



The Road to Cancun

10 November 2010,

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The Road to Cancun

Many observers blame the Copenhagen outcome on contingent factors:

- (a) the Danes did a poor job of preparing for and chairing the meeting;
- (b) a small group of countries were obstructionist, and so on.

Had these factors been different, would the fundamental outcome in Copenhagen been any different?

The outcome in Copenhagen reflects two more fundamental factors in the climate-change negotiations.

- (a) the Copenhagen conference was the first meeting whose success depended on addressing developing as well as developed country emissions.
- (b) The two most important players — the United States and China — do not agree on the fundamental architecture of a future legal regime.

The Road to Cancun

(a) the Copenhagen conference was the first meeting whose success depended on addressing developing as well as developed country emissions.

The insistence by developed countries in Copenhagen that the outcome address developing as well as developed country emissions reflects a fundamental shift in the climate-change negotiations.

For the first decade of the regime, from 1991 to 2001, the negotiations focused almost exclusively on developed country emissions - the basic axis in the negotiations. During this period was the split between the USA & the EU.

On one side, **the EU pushed for strong emissions reduction targets implemented domestically**; on the other side,

the USA initially resisted a targets-based approach during the UNFCCC negotiations and then embraced it under President Bill Clinton,

but insisted on **allowing targets to be met through the use of international market mechanisms such as emissions trading.**

The Road to Cancun

Since 2001, when the Marrakesh conference adopted the detailed rulebook for operationalizing the Kyoto Protocol, the basic dynamic in the climate negotiations has shifted.

The issue of reducing developed country emissions has continued to be central, but developed countries have become increasingly insistent on addressing developing country emissions as well.

This has brought to the fore the second main axis in the climate-change negotiations: **the split between developed and developing countries.**

The new negotiating dynamic began to emerge at the 2002 New Delhi conference, when European countries began pressing for action from developing countries.

For most of the next few years, the shift in the negotiating dynamic was overshadowed by the George W. Bush Administration's decision to reject Kyoto.

But it moved to center stage at the Bali conference in 2007, where it remained in Copenhagen.

The Road to Cancun

(b) The two most important players — the United States and China — do not agree on the fundamental architecture of a future legal regime.

The second related factor that made Copenhagen so hard was the fact that the two biggest emitters in the world — **the United States and China** — **have fundamentally different positions on issues of legal architecture.**

On the one hand, the USA insists that a future agreement be **symmetric** in the sense that it contain legal commitments by both developed and developing countries (though these commitments may be very different in stringency and content).

On the other hand, **China is unwilling to accept any legal commitments to limit its emissions**, regardless of how they are differentiated.

Meanwhile, the countries with Kyoto targets are unwilling to agree to a second round of targets unless the United States and the major emerging economies, including in particular China, agree to do their fair share under a legally-binding global agreement.

The Road to Cancun

Given these political realities, the Copenhagen Accord represents a rather artful compromise that achieved about as much as could reasonably have been expected.

(i) by establishing listing processes for both developed country targets and developing country actions, it satisfied the United States demand for symmetry.

(ii) by establishing only political commitments, it satisfied the Chinese rejection of legally-binding obligations.

(iii) by focusing on a political rather than a legal outcome, it sidestepped the need for any decision about whether or not to continue the Kyoto Protocol

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The Path Ahead

(i) Continuing to Negotiate under the UNFCCC

Without changes in the positions of the USA and China or in the dynamic between developed and developing countries, is there a reason to expect a better outcome in Cancun (or in South Africa in 2011 or Rio de Janeiro in 2012) from that of Copenhagen?

The UNFCCC's consensus decision-making rule is seen by many from developed countries as a stumbling block towards collective progress in these negotiations.

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(ii) Operationalizing the Copenhagen Accord

A 2nd option would be to proceed separately under the auspices of the Copenhagen Accord.

The countries that have associated themselves with the Copenhagen Accord represent more than 85 % of global emissions. So if they were willing to proceed on their own, they could effectively address the climate change problem.

Objections to this approach

- (a) The Copenhagen Accord is "only" a political agreement, so it does not provide sufficient assurance that countries will take action.
- (b) The BASIC countries — China, India, Brazil, and South Africa — whose participation is crucial to the success of any regime, have already signaled that they are unwilling to go with this approach.

Proposals to pursue the climate-change negotiations in the G-20, the Major Economies Forum (MEF), or some other institution with a more limited membership suffer from the same problem.

The Road to Cancun

(iii) Decentralized regime

This approach seeks to split the climate-change problem up into different pieces and address the more tractable pieces in more specialized forums.

To some degree this is happening already.

for example:

- The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is considering international shipping
- The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is considering civil aviation
- REDD+ Partnership
- World Bank is exploring market mechanisms
- MRV Partnership
- UN General Secretary High Level Advisory Group on climate change financing

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(iii) Decentralized regime

While these action-oriented partnerships are also multilateral in structure, they have been established specifically to develop and implement projects to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions while forging close relationships, sharing resources, and coordinating activities.

As a rule, these partnerships work with a targeted group of countries that have both the necessary technical expertise and the capacity to affect the overall rate of growth in greenhouse-gas emissions;

They focus on practical projects that advance the development or utilization of technology; and leverage private-sector investment to accelerate action.

These extra-UNFCCC initiatives raise two issues.

- (a) how should the countries that are taking action deal with each other?
- (b) how should countries taking action deal with those that aren't?



International policy on REDD+

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International policy on REDD+

Outline

- Overview of the REDD+ process
- Outcomes from COP15: Methodological guidance on REDD+
- Status of REDD+ issues under the AWG-LCA
- REDD+ Partnership

International policy on REDD+

Overview of the REDD+ process

- 2005 – Proposal by PNG and Costa Rica calling for considerations for approaches for addressing emissions from deforestation.
- June 2006 - Technical process (SBSTA) was launched
- June 2006 to June 2007 – considerations of relevant scientific, technical & methodological issues by SBSTA (4 sessions).
- Dec 2007 – In Bali, COP decision on REDD+ was taken: to stimulate action (Decision 2 CP/13).
- 2008 – 2009: Two parallel tracks of work related to REDD+
 - (a) Methodological considerations – through SBSTA
 - (b) Policy approaches and positive incentives – through the AWG-LCA.

International policy on REDD+

2009 Copenhagen (COP 15): Methodological issues

COP 15 adopted a Decision on methodological issues (Decision 4/CP 15). This decision included:

- (a) Guidance that should be taken into account when implementing activities relating to the Bali COP Decision
- (b) Guidance for capacity building
- (c) Further work :
 - (i) IPCC to further elaborate and simplify the guidelines
 - (ii) effective involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities.

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In Copenhagen (COP 15): REDD+ policy approaches and incentives (AWG-LCA)

Key elements of the AWG-LCA text that came from Copenhagen included:

- Scope of activities, guiding principles and safeguards
- Phased approach for implementation
- Means of implementation
- MRV of actions (reference emission levels, national monitoring systems, use of IPCC guidelines).

International policy on REDD+

Policy approaches and incentives (AWG-LCA) sessions in June, August & October 2010:

-New proposals and text were added to the draft text which came from Copenhagen.

Nevertheless, countries still share common understanding regarding:

1. Urgent need for scaled-up finance – particularly for ‘readiness activities’.
2. Capacity building in all aspects still urgently needed
3. Development and implementation of national strategies and action plans need to address the drivers of deforestation and ensure the rights and participation of indigenous peoples and local communities.

Key REDD+ issues that are linked to the wider discussions under the AWG-LCA:

1. Financing options, particularly for full implementation (funds only ; markets only; combination of the two).
2. REDD+ as NAMA
3. Links between MRV of action and support.

International policy on REDD+

Specific REDD+ issues that remain to be finalized:

1. Scope of REDD+ activities
2. Safeguards for implementing REDD+
3. Elements required for implementation (national strategy / plan; national forest reference emission level; national forest monitoring system).
4. If sub-national level implementation would be allowed as an interim step
5. If, and when, details of modalities for developing reference emission levels, national forest monitoring system, MRV of actions should be developed in Cancun or post Cancun.

International policy on REDD+

Political realities on REDD+ in Cancun

- Many countries consider REDD+ to be matured enough to be one of the COP Decisions in Cancun.
- Will there be sufficient time & political will to work beyond the new text proposals that were made in June 2010?

Broad interests of South Africa in the REDD+ negotiations:

- To ensure environmental integrity.
- Scope: the + aspects of REDD+ should receive equal status as the REDD aspects
- Operationalization of the safeguards (e.g., preventing transforming natural forests into monoculture plantations)
- MRV of action and MRV of support
- National implementation as opposed to the project-based sub national approach.

REDD+ Partnership

When was the REDD+ Partnership was formed?

It was launched on the sidelines of the UNFCCC COP 15, in Copenhagen, by Australia, UK, USA, France, Norway and Japan.

Why was it formed?

This was a response to the observation that formal negotiations have stalled while action to reduce deforestation is urgently needed.

Objectives of the REDD+ Partnership

- To scale up both the finance and actions for REDD+ activities;
- To improve co-ordination of actions and finance in REDD+ activities &
- To improve transparency in the financing of REDD+ activities.

REDD+ Partnership

Character of the Partnership

It is an interim platform which will come to an end when there is a COP Decision to Implement REDD+ activities under the UNFCCC.

The period envisaged for this Partnership is 2010 – 2012.

It is not a negotiating forum. It is a meeting of like-minded countries.

All Parties are allowed to be members of the Partnership.

There are two co-chairs (one from developing country and the other from developed country) which rotate every 6 months. Current co-chairs are Japan and Papua New Guinea.

From January to June in 2011, the co-chairs will be Brazil and France.

REDD+ Partnership

Reality regarding REDD+ Partnership

Is there money in the kitty?

There has been a minimum of US\$ 4 billion that has been pledged to the Partnership.

However, the Partnership is not a financial mechanism, that is, it does not intend to distribute or allocate money.

Financial arrangements are mainly bilateral in character.

Who stands to benefit from the funds?

Countries with better governance and with large forest reserves will be the main beneficiaries.

Within Africa, the Congo Basin countries, Tanzania, Zambia are some of the main beneficiaries.

REDD+ Partnership

How will the REDD+ Partnership feed into the formal UNFCCC negotiations?

There is lack of clarity on how this initiative will feed into formal negotiations under UNFCCC.

There is no doubt that this initiative has a narrow scope, it focuses mainly on countries with large forest reserves, at the expense of the comprehensive nature of the scope of REDD+ as discussed in the UNFCCC negotiations.

That said, I remain optimistic that lessons learnt during the period 2010 – 2012, the readiness phase, will help us prioritizing our work in the mid-term future.