



NOVEMBER



Globe International Global Equity & Climate Change

A History of the UNFCCC Negotiations for a GLOBAL SOLUTION

http://www.gci.org.uk/Documents/A_Brief_History_of_UNFCCC_to_1998.pdf

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Buenos Aires Global Equity is at the Heart of the Solution

By Aubrey Meyer, Director of GCI, based in London.

Correcting global inequity is at the heart of the solution to global climate change. Without this, there is no role for developing countries. Without this and without all of us, there is no solution to climate change.

The impact of expanding human greenhouse gas (ghg) emissions on the climate system is causing global temperature to rise, putting everyone at risk. The patterns of global consumption behind this impact are deeply divergent. Globally and historically, it is a minority of people that has caused these impacts. Emissions of ghgs have been accumulating in the atmosphere since the beginning of industrialization. 80% of this accumulated impact has come from the less than 20% of global population living in the industrial north.

Since the money supply and ghg emissions are closely correlated, those making the money have been making the mess.

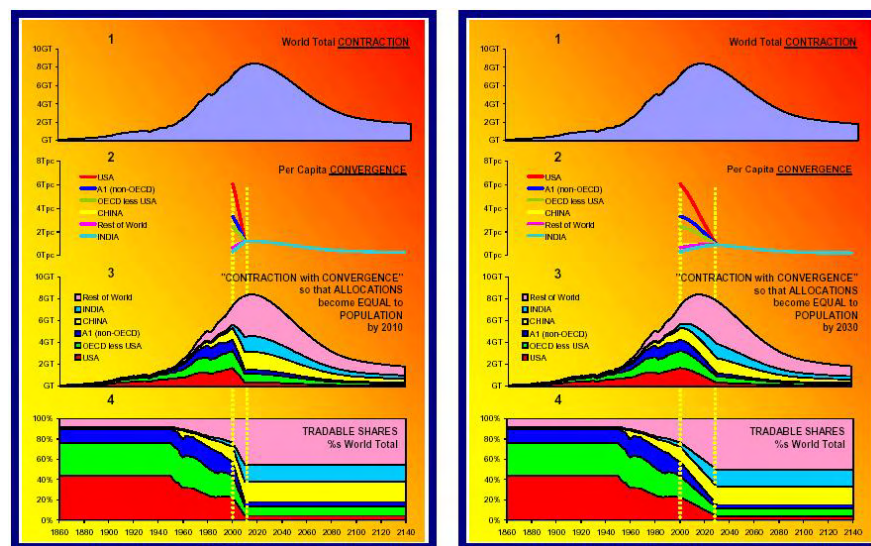
At present, one third of the global population has 94% of the global purchasing power, the other two thirds the remaining 6. Most, but not all of that upper third live in the industrialised countries benefiting from the institutions of their accumulated wealth. A fatalistic maxim says the rich get richer while the poor get poorer.

This now misses the point. All of us - rich and poor - have a dwindling future because of these impacts. While there may historically be no justice between the divergent rich and poor, global climate changes now threaten all of us with chaos. The global environmental justice of climate change will be either correcting inequity and preventing climate change, or living in conditions that become unbearable for all. How do we achieve the former path?



The objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is to stabilise rising concentration of greenhouse gas (ghg) in the atmosphere. By definition this requires a global contraction of ghg emissions from human sources to 60 to 80% less than at present. The sooner this is achieved, the lower the ultimate concentration -and therefore temperature and damage - level will be. The Kyoto Protocol created in December 1997 was a first flawed and inadequate attempt to introduce legally binding commitments to begin this contraction. Industrial countries are supposed to take this lead. But the wrangling continues as . . .

the US has refused to ratify the Protocol saying that unless all countries are involved the effort will be futile because it is one-sided. They say to be effective we must have “globality” or “meaningful participation by developing countries.” They also specify “maximum flexibility” or the “international tradability of these commitments,” so they are achieved “efficiently” or at lowest cost. These are rational arguments. Effectiveness and efficiency are indeed two of the three pre-conditions of success. However the third is global equity, the founding principle of the Climate Convention.

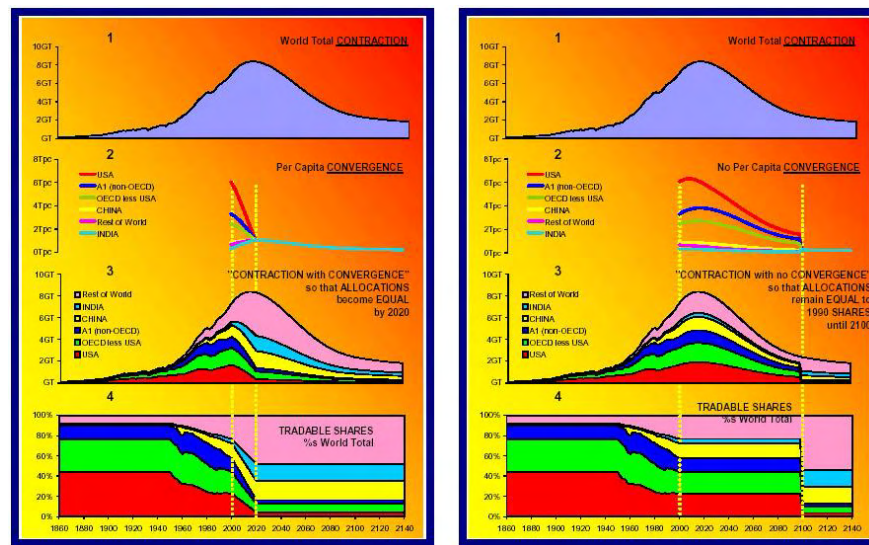


Without this point, the inevitable moral basis of any global rationale - we face continuing political division and deepening ecological adversity. Global equity here simply means how is the global ghg contraction budget shared internationally? Taken together, how do we effectively calculate and equitably share this budget? And then how also do we efficiently manage these shares, so that the whole operation succeeds at least damage cost and abatement cost globally? The answer is “Contraction, Convergence Allocation and Trade”.



COP agrees to a safe global atmospheric ghg concentration target. This, by definition creates a long-term global ghg emissions contraction budget. Inside it shares are legitimate and outside it they are “hot-air.”

When necessary it can be revised, but it is an unavoidably necessary step. COP also agrees that the international shares of this budget are negotiated using the principle of convergence to equal per capita shares globally by an agreed date, with pro rata reduction thereafter. Again revision over time may be required. The combination of these operations result in an internationally complete and equitable set of ghg allocations that are legally binding limitations of reductions and also fully internationally tradable shares. The international distribution of shares is most sensitive to the rates of “Contraction and Convergence” as the graphic examples show. The faster the convergence the greater the share to the low per capita consumers. Noting the “historic responsibility of the Industrial Countries” and using the “maximum flexibility” and acting positively in unison as a majority the developing countries can negotiate an ‘accelerated convergence’ and acquire the majority shares in a future carbon budget that is also globally safe. They can then also sell their surplus shares to the industrial countries in what will be a very lucrative market to determine their future sustainable development. This is equity and survival in a nutshell. Clearly the opportunity to do this is better than ever. The Heads of State at the September Summit of the 113 countries of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Durban, South Africa signalled for the first time as a majority bloc of countries their positive engagement with regard to globality, efficiency and equity.



The final NAM resolutions state terms for an equitable global partnership to solve climate change. “Emission trading for implementation of (reduction or limitation) commitments can only commence after issues relating to the principles, modalities, etc. of such trading, including the initial allocations



of emissions entitlements on an equitable basis to all countries, has been agreed upon by the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change.”

“Contraction, Convergence Allocation and Trade” is already a widely known way of negotiating this. The European Parliament recently voted for this approach with a majority of ninety percent in favour. The Africa Group of Nations had already adopted this position before COP3.

Article 17 of the Kyoto Protocol (KP) is directly a result of the Chinese and Indian delegations rightly demanding equitable allocations at the end of COPS, and the NAM statement now consolidates that.

Before during and since Kyoto, GLOBE International has campaigned for this with a growing number of parliamentarians and with growing success in over one hundred countries, including the US.

The NAM grouping adopting this rationale can now begin the end of global apartheid in what becomes everyone’s rational campaign for equity and survival.

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US Congressman John Porter
Chair GLOBE USA

GLOBE stands for Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment. It is an international network of Parliamentarians committed to working in a global non-partisan manner for legislation to protect the environment.

“Meaningful progress on confronting the challenge of climate change will only occur when countries from the North and the South are able to collaborate in issues of significant and sustainable development. The GLOBE Equity Protocol -

Contraction and Convergence - and its mechanism for financing sustainable development is the only proposal so far which is global, equitable and growth-oriented.

It is these issues that were endorsed at the GLOBE International General Assembly in Cape Cod, and form the thrust of our paper (Nov 1998), “Solving Climate Change with Equity and Prosperity.”



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Buenos Aires Herald Will Mandela end 'global apartheid'?

By Genevieve Cooper

Among the international government figures and advocates of every stripe present at the UN climate change conference here, Aubrey Meyer stands out.

A passionate and intense advocate of a unique idea to head off an environmental disaster and create global equity, Meyer has attracted more attention than ministers and environmentalists. The conference's official newsletter described him serenading cleaning staff and security guards with the violin past midnight on Friday. A columnist in the newsletter of an environmental group depicted him as "a tall, pony-tailed type," "on the brink of a psychotic episode."

Meyer, 51, is the director of the London-based Global Commons Institute (GCI). GCI is an organization dedicated to global environmental issues with a small budget derived from philanthropist donations. He also is an independent policy consultant for Globe International, an organization of some 500 legislators from around the world who cooperate on global environmental issues.

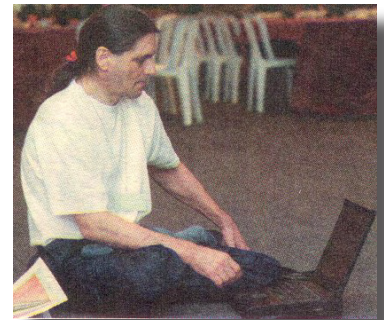
Meyer's personality and background, including the way he got involved in environmental issues, are unusual. What led to his founding GCI was his wish to write a musical, he said in an interview with the Herald.

Born in the United Kingdom, Meyer was raised in South Africa where he studied music. He then left South Africa to continue his music studies in London and over the years performed as an orchestra violinist in England, Ireland and Portugal.

In the early 80s Meyer wrote an orchestral score for the Royal Ballet in London which was successful in England and abroad.

In 1988 while he was thinking about writing a musical, Meyer came across the story of murdered Brazilian ecologist Chico Mendez. At first thinking Mendez would be a good subject for a musical, he found himself drawn to a budding green movement. Having avoided activism against apartheid in his native country, he decided it was time to get involved in the environment issue, he said. GCI was born in 1989.

Since then, GCI has devised an organizing principle with which to approach the climate change problem, and Meyer came to the conference to persuade others that his plan would both control global warming and also end what Meyer refers to as "global apartheid" — the disparity between developed and developing countries.





Delegates at the conference are wrangling to determine how developed and developing countries will share the burden of stabilizing rising greenhouse gas emissions believed to be responsible for global warming. Under the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, developed countries adopted what, if ratified, will become legally-binding targets to reduce emissions. Developing countries have not yet committed to emissions reductions and there are differences among developing countries over whether and how they will participate.

In Meyer's view, the Kyoto Protocol, "creates a very inequitable and unsustainable precedent." Developing countries' participation is essential, he says, but adds, "how the problem is going to be shared has got to be equitable or there's not going to be a solution."

Meyer's plan is to cap global emissions worldwide. Of that amount, each country — industrialized and developing — would have a permit to emit a certain share. In time, a country's permits to emit CO₂ would become proportional to its population, meaning that the industrialized nations which now have approximately 20 percent of the population but produce 80 percent of the greenhouse emissions would have to reduce their emissions to match their populations or buy permits from developing countries.

"If they (the US) can't deliver cuts at that rate, they don't have to. They can buy back from the credit available in other people's surplus," Meyer explained.

The tradability of emissions rights is controversial. Meyer says when emission rights are assigned and traded they become property rights.

Environmentalists say it is a right to pollute and therefore not a property right. He and environmentalists also disagree on the timing of phasing out fossil fuels. Some environmentalists want fossil fuels eliminated immediately. Meyer's plan allows time to phase them out.

The US has not been enthusiastic about "Contraction and Convergence, Allocation and Trade," as Meyer's idea is known. However, the scheme grew partially out of US demands for emissions trading and "meaningful participation" of developing countries in emissions reductions.

Meyer has been lobbying with more success in other regions. China, India, the Africa Group of Nations, the European Parliament and the Non-Aligned Movement have each made statements or resolutions in support of per-capita emission rights distribution, he said.

South African President Nelson Mandela is the current president of NAM and is aware of the Contraction and Convergence argument. Mandela is in a position, according to Meyer, "to open the political space necessary to end global apartheid."



At the conference, Meyer is promoting Contraction and Convergence with seemingly everyone he meets, distributing colourful graphs and devoting hours to explaining the complicated plan. He also has been trying to get Mandela and US Vice-President Al Gore to come to the conference and shake hands. A handshake between Mandela and Gore could push the Convention toward full participation and an equitable approach to mitigating climate change, Meyer believes.

Although Mandela and Gore have so far not heeded his plea, Meyer is a very persuasive man and has shaken up NGOs with the rapid spread of his idea and his certainty that his idea is the way the world should go - so much so that a columnist in the newsletter of an environmental group coalition called him a "dangerous madman" who, "seems to believe he is the only person who knows THE Truth about the climate."

Meyer thought the critique was amusing and gave the newsletter to the Herald.

Globe International will hold a forum to discuss Contraction and Conversion today at noon.