what the country's priorities are within each pillar and at each level of organization, (b) how to weld these priorities into an internally consistent joint vision for peacebuilding or, more typically, a Development Assistance Framework that can guide action for three to five years, and (c) how to mobilize external support for implementing projects that will make progress on the priorities and within the vision or framework. This must be done in the complicated context of a society that may be deeply divided, fearful, and suspicious; a government that may be quite corrupt; pressure from highly motivated peace spoilers

who have found ways to benefit from conflict and lawlessness; massive data gaps that introduce uncertainty into decision-making and planning in many sectors; destabilizing regional dynamics; and urgent humanitarian needs. For example, precisely these conditions have made it incredibly difficult to transform Sierra Leone, and the current Joint Vision is the product of seven years of diverse observations, discussions, projects, and experiments in peacebuilding.¹⁶

The time frame for peacebuilding is always a matter of a few years, and so attention must be given to managing expectations on all sides and laying the foundations for a transformation process that can eventually be placed fully in the hands of the country itself, while the country still continues to evolve towards a condition of stable peace and sustainable development. Thus, the focus of peacebuilding tends to be more on capacity development than on designing and implementing discrete problem-solving projects. This emphasis on capacity development was clearly presented as a recent change, based on four decades of development experience, in a technical paper prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1997. The OECD has since defined capacity development as “[t]he process by which individuals, groups and organizations, institutions and countries develop, enhance and organize their systems, resources and knowledge; all reflected in their abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems and achieve objectives.”¹⁷

Again, in the absence of a single authoritative definition, we offer an approach to thinking about capacity development based largely on our work in recent years for different agencies of the United Nations. In this realm, many distinctions are made in routine reports and daily conversations. Notable—but by no means exhaustive—among these are terms such as technical capacity development, infrastructure capacity development, functional capacity development, and governance capacity development. The term “technical” refers to certain types of specialized knowledge and skills—such as microeconomics, hydrology, or soil ecology—that an organization requires to perform and that may be delivered through training programmes or by providing the services of an expert. Infrastructure capacity tends to mean equipment such as cars, computers, office space, or, in a broader sense, roads and lighting. Functional capacity refers to all the things an organization needs in order to function, from personnel to accounting systems. Governance capacity includes all of the above, but also depends on things like the trust of the public, the ability to mediate fairly among competing social and economic interests, and the willingness to be transparent and accessible. Clearly, the value

of crafting a typology for capacity development is limited by the fact that here, too, we find shifting and overlapping boundaries.

A final dimension of peacebuilding concerns its referents. Inevitably, the United Nations is obliged to devote considerable attention to the national government, especially in those situations where it is more of a partner than an independent entity authorized to intervene in a situation deemed unacceptable by the rest of the world. In either case, however, it is generally acknowledged that a successful transformation requires both a competent state and an empowered and engaged civil society, and peacebuilding must seek to build capacity in both realms.

However we choose to describe it, peacebuilding is a complicated process involving many moving parts that need to be tailored to the exigencies of specific situations. With this in mind, the foregoing discussion can be summarized as follows:

- Peacebuilding is largely about helping a post-conflict state develop the capacity for sustainable, peaceful relationships and structures of governance.
- Capacity development has technical, functional, infrastructure, and governance dimensions.
- Peacebuilding can be organized into four dimensions: security; political and governance; social, economic, and environmental; and truth and reconciliation.
- Capacity development for peacebuilding takes place at various levels of social organization (national, provincial, and local) as well as across the four pillars.
- Capacity development at various levels of organization and across the four pillars involves both state and non-state actors.

Peacebuilding and Climate Change

As our understanding of peacebuilding has evolved since 1992, so has our grasp of the dynamic and interactive variables that contribute to insecurity and conflict. An important part of the post-Cold War rethinking of peace and security has been the increasingly sophisticated analysis of environmental change as a cause (and symptom) of insecurity.¹⁸ A growing body of literature now explores the many pathways through which environmental degradation and resource depletion threaten human well-being—and even survival—as much as, or even more than, the threat of external military aggression. This is especially worrisome for developing countries, where the link between availability of—or access to—ecosys-

tem services and human well-being is generally more direct, governance is weak, and the capacity to deal with stresses is limited. Indeed, for these societies—and especially for the more marginalized and disadvantaged groups within them—environmental degradation and scarcity mean a greater chance of becoming further impoverished and being made more vulnerable to shocks and disruptions such as disease, famine, extreme weather, and market collapse. In some instances, such protracted conditions of vulnerability and insecurity can become grounds for insecurity in the more traditional sense—open violent conflict.

The latest iteration of this link between environmental change and security has been the examination of how climate change will affect security.¹⁹ Typical of much of the literature produced on this topic, the German Advisory Council on Global Change's report, "World in Transition: Climate Change as a Security Risk," states that "[c]limate change will overstretch many societies' adaptive capacities within the coming decades."²⁰ Its authors identify a set of "conflict constellations" vulnerable to climate change effects including: fresh water scarcity in areas that "lack the political and institutional framework necessary for the adaptation of water and crisis management systems ... ultimately leading to destabilization and violence"; food scarcities that lead to "regional food crises and further undermine the economic performance of weak and unstable states, thereby encouraging or exacerbating destabilization, the collapse of social systems, and violent conflicts"; more storm and flood disasters undermining crisis management systems and triggering emigration and other social problems; and climate-induced migration, especially in agricultural economies where climate change contributes to drought.²¹

The report includes assessments of regions deemed to be highly vulnerable to climate-related security threats: North Africa, suffering from water scarcity and rapid demographic change; the Sahel, with its arid landscape and weak states; Southern Africa, where climate change could amplify wide-spread and chronic poverty; Central Asia, where climate effects could add pressure to identity conflicts; South Asia, where hundreds of millions of people are vulnerable to climate amplified economic problems and political stresses; China, with a vast population exposed to massive droughts and heat waves; the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico, with a heightened vulnerability to severe weather events; and the Andean region and Amazonia, where water scarcity may rise as forest cover declines.²² Also published in 2007, the CNA Corporation's report, "National Security and the Threat of Climate Change," envisions a future in which "[c]limate change acts as a threat multiplier for instability in

some of the most volatile regions of the world” and adds “tensions even in stable regions.”²³

These and the findings of many other assessments published in and around 2007 are carefully synthesized in a 2009 report prepared by Achim Maas and Dennis Tanzler. Their report, organized by region, examines science-based climate change trends, the socio-economic factors likely to interact with these, and the security implications of these interactions. The authors conclude that “[c]limate change is first and foremost a challenge for development and individual or human security, which could halt or reverse developmental achievements and threaten livelihoods.”²⁴ They also note, however, the “potential impacts of climate change on the existing (armed) conflicts and unstable regions or the potential for emerging conflicts and zones of turmoil.”²⁵

In their 2007 report, “A Climate of Conflict,” authors Smith and Vivekananda argue that there are “46 countries—home to 2.7 billion people—in which the effects of climate change interacting with economic, social and political problems will create a high risk of violent conflict.”²⁶ It is not certain, of course, that climate change will make conflict more intractable or introduce new conflicts into states that are at war, fragile, or in a post-conflict phase. Climate change impacts may be largely invisible in areas where misery and violence are already overdetermined. Furthermore, it is at least conceivable that climate change could create enormous pressures to co-operate, even among actors with a very low level of capacity. It is also likely that in some cases, climate change will introduce new opportunities for settlement and new livelihoods. Therefore, it would be unwarranted to suggest that there is a straightforward linkage between climate change and the set of countries at the bottom of the Human Development Index and the Global Peace Index. However, insofar as climate change is expected to threaten development efforts and to amplify or create conflict risks, as noted earlier, we can easily conclude that climate change will have a number of implications for peacebuilding:

- Increasing the need for peacebuilding;
- Undermining existing peacebuilding operations; and
- Calling for a shift in peacebuilding approaches and priorities.

It follows that if the cycle of vulnerability to climate and conflict is going to be broken, then conflict prevention and peacebuilding approaches must incorporate measures that give societies the capacity to better anticipate, resist, and recover from actual or expected climate-related stresses—i.e., to adapt. Similarly, adaptation decisions and actions un-

dertaken in post-conflict settings should be designed and implemented in a conflict-sensitive way so that—at a minimum—they do not create or exacerbate conflict risks and, where possible, take advantage of any peacebuilding opportunities. The remainder of this paper describes the process of climate change adaptation and then focuses on the challenges and opportunities for operationalizing the areas of convergence between adaptation and peacebuilding.

Climate Change Adaptation

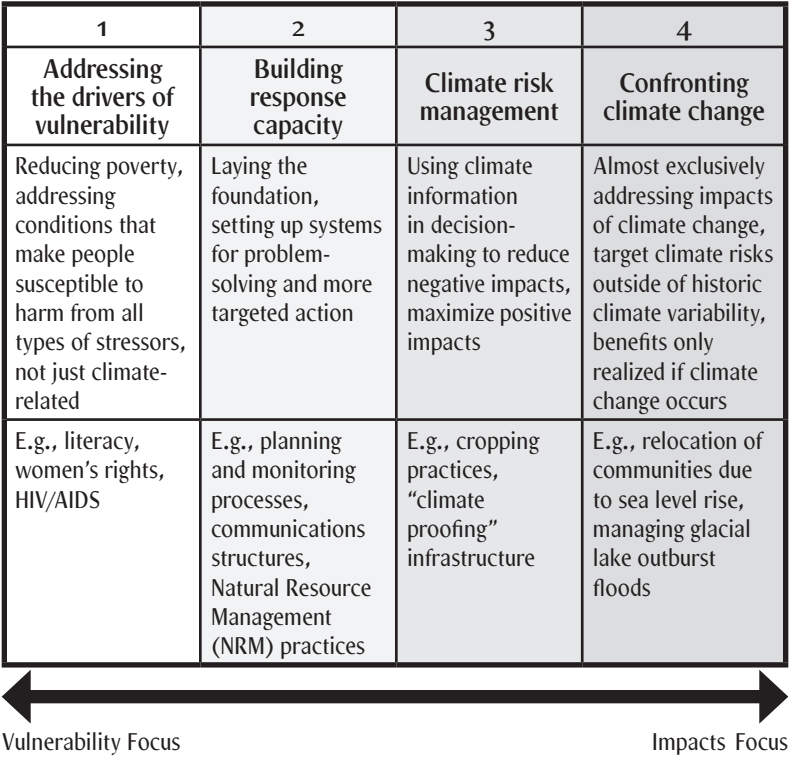
Adaptation is a socio-ecological process of change or adjustment to new or modified circumstances. Within the context of climate change, it is understood as actions that people take in response to—or in anticipation of—changing climate conditions to reduce adverse impacts or take advantage of any opportunities that may arise.²⁷ The need for, type, and scale of adaptation depend on the kind of change taking place as well as the vulnerability of people and natural systems to this change. Vulnerability in this sense can be understood in terms of a system's exposure to disruptive shocks and trends, as well as its ability to prepare for, cope with, and recover from its impacts. The last part of this definition of vulnerability highlights one of the temporal aspects of adaptation—it is a process that can be undertaken before or after the impact of climate change has manifested itself. In other words, human systems can make adjustments in anticipation of change or as a reaction to its consequences.

Two general approaches to anticipatory adaptation decision-making are highlighted in the research: (a) a top-down approach, which uses information about future climate conditions to identify and quantify impacts on different ecosystems and economic sectors, which then is used as a basis for devising adaptation options; and (b) a bottom-up approach, which looks at historical and current climate variability, existing strategies for coping with this variability, and how the latter might be modified to take account of climate change. The bottom-up approach has the advantage of not relying on elaborate climate projections, which are fraught with uncertainties and limited in their depiction of social interactions and capacities (an important determinant in vulnerability). However, it also carries the risk that over-reliance on current or historical conditions will encourage maladaptation, as societies assume a certain extrapolation of the familiar. As a result, an adaptation approach that draws from both approaches is ideal, allowing decision-makers to develop strategies that address current vulnerabilities and development

priorities, while trying to ensure their long-term sustainability through a basic understanding of future projections. In fact, this hybrid approach to adaptation, which draws from multiple climate data sources (historical records, current observations, and future projections) and tries to reconcile different timelines, is often referred to as the climate risk management approach.

Adaptation can involve a wide range of policies, decisions, and activities implemented at different scales. They can span from a farmer's decision to shift crop varieties or a malaria awareness-raising campaign at the village level to a municipal plan to expand a city's storm drainage system or a national policy for scaling-up community-based forest fire management. These examples do not fall outside the purview of traditional development programming and can therefore beg the question: What exactly distinguishes adaptation from traditional development?

Figure 1: Climate Change Adaptation Continuum



The adaptation “continuum” proposed by McGray et al. provides a useful framework for describing the range of possible adaptation activities

and how they relate to traditional development (see Figure 1 above).²⁸ This continuum is organized into four sequential, but overlapping areas of adaptation efforts. At the left hand extreme fall the more familiar development activities that reduce vulnerability to an array of development stressors (e.g., illiteracy, malnutrition, and HIV/AIDS) and at the other end those designed specifically to reduce vulnerability to the real or anticipated impacts of climate change (e.g., relocation of communities due to sea level rise).

The *first* category of activity would include any measure that addresses the drivers of vulnerability by increasing human development. Activities in this category tend to have the explicit goal of poverty reduction and seek to address variables that contribute to vulnerability broadly conceived. While such activities may not be based on any sort of assessment of—or concern for—climate change impacts, they may provide some protection at the household- and community-levels by generally increasing capacity and resilience. Gender initiatives, livelihood diversification efforts, HIV/AIDS awareness, and basic education are among the type of activities typical of this category.

A *second* category along this continuum would include measures designed to build response capacity. Activities typical of this category may generate broad benefits, but will tend to concentrate on areas that are directly affected by—or sensitive to—climate change such as community reforestation projects designed to combat flood-induced land-slides, joint NRM schemes, and weather monitoring programmes. Such efforts to introduce technology and build institutions can create a platform for more targeted measures.

A *third* category focuses on measures that are designed to manage climate risk through the use of climate information such as disaster response planning and the introduction of drought-resistant crops. Climate-proofing projects generally fall into this category, along with many discrete adaptation activities.

A *fourth* category along the continuum involves measures taken to directly confront climate change, generally by addressing climate change impacts. The focus here is on climate risks that fall outside of historic climate variability and that are understood to be the result of anthropogenic climate change. Activities here might include the relocation of communities in response to sea-level rise and responses to glacial melting. All radical and high-cost interventions that explicitly address unprecedented levels of climate risk fall under this category.

As one moves from the left to the right, the emphasis of development activities on reducing vulnerability to climate change impacts increases. A number of factors determine where individual or collective ef-

forts might be situated on the continuum. The quality of (and confidence in) climate information is an important consideration. As one moves towards the right along the continuum, availability and access to reliable climate information plays a critical role in the adaptation effort (hence the appearance of “climate risk management” towards the right). Another consideration is a society’s or social group’s attitude towards risk, as some people will be risk-takers, while others will be risk-avoiders, and therefore the perceived urgency or need to adapt may differ accordingly. These attitudes are, in turn, shaped by a number of contextual factors such as cultural preferences, recent experiences with managing change and upheaval, as well as access to critical resources. These resources encompass a range of categories from financial, technical, political, and social, to things like cash, credit, livestock, social networks, and marketable skills. Availability of (or access to) these resources often determines whether adaptation measures are taken before or after change—if at all.

The point of this continuum is to demonstrate that adaptation includes a wide range of decisions and activities. Even those development activities that fall to the left of the spectrum can be considered adaptation: Although they appear to pay little attention to the specifics of climate change, they build resilience and capacity to manage stress in general, including climate-related stress. In many ways, what is important is not what the adaptation activity looks like, but the planning and decision-making process behind its design and implementation. In other words, an assessment of current and future climate-related vulnerabilities, as well as the range of options for reducing them, may still lead to the adoption of familiar development policies and activities. However, the danger with adopting familiar development activities without considering climate issues is that these activities may foster maladaptation—i.e., leave people more vulnerable to climate-related hazards, especially over the longer term, thereby undermining or reversing development gains. Post-conflict Rwanda provides a good example of this. After the 1994 genocide, no attempt was made to integrate climate risk management into peacebuilding activities. People were settled in protected forest areas and allowed to cultivate steep hillsides. Today, heavy rains in Rwanda, which occur frequently and may be linked to climate change, displace communities, thereby creating costly humanitarian demands, and wash away vast quantities of topsoil, which threatens the long-term productivity of the agricultural sector.²⁹ There is little climate sensitivity at any level of Rwandese society and no obvious way to reduce the risk of more frequent and severe climate-related disasters in the years ahead. The lesson being learned in Rwanda and elsewhere is that information on climate impacts should inform development planning even if the re-

sulting activities appear to be unchanged or familiar; what is new and additional is the assessment of risk that goes into robust designs that will enhance their sustainability and have an overall development impact.

In summary, climate change adaptation is a complex process. Sustainable development programmes designed to reduce drivers of vulnerability and increase resilience can be a form of climate change adaptation, as long as they are conceived of with an eye on their longer-term impacts. Building early-warning and response systems for natural disasters and using climate science to manage climate risk are more targeted approaches that still have wide-ranging benefits, while actions taken explicitly to deal with specific climate impacts can be thought of as more directly and narrowly focused.

Integrating Peacebuilding and Climate Change Adaptation

The authors of “A Climate of Conflict” contend that “[t]he double-headed problem of climate change and violent conflict thus has a unified solution—peacebuilding and adaptation are effectively the same kind of activity.”³⁰ At a high level of abstraction, Smith and Vivekananda may be correct in arguing that “peacebuilding and adaptation are effectively the same kind of activity, involving the same kinds of methods of dialogue and social engagement, requiring from governments the same values of inclusivity and transparency.”³¹ However, as discussed earlier in this paper, peacebuilding is a fairly complex and evolving process that has not always delivered on its goals. Would integrating climate change adaptation tend to strengthen this process? Would it be straightforward to do this? This has not been the case in many sectors of very stable countries. In view of this, one might ask whether climate change adaptation simply would add another layer of complexity, and more trade-offs to negotiate, into settings characterized by many of the elements that militate against co-operation: a large number of stakeholders, vast asymmetries of power, different values and needs, and different future discount rates?

As a first step towards answering these questions, we consider the opportunities and challenges to integrating climate change adaptation into the four pillars of peacebuilding activities identified by the Utstein and OECD reports discussed earlier. Measures within the security pillar, first of all, are focused on bringing stability to a post-conflict society and reducing the proximate risks of conflict relapse. The reconciliation pillar, second, addresses community healing, justice, peaceful means of dispute resolution, and reparations. Overall, the opportunities to inte-

grate climate change adaptation into either of these domains are quite limited, although there may be overlap in the area of reintegration, since this typically involves settling soldiers and providing them with new livelihoods and therefore serves as a bridge into the activities of the socioeconomic pillar.

For example, after the war in Sierra Leone ended in 2002, some seventy thousand rebels were effectively disarmed and demobilized. However, the reintegration has proven very challenging and today unemployment and underemployment are serious problems for the country, especially for its youth. Indeed, two of the four areas of attention for the current Joint Vision are the closely related goals of empowering youth and bridging the rural-urban divide. Inadequate reintegration and a lack of job creation programmes have forced Sierra Leone's growing youth population to do whatever it can to survive—including drug trafficking, smuggling gold across the border into Guinea, and illegal timbering. So-called “chainsaw gangs” sneak into protected areas, harvest valuable hardwood, and sell it to middlemen for a fraction of its value. While this may provide a few days of food, the rapid pace of deforestation is destroying the watersheds that serve urban areas such as Kenema and the ecosystems that act as a barrier to climate and other environmental stresses. Today, Sierra Leone's forest cover is about five per cent of what it once was, and vulnerability to climate risk is mounting quickly. The lesson here is that reintegration is a key phase of peacebuilding with long-term impacts—for security, the economy, and the environment.

The activities within the governance pillar, designed to promote capacity development for good governance, offer at least two potential entry points for climate change adaptation. The first entry point is in the area of ensuring that marginalized and informal groups are empowered and incorporated into political processes. These groups are widely perceived as having heightened vulnerability to stressors, including climate change impacts. Actions that allow these communities greater control over the agenda-setting and decision-making related to their own needs and priorities have the potential to contribute to good governance. The second entry point is in the area of providing support to the new government to enhance its functional capacity vis-à-vis climate risk management. Climate data collection, organization, and distribution mechanisms—through functioning meteorological services—can be an important part of this capacity. This could contribute to the establishment of early-warning systems to prepare for—and minimize—the impact of events such as storms, floods, disease outbreaks, and famine.

Moreover, measures that encourage a government to create key adaptation-related posts in ministries and departments, establish inter-

departmental co-ordination units, take a long-term perspective, and be flexible in planning and policy development through measures such as review processes, simultaneously can encourage wider participation and build adaptive capacity.

For example, one of the reasons Rwanda is poorly positioned to manage climate risk is that the collection of weather data was virtually stopped during the 1994 genocide and has never been fully restored. Consequently, the country lacks the knowledge base to set priorities in this area. Related to this, the focus of post-conflict peacebuilding was on disabling ethnic stressors, providing security, resettling people, educating children, rebuilding infrastructure, and creating jobs—all obviously critical. However, environmental issues, which have considerable implications for many of these other goals, were largely ignored. Indeed, UNEP did not undertake a post-conflict environmental assessment—a study designed to assess conflict-related environmental impacts and identify post-conflict environmental priorities—until 2008, fourteen years after the end of the genocide.

The socio-economic development pillar of activity offers the greatest opportunities for integrating climate change adaptation into peacebuilding. For example, the sheer number of refugees and IDPs that have to be repatriated and reintegrated can be a daunting task that may take years to complete, and there are typically enormous pressures to accommodate people as quickly as possible. In a country such as Rwanda, for example, where refugees in neighboring countries and IDPs numbered over two million in 1994, many families were resettled in marshes and steep hill-sides—all of which were problematic from a climate change adaptation perspective, as their exposure to climate-related hazards such as flooding and landslides was increased. While recognizing the urgency that tends to surround this process, it is in the country's long-term interest to make even these decisions cognizant of the fact that settling people on steep terrain, in floodplains, or on coastlines can create costly, perennial problems for the country.

Another immediate need is for infrastructure. Inevitably, post-conflict societies want functional transportation, communication, and water and energy systems to be the focus of government policy and donor support. Clearly in many situations, there is a powerful rationale to consider the desirability of climate-proofing critical infrastructure (e.g., by constructing higher bridges, wider drainage systems, more efficient irrigation, and water sources that are not at risk of salinization) and introducing new infrastructure such as sea walls that will help people better manage climate risks.

In relation to improving access to health care and education—always priority areas in peacebuilding—it may be tremendously valuable to assess whether disease patterns are changing due to climate change (e.g., the expansion of malaria and other water and vector borne diseases) and ask whether measures can be taken to address this issue. Education is also an area that can be a key to increasing the adaptive capacity at all levels of social organization. In particular, disaster risk reduction training can be incorporated into the curriculum, along with basics on climate risk management.

Finally, it may be very important to think carefully about changes to supply chains that may result from climate change and to avoid encouraging investment into climate-vulnerable sectors, unless adequate insurance is part of the investment package. In this sense there is great amplitude for donors to climate-screen their own investments. Table 1 summarizes the opportunities for integrating climate change adaptation into the four pillars of peacebuilding.

However, while we agree with the claim by Smith and Vivekananda, and many others, that the integration of climate change adaptation into peacebuilding is, in principle, highly desirable, we also believe that this integration will face many challenges and that it needs to be more carefully explored from both theoretical and practical perspectives before mandates, protocols, manuals, and guidance notes can be drafted.

On the one hand, as we have argued so far, the two processes are similar in important ways. Peacebuilding and adaptation are both about building resilience. Both processes promote adopting a longer-term perspective, with enough flexibility built into the system so that it can react to changing circumstances. Further, both processes are context-dependent, and therefore analytic capacities are important, because interventions need to be informed by context-specific conflict analysis, capacity assessments, vulnerability assessments, and scenario processes. The stakes are high in both processes, as failure or ineffectiveness can translate into heightened vulnerability, loss of lives, and broader development setbacks. Finally, the development activities in peacebuilding missions are often valuable to supporting the wider recognition of underdevelopment as a root cause of conflict. The development community has not always found the right balance between short-term, externally-driven results and “less glamorous” medium- to long-term capacity building. Peacebuilding provides an opportunity to rethink development, and integrating adaptation can make both more sustainable.

On the other hand, however, there are also some important differences between the two processes. While the stakes are high in both cases, the time frames in which these stakes will play out are different.

Table 1: Integrating Peacebuilding and Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation	Peacebuilding			
	Social, economic, environmental	Governance and political	Security	Reconciliation
	Addressing drivers of vulnerability	Literacy, health, gender	Decentralized decision-making	Reintegration
	Building response capacity	Land-use planning		
	Managing climate risk	Crop varieties; More resilient infrastructure	Early-warning	
Confronting climate change		Government commissions		

The threat of conflict relapse is confined to about ten years, whereas the costs of a failure to adapt to climate change may not be fully realized for several decades.

Second, what is good for peacebuilding may not always be good for adaptation or vice-versa. For example, settling people around Virunga National Park was critical to kick-starting livelihoods and stabilizing communities in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as people were able to access forest resources to construction, fuel, food, and medicinal needs. However, the resulting degradation of ecosystem services may have undermined the longer-term adaptive capacity of the system.³² Conversely, putting money into climate forecasting may be seen as an extravagance when people are struggling to meet their daily needs. This suggests that—typical of development generally—climate change adaptation involves trade-offs, some of which may directly confront peacebuilding initiatives. More generally in this regard, asymmetries of cause and effect, and of bargaining power within a country, can be particularly divisive on the climate change front.

Third, there are also perceptual and political challenges. For example, citizens of a post-conflict state may well wonder if climate change adaptation measures being promoted could be a veil for the interests of other countries. There is often great sensitivity to what other countries have been doing and are planning to do. Also, while there are grounds to believe that climate change adaptation would tend to be a unifying force in the UN system, it could actually become a fragmenting one if it was perceived as a threat to the traditional roles different agencies have played. Finally, even if one wants to integrate climate change adaptation into peacebuilding, assessments of climate risk may be difficult or impossible in the time frame available, and it is hard to act and plan under conditions of great uncertainty.

Conclusions

In conclusion, we believe that the integration of climate change adaptation into peacebuilding is attractive in many ways and might even be critical to helping build the needed capacity to transform post-conflict societies into sites of enduring peace and sustainable development. Our own work in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone provides many examples of how the failure to introduce climate change adaptation into peacebuilding activities meant that decisions with long-term consequences were not considered from a climate perspective, and that today these countries are ill-equipped to manage climate risk.

Our main goals in this article were (a) to make the case for integrating climate change adaptation into peacebuilding and (b) to develop a framework for illustrating how this might be done. While recognizing limitations in the body of literature linking climate change, conflict, and security that has mushroomed since the release of the 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports, it is hard to imagine how the counter-argument—this integration should not be pursued—could be made compelling. We do not know how climate change will affect conflict-prone, conflict, and post-conflict societies, but we do have many plausible and alarming scenarios that clearly suggest that actions that can be reconciled with peacebuilding ought to be incorporated. On this basis we have adopted the four pillar model of peacebuilding used by the Utsein group and the OECD and mapped into it a four-part continuum of climate change adaptation, that Hammill helped to develop. It is not surprising to us that the greatest area of potential integration is between climate-sensitive, basic development and the socio-economic pillar of peacebuilding. Nevertheless, there are connections across the matrix.

As committed as we are personally to addressing climate risk, we do not want to be naïve about the prospects for introducing climate change adaptation into peacebuilding operations, and so we also have tried to identify obstacles and challenges. In particular, we believe that there are considerable challenges related to the different time frames associated with peacebuilding and climate change adaptation, which could lead the former community to resist adding this to its already vast and complicated domain. Additionally, while there are areas of convergence, there are also points at which the logic of peacebuilding is likely to run counter to the logic of climate change adaptation, forcing decision-makers into the unhappy realm of trade-offs and compromise. And finally, there will be political and institutional barriers as there have been in every country where some actors have sought a more aggressive stance on climate change. ■

Notes

¹ Dan Smith and Janani Vivekananda, *A Climate of Conflict: The Links between Climate Change, Peace and War* (Oslo: International Alert, 2007), 4, available at <http://www.international-alert.org/pdf/A—Climate—Of—Conflict.pdf> (accessed January 16, 2010).

² See United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), *From Conflict to Peacebuilding: The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment* (Nairobi: UNEP, 2009).

³ See Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Working Group II, *Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*, 2007, <http://www.ipcc.ch/ipccreports/ar4-wg2.htm> (accessed January 16, 2010).

⁴ See Dan Smith and Janani Vivekananda, *Climate Change, Conflict and Fragility: Understanding the Linkages, Shaping Effective Responses* (London: International Alert, 2009), available at <http://www.international-alert.org/press/Climate—change—conflict—and—fragility—Nov09.pdf> (accessed January 16, 2010).

⁵ See UNEP, *From Conflict to Peacebuilding*.

⁶ Similarly, the presence of conflict risks in an area vulnerable to the impacts of climate change may call upon societies to confront these impacts in a different way, so as to reduce the likelihood of conflict.

⁷ See Lakhdar Brahimi, “State-Building in Crisis and Post-Conflict Countries,” paper presented at the 7th Global Forum on Reinventing Government, Building Trust in Government, Vienna, Austria (June 2007), available at <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN026305.pdf> (accessed January 16, 2010); and Roland Paris, *At War’s End: Building Peace After Civil Conflict* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁸ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, “An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping,” Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on January 31, 1992, Document A/47/277 - S/241111, June 17, 1992, available at <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html>; and Boutros Boutros-Ghali, “Supplement to An Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations,” Document A/50/60 - S/1995/1, January 3, 1995, available at <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agsupp.html> (both accessed January 16, 2010).

⁹ Jacob S. Kreilkamp, “U.N. Postconflict Reconstruction,” *International Law and Politics* 35 (2003): 619–70, 619.

¹⁰ Kreilkamp, “U.N. Postconflict Reconstruction,” 619.

¹¹ Michelle Maiese, “What It Means to Build a Lasting Peace,” Knowledge Base Essay, September 2003, <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/peacebuilding> (accessed January 16, 2010).

¹² See OECD, “Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities,” Factsheet 2008, Development Assistance Committee, Paris, 2008, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/36/20/39289596.pdf> (accessed January 16, 2010).

¹³ See Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Towards a Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding: Getting Their Act Together. Overview Report of the Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding* (Oslo: Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004).

¹⁴ Our description of the four pillars summarizes and reiterates language from the two reports identified in the previous note.

¹⁵ These comments are based on Matthew’s participation, through UNEP’s Post Conflict and Disaster Branch, in two United Nations peacebuilding missions to Sierra Leone.

¹⁶ “Joint Vision” refers to a United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) document produced in 2009. It describes the United Nations commitment to twenty-three programmes that support the 2008 Poverty Reduction Strategy entitled “Agenda for Change.” See UNIPSIL, “Joint Vision for Sierra Leone of the United Nations’ Family,” Freetown, Sierra Leone, May 30, 2009, <http://unipsil.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=2219> (accessed January 16, 2010).

¹⁷ OECD, “Capacity Development,” Glossary of Statistical Terms, <http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=7230>; see UNDP, “Capacity Development,” Technical Advisory Paper 2, July 1997, <http://mirror.undp.org/magnet/cdrb/TEHPAP2.htm> (both accessed January 16, 2010).

¹⁸ See Jon Barnett, *The Meaning of Environmental Security: Ecological Politics and Policy in the New Security Era* (London: Zed Books, 2001); Richard Matthew, Mark Halle, and Jason Switzer, eds., *Conserving the Peace: Resources, Livelihoods, and Security* (Geneva and Winnipeg: IISD Press, 2002); and Ken Conca and Geoffrey Dabelko, eds., *Environmental Peacemaking* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2002).

¹⁹ See Oli Brown and Anne Hammill, “Climate Change as the ‘New’ Security Threat: Implications for Africa,” *International Affairs* 83, no. 6 (2007): 1141–54; Kurt M. Campbell, ed., *Climatic Cataclysm: The Foreign Policy and National Security Implications of Climate Change* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2008); CNA, “National Security and the Threat of Climate Change,” 2007, <http://securityand-climate.cna.org>; German Advisory Council on Global Change, *World in Transition: Climate Change as a Security Risk* (London: Earthscan, 2008); and Nicholas Stern, *The Economics of Climate Change: The Stern Review* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

²⁰ German Advisory Council on Global Change, *World in Transition*, 1.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 2–3.

²² See *ibid.*, 2–4.

²³ CNA, “National Security,” 6–7.

²⁴ Achim Maas and Dennis Tänzler, *Regional Security Implications of Climate Change: A Synopsis* (Berlin: Adelphi Consult, 2009), 7.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁶ Smith and Vivekananda, *A Climate of Conflict*, 3.

²⁷ See Emma L. Tompkins and W. Neil Adger, “Building Resilience to Climate Change Through Adaptive Management of Natural Resources,” Tyndall Working Paper 27, Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, January 2003, <http://www.tyndall.ac.uk/sites/default/files/wp27.pdf> (accessed January 16, 2010).

²⁸ This section of the paper is adapted from Heather McGray, Anne Hammill, and Rob Bradley with E. Lisa Schipper and Jo-Ellen Parry, *Weathering the Storm: Options for Framing Adaptation and Development* (Washington, DC: World Resources Institute, 2007).

²⁹ Both authors have extensive experience working on these issues in Rwanda. Anne Hammill, Alec Crawford, Robert Craig, Robert Malpas, and Richard Mat-

thew, *Conflict-Sensitive Conservation: Practitioners' Manual* (Winnipeg: IISD, 2009) is based partly on project work carried out in Rwanda. Also, Matthew is a co-author of the forthcoming UNEP Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment of Rwanda.

³⁰ Smith and Vivekananda, *A Climate of Conflict*, 4.

³¹ Ibid., 5.

³² This case also informed Hammill et al., *Conflict-Sensitive Conservation*, and both authors have carried out fieldwork in and around Virunga National Park.

Moving beyond the Myth of Climate Wars: A Response to Hammill and Matthew

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NINA HALL

The issue of climate change is an issue of war and peace, which we have an obligation to deal with ... [W]e can stop climate wars.

—Senator John Kerry at Copenhagen, December 16, 2009¹

In the lead-up to Copenhagen, as well as at the climate change conference itself, politicians, senior United Nations (UN) officials, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and representatives of civil society highlighted the dire humanitarian impacts of climate change in developing countries. John Kerry's opinion, expressed in the final days of the conference, reflects a widely accepted argument that climate change will lead to conflict. This argument has been endorsed by the United Nations, government agencies, and various think tanks, and has also gained widespread media attention.² Richard Hammill and Anne Matthew's article is a valuable contribution to this literature because they illustrate, from their extensive experience in the field, how peacebuilding can be made "climate sensitive" to avoid the outbreak of conflict in post-conflict contexts.

Their article reflects the state of the current debate on climate change and conflict: It is framed predominantly in policy terms and as an exploration of the connection between the peacebuilding and climate change adaptation literatures and policy frameworks. They argue that peacebuilding is a broad process of reform and capacity building across four pillars: (1) the social, economic, and environmental dimension; (2) the governance and political dimension; (3) the security dimension; and (4) the truth and reconciliation dimension. Climate change adaptation measures, which include everything from poverty reduction strategies to climate risk management, fit well within this all-encompassing, transformative state-building project. Hammill and Matthew elaborate that it is particularly within the first two categories of social, economic, and environmental on the one hand, and governance and political on the other, that climate change adaptation measures can be most significantly advanced. This framework will no doubt be useful for the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the UN Department of Peacekeep-

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ing Operations (DPKO), and other UN agencies as they reflect on how to integrate climate change into their peacebuilding work.

In this response piece I would like to discuss the evolution of climate change as a humanitarian concern. In this regard, there are a number of critical questions. First, what is the nature of the link between climate change and conflict? Second, who is concerned about the relationship between climate change and conflict? Third, what motivates this concern? I will explore the way the “climate change–conflict nexus” is framed and used for many differing motives. This will involve an examination of the portrayal of the humanitarian impacts of climate change by civil society, politicians and the military, and the United Nations. Such an analysis will enable us to position Hammill and Matthew’s contributions within a highly politicized debate.

Does Climate Change Cause Conflict?

Hammill and Matthew argue that climate change impacts on peacebuilding and conflict resolution efforts in two ways. First, climate change may increase the overall demand for peacebuilding missions by tipping unstable areas into openly violent ones. Second, climate change may undermine existing peacebuilding efforts, as dwindling resources may increase “competition and tensions in volatile settings” (p. 90). These tensions in turn may upset post-conflict settings characterized by fragile peace and weak governance structures and institutions. They suggest there is a significant link between climate change—or rather its environmental impacts such as desertification, changes in precipitation, or sea-level rise—and the outbreak or return to conflict. Hammill and Matthew do go on to provide a more nuanced view of this link and acknowledge that the outbreak of conflict is mediated by a number of other social, political, and economic factors. However, this does not lead them to question the link between climate change and conflict in itself.

The argument that climate change causes conflict makes perfect sense at face value. As the world heats up, resources—in particular water and arable land—diminish and competition is said to increase over what little is left.³ Yet, there is little empirical evidence that resource scarcity, in and of itself, triggers conflict between states.⁴ In fact, as Hammill and Matthew acknowledge, resource scarcity may rather lead to co-operation and collaboration to develop adaptation responses and technologies that will ensure survival. While some current research suggests that environmental change may contribute to conflicts at the intra-state level, it is not the determining factor.⁵

Moreover, intra-state conflict may be more likely to occur over an abundance of resources. As Collier argues, civil wars occur where both parties are able to generate revenue and are financially viable.⁶ Existing evidence points to the issue being far more related to resource allocation and good governance than to scarcity. In short, while climate change may lead to a scarcity of resources, this does not automatically mean that conflict will follow either at the international or national level. Despite this ambiguous relationship between conflict and climate change, the assumption that climate change *triggers* or *causes* conflict dominates much of the media, advocacy, and policy discourse.

Indeed, the alleged link between climate change and conflict forms the basis for Hammill and Matthew's policy solution: the integration of climate change into peacebuilding. While they state that it is difficult to make a compelling case against this solution, they do highlight a number of obstacles to effectively integrating climate change into peacebuilding. Adaptation may, for example, add more trade-offs into already difficult negotiations in areas characterized by weak institutions and low capacity for dealing with collective-action failure. Moreover, climate change adaptation measures may run against peacebuilding needs. Lastly, it may simply be difficult to justify environmental projects in a context in which peoples' fundamental needs are not met. Despite these challenges, however, Hammill and Matthew believe that climate change adaptation should be integrated into peacebuilding.

Why Link Climate Change and Conflict?

The broader question is: Why, given the tenuous and ambiguous empirical links between climate change and the outbreak of conflict, should we concentrate on this particular factor of peacebuilding? The answer is to be found in the rise of climate change on the international policy agenda in the last decade. This section discusses the roles of three broad categories of actors who have focused resources and debate on climate change as one of the most important global issues: (1) NGOs/civil society; (2) national governments (principally foreign ministries and the military); and (3) the UN system.

Since the late 1990s, a broad coalition of environmental, development, human rights, and social justice civil society groups have advocated for leaders to take action on climate change. This movement has framed climate change as an environmental and *humanitarian* issue. Major international development and humanitarian NGOs including Oxfam, Christian Aid, and Tearfund have moved into the advocacy space tra-

ditionally occupied by environmental NGOs such as Greenpeace, and have made climate change one of their principal advocacy campaigns. They have made strong moral arguments that climate change will cause “climate wars” and the displacement or death of thousands, if not millions, of people.⁷ Such claims have contributed to the emergence of issues such as “climate wars” and “climate refugees” on the list of current and future global problems. NGOs and civil society groups have framed climate change in apocalyptic terms principally to mobilize the public and to lobby governments to mitigate carbon emissions and sign up to a “strong, fair, and legally binding agreement” in Copenhagen.

Although such an agreement was not signed in Copenhagen, this broad civil society movement has been very successful at moving climate change up the agenda in international fora and drawing the world’s attention to COP15 (the Copenhagen climate change summit)—described as the most important multilateral negotiations of 2009. The environment is now an issue that state leaders, and not just environment ministers, discuss at major political and economic fora such as the G8 and APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation). However, as climate change has moved up the international agenda, it has become “securitized.” In April 2007, for example, the then British foreign secretary argued that climate change went to the very heart of the security agenda and stated: “I have made climate security such a priority of my first year as Foreign Secretary.”⁸ Leaders have adopted this security discourse as it “communicates a certain gravitas ... and warrants a policy response commensurate in effort if not in kind with war.”⁹ Interestingly, governments seeking to justify action on climate change have adopted some of the terms constructed by NGOs and argued that it could lead to “climate wars” and result in the displacement of millions of “climate refugees,” but they have framed these problems as threats to national security. The Pentagon, for instance, officially considers global warming a threat to US national security and will include it among the security threats identified in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review.¹⁰ This securitization—and militarization—of the issue results in stronger emphasis on climate change as a cause of conflict, legitimates a role for the military in responding to environmental crises, and obscures the impacts of environmental change on human security.

Nevertheless, this securitization and militarization gives great political weight to the issue—weight that would be lacking if it was framed simply in environmental terms. Hence, the United Nations has also framed climate change in security terms and emphasized the “climate change–conflict nexus.” In an editorial in the *Washington Post* in 2007, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon argued that the conflict

in Darfur “began as an ecological crisis, arising at least in part from climate change.”¹¹ In this article, Ban Ki-moon used the threat of conflicts caused by climate change as a rhetorical device to mobilize support for a global agreement on climate change. This message has been repeated and reinforced by many UN agencies, including UNEP, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which have also stated that climate change will cause conflict. All UN agencies are now seeking to integrate climate change into their humanitarian work. UNDP, for example, argues that “integrating environment and natural resources into peacebuilding is no longer an option—it is a security imperative.”¹² In a recent report, UNEP claimed that “climate change is considered to be directly related to the conflict in the region [Darfur], as desertification has added significantly to the stress on the livelihoods of pastoralist societies, forcing them to move south to find pasture.”¹³ UN agencies are reframing much of their humanitarian work in climate change terms to maintain their relevance within a changing world, and also to gain access to future climate change adaptation funds.¹⁴

I have highlighted the securitization of climate change and the rhetorical use of the “climate change–conflict nexus” for two reasons. First, it is important to note that UN agencies, governments and the military, and NGOs have differing motives for linking climate change to conflict, which lead to different policy responses.¹⁵ NGOs have tended to emphasize the humanitarian impacts of climate change in apocalyptic terms to compel governments to establish an international agreement to mitigate carbon emissions. Governments have emphasized the national and global security implications of climate change and—particularly in the United States—have pursued a militarization of their policy response. Meanwhile, the United Nations has put emphasis on the security implications of climate change to pressure states to work constructively within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process and to ensure that a successful agreement is reached. In addition, the United Nations has framed climate change in *human security* terms and has stressed the need to develop adequate responses to the adverse humanitarian impacts of climate change. Essentially, the United Nations has emphasized the “climate change–conflict nexus” to ensure that it is part of a solution that involves a bold, binding international agreement and an adaptation fund under the auspices of the United Nations.

Second, we must note that uncritical acceptance of the argument linking climate change and conflict may lead to framing policy in overly simplistic terms, misreading the policy problem, and therefore misguid-

ing our attempts to solve it. We cannot conceive of the “environment” as the problem, divorced from issues of political economy and governance. We may develop the best technologies or adaptation measures, but they will not be effective—or at worst may be misused for other ends—if they do not take these factors into account. The mistakes of this type of “apolitical” and “common-sense” humanitarian policy-making were seen in the response to the Somali famine in the 1980s. Famine was conceptualized as a lack of food, and thus the policy solution was simple: send food aid. Yet, food aid had disastrous impacts on Somalia’s economic and political situation.¹⁶ It undercut local production, Somali farmers lost their livelihoods, and it was used by the government of Siyaad Barre to maintain support with certain ethnic groups, some of whom sold the food aid for arms, eventually leading to civil war. The problem was not a lack of food, but a lack of access or *entitlements* to food.¹⁷ In short, when conceptualizing the causes of conflict, we should not over-emphasize the influence of climate change or separate it from political and economic factors.

Hammill and Matthew do recognize the importance of linking environmental change to the broader political, social, and economic context in post-conflict societies, and we must hope that other humanitarian actors also do so. The authors are willing to acknowledge that the link between climate change and conflict is complex and that adaptation may not always complement peacebuilding initiatives, but may instead undermine them. The next policy step needed, if we are to pursue their agenda, is to look more closely at where integration of climate change into peacebuilding has been attempted, whether it has worked, and why. Yet, stepping back from their policy prescriptions, it becomes clear that Hammill and Matthew implicitly support the securitization of climate change advocated by the United Nations and national governments when they argue that adaptation measures should be tied in with peacebuilding, which is an inherently security-focused activity. In world politics, high value is put on conflict and securitization—and on short-term responses to issues that are framed in these terms. The debate needs to move to longer-term problem-solving and the much more complex and difficult societal shifts required in order to combat the causes of climate change. ■

Notes

¹ The author attended a side event with John Kerry at the COP15 summit in Copenhagen on December 16, 2009.

² For account of the causal link between climate change, migration, and conflict, see Nils Petter Gleditsch, Idean Salehyan, and Ragnhild Nordas, "Climate Change and Conflict: The Migration Link," Coping With Crisis Working Paper Series, International Peace Institute, New York, 2007, available at <http://www.ipacademy.org/media/pdf/publications/cwc-working-paper-climate-change.pdf> (accessed January 17, 2010).

³ See Gleditsch, Nordas and Salehyan, "Climate Change and Conflict."

⁴ See Richard Black, "Environmental Refugees: Myth or Reality?" New Issues in Refugee Research Working Paper 34, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva, 2007, 8; Camilo Boano, Roger Zetter, and Tim Morris, "Environmentally Displaced People," Forced Migration Policy Briefing 1, Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford, 2008, 22-3.

⁵ See Rafael Reuveny, "Environmental Change, Migration and Conflict: Theoretical Analysis and Empirical Explorations," Human Security and Climate Change Workshop, Asker, Norway, 2005, available at <http://www.gechs.org/downloads/holmen/Reuveny.pdf> (accessed January 17, 2010).

⁶ See Paul Collier, "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy," Development Research Group, World Bank, 2000.

⁷ See Christian Aid, *Human Tide: The Real Migration Crisis* (London: Christian Aid, 2007).

⁸ Margaret Beckett, "The Case for Climate Security," Speech at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), London, May 10, 2007, <http://www.ipb.org/Margaret%20Beckett%20-%20The%20Case%20for%20Climate%20Security.html> (accessed January 8, 2009).

⁹ Jon Barnett, "Security and Climate Change," *Global Environmental Change* 13, no. 1 (2003): 7-17, 14.

¹⁰ See Tom Gjelten, "Pentagon, CIA Eye New Threat: Climate Change," National Public Radio (NPR), December 14, 2009, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=121352495> (accessed January 16, 2010).

¹¹ Ban Ki-moon, "A Climate Culprit in Darfur," *The Washington Post*, June 16, 2007.

¹² UNEP, "From Conflict To Peacebuilding: The Role Of Natural Resources And The Environment," <http://www.unep.org/conflictsanddisasters/Policy/EnvironmentalCooperationforPeacebuilding/tabid/283/language/en-US/Default.aspx> (accessed January 16, 2010).

¹³ Boano et al., "Environmentally Displaced People," 23.

¹⁴ In fact, the UN, was concerned at Copenhagen that they would be marginalized from the adaptation fund as governments discussed the option of bilateral funding arrangements. The whole UN system made a large effort to present a united harmonized and effected front through various "One-UN" side events with high-level panels. The author attended two "One-UN" side events during the course of Copenhagen, one of these included the heads of almost every UN agency and the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

¹⁵ Emphasizing climate change may also obscure other pressing environmental issues such as biodiversity or the impact of other non-climatic natural disasters (volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and earthquakes), which may also have an impact on conflict and peacebuilding. The positive impact of the tsunami in Aceh in creating an opportunity for peace is one interesting example of this.

¹⁶ See Michael Maren, *The Road to Hell: The Ravaging Effects of Foreign Aid and International Charity* (New York: The Free Press, 1997).

¹⁷ See Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981).

The Expansion of EU Climate Policy and its Future under the Lisbon Treaty

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DAVID BENSON AND ANDREW JORDAN¹

ABSTRACT

Supporters of the European Union (EU) Lisbon Reform Treaty argue that it will introduce institutional changes that will enhance the capacity of the EU to confront significant policy challenges, most notably those relating to climate change. Despite wide-spread public and academic debate on the contents of the Treaty, surprisingly limited in-depth analysis has been conducted on the implications of “Lisbon” for future climate change policy. Consequently, this article aims to understand its potential impacts in terms of the expansion of policy tasks at the EU level. It argues that while some amendments have the potential to significantly affect current policy dynamics, others simply institutionalize existing practice. As a consequence, the overall impact of the new Treaty is rather mixed. In short, there is something to satisfy both Europhiles and Eurosceptics alike.

Climate change is the greatest challenge facing the world today. It cannot be met without the EU playing a leading role.

—David Miliband²

Public debate on the EU Reform Treaty, otherwise known as the Lisbon Treaty, has often become polarized between Eurosceptics stressing its alleged negative impacts on national autonomy and Europhiles citing its positive gains in terms of revising EU decision-making institutions. Concerns over national interests underpinned the rejection of the Treaty by Irish voters in 2008 and have continually stoked the fire of popular discontent in other European member states. One criticism made of the Treaty is that it merely replicates the now defunct EU Constitutional Treaty, which was sunk by populist referenda in both France and the Netherlands in 2005. Another is that it transfers yet more national powers to Brussels. By contrast, supporters believe that the Treaty is a vital new cog for ensuring the continued running of the EU’s machinery of governance, which threatens to grind unceremoniously to a halt unless there is an institutional overhaul.

The Treaty has also been actively promoted on the grounds that it addresses critical public policy concerns facing the EU such as im-

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migration, energy security, and, of course, climate change. For “yes” campaigners in the 2008 Irish referendum, the Treaty’s climate change provisions were a positive—if ultimately unsuccessful—selling point. European Commission President Barroso stated that “[c]limate change and energy security are ... [the] two cornerstones of the Lisbon Treaty.”³ Yet, discussion of this first “cornerstone” has largely been ignored in public political debates and has barely featured in academic analyses. It is therefore important to understand what implications the Treaty might have for future EU climate change policy and governance.

This article therefore examines what the impacts of Lisbon might be on day-to-day policy-making in the climate area. Such an analysis is important for three reasons. First, the EU has evolved from an economically based international organization into a complex, multilevel system of governance that strongly affects the environmental policies of its member states.⁴ Within this system, climate change is increasingly governed by policy decisions taken not at the national level, but by national governments acting together with EU institutions at the European level.⁵ Collective EU action is internationally significant, with member states’ combined emissions of greenhouse gases accounting for 10.5 per cent of the global total in 2006.⁶ Second, the development of this system has in part proceeded via treaty changes that have helped to progressively embed the environmental “rules of the game” into EU policy-making.⁷ Treaty amendments are potentially important because they can significantly shape the space for subsequent policy development.⁸ On the other hand, there is also evidence that they simply codify policy-making practices that have evolved in the period since the previous treaty amendment.⁹ Lastly, expansion of climate policy at the European level has enhanced the position of the EU as an international actor more broadly.

This article is structured around three questions. First, how has EU climate change policy expanded in the past? An outline is provided of the historical expansion of climate policy at the EU level. Developments are explained through the perspective of three interlinked dynamics of policy expansion drawn from the European integration literature—Internationalization, Federalization, and Environmental Policy Integration (EPI). Second, what amendments relating to climate change policy will the new Treaty introduce? A brief summary is provided of the background to the Treaty reform process and, building on previous analysis, an examination is given of the potential implications for EU climate change policy.¹⁰ Third, how might the Lisbon Treaty affect future policy expansion? These potential impacts are then related to the political dynamics that have shaped EU climate policy to date.

Current EU climate change policy and governance dates back nearly two decades. During this time, a small but influential *acquis communautaire* (body of laws and policies) has coalesced at EU level. Measures introduced are broadly divisible by their external (international), internal (EU), and cross-sectoral dimensions. This section therefore examines policy expansion according to these three dimensions.

Policy Expansion in Three Dimensions

Theories of European policy expansion abound, but such complex dynamics cannot be entirely captured by a single explanatory approach.¹¹ EU climate change policy expansion could, for example, be viewed through the lens of three critical drivers: Internationalization, Federalization, and EPI.

Under internationalization, policy expands as the multilevel EU becomes party to international agreements on behalf of the member states.¹² Although manifestly not a “state,” the EU is legally empowered under its founding Treaty of Rome to enter into international agreements in certain areas. While external “Community policy-making” has primarily encompassed the Common Commercial Policy in respect of multilateral trade agreements, it has increasingly “been extended into more contested areas such as ... the environment.”¹³ Meanwhile, the European Commission is involved in co-ordinating, via the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), between national governments on more openly intergovernmental foreign policy issues—what Smith terms “Union policy-making.”¹⁴ Institutional construction “from below and above” has thus become a powerful internationalizing dynamic in EU environmental policy.¹⁵ International tasks have also expanded via member states’ participation in international agreements, necessitating EU action in order to harmonize regulatory approaches across the single market. Under a dynamic similar to Europeanization, policy expansion occurs as tasks are subject to passive or proactive “uploading” from member states, “downloading” from the international level, or shared horizontally between EU institutions.¹⁶

Federalization occurs in multilevel governance systems when a vertical powershift takes place from autonomous “self-rule” in constituent states to co-operative “self-rule and shared rule” with the federal level as policy tasks become centralized.¹⁷ According to Trechsel, there is widespread agreement that a form of “federalization” is occurring within the

EU.¹⁸ Historical evidence broadly supports this view, with a discernible upward reallocation of policy tasks from member states to the EU having taken place since the 1950s. Although uneven when viewed across policy sub-sectors, an ongoing process of federalization is palpable in areas such as the environment.¹⁹ Here “self-rule and shared rule” is manifestly the dominant mode of governance after an incremental centralization of power since the early 1970s. One primary rationale for centralizing policy is the propensity of environmental problems to transcend national borders, necessitating legally enforceable “federal” responses to internalize impacts, particularly within the context of the single market.

Policy expansion has also proceeded via the lateral, cross-sectoral integration (“mainstreaming”) of climate change objectives into the development of cognate EU policies on topics like energy, agriculture, and transport. In the EU, the principle of EPI is linked to the application of sustainable development.²⁰ As sustainable development became the primal discourse shaping EU environmental policy in the late 1980s and 1990s, means were sought to achieve greater cross-sectoral integration of the environment into economic areas. The EPI principle was first introduced into EU policy-making by the 1986 Single European Act and then incorporated into the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam as a core objective of policy. In EU policy dynamics, EPI has since assumed a “procedural” role, implying “that policy makers in non-environmental sectors recognize the environmental repercussions of their decisions.”²¹ In terms of policy expansion, the principle has undeniably informed the growth of environmentally-related policy into areas such as energy and transport.²²

The Evolution of EU Climate Policy: An Historical Overview

Internationalization dynamics were critical in establishing EU climate policy. Scientific evidence on the “greenhouse effect” first appeared in the 1970s. By 1979, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) had identified the urgency of action to irreversible damage to the climate from human activities. A specific EU policy response evolved gradually after the establishment of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988. The IPCC’s research subsequently established clear linkages between human activities and climate change. These findings prompted a Commission communication on climate change in 1988—the first recognizable step in developing an EU policy. Specific measures were slow to emerge and—recognizing a gap in international leadership on the issue—the 1990 Dublin European Council

called for unilateral EU action to tackle rising emissions. Meeting later that year, the joint Council of Environment and Energy Ministers agreed to stabilize EU carbon emissions at 1990 levels by 2000.²³

Thereafter, a gradual but by no means uncontroversial federalization of climate change policy occurred. With the EU anxious to maintain its global policy leadership prior to negotiations on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, concrete policy measures were required. An EU strategy to meet its carbon emissions reduction targets and to improve energy efficiency was consequently outlined by the European Commission. Central to the Commission's strategy were proposals for two directives (on energy efficiency and a carbon and energy tax) and two decisions (promoting renewable energy and monitoring emissions). Although three of these items proved uncontroversial, the fourth (the carbon and energy tax) was not.²⁴ National governments, including the United Kingdom, blocked it in the Council, arguing that taxation should remain a national competence.

Further measures followed in the late 1990s. Informing this strategy was the perceived need to integrate a climate change dimension into EU energy and transport policy. The policy options forwarded by a 1995 Commission working paper were completing an EU-wide internal market for energy supply, promoting generation of renewable energy, improving transport efficiency, and providing support for technological development. These initial options then led to an increase of measures during this period.²⁵ Simultaneously, the Commission was targeting carbon emissions from passenger vehicles. Resistance from European auto manufacturers to binding legislation led the Commission to pursue voluntary agreements to cut vehicle emissions with the industry in the late 1990s.²⁶

Internationalization was again evident as the EU drove forward the 1997 UNFCCC Kyoto Protocol process. Prior to the Kyoto Summit, the EU Environment Council had called for a fifteen per cent global reduction in greenhouse gases by 2010 on 1990 levels.²⁷ In the event, the EU committed itself to an eight per cent reduction between 2008 and 2012.²⁸ Meeting this commitment was initially approached by dividing emissions reductions among member states under a "burden-sharing" agreement.²⁹ Using a principle of differential responsibilities, wealthier member states agreed to substantial cuts, while some less developed countries were allowed to stabilize or even increase their emissions.

In the early 2000s the federalization of climate change policy continued. A Commission communication, introduced in 2000, set out potential emissions reductions policies, including a multi-stakeholder exercise known as the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP). This

outlined a series of policy proposals primarily relating to energy supply and efficiency. Directives subsequently adopted by the EU included those on the energy performance of buildings and emissions trading. Climate change policy therefore became ever more federalized and increasingly integrated across sectors.

Perhaps the most significant development to emerge during this period was the EU Emissions Trading Directive. Known as “Cap and Trade,” these systems work by providing economic incentives to polluters to reduce their emissions through creating a market for tradable pollution allowances or “credits.” An international trading mechanism to control greenhouse gas emissions was originally suggested by the US government during the Kyoto Protocol negotiations.³⁰ Although initially reluctant to embrace the notion, the European Commission nonetheless issued proposals for a Europe-wide emissions trading directive in 2001. Despite intense intergovernmental bargaining, the directive was adopted in 2003, with emissions trading starting in 2005. With an Emissions Trading System (ETS) under construction, the EU felt sufficiently confident to ratify the Kyoto Protocol in 2002.

Recent years have witnessed heightened expansion as climate change and energy agendas have merged. Heads of state, meeting at the 2007 European Council in Brussels, committed themselves to adopt an integrated climate-energy package of new policies. A critical objective will be the development of a “highly energy-efficient and low greenhouse-gas-emitting economy.”³¹ A binding target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by twenty per cent by 2020 was also established. Initial measures for meeting these ambitious targets were proposed by the Commission in 2008 under the EU’s climate-energy package.³² Included in this were proposals for: a directive revising the ETS; an effort sharing decision; a renewable energy directive; a carbon capture and storage directive; a fuel quality directive; and a regulation on carbon emissions from cars. In terms of EU climate change policy, the so-called “20 20 by 2020” package therefore marks a significant step which should strengthen EU international leadership on this issue.

Climate policy integration is also occurring in the transport sector. Aviation is now included in the new 2009 ETS Directive, and emissions from passenger cars have also been retargeted by EU regulators. The car industry’s abject failure to meet voluntary targets led the Commission to introduce the regulation limiting carbon emissions under the “20 20 by 2020” package. This was adopted in early 2009. Meanwhile, transport emissions continue to increase with data showing that they grew by twenty-eight per cent between 1990 and 2006, suggesting that

this sector will become a key battleground for meeting future emissions reduction targets.³³

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One area not subject to federalization is climate change adaptation. To date, individual member states have chosen to pursue their own national-level strategies, although this area is ripe for a greater EU role.³⁴ As such, the European Commission published a white paper on climate change adaptation in early 2009 outlining initial steps.³⁵ Like the transport and energy sectors, adaptation could become a significant focus for future federalization and cross-sectoral policy integration.

Measuring Policy Expansion

Beginning in the late 1980s, the EU has—via the linked processes of internationalization, federalization and policy integration—gradually expanded the ambit of its climate change policy. However, this expansion has hardly been linear. On the contrary, there have been numerous fits and starts. This temporal dimension of policy development is visible in Table 1. Focusing on specific climate change and related energy efficiency measures in terms of the types of major policy instruments adopted, several trends are apparent. Climate change policy has expanded via the use of regulatory instruments, voluntary agreements, market-based instruments, and “informational” measures such as consumer labeling.³⁶ The period between 1992 and 2000 witnessed a relatively slow expansion in their use. The instruments introduced primarily covered energy efficiency and the labeling of household appliances. Voluntary agreements on carbon emissions from passenger cars were reached in the late 1990s. A measurable step-change in policy expansion occurred post-2000 as the EU sought to meet its Kyoto Protocol commitments. Both regulatory and market-based instruments were introduced, including the 2003 Emissions Trading Scheme Directive. In 2009, further regulatory mechanisms were adopted as part of the “20 20 by 2020” climate-energy package.

“Rebranding” the EU: Climate Change Policy and the Lisbon Treaty

The foregoing analysis demonstrates that an incremental expansion in EU climate change policy has taken place, with a pronounced step-change around 2000. If these trends are simply extrapolated forward, policy could be expected to continue growing. How likely is this to occur, particularly in the light of the recent adoption of the Lisbon Treaty?

Table 1: EU climate change policy: major instruments 1992-2009.³⁷

Regulatory instruments	• 1992 Monitoring carbon emissions • 2001 Electricity from renewable energy • 2003 Energy performance of buildings • 2003 Biofuels • 2004 Promotion of combined heat and power • 2009 Climate change and energy package of instruments (covering: carbon emissions; carbon capture and storage; renewable energy; revision of emissions trading; “Effort sharing” agreement)
Market-based instruments	• 2004 Upper and lower limit for national fuel taxes • 2003 Emissions trading (functioning from 2005)
Informational instruments	• 1992 Energy labelling • 1992 Eco-label • 1993 Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (emas)
Voluntary instruments	• 1999/2000 Car emissions (supplanted by 2009 EU Regulation)

It contains several legal amendments that could conceivably shape the rate, scale, and form of future policy expansion. This section examines the contents of the Treaty in greater depth in order to provide a better prediction of future dynamics. To contextualize this analysis, first an explanation is provided of how and why the Treaty includes provisions on climate change.

Institutionalizing Climate Change: From Brussels to Lisbon (via Berlin)

Climate change was not explicitly mentioned in the now defunct draft Constitutional Treaty, although some relevant measures (such as the new energy title, see below) were included. How climate change came to be explicitly incorporated into the Lisbon Treaty is reflective of both converging public concerns and political opportunism. After the public’s rejection of the Constitution, many Eurosceptic analysts and politicians confidently predicted the demise of what they perceived to be an elitist

attempt to engineer a federal superstate. For some time, these views appeared vindicated. During 2005 and 2006, national politicians engaged in bitter recriminations while vainly seeking solutions to the constitutional limbo that the EU found itself in. Supporters of the Constitutional Treaty, however, regrouped and retrenched. With backing from the Commission, the Amato Group—comprised of leading EU elites—met in Brussels to redraft the text into a new document. This work sought to amend the existing treaties—the 1957 Treaty establishing the European Community (Treaty of Rome, also known as TEC) and the 1992 Treaty on European Union (TEU). Successive Council Presidencies were unable to steer a way forward until the German government took the lead in 2007 with a self-expressed mandate to resolve the constitutional impasse. Using its considerable political clout, the German Presidency led by Angela Merkel was able to secure political commitment to reach a new agreement. This was done at the March 2007 European Council in Berlin and gave rise to what became known as the Berlin Declaration.

Climate change issues entered the process prior to the Berlin Council. For some national politicians, climate change provided a timely opportunity for the EU to demonstrate its broader relevance. Writing before the Berlin negotiations, UK Environment Secretary David Miliband argued for a “rebranding” of the EU as the “Environmental Union” to improve its legitimacy and to provide it with a renewed *raison d’être*.³⁸ He deliberately linked climate change to the constitutional reform process as “the issue that can best reconnect Europe with its citizens and rebuild trust in the European institutions.”³⁹ For other political actors, climate change had become an amenable and convenient populist device for selling a new treaty to sceptics. These exact sentiments were expressed by national officials preparing for the Berlin Council. The German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier suggested that “if we want to open this discussion [on a treaty] then climate protection is, in my view, the obvious candidate for an additional element.”⁴⁰ British government actors also targeted an opportunity to employ climate change strategically to “draw the sting from Eurosceptic hostility to new EU powers.”⁴¹

As a result, climate change concerns were incorporated into what became known as the Lisbon Treaty. Following the Berlin Declaration, EU officials began to draft a new treaty based on the Amato Group’s document. Rather than just a literal “cut and paste” of the old Constitution, the final text, published in June 2007, contained some genuinely new elements, including specific provisions for climate change.⁴² After agreement was reached on the text at the 2007 Brussels Intergovernmental Conference, the Treaty was signed in Lisbon later that year.

Key Amendments: Competences and Procedures

To all but the most seasoned EU analyst, the Lisbon Treaty text is a totally impenetrable document. This results partly from the nature of EU treaty-making. While the Constitution was written *de novo* as a single document using relatively plain text, Lisbon is an amending treaty. Its provisions are written as a series of legal amendments to the two existing founding treaties. In order to understand the text of the new Treaty, it has to be read alongside previous agreements. To simplify our analysis, key provisions for climate change policy are divided into those addressing *competences* and those introducing *procedural* amendments. Changes to policy-making procedures are significant as they could enhance the EU's opportunities for future expansion.

Competences

Under primary law, decision-making powers or competences are allocated to the EU by member states under the principle of conferral. Accordingly, the EU can only—in theory at least—introduce legislation in areas conferred to it under its founding treaties. Environmental policy thus became a shared EU competence in 1987 after a specific environmental “title” (Title VII) had been included in the Single European Act. Lisbon revises existing competences and reallocates further tasks upward from national governments to the EU, potentially altering future climate change policy and governance.

Under the Lisbon Treaty, provisions for environmental policy effectively remain unchanged apart from one significant amendment. A new article (Article 191 (1), formerly Article 174 TEC) has been inserted into the Treaty of Rome, providing EU environmental policy with the revised objectives of: “preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment, protecting human health, prudent and rational utilisation of natural resources, [and] *promoting measures at international level to deal with regional or worldwide environmental problems, and in particular combating climate change.*”⁴³ As such, this amendment does not give the EU a new legal power for climate change, since it merely expands existing environmental objectives. However, it does provide a clearer indication of the expected direction of future policy.

New EU powers have also been introduced into the interrelated area of energy. To date, a *de facto* EU energy policy has emerged via the incremental, *ad hoc* introduction of a patchwork of legislative measures founded on various other Treaty provisions.⁴⁴ National governments

have historically thwarted Commission attempts to create a genuinely common European energy policy.⁴⁵ Their resistance weakened in the early 2000s in response to several interconnected factors, primarily concerns over energy dependency from “unstable” regions, but also the desire to stimulate new low-carbon technologies to boost global competitiveness and the long-running battle by the Commission to “unbundle” European energy markets to improve their efficiency.⁴⁶ Climate change has, however, become a major rationale for a treaty-based energy competence and a more joined-up EU energy policy.⁴⁷ Integration of climate change concerns into energy measures, as described above, has been occurring for some time. An energy title was thus created in the draft Constitution, subsequently redrafted into the Lisbon Treaty. Contained in this title, Article 194 (1) states:

In the context of the establishment and functioning of the internal market and with regard for the need to preserve and improve the environment, Union policy on energy shall aim ... to ... ensure the functioning of the energy market; ... ensure security of energy supply in the Union; ... promote energy efficiency and energy saving and the development of new and renewable forms of energy; and ... promote the interconnection of energy networks.⁴⁸

The Council will adopt energy measures under co-decision, or “ordinary legislative procedure” as it will be renamed, with the European Parliament. Therefore, the new Treaty will provide wide legal powers to the EU for meeting combined climate and energy objectives, most notably improving energy efficiency, increasing energy savings, and expanding renewable sources of energy to reduce emissions.

The Lisbon Treaty will also create two new titles, each potentially providing a new impetus for climate change adaptation, an area more fragmented than mitigation policy. First, the EU will gain new powers to promote greater solidarity among member states, ostensibly in the event of terrorist attacks, but also in response to natural disasters, which are expected to increase under climate change (Title VII, Article 222).⁴⁹ Second, a related title will be created covering civil protection (Title XXIII).⁵⁰ The EU has already introduced several *de facto* measures for co-ordinating national civil protection strategies under its existing environmental powers. The provisions of the new title will empower EU actors to facilitate greater co-operation between member states in preventing and protecting against environmental disasters. Powers for solidarity and civil protection could be invoked in the event of, and preparation for, climate change related disasters.

The amendments will also make some procedural changes that could have an important bearing on international climate change policy-making. In their analysis of the Constitution, van Schaik and Egenhofer identified significant faults with the EU's ability to negotiate climate change agreements.⁵¹ Since climate change has largely been designated as an area of intergovernmental interest, forging a common position among national governments and EU institutions often proved very complex.⁵² Reviving a measure first incorporated into the Constitution, the Lisbon Treaty has created a High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy ("foreign minister") with a dedicated, funded diplomatic service known as the external action service. This position could enhance the EU's ability to negotiate future international climate change agreements by reducing some of the internal disputes that took place in the past.⁵³ The Lisbon Treaty has also introduced a permanent Council Presidency to replace the current six-monthly rotating position. As the success of past negotiations has tended to correlate with the priorities and co-ordinating ambitions of incumbent Council Presidencies, this move should ensure greater consistency over time.⁵⁴

Whether this results in a greater emphasis on climate change issues remains to be seen. In the past, the Commission has used the presence of weak intergovernmental co-ordination structures to push for stronger EU powers. In many ways, it has been the only stable EU actor in international climate policy negotiations, as the lead has passed from one presidency to the next. Internally, it also initiated innovative policy measures such as the ETS.

Two other procedural changes impact directly on climate change policy. First, Lisbon extends the co-decision powers of the European Parliament to new areas. Although the Parliament already shared decision-making with the Council for environmental policy under co-decision, the "ordinary legislative procedure" now applies to further policy sectors with a strong climate change dimension, including transport, energy, regional development, and agriculture. Second, Council voting procedures are to be restructured. From 2014, Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) will be extended to more areas of policy than at present. While almost all aspects of environmental policy are currently subject to QMV, some "nationally sensitive" areas are exempt, including environmental taxation. In these realms, unanimity is the decision rule. In the past, this has thwarted Commission attempts to introduce environmental taxation, including the carbon and energy tax described above. However, under

the Lisbon Treaty, the Council is able to switch voting on these sensitive issues to QMV (and thus to the “ordinary legislative procedure” with the Parliament). These amendments may allow faster, more decisive policy-making should member states desire it.

Climate Policy Beyond Lisbon

How might these amendments affect future policy dynamics? One way to answer this question is to analyse their influence on the existing drivers of policy expansion, namely internationalization, federalization, and policy integration. With regards to internationalization dynamics, “external” policy expansion may proceed in a certain manner. According to the EU Environment Commissioner, although the new Article 191 “will not result in a change in the legal basis for any future action which the EU may wish to propose ... [it] provides a clearer recognition of the importance of tackling climate change at the international level.”⁵⁵ However, the article appears significant as it provides EU institutions with a potentially broad role in promoting international environmental action, particularly on climate change. These amendments will then undoubtedly increase the capacity of EU actors to expand the external dimension of climate change policy. The EU has appointed itself as an international climate change policy “leader.”⁵⁶ Procedural changes made by Lisbon could enhance this status by improving internal decision-making and boosting external negotiating capacity.

The Treaty amendments could also influence policy expansion via federalization. Policy tasks could continue to be centralized away from member states. A new energy competence will, broadly interpreted, appear to embed wide-ranging powers for communitizing energy policy and creating a genuine single market for energy supply, both of which are stated as strategic EU aims. Civil protection and solidarity powers also have implications for the long-term adaptation strategies of member states. National governments could be obliged to enhance the co-ordination of civil protection responses in respect of solidarity. Due to changes in Council voting and co-decision procedures, yet more areas of environmental policy could come under the EU’s influence. In the case of climate change, fiscal instruments may prove easier to introduce. Analysts are divided on the potential policy-making impacts of Council voting changes, but for Andrew Duff MEP, they will “much enhance the Union’s capacity to act by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the institutions and decision-making mechanisms ... to face its new global challenges and address the issues which matter ... such as climate

change, [and] energy security.”⁵⁷ In this respect, the Treaty may enhance the ongoing process of federalization.

Potentially, the Treaty amendments could affect the dynamics of EPI. The Treaty’s enhanced energy powers could allow the EU to expand its role in this sector. Given the European Parliament’s traditional support for environmental issues, the extension of its powers could see a greater emphasis placed on integrating emissions reductions objectives into sectors so far resistant to wide-spread EPI, for example agricultural policy. However, the precise impacts of the new provisions are difficult to predict in any detail. One compelling argument is that their impact will be minor because they merely formalize existing patterns of expansion that would probably have continued had Lisbon been abandoned. Evidence that climate policy has accreted gradually over time does seem to add credence to this view. Moreover, application of the amendments will ultimately depend on how they are invoked in policy-making according to national government preferences.

With regard to internationalization, although the amendments may facilitate further policy expansion, the EU is already highly active in the global climate change arena. While a “leader” in the UNFCCC process since its inception, the EU is also spear-heading current attempts to forge a post-Kyoto agreement.⁵⁸ Additional actions include encouraging wider participation of countries and sectors in the ETS, providing financial assistance to developing countries, promoting low-carbon technologies, and expanding market-based mechanisms for emissions reductions.⁵⁹ To an extent, the EU is already promoting these aims globally through climate change co-operation with non-EU countries. Collaborative linkages have been forged between the ETS and other fledgling regional carbon-trading schemes via the International Carbon Action Partnership. In parallel, the EU has cultivated engagement with “strategic” countries outside of the Kyoto Protocol, primarily the United States. Climate change partnerships have been established with developing countries and regional economic organizations. The Treaty may then merely add legal formality to existing policy expansion. As such, the UK House of Lords argues that “[t]he introduction into the Treaty of a specific reference to climate change is of strategic rather than legal significance.”⁶⁰

Current federalization trends may not significantly alter in a post-Lisbon era either. According to the Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas, although the Treaty adds legal bases for energy and civil protection,

action has already been taken at the Community level with regard to energy policy as well as in the civil protection sphere ... What the Lisbon Treaty does

here is to provide the EU with clearer powers to propose and adopt measures in those two policy areas, whilst at the same time setting out the limits of those powers.⁶¹

In other words, the Treaty simply codifies the policy status quo. For example, the Civil Protection Mechanism, adopted in 2007, has already established co-operation between the Commission and member states in the event of environmental disasters. Such co-operation will continue, and perhaps intensify, despite the Treaty. Energy policy-making, however, could well see a significant expansion on the back of the amendments. Environmental policy-making increased rapidly after the Single European Act added an environmental title to the founding treaties.⁶² With potentially sweeping EU powers for energy policy-making, a similar federalizing momentum may emerge although a number of constraints are built into the Treaty (see below).

Third, policy expansion via EPI is already well advanced. While serious questions pertain over the long-term effectiveness of the EU's EPI strategies, its political popularity remains strong, at least among environmentalists.⁶³ One way in which EPI is being promoted is via the amalgamation of energy and climate change objectives at the EU level via the creation of a climate and energy "super DG" (Directorate-General) in the Commission. Further incursions of climate change elements into transport policy-making are foreseen to enable the EU to meet its international emissions reduction targets.⁶⁴ Structural funding also now includes climate change considerations as part of a wider "greening" of EU spending. In March 2009, the Commission announced plans to invest €105 billion in the "green economy" via the EU's Cohesion Fund. Some €48 billion will be allocated to climate change related projects, primarily rail infrastructure, renewable energies, and energy efficiency schemes.⁶⁵

Finally, member states' attempts to resist policy expansion should not be overlooked. Member states certainly enjoy some veto power via Council decision-making, although this "brake" has gradually degraded as the scope of co-decision-making has expanded. Yet, the Lisbon Treaty will still allow states to block new energy related measures if they so wish. Under the new environment title, unanimity will remain the decision rule for proposals involving member states' choice of different energy sources. Governments could therefore still veto energy measures if national interests were at stake. Although to date member states have supported a common energy policy, the acid test will be whether the Commission can genuinely unbundle the domestic market dominance

Conclusions

Climate change is undeniably a key feature of the new Lisbon Treaty. As it is implemented, the capacity of the EU to continue its global leadership in climate change negotiations will grow. New powers for solidarity and civil protection may increase EU co-ordination of intranational responses to climate change related events. The linkage of climate change with energy objectives in recent EU policy-making initiatives will also expand, accelerating existing federalization processes. Environmental policy integration could also expand as climate policy tasks gradually diffuse into more and more cognate sectors. For scholars of intergovernmentalism such as Moravcsik, these Treaty changes are important to understand, as they will eventually shape the future course of EU integration.⁶⁶ Beauty, though, is in the eye of the beholder. The new changes may please some Europhiles, but strike fear into the hearts of Eurosceptics who are worried about the loss of yet more sovereignty to Brussels.

However, not all of the “new” treaty is actually new. Many aspects simply seek to tweak existing policy expansion dynamics. Internationalization processes are already ongoing with the EU being active in negotiating a successor to the Kyoto Protocol. Federalization is increasingly apparent in the energy sector with a merging of energy and climate change objectives together under a new policy framework. The integration of environmental concerns into cognate sectors is also well advanced, with climate change becoming a central feature. In this broader sense, Lisbon is really only a facilitator of ongoing processes. EU climate change policy, in other words, is likely to continue expanding irrespective of the Lisbon Treaty. This rather different interpretation is likely to satisfy Eurosceptics, but to disappoint the Europhiles who wanted a new treaty to radically re-equip the EU handle the challenges of the new century. When Barroso used the term “cornerstone” to describe the climate change aspects of the new Treaty, he was undoubtedly trying to appeal to Eurosceptics and Europhiles alike. That he had to do this tells us more about the state of European integration in the late 2000s than the EU’s fight against climate change. ■

¹ The authors would like to thank the four anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on the paper.

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⁶³ European Environment Agency, "Environmental Policy Integration in Europe: State of Play and an Evaluation Framework," Report No. 2/2005, Copenhagen, 2005.

⁶⁴ See European Commission, *A Sustainable Future for Transport* (Brussels: CEC, 2009).

⁶⁵ See European Commission, "Cohesion Policy Backs 'Green Economy' for Growth and Long-Term Jobs in Europe," Press Release, Brussels, March 9, 2009.

⁶⁶ See Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht* (London: UCL Press, 1998).

Member State Preferences and the Importance of Implementation: A Response to Benson and Jordan

FABIAN TEICHMÜLLER

In "The Expansion of EU Climate Policy and its Future Under the Lisbon Treaty," David Benson and Andrew Jordan provide a succinct account of the development of climate change policy at the EU level. They observe the role climate change plays in the recently ratified Lisbon Treaty and they point to some of the possible impacts that the amendments contained in this treaty may have on the future of EU climate policy. While the article achieves its aim of providing an overview of the expansion of "formal" EU climate policy, that is, policy as contained in EU documents, this response emphasizes the importance of also considering the implementation of these policies, since we should be at least as concerned with policy outcomes as we are with policy outputs. To account for past climate policy developments, I will focus on the preferences of individual member states. Addressing these issues will highlight the challenges that the EU and its member states will face in the area of climate policy in the coming years. First, however, I will evaluate the theoretical framework used by Benson and Jordan, and I will argue that, while useful, the length of the contribution does not allow the authors to make full use of it.

Internationalization, Federalization, Environmental Policy Integration: Benson and Jordan's Theoretical Framework

Benson and Jordan use the concepts of Internationalization, Federalization, and Environmental Policy Integration (EPI) in order to trace the expansion of climate policy making at the EU level in the past thirty years. They look at those parts of the Lisbon Treaty that are relevant to climate change, how they came to be included, and what their potential impact on future climate policy may be. The authors are careful in highlighting the fact that it is difficult to extrapolate from past policy expansion to possible future policy changes, and their account of past policy changes is both informative and succinct.

Fabian Teichmüller, "Member State Preferences and the Importance of Implementation: A Response to Benson and Jordan," *St Antony's International Review* 5, no. 2 (2010): 141–146.

With regard to the framework used in the article, a minor point of criticism would be that while they successfully highlight the process of internationalization (that is, the way in which the EU's leading role in international negotiations shaped climate policy expansion internally), both EPI and especially federalization of policy receive rather short shrift. First, when discussing EPI, Benson and Jordan carefully show how climate concerns became increasingly integrated into energy policy, and how renewable energy and energy efficiency are areas within which EU climate policy has progressed considerably. Yet, not only has EPI implementation often been fraught with considerable difficulty, its progress has also been uneven across policy areas.¹ For example, the article states that the principle of EPI has "undeniably informed the growth of environmentally-related policy into areas such as energy and transport" (p. 124). Nevertheless, the article does not provide a sufficient account of the difficulties faced by the EU and other actors in including environmental concerns into other policy areas, such as agricultural policy where, arguably, much less progress has been made than in energy policy.

Second, it is difficult to distinguish federalization as a distinct process in Benson and Jordan's account. They illustrate the expansion of climate policy at the EU level, yet it seems that to use federalization as a meaningful concept, it would be necessary to not only show policy expansion at that level but furthermore the transfer of competences and the increasing *centralization* of climate policy-making within the EU. In other words, evidence supporting a federalization hypothesis should include a lack of parallel processes of climate policy expansion at the national level or, alternatively, the faster development of climate policy in some member states than at the EU level. To sum up, internationalization, federalization, and policy integration are useful theoretical tools to understand policy development. Within the confines of the article, however, there may not have been sufficient space available to deal adequately with all three of them.

Past Policy Implementation: The Kyoto Protocol and Emissions Trading

A wider set of questions raised by Benson and Jordan's contribution concerns the impact of written policies agreed at the EU level: their implementation, their constraining influence on actors, and whether they are merely a formalization of past practices or indeed statements regarding future intentions. Addressing these questions requires a focus on the con-

text of past EU decision-making, the respective successes and failures in implementing EU climate policy in the past, as well as the current political context that will shape future climate policy-making and implementation as influenced by the Lisbon Treaty changes. Two well-known examples highlight the sometimes tenuous link between declared policies and real-world impact and implementation: emissions reductions in the “EU-15” member states (the fifteen member states of the EU at the time the Kyoto Protocol was signed in 1997) and the EU Emission Trading System (EU ETS).

There has been a clear reduction in carbon emissions since the 1990 base year of the Kyoto Protocol, and the EU-15 were—even before the current economic crisis—on track to meet their 2012 emissions reduction commitments.² Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to see this exclusively (or even primarily) as the result of an expansion of climate policy in order to implement the Kyoto Protocol. In fact, a large proportion of the overall EU-15 emissions reductions are due to the demise of the highly carbon-intensive East German industry in the early 1990s as well as the switch from coal-fired to gas-fired power plants in the United Kingdom in the second half of the 1990s; processes which not only largely predate emission reduction policies but were furthermore driven by non-climate considerations.³ This illustrates two things: a correlation between an announced policy and a result seemingly showing its implementation can be misleading, and it may be that the EU’s ambitious international stance could—to an extent—have been the result, and not the cause, of carbon emissions reductions.

Looking at the EU ETS shows why studying bargaining processes during the implementation of a stated policy is crucial in order to judge its ambitiousness and its real-life impact. While the EU ETS is definitely an ambitious policy framework to deal with climate change in principle, its actual implementation has often suffered from a lack of political will and member states’ worries about losing industrial competitiveness. The way in which emission permits (i.e., the right to pollute) have been allocated to industries illustrates these problems: the free allocation of permits to polluting companies based on historical plant emissions (known as “grandfathering”)—rather than, for example, auctioning all permits in a competitive bidding process, as well as a more general over-allocation of permits, has led to a carbon price that has been low for most of the first two phases of the trading system and has fallen further since the onset of the recession.⁴ Furthermore, grandfathering violates the polluter-pays principle in that it leads to a transfer of capital from taxpayers and customers to the polluting utilities, while over-allocation of permits exacerbates this problem.⁵ The problem here is that the EU

ETS is—by design and intent—an ambitious policy, yet one that can easily be “softened” by member states.

The above shows that future policy expansion depends not only on the introduction of further policy elements but, crucially, on the implementation of existing policy. Benson and Jordan discuss as examples of progress within the ETS the increased number of permits to be auctioned and the future inclusion of emissions from aviation into the system. Indeed, in these examples, progress in the implementation of the ETS can be measured by analysing changes such as the above as they appear in written policies. Yet in other areas, such as judging the effectiveness of the overall cap on emissions (i.e., the amount of permits available for both auctioning and giving away), progress is harder to verify since the answer cannot be ascertained simply by studying the relevant policy documents in isolation. For example, for an overall cap to be judged effective it should lead to a carbon price that creates a clear incentive towards lowering emissions. Given that the carbon price depends on the differential between actual emissions and the amount specified in the cap, merely analysing the cap would not be sufficient.

The Importance of Member State Preferences

The above examples touch on two important issues. First, it is important, when assessing the potential impacts of the Lisbon Treaty on climate policy, to distinguish between formal policy and its implementation. Second, it is important to distinguish between the EU as a unified actor and as an institution that consists of member states whose preferences are often diverging. This implies that even when EU policy is not—or cannot be—vetoed in the Council of Ministers, it does not necessarily reflect the preferences of individual member states or even member states as a group. For example, the European Commission’s agenda-setting power may have prevented the formation of a majority against a certain policy. While there is no space here for a detailed examination of this point, it is nevertheless important to note that because member states arguably have greater influence in implementation than formulation of policies, they will be less likely to implement policies when they diverge from their preferences.

In the case of the Kyoto Protocol, the EU’s ratification of the Protocol did not mean that it was implemented effectively at the level of all individual member states. In the case of the EU ETS, the EU and its member states managed to push for an innovative policy. At the same time, in subsequent negotiations on the mode of distributing permits, the mecha-

nism was weakened by member states individually and collectively shirking responsibility. These are just examples, but they highlight the point that, in addition to studying the formal policies trying to limit climate change, it is necessary to look at both the implementation of these policies as well as the preferences of member states and other actors who define and re-define implementation measures. It is also important to consider the ambitiousness of a given policy throughout its lifetime in order to fully assess the effectiveness of policy as well the ambitiousness of future policy expansion. To do this would clearly have been outside the scope of Benson and Jordan's work. They do refer to individual member states blocking certain policy initiatives, such as environmental taxation, as well as the way in which some policies, such as EPI, were implemented. Yet, the fact that they cannot possibly do so for the whole range of policies they list may have warranted a clearer admission that analysing written policy is only a part, if an important one, of understanding the EU's efforts to combat climate change.

Considering the Future of EU Climate Policy

Where does this leave us with predictions for the future of EU climate policy? In addition to the policy framework created in the past and analysed by Benson and Jordan above, it is important to keep in mind that contextual factors influencing member states' preferences are less likely to lead to a continued expansion of climate policy than they have been in the past. The modest results of the Copenhagen climate summit increase the political and economic risk facing the EU if it implements significantly more stringent climate change policies than other major actors. The current economic crisis certainly makes ambitious further expansion of climate policy less easy to explain to domestic audiences more worried about job losses than before. To an extent, this is exacerbated by the EU and its member states' past successes in dealing with environmental issues in general and climate change in particular. While in the past the EU has mainly addressed areas where carbon emissions reduction was less costly or even facilitated job creation—such as energy efficiency and renewable energy—many of the major issues which have yet to be addressed (such as personal transport, carbon capture and storage, and measures limiting the carbon emissions of agriculture) are likely to impose greater costs on domestic producers and consumers. ■

¹ See Måns Nilsson, Mats Eklund, and Sara Tyskeng, "Environmental Integration and Policy Implementation: Competing Governance Modes in Waste Management Decision Making," *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 27, no. 1 (2009): 1–18.

² See European Environment Agency, "EU-15 On Target for Kyoto, Despite Mixed Performances," October 16, 2008, <http://www.eea.europa.eu/pressroom/newsreleases/eu-15-on-target-for-kyoto-despite-mixed-performances> (accessed January 17, 2010).

³ See European Environment Agency, "Greenhouse Gas Emission Trends and Projections in Europe 2009: Tracking Progress towards Kyoto Targets," EEA Report No 9/2009, 112, available at <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/eea-report-2009-9/at-download/file> (accessed January 17, 2010).

⁴ See Businessgreen.com, "Deutsche Bank Predicts Carbon Price Recovery," January 12, 2010, <http://www.businessgreen.com/business-green/news/2255941/deutsche-bank-predicts-carbon> (accessed January 17, 2010).

⁵ See Edwin Woerdman, Stefanò Clo, and Alessandra Arcuri, "European Emissions Trading and the Polluter-Pays Principle: Assessing Grandfathering and Over-Allocation," in *Climate Change and European Emissions Trading: Lessons for Theory and Practice*, eds. Michael Faure and Marjan Peeters (Cheltenham: Edgar Elgar Publishing, 2008), 128–50.

American Evangelicals and the Politics of Climate Change

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CHRISTOPHER WAYNE FRAZIER-CRAWFORD BOERL¹

ABSTRACT

With Democrats expanding their congressional majority in both houses of Congress and with the election of Barack Obama as President of the United States, environmental prospects should be looking up. Yet, following the recent slowdown in the global economy, investments in renewable energies are dwindling while sizeable portions of the Democratic Caucus remain uneasy over a number of proposed environmental provisions. Despite these developments, President Obama remains committed to the environment, arguing that the United States must invest in a greener, more energy-efficient future if it is to ward off long-term economic damage. As these political tensions play out, the future of America's environmental policy remains unclear. Yet to the surprise of many political observers, President Obama is finding an unlikely ally in a growing crop of evangelical Christians. Increasingly, American evangelicals are rallying behind the "Care of Creation" movement and are adopting the environment as a matter of theological importance. With evangelical support, Republican politicians—as well as moderate and conservative Democrats previously unaffected by the efforts of the environmental lobby—are beginning to re-evaluate their environmental position to better accommodate the changing views of their religious base. This article assesses what—if any—impact such a development might have on the future of America's environmental policy by focusing on current polls, the activities of relevant interest groups, and the actions of both political and religious leaders.

The past several years have been tough for environmentalists, and tougher still for a wide range of plant and animal life. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, humanity has been responsible for the extinction of such species as the Baiji Dolphin, the West African Black Rhino, and the Golden Toad. In addition to the loss of these animals, the accumulation of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has continued at an alarming rate, resulting in increased arctic ice melt, which in 2007 led to the opening of the Northwest Passage for the first time in recorded history.²

Given the present state of our planet, the historic election of Barack Obama, coupled with the expanded majority of the Democratic Party in both US Houses of Congress, should have given environmentalists much to cheer about. Indeed, throughout his bid for the White House, President

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Obama made environmental protection a key priority of his campaign. Since entering office he has championed a number of environmental measures, including a cap-and-trade emissions scheme similar to the one found in Europe. He has even gone so far as to link environmental protection to the rehabilitation of America's economy, stating: "My presidency will mark a new chapter in America's leadership on climate change that will strengthen our security and create millions of new jobs in the process."³

Yet despite such lofty promises, stricter environmental regulations remain an uncertain aspiration for several reasons. President Obama as well as many self-styled progressives in Congress face powerful opposition from so-called "Blue Dog" Democrats. As fiscal conservatives, many "Blue Dog" Democrats hail from the industrial Midwest, a region which has recently been quite friendly to the Republican Party (GOP) and where the economy remains heavily dependent upon the coal and automotive industries. For workers in these districts, the phrase "environmental protection" is often synonymous with job losses. Thus, while the financial meltdown of 2008 cost several incumbent Republicans their jobs, it could only take Democrats so far. From a political perspective, Democrats are now responsible for the American economy and the longer the United States remains in a recession, the more susceptible they become at the polls. To counter this obstacle, President Obama is banking on two developments: first, that the American economy will rebound; and second, that so-called "green jobs" will be in large part responsible for this recovery. The problem, however, is that transforming a nation's economy is a cost-intensive process and one which is best undertaken during good economic times. Thus, to the detriment of "the young and growing renewable energy industry, the timing of the global downturn could not be worse. Bank credit has dried up just as the sector is most in need of money to build expensive wind farms and solar arrays."⁴ To help offset this effect, the US government has provided some assistance, yet federal financing cannot entirely replace the disappearing private investments.⁵ Furthermore, as economist Ben Lieberman argues, such government investments are at best a "zero-sum game,"⁶ as the federal dollars required to kick-start such an industry must either be borrowed or redirected from other government works, thereby placing jobs and programs unrelated to green energy in jeopardy.

Given these realities, environmentalists know that the passage of meaningful legislation to mitigate climate change remains anything but certain in the United States. Complicating matters even further is a Republican Party which increasingly acts as though it were a shadow parliamentary government rather than a minority congressional caucus.

Over the past year for instance, the GOP has deservedly garnered for themselves the label of the “Party of No,” rather than seeking an acceptable legislative compromise as historically has been the case. Yet this strategy poses significant political dangers for Republicans, particularly on matters of environmental protection, where opposition threatens to tear the Party in two. This is so as evangelical Christians, who for the better part of the past three decades have served as the most expansive and reliable base of the Republican Party, are adopting the environment as a matter of theological importance. As this base increases its support for greater environmental protection, or as evangelicals like to call it, “creation care,” Republicans must either adopt environmental protection as a platform within their own party, or risk giving the Democrats an opening to this all-important slice of the American electorate.

For many, the news that American evangelical Christians are embracing environmental protection might come as a surprise. Such a move seems to run counter to the staunchly conservative political and social positions with which this group is associated. Even in the broader academic discourse, in which scholarly work is expected to identify such social movements early on, little attention has been paid to evangelical environmentalism. Moreover, the work which does identify this trend tends to treat it as a curiosity to a much larger story, rather than a story in its own right. Matthew Nisbet typifies this approach as he provides only two paragraphs on the rise of evangelical environmentalism in an article on public engagement and communicating climate change.⁷ Even those scholars, such as Lawrence Prelli and Terri Winters, who take evangelical environmentalism as their focus, tend to view the environmental and evangelical camps as two distinct sides, incapable of working together without significant coaching and mediation. While many of Prelli and Winters’ arguments in “Rhetorical Features of Green Evangelicalism” are true, such as the fact that environmental scholars would do well to attend to the emerging evangelical environmental discourse as it promises to open new possibilities for “building political coalitions and alliances on issues of common concern to environmentalists and Christian evangelicals,”⁸ their treatment of the subject leaves the reader with the feeling that evangelicals and environmentalists are two groups who inherently hold the other in oppositional conflict. While such a view might be appropriate in rather extreme cases, there is little evidence that would otherwise warrant such an impression. Additionally, the very fact that the authors have taken such an approach might well prove counter-productive if adopted by the broader academic discipline, as it plays to outdated stereotypes in which the burden of evangelical ignorance must be shouldered by the more astute secular environmentalist.

Despite these deficiencies, I seek to extend the overall contention of past authors, namely that evangelical environmentalism matters politically and that more attention ought to be given to it. This article takes a more constructive approach to the issue by treating evangelical environmentalism as the object of primary importance. The article acknowledges the fact that the issue of climate change cannot be adequately addressed without the commitment of the United States, and suggests that in order for the United States to be able to show such commitment, President Obama needs the support of conservative constituencies—areas of the United States in which traditional forms of environmental activism have failed. It is within these districts and states that evangelicals are uniquely positioned to demand support for combating climate change, and an examination of this matter is of ample importance. This article therefore provides an account of the American creation care movement. To assess the impact of this movement, I will draw on historical narratives, polling data, personal interviews, and I will present an analysis of the activities of relevant interest groups, religious leaders, and politicians.

Understanding Evangelical Environmental Resistance

Unlike Catholics, whose theology has for centuries been profoundly influenced by environmentalists such as Saint Francis of Assisi (the patron saint of animals and the environment), and mainline Protestants, who for a variety of reasons have been more willing to embrace the discoveries of modern environmental science, evangelicals are relative newcomers to environmental activism. Several factors account for this delay. Part of it has to do with a general mistrust of science engrained in the evangelical psyche following the infamous Scopes Monkey Trial,⁹ while other reasons relate more directly to their literal interpretations of scripture and eschatological beliefs themselves.¹⁰ For instance, the most dire warnings issued by climatologists often deal with the flooding of coastal cities and regions. For many of us such warnings are perfectly logical, as the water from melting arctic ice has to go somewhere. Yet the evangelical mindset is steeped in foundationalism, according to which the Bible is the ultimate source of authority and truth. Thus, when this perspective is combined with a working knowledge of biblical scripture, it becomes easier to understand why such large parts of the evangelical population would remain sceptical of scientists who claim that flood or drought will soon be upon us, as in the eighth chapter of the Book of Genesis, God promises Noah after the flood that humanity will never

again know such a terrible fate, sending a rainbow as a continued reminder of this covenant.

Similarly, many American evangelicals subscribe to “premillennial dispensationalism,” a strand of end-times eschatology that found its way into the evangelical mainstream thanks to the published works of Hal Lindsey and Tim LaHaye.¹¹ For pre-millennial dispensationalists, environmental matters have historically been of little concern, as the effects of ecological destruction are not expected to be felt until after the second coming of Christ. Armed with this understanding, evangelicals have taken Christ’s imminent return as a cue to focus on issues more pressing than the environment and have accordingly devoted themselves to the moral and spiritual purification of one’s soul and society at large.¹²

Contributing further to the historical neglect of the environment by evangelicals has been the media environment of the 1970s and 1980s, when evangelicals first rose to political prominence. In this environment, multi-directional conversation was not easily achieved and, as a result, agendas were often set by those in control of the microphone. Because evangelical leaders such as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson were busy fighting the “culture wars,”¹³ concern about environmental degradation was either put on the back burner or framed as further troubling evidence of the secularization of American society.

Furthermore, it was not until 1967 that environmentalism even began to register in the evangelical movement, with the publication of Lynn White Jr.’s essay “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis.”¹⁴ White made a simple yet effective argument, proposing that although it was the industrial revolution of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that gave humanity the means to destroy nature on a large scale, the mentality which permitted such destruction was set in place centuries before, thanks to Christianity’s emphasis on so-called “dominion theology.” In short, dominion theology is the belief that God gave humans dominion over all matter of life on earth, and that while “man” may be made of clay (earth), “he” is not simply a part of nature, but rather made in the image of God. Such a belief, White argued, “not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God’s will that man exploit nature for his proper ends.”¹⁵ Upon publication, however, White’s analysis was seen by evangelicals as an attack on the faith, and it therefore served to further increase the distrust of science which many evangelicals already held. For the next three decades, environmental matters, inasmuch as evangelicals were concerned, were largely seen as the prerogative of the political and secular left.

The Historical Roots of Evangelical Environmental Activism

In 1996, however, a remarkable and quite unexpected shift began to occur in the evangelical body, which was evidenced when congressional Republicans opposed the Endangered Species Act. Leading the campaign against the act was Representative Richard Pombo, a California Republican who was also Chair of the House Resource Committee. From the onset, he expected a fight from America's many environmental groups, but did not expect to be "damned by a group of self-styled conservative Christians" who viewed his efforts as an affront to God's creation.¹⁶ One group of evangelicals supporting the Endangered Species Act was the Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN). In response, a spokesman from Pombo's office released a statement asserting that the environmental Christians who were opposing his efforts were in reality "a front group for Clinton/Gore," and that "[t]he Evangelical Environmental Network [was] directly linked to the Environmental Information Center, which is staffed by Democrats and funded by some of the largest left-wing foundations in the country."¹⁷ Yet Pombo's attacks only added to the determination of the EEN and other evangelical environmentalists. As a result, media buys and lobbying efforts by evangelicals were stepped up. In a recent interview, Peter Illyn, formerly of the EEN and now president of Restoring Eden, recalled his own encounter with Pombo:

I went by his office and I told his staff, "that I just wanted the congressman to know that I'm one of those Christian environmentalists, and I'm a Four Square pastor, and I certainly hope the congressman doesn't think the Four Square church is liberal, because we're not, we're conservative." And then I left and was out the door and not more than ten feet down the hall when I hear, "Sir. Sir, the congressman would like to meet with you." And I went in and met with the congressman, and the congressman is sitting there and trying to explain to me why the endangered species list isn't really working. And I remember looking at him and saying, "but congressman, driving species to extinction is sin." And I watched him, not blanch, but not know how to respond to this message. And it was very emboldening for me to realize that you could make a difference politically. That sure money was involved; but that at the end of the day, money doesn't mean a thing if they don't have the support of the voters.¹⁸

Faced with a growing and increasingly public dispute with evangelicals, coupled with low public support, congressional Republicans had few options but to abandon their opposition to the Endangered Species Act. In doing so, Republicans handed a significant victory to environmentalists and, more importantly, ceded important political ground to

an upstart evangelical movement that did not conform to the established contours of America's religious body. In the years that followed, the EEN built on these efforts, which some openly referred to as the saving of humanity's modern day Noah's Ark, and went on to establish creation care as a legitimate concern of the evangelical project.¹⁹

By 2002 the EEN conducted the "What Would Jesus Drive?" campaign for more fuel-efficient cars. Armed with fact sheets, bumper stickers and a pool of eager volunteers, the EEN published books and traveled the country educating congregations on what they believed to be the Bible's mandated stewardship of God's creation. In 2006, the EEN was a major supporter of the Evangelical Climate Initiative (ECI), a statement which called for "federal legislation that would require reductions in carbon emissions."²⁰ Among the eighty-six evangelical leaders who signed the ECI, thirty-nine were presidents from evangelical colleges, while several others were pastors at some of the largest churches in the country, including Rick Warren of Saddleback, who authored "The Purpose-Driven Life," one of America's all-time best-selling books, which to date has sold in excess of 30 million copies.²¹

Creation Care and Evangelical Tensions

As a result of these highly publicized campaigns, the EEN found itself under considerable attack from influential evangelical leaders. Pat Robertson, for instance, once famously stated that "the concept of linking Jesus to an anti-SUV campaign borders on blasphemy,"²² while Terry Watkins insisted that "to degrade the Lord Jesus into a[n] environmental wacko 'car salesman' is beyond simple ignorance—it's irreverent and it's blasphemous."²³ In an effort to curb what they saw as evangelical environmentalism gone too far, Charles Colson, with the help of Richard Land (president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, which serves as the political arm of America's largest protestant denomination), James Dobson (founder of Focus on the Family), and the Southern Baptist Convention, launched the Interfaith Stewardship Alliance and the "We Get It!" campaign. Together, these efforts sought to restrain the creation care movement by portraying it as harmful to those living in the developing world, as well as to the broader ambitions of the evangelical community.

Although the Interfaith Stewardship Alliance and the "We Get It!" campaign remain actively engaged in the evangelical environmental debate, creation care proponents are, however, skeptical that either effort will find much favour among younger evangelicals. This is because such

efforts rely on a dualism which younger evangelicals are quick to reject. As Corey Beals, a professor of Philosophy and Religion at evangelical George Fox University, explains:

[The environmental question has] been framed in a very dualistic way in terms of pitting humans versus animals, or humans versus the earth. So evangelicals have answered that question the best they know how: "If I have to choose between a whale and a baby, I'm going to choose a baby ..." And so, because the question has been framed that way, evangelicals have been thinking they've been choosing life by defending humans over nature. Today's students reject that dualism; they see it as a false dichotomy. You'll say "babies or whales?" and they'll say "yes!"²⁴

Thus by reframing the issue as a matter of theological importance, the creation care movement has largely been successful in unloading environmental activism of much of its political baggage. When otherwise conservative leaders such as Rick Warren champion environmental causes, they are tearing down the political dichotomies of the left and right and instead are making the matter of protecting the environment an issue of doing God's will. As a result, the voices of evangelical opposition to creation care are beginning to thin as increasing numbers are joining the ranks of Cizik and Illyn.²⁵ For instance, just two years after the success of the "What Would Jesus Drive?" campaign, a poll commissioned for PBS's "Religion and Ethics Newsweekly" found that forty-five per cent of evangelicals believed that combating the effects of climate change was an extremely or very important issue,²⁶ while a more recent 2009 poll conducted by Pew Forum found that fifty-eight per cent of white evangelicals believed there to be solid evidence that the earth is indeed warming.²⁷

Those who remain skeptical that evangelicals are warming to environmental protection often cite a 2007 poll commissioned by The Barna Group, which found American evangelicals to be the religious group least concerned about the effects of climate change. As the poll found:

[The] nation's born again population is divided into two groups, evangelical Christians (who represent about 18 million adults) and non-evangelical born again Christians (who are about 77 million adults). Evangelicals perceive global warming very differently than any other slice of the population—and they view the issue with significant skepticism. Among evangelicals, just 33% say that the issue is a major challenge, compared with 55% of non-evangelical born again Christians. That qualifies evangelicals as the least concerned segment among more than 50 population groups studied.²⁸

The shortcoming of the Barna poll, however, is that evangelicals are viewed not as a Christian sect in their own right, but as a subset of so-called “born again” Christians. In distinguishing between these groups Barna provides the following definitions:

“Born again Christians” are defined as people who said they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today and who also indicated they believe that when they die they will go to Heaven because they had confessed their sins and had accepted Jesus Christ as their savior.²⁹

Evangelicals by contrast are defined as meeting:

The born again criteria, plus seven other conditions. Those include saying their faith is very important in their life today; believing they have a personal responsibility to share their religious beliefs about Christ with non-Christians; believing in Satan; believing that eternal salvation is possible only through grace, not works; believing that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth; asserting that the Bible is accurate in all that it teaches; and describing God as the all-knowing, all-powerful perfect deity who created the universe and still rules it today.³⁰

Exactly why Barna decides to use this more complex and narrowed definition of “evangelical” is not known. Nevertheless, the definition runs counter to most scholarly work.³¹ Furthermore, despite the claims of this rather nuanced poll, there remains ample evidence that suggests a thawing of evangelical environmental attitudes. For example, the once hostile Pat Robertson now regularly discusses the importance of environmental stewardship on his Christian Broadcasting Network show “The 700 Club” and has made an appearance in a national environmental advertising campaign with the decidedly liberal Al Sharpton.

Moreover, when one considers the demographics of American evangelicals, as well as on-going shifts in the evangelical body, it should come as little surprise that efforts such as the “We Get It!” campaign likely pose little threat to the creation care movement. Peter Illyn remarks that such attacks fail “because it [is] the far right yelling things to the far right.”³² Admittedly, while men such as Colson and Dobson have historically garnered tremendous social and political clout, and for that matter continue to do so today, followers of their ministries, like the men themselves, are aging. While more than two-thousand stations nationwide carry Dobson’s daily radio message, it is difficult to imagine many college-age evangelicals tuning in to hear the thoughts and views of the seventy-three-year-old Dobson. Today’s reality is that the evangelical vanguard which came to define the culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s is being culturally displaced by younger, more politically-open evangelical lead-

ers who have increasingly taken the reins of the evangelical project and who are refocusing evangelical priorities on what many view to be the Bible's social gospel.

The Political Sophistication of Evangelical Environmentalism

In an effort to convert this growing theological support for environmental protection into public policy, some creation care organizations are becoming more assertive in their activism and are showing signs of greater political sophistication. For example, although Restoring Eden has an established history of campaigning against mountain-top mining, whereby the summits of mountains are removed in order to gain access to the deposits inside (usually coal), they have found past efforts, which typically involved lobbying members of Congress and sending small groups of activists to protest at the mining sites themselves, to be insufficient. Recently, therefore, Restoring Eden has been inviting church leaders and youth groups from influential churches in key congressional districts across the country to join them in "camping expeditions" in the Appalachian region where most US coal deposits are located. While there, these church goers witness firsthand the environmental impact of mountain-top mining and are encouraged to spread the word to their own families, congregations, and local communities, as well as to petition their members of Congress and to contact local media outlets.³³ In adopting this approach, Restoring Eden is not only helping to ensure that future evangelical generations grow up with strong environmental values, but they are also engaging in more effective and calculated political actions.

Similarly, another creation care organization known as Renewal, arguably the nation's largest gathering of college-age evangelical environmentalists, recently concluded their 2009 "Green Awakening Campus Tour" which took Renewal speakers and activists to forty-six university campuses, where local environmental issues were highlighted and students were afforded the opportunity to engage in the political process at the local level. In addition to reaching tens of thousands of college-age evangelicals, Renewal's "Green Awakening Campus Tour" also garnered the attention of several of the most prominent evangelical media outlets, including "Christianity Today," the Christian Broadcasting Network, Crosswalk.com and the "Prime Time America" radio address of the Moody Bible Institute.³⁴

Likewise, secular environmental groups have added a further dynamic to the creation care movement, as some are now reaching out to form important working relationships with their Christian counterparts. Sustain Lane, a popular online environmental community, recently recognized the importance of having evangelicals on the side of the environment. Cris Bisch, who manages the creation care forum for sustainlane.com, says the following about the origins of this partnership:

So when James [the sustainlane.com Managing Director] contacted me, he said, "You know, we've got a new [US] president coming in. He's opening the doors to environmental change in our country. There's been a lot of division going on in our country, and we want to be a place where the left and the right can come together and be able to dialogue and be able to hear what each has to say and not be fragmented." He [James] had a vision to see where this new president wanted to take the country and how important the roles of organizations like Sustain Lane are in bringing about this transformation. Because we are in transition in our country and hopefully it's going to be in the right direction, and when we are dialoguing, we are talking together and we are laying down our differences.³⁵

Several recent projects focused on climate change have also looked at strengthening relations between the scientific and evangelical communities. In 2007, for instance, the University of Akron hosted the "Friendship Project," a gathering of twenty-five scientists and evangelical ministers in an effort to "stop global warming and address other major environmental issues such as massive species losses."³⁶ Dr Stephen Weeks, a professor of biology at the University's Integrated Bioscience Program, spoke to the important role that forums such as these play in bridging social divides, so that scientists and evangelicals can "band together to stem the loss of 'the creation.'"³⁷ Similarly, expeditions which take teams of environmental scientists and evangelical leaders to view the effects of climate change, such as melting glaciers, are becoming commonplace. Such joint ventures are likely to go a long way in addressing many of the historical antagonisms separating science and faith. As Richard Cizik has commented, "we are on the verge of an evangelical awakening to the global environmental crisis. But an even more significant accomplishment will occur when the worlds of religion and science come together in a spirit of reconciliation."³⁸ He adds that, while evangelicals and scientists may disagree on how the world came into existence, there is "no disagreement about whether that world deserves protection."³⁹

The Political Impacts of Evangelical Environmental Activism

Although there remain Christians who are not at all interested in combating climate change, and even some who label the creation care movement as heretical, evangelical environmentalism continues to leave its mark on Washington. As recent polls show, evangelicals are warming to the idea of environmental ministries, and in the United States, where religion and politics so often go hand-in-hand, theological shifts such as this have important political ramifications. Meanwhile, there is plentiful evidence to suggest that congressional Republicans and even conservative Democrats are waking up to this new reality. For instance, one of the most vocal congressional opponents of creation care is the Republican Senator James Inhofe from Oklahoma, former chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, and himself an evangelical. When Inhofe was once asked what he thought of Cizik's ministry, he replied that it was "something very strange," adding, "you can always find in Scriptures a passage to misquote for almost anything."⁴⁰ Yet more recently Inhofe, who has in the past called global warming a hoax and compared the Environmental Protection Agency to the Gestapo, surprised many on Capitol Hill by joining the likes of Senators John Kerry and Barbara Boxer, two prominent Democrats, in supporting legislation requiring the Environmental Protection Agency to assess options for cleaning up black carbon emissions.⁴¹

Certainly such a move is uncharacteristic for Inhofe, yet as has been pointed out to the Republican Party, "evangelicals make up a hundred million Americans. They are from forty to fifty per cent of the conservative base of the GOP" and although evangelicals were apparently willing to give George W. Bush a pass with regards to the environment, "a new generation of evangelicals may desert the Grand Old Party for its failure to face up to the environmental future."⁴² For these reasons, it is likely that Inhofe and other Republican senators have recently and quite publicly called for greater environmental protection. For instance, the staunchly conservative Senator Sam Brownback of Kansas recently spoke of the role religious leaders are playing in forging a middle ground in the environmental debate. Although Brownback is not fully convinced that humanity is responsible for climate change, he welcomes "'prudent' steps recommended by some religious leaders to reduce carbon emissions."⁴³ Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, another favourite among many evangelicals, went one step further when he chose to announce his support for the Senate climate bill he was co-authoring with Senator

John Kerry by writing an op-ed piece in the *New York Times*.⁴⁴ Actions like these illustrate how the political and theological importance which evangelical leaders and worshipers are nowadays placing on the issue of climate change, also affects political leaders.

Conclusion

Addressing the environmental challenges we face today is no easy task. The timing of the present worldwide economic recession has strangled much needed capital from the pockets of a still budding renewable energy sector, while a number of otherwise moderate and fiscally conservative Democrats have so far succeeded in slowing down many of President Obama's most ambitious environmental projects. Yet a growing choir of evangelical Christians is rallying behind the creation care movement. As they do, they bring with them added pressure on more conservative members of Congress, many of whom have previously been unaffected by the lobbying efforts of the traditional environmental movement. With this theological shift, the potential for meaningful social and political change looks certain.

From a purely electoral perspective, progressive Democrats are increasingly aware that the growth of the creation care movement provides them with an opportunity to engage with evangelicals. If Republicans are to maintain the allegiance of this vital base, simply rehashing old culture war issues is unlikely to yield substantial political rewards. The reason for this is that, like all social entities, the evangelical community is anything but static. The social and political priorities of evangelicals will continue to change as younger evangelicals come to assume leadership roles within the church. The evangelical position on issues such as abortion and so-called traditional marriage will similarly evolve to reflect the changing dynamic of the church community. After all, younger evangelicals are more likely than their parents to have openly gay friends and have never known a United States where abortion was not legal. Having witnessed the culture wars of past decades, today's evangelicals know there is little to gain by revisiting them. Instead, the evangelical community is increasingly opting for compromises that seek abortion reductions and defend the legal rights of homosexuals while preserving the religious sanctity of marriage. In taking these issues in new directions, it would appear that younger evangelicals are unloading significant political baggage and are thereby allowing for an expansion of their social and political agenda, in which issues of environmental protection will receive significantly more attention. Such a reality will likely be key

in combating the effects of climate change, as it is difficult to see much meaningful environmental commitment on the part of the United States without the help of evangelicals. ■

Notes

¹ I would like to thank my wife Lavina and my supervisor Professor Andrew Chadwick for their support and guidance. I am also grateful to the anonymous reviewers, who provided me with further insight to an area of study I believe warrants greater political attention.

² See John Roach, "Arctic Melt Opens Northwest Passage," *National Geographic News*, September 17, 2007, <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2007/09/070917-northwest-passage.html> (accessed January 16, 2010).

³ Kevin Kelleher, "Can Obama Fight Climate Change and a Recession?" *earth2tech*, <http://earth2tech.com/2008/11/19/can-obama-fight-climate-change-and-a-recession> (accessed January 16, 2010).

⁴ Beth Gardiner, "Global Downturn Sapping Renewable Energy Sector," *The International Herald Tribune*, February 17, 2009.

⁵ See *ibid.*

⁶ Ben Lieberman, "Green Stimulus: Tying Economic Package to Environment Plan is Not Workable," <http://www.heritage.org/research/energyandenvironment/wm2245.cfm> (accessed January 16, 2010).

⁷ Matthew C. Nisbet, "Communicating Climate Change: Why Frames Matter for Public Engagement," *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 51, no. 2 (2009): 12–23.

⁸ Lawrence J. Prelli and Terri S. Winters, "Rhetorical Features of Green Evangelicalism," *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture* 3, no. 2 (2009): 224–43, 225.

⁹ In 1925 the State of Tennessee passed the Butler Act, which prohibited the teaching of Darwinism in public schools. The New York based American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), then just five years in existence, sought to challenge the constitutionality of this act in open court. John Scopes was the Dayton teacher who broke this law and who was accordingly brought to trial. Defending Scopes was one of the nation's most infamous defence attorneys Clarence Darrow, while three-time Democratic Presidential nominee William Jennings Bryan served as a state prosecutor. Ultimately Scopes was convicted of violating the Butler Act and was fined one hundred US dollars only to have the ruling thrown out in superior court due to a technicality. Many, however, speculate that the State of Tennessee sought to dismiss the charges as they had been made to look foolish under the considerable public attention which followed the trial.

¹⁰ See Heather Hendershot, "God's Angriest Man: Carl McIntire, Cold War Fundamentalism, and Right Wing Broadcasting," *American Quarterly* 59, no. 2 (2007):

373–96; Brian McCammack, “Hot Damned America: Evangelicalism and the Climate Change Policy Debate,” *American Quarterly* 59, no. 3 (2007): 645–68; Matthew C. Moen, “The Evolving Politics of the Christian Right,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 29, no. 3 (1996): 461–64; Joel A. Carpenter, “Fundamentalist Institutions and the Rise of Evangelical Protestantism, 1929–1942,” *Church History* 49, no. 1 (1980): 62–75.

¹¹ See Hal Lindsey with Carole C. Carlson, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1970); T. LaHaye and J.B. Jenkins, *Left Behind: A Novel of the Earth’s Last Days* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1996).

¹² See McCammack, “Hot Damned America.”

¹³ The term “culture war” is a metaphor often used to describe the political and social tensions between conservative and progressive Americans. While the term itself has long been used in one form or another, it entered the American popular lexicon in 1990s and received considerable lip service in 1992 after Pat Buchanan declared at the Republican National Convention on August 17, 1992, that “there is a religious war going on in this country. It is a cultural war, as critical to the kind of nation we shall be as the Cold War itself, for this war is for the soul of America.” An excerpt of the speech is available at <http://tinyurl.com/yl8byd7> (accessed January 19, 2010).

¹⁴ Lynn White, Jr., “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis,” *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1203–7.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1205.

¹⁶ Gayle M.B. Hanson, “To Green Fundamentalists, Earth is a Close Second,” *Insight on the News*, September 1996, <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi—m1571/is—n33—v12/ai—18625321> (accessed January 16, 2010).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Interview with Peter Illyn on Restoring Eden and the creation care movement, May 27, 2009.

¹⁹ Peter Steinfels, “Evangelical Group Defends Laws Protecting Endangered Species as a Modern Noah’s Ark,” *The New York Times*, January 31, 1996; see also Hanson, “To Green Fundamentalists.”

²⁰ Laurie Goodstein, “Evangelical Leaders Join Global Warming Initiative,” *The New York Times*, February 8, 2006.

²¹ See Rick Warren, *Purpose-Driven Life: What on Earth am I Here For?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002).

²² Good Morning America, “Would Jesus Drive an SUV? Commercials Say Jesus Wouldn’t Drive an SUV,” *ABC News*, n.d., <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/story?id=125583&page=1> (assessed January 16, 2010).

²³ John McCaslin, “Driving with Jesus,” *Townhall.com*, May 28, 2007, <http://townhall.com/columnists/JohnMcCaslin/2007/05/28/driving—with—Jesus> (accessed January 16, 2010).

²⁴ Interview with Corey Beals on Restoring Eden and the creation care movement, May 22, 2009.

²⁵ Richard Cizik and Peter Illyn are leading figures within the creation care movement. Cizik is the former vice-president of the largest evangelical organization in the United States, The National Association of Evangelicals, and helped to lead the EEN from obscurity to national prominence. Illyn is former EEN activist and is now president of Restoring Eden, which is based in Washington State.

²⁶ See McCammack, "Hot Damned America."

²⁷ See The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "Religious Groups' Views on Global Warming," <http://pewforum.org/docs/?DocID=238> (accessed January 16, 2010).

²⁸ The Barna Group, "Born Again Christians Remain Skeptical, Divided About Global Warming," September 17, 2007, <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/20-donorscause/95-born-again-christians-remain-skeptical-divided-about-global-warming> (accessed January 16, 2010).

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Alternative definitions for the term "evangelical" can be found in D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004); and John G. Stackhouse, Jr., "Defining 'Evangelical,'" *Church & Faith Trends: A Publication of The Centre for Research on Canadian Evangelicalism* 1, no. 1 (2007): 1-5, available at <http://files.etc-canada.net/min/rc/CFT-1-1-DefiningEvangelical.pdf> (accessed January 16, 2010). Any of these definitions of the term "evangelical" will undoubtedly provide a much broader understanding.

³² Interview with Peter Illyn on Restoring Eden and the creation care movement, May 27, 2009.

³³ See *ibid.*

³⁴ See Renewal, "Green Awakening Tour Report," *n.d.*, <http://www.renewingcreation.org/images/Green%20Awakening%20Tour%20Report.pdf> (accessed January 16, 2010).

³⁵ Interview with Cris Bisch on Sustain Lane and the creation care movement, May 16, 2009.

³⁶ University of Akron News, "University Hosts Global Warming/Environmental Friendship Group," August 31, 2007, <http://www.uakron.edu/news/articles/uamain-1839.php> (accessed January 16, 2010).

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Richard Cizik, "Richard Cizik 'On God': Warming Up to Creation Care," *Search Magazine*, <http://www.searchmagazine.org/On%20God/cizik-on-god.html> (accessed January 16, 2010).

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Michael Janofsky, "When Cleaner Air Is a Biblical Obligation," *The New York Times*, November 7, 2005.

⁴¹ See Goodstein, "Evangelical Leaders."

⁴² Cizik "On God".

⁴³ Brian Winter, "Religious Groups Active in Climate Debate," *USA Today*, December 15, 2009, <http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2009-12-06-climate—N.htm> (accessed January 16, 2010).

⁴⁴ See John Kerry and Lindsey Graham, "Yes We Can (Pass Climate Change Legislation)," *The New York Times*, October 10, 2009.

Climate Change Politics in Copenhagen

AN INTERVIEW WITH MAAS GOOTE

Maas Goote is lead negotiator for the EU in the international climate change negotiations. He is also head of the Programme for Climate and Energy at the Netherlands Environment Ministry, and is head of the Dutch delegation to the conferences of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). He spoke to us in January 2010, after the Copenhagen summit, and reflected on the global politics of climate change from a practitioner's perspective.

STAIR: Could you explain to us your role as lead negotiator for the European Union in the international climate change negotiations?

Maas Goote (MG): As you know, the EU has a rotating presidency. In terms of the negotiations, however, it is not very effective to have the negotiating team change every six months. Therefore, some time ago it was decided that the EU would select one individual—out of all heads of delegation from EU member states—to represent the EU as a lead negotiator. It is a working arrangement to ensure consistency and continuity. In fact there are two lead negotiators, as there are two “tracks” within the international climate change negotiations. Furthermore, I don’t represent the EU at the level of ministers of course—I’m talking about the level of officials. When it comes to the ministerial level, the EU is represented by the environment minister of the country holding the presidency.

It is not me, of course, who decides on the EU positions. Those are discussed and adopted by the Council—the European Council or the Environment Council, and further elaborated by the Working Party (comprising the Heads of Delegation). The member states together decide on the direction and I am simply there to negotiate. It is an interesting job: there are twenty-seven member states and it’s always a challenge to represent all their different perspectives in a balanced way. It sometimes is a balancing act in which you have to be careful what to say, and how to say it, but in most cases the lead negotiator is given the full confidence of the group to act as he or she thinks is best in terms of EU tactics.

During the Copenhagen conference I met with officials from all EU member states every morning, in order to report back on what happened the day before and to explain new developments. I put questions to the group, suggesting for example that we might want to change this posi-

tion here, or slightly adjust our strategy there. So I am also seeking new mandates, if necessary. At the end of the day I meet with the “Troika”: the current EU presidency, the incoming presidency and the European Commission. In between the official conferences and negotiating sessions, I am also on the road constantly, to talk to people bilaterally.

STAIR: During and after the Copenhagen climate change summit, there was much debate in the media and within civil society on what roles key actors played in the negotiations. Many seek to blame someone for the Copenhagen deal not being ambitious enough, and point to various players, such as China or the industrialized countries. Could you reflect a bit on this debate?

MG: This isn’t an easy question to answer briefly. First of all, of course there is a difference between the actual negotiations and the perception by the media. One of the things—let me say that quite frankly—that the EU should improve is to explain better to the media what we are doing. We should “spin” better—though I am not sure that’s the politically correct term. It is clear that most pictures sketched in the media are incomplete or inaccurate, but this is partly because the process is not very transparent and because we, as the EU, are not always good at explaining it. In a broader sense, however, the difficulty is that climate change is not only an urgent issue, but also one that touches upon many different aspects. It touches on economics, private sector activities, trade, development co-operation—so it’s not simply an environmental issue. There are a lot of interests at stake and that means that negotiations, in an international multilateral setting, are always very complex. There are different agendas and you have different alliances with different countries, depending on the topic. We have a different alliance with Africa, for instance, when it comes to adaptation and when it comes to technology. This is just an example that illustrates the very complex sets of relationships.

In terms of reporting, people look for quick and easy headlines. The complexity of the international climate change negotiations, however, makes it very difficult to provide one headline such as, “China is to blame,” or, “The EU is to blame.” This is such a complex process that no four-word headline can be accurate, or tell the whole picture—that is the problem. No one is to blame and everyone is to blame, in a sense.

This brings me to an important point: It isn’t one country driving this process, there is no one captain on the ship. If there were one captain, you could always say, “The captain is doing a good job,” or, “The captain is doing a bad job.” But since there isn’t one captain—it’s not one country, it’s not the UNFCCC secretariat, it’s not the Danish presidency

of the conference; in short there is no single individual entity behind the wheel—it is always a complex situation of different actors doing different things.

STAIR: Could you elaborate on the actions of the EU and other major players?

MG: First of all, the EU always has a very important role to play in the preparations. We are—and now I'm coming to the things that the EU is good at—good at being ambitious, and we're good at setting the agenda and pushing others to go further. We are often ready to move forward and to make progress. But in the end game there often are a number of countries that feel more reluctant to move—and there is very little we can do about that. We cannot force any country to do something more ambitious than they are willing to do.

Now China is of course waiting for the United States. China is a big powerhouse, that is clear, but it is still in many respects a developing country too. They have poverty to address, and other priorities, therefore China will not go forward in isolation. It will factor in the steps that the United States, its biggest competitor in a sense, is willing to take. But, on the other hand, the US administration is of course largely dependent on what happens domestically, in terms of legislation. In short, China was waiting for the US to some extent and didn't want to move forward without the United States being part of that progress, and the United States wanted to move forward but needed China to go along and was constrained by the national discussion on climate legislation. They wanted to avoid—and this is also very common sense—a situation in which they make a deal internationally, but then come home and find no support for such a deal, as happened with Kyoto.

So there you have a picture where China is going into the negotiations with certain interests and certain perspectives, the United States with theirs, and the EU with ours. This shows it is much too easy—it is a case of poor analysis—to have a headline saying that China blocked a deal, or that the United States did not want it. There is a fundamental difference between headlines on the one hand, and a clear geo-political analysis on the other. When you examine the geo-political situation, you have to conclude that the world, the collective world, was not fully ready for a major breakthrough in Copenhagen, even though there were high expectations. We only managed to take a modest step—it's an important step, but it's modest. So in short: no blame games for me. It is certainly not my intention, by the way, to criticize the press, because the Copenhagen process is very difficult and very intransparent. It is impossible to

summarize the power plays in a geo-political dimension such as this, in one headline.

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STAIR: Could the EU have done anything more during the final days of the conference to convince other countries to move forward?

MG: I don't want to sound pessimistic, but as things stood in Copenhagen, I think there is very little we could have done, in addition to what we have done. We promoted an ambitious deal—and we do have some breakthroughs in the Copenhagen Accord—but we were not the ones with any problems and found it difficult to be a bridge-builder, because we could not offer anything more than we already had. The others simply had to sit down together, look each other in the eye, and try to find solutions—and there was very little the EU could do to intervene or to mediate.

STAIR: Coming back to a previous theme: Does the media have an influence on negotiators during the conference? Even if everyone knows that it's impossible for the media to summarize things accurately in a headline, do these headlines still affect you?

MG: Yes they do. They can affect you in a variety of ways, both positively and negatively. On the one hand, a headline can be frustrating, because once a story is out there, it is very difficult to counter it—to put the genie back into the bottle, so to speak. You cannot correct it anymore even if you think it's wrong. On the other hand, a good or helpful headline can give you extra energy. Many people, who are not involved directly in the negotiations, do read those headlines and will complement you if they read you did something well. Though the next day they might come to you and say, "I read that you blew it completely," which can be frustrating, and does impact your work. This is of course not restricted to the EU; all countries look at the headlines and the news stories—and each of us will have good days and more frustrating days.

STAIR: Could I then ask you a couple of questions related to some of the articles featured in this issue of STAIR? First of all, we are publishing an article on the expansion of climate change policy at the EU level, and the influence that the Lisbon Treaty could potentially have in the future. Could you comment on this in relation to the international climate change negotiations?

MG: The Lisbon Treaty entered into force two weeks before the Copenhagen summit, but we decided not to change the European rules

of the game right before this important summit. So the new treaty did not have an impact on how we operated in Copenhagen. When moving forward, however, and making our working arrangements for 2010, the new treaty will clearly impact our work. I am not sure how exactly. I assume that the Spanish presidency is currently consulting and in discussion with the European Commission and the new President of the Council, Herman van Rompuy, in order to see how it might work in practice. The Lisbon Treaty is not clear on all accounts, and many things are not written down—which is logical, as many things concern daily practice and working arrangements that are not reflected in a treaty. The influence of the Lisbon Treaty is therefore difficult to predict, but in general I can say three things. First of all, I think Mr van Rompuy will most probably play an important role in the future because he is the President of the Council, and climate change is a highly political issue involving high-level summits. Secondly, not much has changed in the Lisbon Treaty when it comes to the Community competence in the field of environment. Changes have been made, though, in relation to foreign policy, and it remains to be seen how those changes will impact on our work on climate. Finally, a third dimension has nothing to do with the new treaty, but with the evolving nature of European legislation: even if the treaty doesn't fundamentally change environmental competencies, internal EU legislation is growing, meaning a growing competency for the European Community.

STAIR: On your the first point: In the coming years, would you see Mr van Rompuy sit in the "inner circle" next to Obama?

MG: Well, that's difficult for me to say. I'm not sure how the institutions of the EU will evolve, but, speaking again in my personal capacity, I would say yes, I think so. And from a European perspective we should welcome that. The more we speak with one voice, the more effective we are, and if the new president can add to that sense of unity, it would be beneficial for EU efforts, I think.

STAIR: Another article in this issue focuses on adaptation, and describes how adaptation is seen in two opposing ways by different groups within the international climate change negotiations. Adaptation can be seen as very similar to development, and is seen as such by development NGOs but also to a certain extent by developed countries. Alternatively, adaptation can be seen as "equity" as the author calls it, and in this sense it can be used as a term by developing countries to talk about "repaying the climate debt" without actually saying those

MG: I think that in general these two approaches to adaptation indeed feature in the actual negotiations. But I wouldn't see it as a black and white distinction—in practice you see these two dimensions combined in the discussions, and even in your own mind. It's not like there are two schools of thought, and one country follows one school, and another country follows another—you see both aspects together, in tandem. Part of adaptation relates to more traditional development co-operation, but part of it is also, perhaps for some, or perhaps implicitly, an issue of equity.

These two aspects are by far not the only two featuring in the adaptation discussions, by the way. Another important point of discussion is the level at which action is needed. To what extent do you want to regulate and set norms for adaptation at the international level, and to what extent do you want to leave implementation and elaboration of the norms and the actions to the regional, national, or even the sub-national level? Another point, of course, is finance. In my opinion, we cannot reinvent the wheel completely—politically and practically it is impossible to only focus on a new fund. We have to involve existing institutions such as the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility—they have the expertise, they have the experience. On the other hand, though, you have to find some coherence and avoid an overly fragmented landscape on finance. Therefore it would be good to have some kind of oversight.

STAIR: Another topic dealt with in this issue is the emergence of new non-state actors addressing climate change. What are the positive and negative sides of the large numbers of non-state actors now participating in the international climate change summits?

MG: The participation of non-governmental organizations is very important. And when I talk about NGOs, I am not only referring to “green” NGOs such as Greenpeace or Friends of the Earth, I am talking about the whole spectrum of non-governmental actors, including private practice, industry, local communities, cities, and so forth. We cannot make any progress on climate change without those NGOs being part of the dialogue. We get a lot of feedback from them and, from our side, we hope to give them as much information as possible. There is a lot of expertise out there, and I don't think the number of NGOs should go down. It was a huge summit in Copenhagen—perhaps a bit too crazy—but I think in essence the issue is about political interests and trying to bridge those.

Sometimes it succeeds and sometimes it doesn't. I don't believe for a second that the size of Copenhagen undermined the end result. So I do not agree with those saying, "There were too many people, it was too crowded, and therefore we only got a modest outcome."

I do think—and that's the other side—that sometimes the issue of climate change is used as a vehicle for all kinds of things. And it doesn't help the negotiations, or the agenda, or progress, if every single issue under the sun comes on the climate change bandwagon. We have to be careful—not every single issue can be solved through a Global Climate deal. I sometimes have the feeling that NGOs tried to put their issue forward in the context of Copenhagen because of the attention the summit got, rather than because of its direct relationship to climate change. Another slightly negative point concerns the expectations held by NGOs. I think that if you want to solve the climate change problem, you have to first start a regime and then strengthen it. You cannot have the ideal regime straight away, it is a step by step process. In Copenhagen, some NGOs couldn't accept that we weren't aiming for the ideal picture. Some sense of realism and political feasibility is needed in order to assess what is and isn't possible.

STAIR: Having discussed the Copenhagen summit, and some of the themes raised in this issue of STAIR, I would like to end with a look to the future. What do you think are the prospects for next December's summit in Mexico? Do we need more political will, and if yes, will we find it in the future?

MG: Well, first of all, I don't think there necessarily was a lack of political will. Climate change is such a huge challenge that it cannot be solved with a big bang. Perhaps we were overly optimistic in thinking that Copenhagen could somehow give us that silver bullet, that magical formula. We only got a modest step in Copenhagen—though an important one—not necessarily because of a lack of political will but because this is such a huge thing. Climate change politics has so many dimensions, it is so complex, that I feel we have to approach it a more step-by-step manner. I'm not saying that we should delay action: the climate change problem is urgent and we should act now. I'm just saying that Copenhagen, though a step forward did not give us a full deal because we are dealing with such a complex and multi-layered problem. I believe in a start-and-strengthen approach, where we take steps, we learn how to do it, we gain experience and we build trust, and we go from one step to the next.

Furthermore, I see this as a continuum in history. Take a look at the 1980s. We worked on a climate change treaty and many wondered

whether it would be possible to get it ready in time for the Rio Summit—it was ready and in 1992 we got the convention (the UNFCCC). Then people said, “It’s never going to enter into force,” but it did. And then many said, “We’re never going to get an agreement with developed countries on targets,” but we did get targets in Kyoto, and then people said, “It’s never going to enter into force,” but it did. So we are taking steps—it isn’t going fast enough and clearly we should move up the pace, but I see 2010 again as an important year to take what we did in Copenhagen get as much support for the Accord as possible, and then address the gaps, and make the deal stronger. I hope we use 2010 to learn lessons from 2009 and focus not on the things that divide us, but on where we can make the deal stronger. Stronger for developed countries, stronger for the developing countries, stronger for the least developed countries—and we should try and get the available money going. For the coming years we have ten billion dollars available per year—now let’s get that money together and get it to where it is needed, swiftly. Let’s try and operationalize the Copenhagen Accord and get a good next step in Mexico. I often say we should be idealists without illusions—we should have high ambitions, we should aim for what we need, but we should also avoid unrealistic expectations and illusions. We should simply take another step, learn from each other, and move forward. I took that phrase from John F. Kennedy, actually, who once described himself as an “idealist without illusions.” ■

Nicholas Stern. *A Blueprint for a Safer Planet: How to Manage Climate Change and Create a New Era of Progress and Prosperity*.

London: The Bodley Head, 2009. 256 pp. £17 (pbk).

ISBN: 1847920379.

ANA MARIA KLEYMEYER¹ (International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, Geneva)

Nicholas Stern's latest book on the economics of climate change provides an updated look at the main messages derived from the 2006 Stern Review, widely considered one of the most politically influential analyses of the topic of climate change. The book was released in mid-2009, only months prior to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's 15th Conference of the Parties in Copenhagen, and clearly set out to weigh in on critical issues under consideration in the crafting of a new international agreement.

Stern provides an overview of some of the basic climate science, which he then uses to build an economic analysis of both the roots of the climate crisis and its possible solutions. A few points distinguish this publication from the Stern Review's much longer technical study. The book updates readers on the magnitude of the climate crisis, based on the latest scientific evidence, and then points out the resultant adjustments necessary to prior analyses. The book contains a stronger political analysis than the Review, and does a remarkably good job at consistently incorporating a balanced and equitable approach to the impacts and challenges relevant to developing countries.

Stern evaluates the economics heavily—often meandering for pages beyond the grasp of his non-economist readers—but he also weighs in equally on development concerns for countries at different stages of growth, and, moreover, addresses the complexity of global political dynamics. This “balanced” approach appears in the political rhetoric of developed countries, but rarely plays out in their national policies or in the actions they take at the international level. Border carbon adjustments—applying taxes on imports of “high-carbon” goods from countries with less stringent climate change policies—are one example of a national policy that antagonizes the developing world and contradicts

political statements that developed countries should “take the lead” on climate change mitigation. There is reluctance among developed countries to commit to sufficient and sustained financing through a financial instrument with balanced decision-making and direct access for developing countries. Stern understands the concepts of historic responsibility and equity in delivery of global solutions, but his recommendations on these issues could be even stronger if taken to the level of specifics for implementation.

Stern’s style and tone indicate a keen awareness that his research and conclusions are taken into account at the highest political decision-making levels, particularly in Europe. This may explain why he seems to go out of his way in numerous parts of the book to refute the approaches and findings of other well-known economists—and especially his critics—slaying their conclusions with sharp and swift strokes. Although these internal reputational contests are tedious and best left to academic articles, the time and space dedicated to these points underline the importance of clearly standing out above the rest if you are to be the one to influence national and international decision-making.

One of the strongest aspects of the book is Stern’s repeated emphasis on equity and climate justice. He goes to great lengths to describe these issues and to incorporate them into his recommendations as a fundamental basis for action and effective results. Stern addresses equity through economics and ethics, with simple yet carefully detailed arguments. Specifically, he addresses the complex issue of developing country mitigation as necessary yet distinguished from developed country mitigation, as well as the imperative to secure and effectively deliver assistance to vulnerable countries and communities who will be hit the hardest by climate change. Such principles receive lip-service but little action in the context of global negotiations and political meetings, particularly when it comes to discussion of the economic aspects. Yet, although Stern builds a robust economic and social case for equity, and warns of the ineffectiveness of not incorporating the principle into climate decision-making, his argument concerning the consequences of not addressing climate change through a justice-based approach are not as compelling or clearly tied to his numbers on economic consequences of inaction, for example.

Stern makes a solid case for the need to address climate change collectively and then puts forward recommendations—his “blueprint”—for how to shape a workable international approach. He translates the science from prognosis into economic analysis that can then be applied to governmental policy-making, where projections, risks, costs and benefits are the language of government planning. These arguments then form

the basis of the “structure of a global deal”—an agreement that is not only feasible in economic terms for all countries, but also sustainable.

Perhaps Stern’s most important message, which was clear in the Stern Review and continues to resound throughout this book, is his pragmatic optimism that it is possible for the world to successfully address climate change. While he is quite clear about the complexity and amount of effort required from governments and citizens, he never falters from his message that the fundamental shifts in human behaviour are possible through policy-making, that investments required are available, sound, and deliverable, and that a global deal can deliver the emissions reductions necessary to stabilize our atmospheric system.

So, why is Stern’s blueprint not on the desk of every decision-maker involved in the issue, if it contains so many well-founded answers? Perhaps it is a matter of time. Or perhaps the book does not address or resolve the challenges of governance that impede governments from acting on the basis of clear evidence and sound judgment. Many of the challenges we face in solving the climate change dilemma are the same weaknesses that make our economic systems fragile and keep our development goals just beyond reach. They include a relatively young international system characterized by institutional and governance problems; insufficiently strong international compliance mechanisms that need to include both assistance and penalties; and national-level implementation stumbling blocks such as weak financial structures, corruption, political discontinuity, and varying levels of capacity, among others. Resolving these challenges is fundamental to ensure a comprehensive approach to climate change and requires political will to change along with dedicated efforts and resources over the long term. These are some of the subtler hues to our global political economy that we must face collectively and improve in order to achieve a unified and effective approach to climate change. While Stern’s book serves to further sharpen the picture of the economics, principles, and policies for climate governance, fundamental components of a broader solution on the path away from business as usual—the “blueprint”—can only be effective when the engineers and builders assiduously and responsibly carry the project through. ■

Notes

¹ Ana Maria Kleymeyer is Senior Advisor on Climate Change Negotiations at the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, Geneva. She previously served as a senior advisor to the Government of Argentina.

Paul G. Harris, ed. *Climate Change and Foreign Policy: Case Studies from East to West.*

London: Routledge, 2009. 208 pp. £75 (hbk).

ISBN: 041548345X.

NICHOLAS CHAN (St Antony's College, University of Oxford)

The halting progress of international co-operation on climate change over the past two decades, coupled with the growing urgency of the need to address the causes and impacts of rising temperatures, has led to an increasing amount of literature examining the political obstacles surrounding the climate regime. Why has agreement been so difficult? If countries remain so far apart at the negotiating table, how has this been so? In this edited volume, Paul Harris and his collaborators aim to illustrate how domestic political dynamics feed into decision-making processes for a country's environmental foreign policy.

The eight chapters that form the bulk of the book each focus on one country, their authors highlighting how each country's international position on climate change has been affected by domestic dynamics. Additionally, one chapter deals with the European Union and the interplay between its environmental stance and bureaucratic influences. A final chapter shifts discussion to adaptation, exploring how climate policy interfaces with the existing foreign aid regime. While some of the case studies focus on the "usual suspects" of the international politics of climate change (China, Japan, Australia, the United States), the others draw our attention to countries that have received less attention in the English-language literature (Turkey, Hungary, Denmark, France). These chapters are largely descriptive, offering an account of how climate change foreign policy has changed (or not) over the two decades of international negotiations.

What is particularly instructive for this latter group of countries is how the authors illustrate the redefinitions of state interests over time within the country concerned. In showing how this translates into national policy on climate change—whether on the speed of accession to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, or in the spillover effect into other policy arenas—the authors provide a different perspective on climate co-operation from that which normally focuses on the big players. As a whole, the volume draws attention to the need to locate an understanding of how climate change foreign policy is made within the broader political context of the country concerned—whether it is American exceptionalism, Turkey's tension between the pulls of aspiring

Western identity and economic reality, French geopolitical independence, and so forth.

Each chapter reaches useful conclusions about how to understand the development and formation of a country's climate change policy, paying attention to preference formation, the influence of scientific information, domestic interest groups, bureaucratic actors and individual leadership, among other things. In this way, the volume questions our ability to treat foreign policy-making in unitary actor terms by tracing international policy shifts to corresponding, multi-actor shifts at the domestic political level. And of course, the interplay between the international and domestic contexts is also at the heart of this, such as the pressures of Japanese economic recession, reputational costs from the 2003 invasion of Iraq for Australia, or for Hungary, policy harmonization linked to post-Cold War European integration.

Because of the diversity of approaches across the chapters and only minimal attempts at cross-case comparison, however, the chapters are more impressive individually than they are as a collective volume. Despite offering a more conceptual treatment elsewhere of the theoretical insights that foreign policy analysis can make to understanding environmental co-operation,¹ Harris makes only minimal remarks in the introduction of the present volume about what we can draw, comparatively, from this array of cases. We can recognize the basic point that "foreign policy matters," but when some chapters base their analysis around different frameworks, whether it is discourse analysis (Australia) or path dependency (France), and use different benchmarks for comparison, such as the ozone regime (Turkey) or that for biodiversity (Hungary), there is little of general consequence that can be said about how the foreign policy of climate change is made. We end up, in short, with a laundry list of various contributing factors—some of which are undoubtedly more important in some cases than others—but little evaluation of whether any hold greater explanatory influence.

Context matters greatly, as the contributors to this volume demonstrate, and the international context cannot be divorced from the domestic when it comes to climate policy. Understanding how foreign policy is made is an important piece of the puzzle of collective action that underlies co-operation on climate change, highlighting the agency of sub-state actors as part of the complex reality of twenty-first century international politics. ■

Notes

¹ See John Barkdull and Paul G. Harris, "Environmental Change and Foreign Policy: A Survey of Theory," *Global Environmental Politics* 2, no. 2 (2002): 63–91.

Mary E. Pettenger, ed. *The Social Construction of Climate Change: Power, Knowledge, Norms, Discourses.*

Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2009. 280 pp. £55.00 (hbk).
ISBN: 0754648028.

MICHAEL URBAN (Balliol College, University of Oxford)

The Social Construction of Climate Change seeks, in the words of its editor, to “understand the interpretations of climate change, vis-à-vis the social processes of climate change conceptualization, i.e., what it is and how its causes and consequences, and the planned responses to it, are constructed” (p. 2).

The book is divided into two sections, the first of which focuses on a “norm-centred perspective,” with the second employing a “discourse analytical perspective.” Whatever the planned division of labour, however, the most readily noticeable difference between the two sections lies in the adherence by the contributors to the first part to what can be called conventional constructivist approaches (à la Wendt), and the embrace of more critical versions of constructivist thought in the second. Indeed, the diversity of approaches employed by the various contributors, between but also within sections, forms one of the strengths of the volume.

The book is at its best when it is at its most descriptive. The chapters in the first half plot the evolution of a variety of norms associated with climate change in a number of developed states, including the United States, the Netherlands, and Japan. All of these accounts are accessibly written, which is important for those not well versed in constructivism’s often opaque prose. The chapter by Loren R. Cass, which focuses on measuring the salience of several key environmental norms in British, German, and American climate change debates, provides a useful and replicable model for measuring norm salience in domestic contexts, thereby opening up the possibility for comparable studies across a wider range of case studies. Other chapters also provide interesting descriptions of specific norms within their national contexts and represent valuable empirical contributions, which are likely to prove useful foundations for future research.

The second section of the book delves deeper into debates about climate change and seeks to explore the underlying discourses which structure them at the local, national, and international levels. While many of these accounts are intriguing, insightful, and well written, some of the

contributors undermine their own efforts by writing in such an inaccessible and unstructured way that at times only the most determined reader will be able to puzzle out the full meaning of their argumentation. This unfortunate tendency is most present in William D. Smith's chapter, which deals with Totonac cosmology as a form of climate change knowledge, but crops up in other chapters as well. Even more problematic than dense verbiage and distended argumentation, however, is the unresolved tension that exists between, on the one hand, some contributors' attempts at explanation and understanding and, on the other, their undisciplined meandering between the two. Such tension is not unique to this volume and pervades much constructivist international relations scholarship; however, certain claims advanced in the second half of the book throw some of the associated challenges into fairly sharp relief.

For instance, in their chapter on the discourse of territorialization, Matthew Paterson and Johannes Strippel argue that certain "discourses serve to structure concrete policy developments, and illustrate how they reterritorialize climate politics." While they are never explicit in doing so, Paterson and Strippel advance a number of essentially causal claims that effectively move them out of the realm of understanding and into explanation. This is not necessarily a problem; it simply requires them to develop a causal account of their claim, operationalise it, consider some alternative explanations for the alleged effect, devise a methodology to test their account against its rivals, and provide empirical evidence supporting their account over the aforementioned alternatives. True, Paterson and Strippel might abjure such explanatory pretensions and claim to be only seeking understanding, but such a position sits uncomfortably with their claim to be exploring "the ways that ... territorial framing is productive of concrete policies" (p. 149).

Causally relating a discourse to events in a methodologically rigorous way remains one of the most difficult tasks for the social scientist, but it is too important a task to avoid. While this book provides a number of credible narratives concerning the influence of norms and discourses, when it strays into causal explanation it generally fails to show why constructivist accounts are more valid than credible alternative narratives. There are some partial exceptions, with Myanna Lahsen's chapter coming closest to substantiating her claims through the use of interviews. Nonetheless, despite these weaknesses, the work collected in this volume does provide a strong foundation of insightful empirical work upon which additional efforts can hopefully be built. ■

Mike Hulme. *Why We Disagree About Climate Change: Understanding Controversy, Inaction and Opportunity.*

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 432 pp. £15.99 (pbk).
ISBN: 0521727324.

MILAN ILNYCKYJ

In addition to being an observable physical phenomenon, climate change has taken on a broad range of social, political, and even theological meanings. Mike Hulme's *Why We Disagree About Climate Change* seeks to chart out the major lines of argumentation that have emerged around the subject, as well as to consider the implications that flow from them, both in terms of climate policy and in terms of broader matters of ethics and public policy. Ultimately, Hulme argues that "climate change should be seen as an intellectual resource around which our collective and personal identities and projects can form and take shape" (p. 326). The range of discourses Hulme considers is restricted to a particular segment of the overall climate change debate—specifically, those contributors to the debate who accept three scientific touchstones: that greenhouse gases affect the climate system, the recorded rise in global temperatures, and the possibility of non-linear responses in the climate system. Restricting the scope of consideration in this way allows Hulme to exclude viewpoints that have no scientific basis. However, doing so also precludes examination of all relevant actors in the global political discussion about climate change policy. While Hulme effectively examines the social, cultural, and political aspects of climate change, he may inappropriately downplay the observed and possible future physical consequences resulting from greenhouse gas emissions.

Hulme's book considers the climate change debate through the lenses of science, ethics (especially religious ethics), economics, psychology and the perception of risk, "development" as variously understood, and governance. Each chapter provides a good survey of different viewpoints along with insightful commentary. Hulme considers the important and contested role that science has taken on in the political sphere, with actors holding various positions all defending theirs as having a scientific basis. He argues convincingly that "[p]olicing the representation of scientific knowledge is a contentious activity" (p. 95). For the most part, Hulme's approach is academic and descriptive, though his argument turns surprisingly prescriptive on the question of population and

the environment. Notably, his examination does not consider those who engage in the climate change debate in dishonest or self-serving ways, seeking to maintain the status quo by creating the false sense that the science is deeply uncertain. Arguably, understanding the role of these actors is important when it comes to understanding public confusion about the climate issue, as well as the continuing lack of meaningful political action. Relatively few politicians or members of the general public would automatically accept Hulme's three touchstones as correct, partially because of the active misinformation still being disseminated.¹

The book distinguishes itself most from others in the genre by devoting considerable attention to ethical issues, considered primarily from the perspective of religious ethics. Hulme notes the exhortations by religious officials and documents to act as stewards of the planet, and considers disagreement about what that obligation means and how it should be put into practice. However, he does not consider how climate change relates to the problem of theodicy: why a benevolent deity concerned with human welfare would provide in fossil fuels such an ample and easily employed energy source, but build in a potentially devastating caveat that would not be understood until several hundred years after they entered widespread use. Nor does he consider that religious belief might diminish concern about climate change, since an orderly universe with a creator seems less likely to allow humanity to capriciously extinguish itself than one governed only by chance and physical laws.

At times, the book seems overly eager to link different views on different issues as if they formed comprehensive philosophies, for instance by suggesting that those who view societal organization in a certain way almost inevitably have similar views about the relationships between humanity and nature. For instance, it is not clear why those of an "egalitarian" leaning would generally view nature as "ephemeral," or why those with a "hierarchical" view of public policy would see it as "perverse" or "tolerant." This, along with the extremely short shrift given to secular forms of ethical reasoning, sometimes gives the impression of a lack of nuance. The link between non-moral facts that people believe about the world (such as about whether climate naturally returns to a stable state after being disturbed) and the high level ethical, political, and philosophical positions they affirm is likely not so clear-cut and determinative.

While Hulme systematically rejects the view of climate change as a technical problem to be solved, he does not provide adequate evidence to support this position. It seems logically possible that carbon-intensive forms of energy generation could be replaced with carbon-neutral ones, and deforestation stopped, without any fundamental change in world-

views or in economic or political structures. For instance, efforts like those by Google.org to produce renewable energy that is cheaper than coal (their RE<C initiative) suggest that there is a small chance that such positive outcomes could arise primarily through technological development, rather than being mandated through government policy.

Hulme seems to overemphasize psychology at the expense of attention to the physical characteristics of the climate system. While Hulme argues that considering climate change as primarily a physical phenomenon risks giving it “near infinite plasticity” (p. 28) there is also a risk that an overly psychological examination will fail to give due weight to the serious physical realities humanity is confronting. For instance, despite how the possibility of runaway climate change relates psychologically to “myths” about the apocalypse, it is also a real physical possibility independent of human ways of thinking. Indeed, it is something that could potentially have been caused unwittingly before any climate science was known. While examining human psychology can provide insights into why people respond to climate change in the ways they do, the discussion risks being ungrounded and overly relativistic if consideration of physical likelihoods of different outcomes is not included. Hulme’s reflexive rejection of the possibility of catastrophic climate change causes him to downplay the harm that could result if humanity fails to restabilize the climate system. If that assumption is rejected, the possibility arises that his examination of the climate change debate does not accurately consider the full extent of the problem. That said, Hulme’s examination is a valuable contribution to the overall academic discussion of climate change. By revealing the many ways in which those who agree on certain scientific premises continue to disagree on what ought to be done about climate change, Hulme demonstrates the roles that fact, philosophy, and ideology play in determining the human response to our changing atmosphere and warming planet. ■

Notes

¹ One recent book focused on this phenomenon is James Hoggan with Richard Littlemore, *Climate Cover-Up: The Crusade to Deny Global Warming* (Vancouver: Greystone Books, 2009).



China's Rise: An Adapting Global Structure

Call for Papers

Abstracts due April 30, 2010

Papers due August 31, 2010

In fields as disparate as naval security, financial regulation, pandemic control, and greenhouse gas emissions targets, China's policies have become pivotal. For many years it was isolated at the margins, but since "reform and opening"—begun in the late seventies—China has engaged the world, joined international organizations, and participated in regimes. Today, China is an undisputed major player in global affairs. It shapes the world to an unprecedented level.

China's ongoing rise is the subject of colourful—and often heated—debate. Much of this debate has focused upon China's internal development, including its adaptation to global structures. The *St Antony's International Review (STAIR)* would like to invert this question, considering a related, but less visited, issue: the impact of this rise upon the global political architecture. This approach aims to identify aspects most dramatically influenced by China and to evaluate some of the prospects for the architecture's continuing ability to absorb China's "peaceful rise."

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Examples of questions that might be explored are:

- How have international economic institutions adapted to accommodate China's interests and values?
- G20, G2—through which informal fora will China attempt to shape the coming global economic and political landscape?
- How have the practices of the United Nations changed in response to Chinese influence?
- Does China's rise have an impact upon the concept of "humanitarian intervention"?
- Is China influencing the notion of "global responsibility"?
- How is China's rise shaping the development of international law?
- Is China's rise influencing the debate over the existence, or otherwise, of "Asian values"?

STAIR welcomes abstracts of up to 500 words in length. In conjunction with this call for papers, *STAIR* also seeks to publish book reviews of works that relate to the theme of the issue.

Notes for contributors are available at www.stair-journal.org

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STAIR is the only peer-reviewed journal of international affairs at the University of Oxford. Set up by graduate students of St Antony's College in 2005, the *Review* has carved out a distinctive niche as a cross-disciplinary outlet for research on the most pressing contemporary global issues, providing a forum in which emerging scholars can publish their work alongside established academics and policymakers. Distinguished past contributors include John Baylis, Robert O. Keohane, James N. Rosenau, and Alfred Stepan.

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