

1 The C&C Foundation works to engage the public and policy makers globally with Contraction & Convergence (C&C). Developed in the early 1990's by Aubrey Meyer and the Global Commons Institute, C&C is a formula for cutting global carbon emissions in time to stabilise the concentration of atmospheric greenhouse gases and for sharing the responsibility of doing so proportionately among all nations.

2 C&C is increasingly seen by leading scientists, economists, faith leaders and policy makers as a rational and fair formula through which the UNFCCC can deliver the commitment it made in Durban last December: to reach an effective, fair and binding climate deal that involves all nations.

3 The C&C Foundation notes that public engagement with C&C has been hindered by the lack of media attention and the dismissive attitude of the mainstream environmental NGOs and government advisors that helped to draft the Kyoto Protocol. We believe that C&C offers a rational survival strategy to avert runaway climate change which will also lay the foundations of a sustainable low-carbon global economy.

4 We note that without Aubrey Meyer's determined and almost solo advocacy over almost twenty years, C&C would not now be the most widely cited and influential formula. Meyer launched C&C at COP 3 in Geneva in 1996, where it attracted strong interest from developing nations. A year later at Kyoto, C&C was proposed by India and backed by many African nations, China and the USA. However, once the Kyoto Protocol was adopted, its backers sidelined C&C as 'utopian', 'lacking in support' and unnecessary. They also blamed, incorrectly, C&C as the reason the USA refused to sign Kyoto.

5 Such attitudes kept C&C off the UNFCCC agenda and blinded political leaders to the idea that C&C offers a guiding principle/rationale that can end years of argument about implementing the Kyoto Protocol. Negotiators also failed to realise that by not requiring emerging and developing nations to control their future emissions, Kyoto set a dangerous precedent. Until Durban, this was India's negotiating position, yet when it proposed C&C at Kyoto in 1997, Indian negotiators were well aware that C&C would eventually require India to cut its average per capita emissions. The arguments for C&C have not changed and the fact that the USA, China and India saw the merits of C&C in 1997 suggests they will do so again. The key question is whether there is any alternative and more compelling rationale than C&C for an effective climate deal that all nations would be willing to sign? If so, why haven't we heard of it?

6 Meyer continued his campaign for C&C because he rightly judged that Kyoto's inequity and inadequate emissions targets would eventually become apparent and compare poorly with the mathematical rigour and fairness of C&C. Yet despite Meyer's efforts, C&C remains little known because the mainstream media tend to take their lead on climate change from the major green NGOs and official advisors. The media has also failed to report on the ways western nations used their financial muscle to dissuade developing nations from proposing C&C (cf. COP 12 in Nairobi when Kenya wanted to propose C&C but were pressured by the UK government not to).

7 Recent high level reports by health professionals, economists and scientists confirm growing and diverse expert support for C&C. However, governments will not be able to introduce C&C unless it is understood and supported by policy makers, the media and the public in every country.

8 The C&C Foundation is therefore being set up to present the case for C&C to the widest possible audience, act as a catalyst for support and provide objective information about C&C for business, governments, civil society and individuals. We will also seek out high profile champions and it is worth noting that Eden Project founder Tim Smit believes that future generations will look back at C&C as 'the single most important idea since the Renaissance' because it will prove to be the principle that enabled effective global collaboration to avoid climate chaos.

9 The idea of an overarching guiding principle/rationale for dealing with climate change is critical. The lack of any such principle at previous UNFCCC talks allowed short term national economic and political interests to hijack the agenda. In contrast, C&C lays the ground rules for a sustainable and fair global economy which channels the energy and efficiency of markets into serving the needs of people and the environment. This is a win-win: without effective global collaboration to prevent runaway climate change, financial markets will eventually collapse and incalculable financial and human capital destroyed. C&C provides a unique, time-limited opportunity to organise a safe transition to a low carbon global economy. As Bill McGuire (professor of climate and geophysical risk at UCL and advisor to leading banks and insurance companies) has said - 'it's either complete catastrophe, or C&C'. Rajendra Pachauri (chair, IPCC) has described C&C as the only way ahead 'and the sooner this principle is understood and applied, the better'.

10 The most serious consequence of the economic crisis is to have pushed climate change down the agenda and return policy makers to a default setting of business-as-usual-non-stop (fossil fueled) economic growth. In 2011, despite recession, UK carbon emissions rose 3% and global emissions rose 6%. The most urgent challenge is therefore to keep in balance with the biosphere while walking a low carbon tightrope toward a sustainable future without the safety net of an adequate low carbon infrastructure. The consequences of failure are beyond calculation and future generations will be right to curse us for failing to act when we had the chance.

11 The only option is therefore to organise effective global collaboration to cut carbon emissions before the window of opportunity closes. We believe C&C is the only viable rationale for doing this, but it cannot thrive without an effective communication strategy, unprecedented and urgent global collaboration and exceptional political leadership. However, leadership without C&C as a science-based rationale for action will achieve nothing. This makes C&C the key idea of our age and the rationale for a fundamental and benevolent change in the relationship between industrialised, emerging and developing nations - and their citizens.

12 C&C has been condemned as a communist plot by free-marketeers and a right-wing conspiracy by people who don't trust markets. This suggests it offers a balanced approach, but nobody disputes its mathematical, scientific and even musical, rationale. Many people have described C&C as 'morally compelling' but this misses the point that

fairness is secondary to counting and cutting carbon emissions. The greatest injustice would be for poor countries (those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change) to sign up to a global strategy to prevent runaway climate change which offers reparations for 'historic emissions' by industrialised nations, but fails to cut global emissions fast enough to prevent disaster.

13 Aubrey Meyer spent many years as a professional viola player. Learning the violin took many years and he makes the point that the violin didn't change - he did. He says that although it won't be easy to 'learn C&C', it will become second nature - much like playing an instrument is to a musician. Daniel Barenboim once said that the difference between a politician and a musician is that a good politician must always be prepared to compromise because they can't otherwise make deals, but a good musician can never compromise because music requires absolute precision. The same is true of dealing with climate change. C&C understands that the biosphere won't negotiate... so we have to change.

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