

Comments by Michael Hutchinson re. Esmée Fairbairn Foundation peer review of Contraction & Convergence 2/6/11

1) I have discussed the decision not to support the Global Commons Trust with Mayer Hillman and Aubrey Meyer, with whom Mayer Hillman spoke before he went away. Aubrey said that the grant made by EFF to the Global Commons Trust in 2007 was in recognition of work already done - and to help his advocacy of C&C without requiring specific actions in the future - and that Danyal would know this. He confirmed that the funds have been used exclusively to fund his campaign for C&C over the last three years.

2) In response to the reviewer's comments that GCI needed to collaborate and share information with other NGOs, Aubrey pointed out that all the 'intelligence' that the Global Commons Institute has gathered is freely available and can be consulted by anyone on www.gci.org.uk. He also wondered if reviewer was aware that Climate Action Network has consistently denounced C&C, which makes the idea of collaboration with the mainstream environmental movement - which still has no clear, unified, policy on dealing with climate change - at best difficult.

3) The current schizophrenia amongst climate activists is captured by the current policy statement from Stop Climate Chaos:

"Different members of the Stop Climate Chaos Coalition support different frameworks for achieving a just and socially equitable climate agreement, including 'Contraction and Convergence' and 'Greenhouse Development Rights'. But whatever the precise framework agreed by the international community, they must be based clearly on principles of justice and equity, for this and future generations."

http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/scc_advocacy_platform_2010-11.pdf

It's time for SCC to make its mind up. C&C and GDR are mutually exclusive, and the latest academic papers (e.g. a thesis by Katerina Kraus comparing both proposals (attached herewith) and a paper by Prof Konrad Ott came out firmly in favour of C&C. "At the core of the author's argument lies the climate-ethics concept of "<<http://www.gci.org.uk/zew.pdf>> Contraction and Convergence". This argument provokes a constructive debate, and it presumes to support a concept that has been regarded as "Utopian" a decade ago but has now entered the political stage. What might it contribute to international climate policy in a nondistant future?" http://books.google.com.pe/books?id=xu3w1OW9AQkC&pg=PA195&dq=%22Contraction+and+Convergence%22&hl=en&ei=zyrhTcCcMoSq-gbq-dnABg&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=10&ved=0CFgQ6AEwCTgK#v=onepage&q=%22Contraction%20and%20Convergence%22&f=true> Religion and Dangerous Environmental Change Sigurd Bergmann Dieter Gerten [Eds]

This does not make me feel that C&C is 'old-hat' - quite the reverse.

4) These points suggest that whoever did the peer review for Esmée Fairbairn is misinformed/out of date about C&C, has not given proper weight to the growing and diverse expert support for it and may support a competing framework proposal. I can't know this, because I don't know who wrote the review, but the peer review neatly underlines the need to communicate C&C via the web and film as widely, fairly and effectively as possible. If expert assessors make such errors, how can the public - or even climate negotiators from countries with limited resources, find out about C&C as concept which is increasingly seen as critical to our future? Esmée Fairbairn Foundation would obviously not want to make funding decisions on the basis of a flawed assessment.

5) An obvious error in the review is the idea that C&C encourages population growth. This has been asserted by people who don't fully understand C&C, but not by those who do. Roger Martin (chair, Optimum Population Trust) used to make this criticism of C&C, but revised his opinion after hearing a presentation by Aubrey Meyer at the Global Humanitarian Forum in 2009 in which Meyer explained how a population cut off year (which has always been an element within C&C) will if anything create incentives to restrain population growth.

Once Martin realised that negotiating a population base-year in the C&C accounts would not give extra carbon entitlements to countries with rising populations or diminish them to countries with falling populations, the OPT changed its policy and now endorses C&C (as you can see in this statement which has been signed by David Attenborough, James Lovelock, Jonathon Porritt and others): <<http://www.optimumpopulation.org/submissions/climatechange09.pdf>>

Another pro C&C view from the group Population Matters is here: <<http://populationmatters.org/thinking/sustainable-lifestyles/sustainable-lifestyle>>

The video graphic sequence I produced for the [candcfoundation.org/](http://www.candcfoundation.org/) shows how this cut off year will work: <<http://www.candcfoundation.org/pages/whatis.html>>

6) The idea that C&C has been superseded by ideas that address the issue of responsibility for historic emissions by industrialised nations sounds like wishful thinking by advocates of other proposals and betrays another fundamental misconception about C&C. 'Historic emissions' are indeed a focus of some later proposals that claim to be variants of C&C (but aren't really) - notably Greenhouse Development Rights (GDR). But, however appealing they may seem to people who like the idea of a fairer world, such proposals are counterproductive in terms of reaching a global climate deal. The USA categorically rejects the idea of blame (and therefore compensation) for historic emissions - because the Byrd Hagel (Senate) Resolution prevents the US from signing any climate deal that is judged to be against US interests and which does not treat all nations on the same terms. In the case of GDR, it would also require the US and other 'over-emitting' nations to have 'negative-emissions-entitlements' after 2029 - after paying massive reparations to developing nations - in return for which they will have no commitments from least developed nations about cutting their future carbon emissions. Byrd Hagel prevented the USA from signing Kyoto and will certainly prevent it signing any future climate deal that prioritises financial compensation from industrialised to developing nations (or low-income individuals) for historic emissions. Indeed, Todd Stern, US Special Envoy on Climate Change, walked out of the recent UNFCCC meeting in Bangkok on this very issue - leading him to predict that COP17 in Durban this December will end in failure. Such an outcome would be a disaster for effective global leadership and consensus on dealing with climate change and may lead us to a series of unquantifiable bilateral deals between the USA, China, Brazil, India and Russia which will exclude other developing nations from a fair share of the benefit from an effective climate deal.

7) This is why C&C, in contrast to GDR and other proposals, sidesteps the issue of historic responsibility. Instead, it introduces a framework-based carbon market, through which developing nations can sell their unused equal per capita carbon entitlements to 'over-emitting' nations. This will generate income and technology transfer for climate vulnerable nations (i.e. mainly developing nations) which will help them to develop their economies. C&C's 'equity lever' is the date negotiated for the convergence of entitlements; the earlier this is, the longer industrialised nations will have to pay for using carbon entitlements that belong to carbon frugal nations. It also follows that the faster the rate of carbon emission contraction, the higher the price for per capita entitlements. If the EFF peer-reviewer fully understood this mechanism, he or she ignored its implications, because it gives C&C a subtle way of avoiding blame for historic emissions while still delivering a fair economic outcome: i.e. incentives for all countries to avoid fossil fuels, plus serious revenue for climate vulnerable, low-emitting (i.e. developing) nations to cope with climate change and grow their economies. In other words, C&C is a recipe for 'climate justice without vengeance'.

8) The suggestion that C&C should be modified to embrace historic responsibility for emissions reveals a fundamental misconception about C&C and may hint at the assessor's preference for a competing proposal (e.g. GDR) that seeks to compensate developing countries for historic emissions. This is the very issue that has caused years of stalemate at the UNFCCC and led to 'mission creep' in which the laudable fight against global poverty championed by NGOs such as Oxfam and Christian Aid has become confused with the separate issue of effective action to cut carbon emissions - which should be the priority for NGOs like Greenpeace FOE and WWF. The question of whether advocacy of C&C will help the UNFCCC process can therefore be answered positively.

9) The economist Professor Ross Garnaut, who reviewed climate change strategies for the Australian Government recognised that *"contraction and convergence approach addresses the central international equity issue simply and transparently. Slower convergence (a later date at which per capita emissions entitlements are equalised) favours emitters that are above the global per capita average at the starting point. Faster convergence gives more emissions rights to low per capita emitters. The convergence date is the main equity lever in such a scheme."* (Garnaut Review, 2008) - <http://www.garnautreview.org.au/pdf/Garnaut_Chapter9.pdf> citing Global Commons Institute 2000, '<<http://www.gci.org.uk/www.gci.org.uk/briefings/ICE.pdf>>GCI C&C Briefing', originally published as Meyer, A. 2000, Engineering Sustainability 157(4): 189–92." "<http://www.amazon.com/Contraction-Convergence-Solution-Schumacher-Briefings/dp/1870098943/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1298922617&sr=8-1#>

10) The idea of modifying C&C so it fits the divisive and blame-based agenda of the mainstream environmental movement is pointless. It is like asking a good violinist to play out of tune because everyone else in the orchestra is doing so. That's no way to make music! The science-based targets and transparent per capita equity of C&C provide an overarching rationale for UNFCCC-compliance that ensures each nation is treated - and acts - on the same basis in terms of emissions. This is why India and many African nations proposed C&C at Kyoto in 1997 and why Jonathan Pershing (then as now a lead climate negotiator for the USA) said, in response, that *"C&C may provide the basis of some future agreement that we all ultimately may seek to engage in"*. Fourteen years later, India has been tempted by the low hanging fruit of Greenhouse Development Rights as proposed by Greenpeace et al. because it likes the idea of being compensated for historic emissions without being obliged to restrain its own carbon emissions. Despite this, C&C remains the only basis for a climate deal that has any chance of resolving the differences between the USA, China, India and the rest of the world.

11) As many have recognised: - <http://www.gci.org.uk/endorsements.html> C&C remains the best and even some say the only basis for a climate deal that has any chance of resolving the differences between the USA, China, India and the rest of the world. The issue is not therefore whether C&C will obstruct the UNFCCC process, but whether proponents of GDR have reflected on the consequences of advocating a model that guarantees further conflict and failure.

12) C&C has growing support in Africa, Asia and Latin America, but many developing countries 'backed' Kyoto because of the money they could get from CDM projects, only to be very disappointed. Yet beneath the surface, support for C&C remained solid. Kenya wanted to propose it from the chair at COP 12 in Nairobi in 2006, but was told that Britain would not help to fund the conference (which Kenya, the host country, lacked the resources to pay for) if they did so. Climate Network Africa supports C&C http://www.gci.org.uk/Documents/P985-CNA_Climate-Change_April2004.pdf and so does Martin Khor, director of Third World Network (TWN) www.gci.org.uk/Documents/MartinKhor.pdf (The rates of C&C as in the UK Climate Act were prescribed by the UK and others at COP-15 in Copenhagen, but Martin Khor knows that the Global Commons Institute (GCI) shares his view that convergence by 2050 can be sooner than that and

that with C&C, The Global Commons Institute has uniquely provided a means to deal with and communicate this: [-www.gci.org.uk/public/COP_15_C&C.swf](http://www.gci.org.uk/public/COP_15_C&C.swf).) Advocacy of C&C to developing countries is therefore of great importance.

13) Interest in C&C is growing. Aubrey Meyer recently told me that the GCI web site communicating is now getting up to 17,000 hits a day - often from US government agencies - which is well up from around 5,000 a few months ago. Persuading climate negotiators from many developing and emerging countries about C&C and the high levels of support for it, are a high priority in any C&C communications strategy.

14) A piece in the Telegraph in 2007 analysed the reasons for the awkward relationship between Aubrey Meyer and the mainstream environmental movement. It suggested that mainstream environmentalists don't like C&C because it 'wasn't invented here' and Aubrey Meyer is not biddable. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthcomment/charlesclover/3302927/Earthlog.html> Mark Twain understood the dangers of peer pressure: "a crank is a crank until proven right"...

The New Statesman Energy Supplement made the following comments some years back: *"This brings us to "contraction and convergence" (C&C). Advocated by a small British group called the Global Commons Institute, this formula for future global emissions could, without exaggeration, save the world. The contraction half of the formula cuts global emissions year on year so we never go above the critical trillion-tonne threshold of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The convergence half brings about a gradual convergence of national emissions entitlements, according to population. The logic is compelling, but some say it is fantasy politics. Big environment groups such as Greenpeace see the formula as a political dead end - they are profoundly wrong."* http://www.gci.org.uk/Documents/New_Statesman_SupplementC&C_only.pdf

The NS supplement separately described Meyer, along with Barack Obama and a few others, as one of the ten people who will change the world: - http://www.gci.org.uk/Documents/NewStatesman_10_People_to_change_the_World.pdf

The points are still valid and are issues that would be rehearsed in the film.

15) It would be a serious missed opportunity if the EFF is unable to find a way to support C&C because it has not yet had the benefit of a properly funded communications strategy, has received little press attention and lacks institutional support. C&C was sidelined by the mainstream environmental movement because they deemed it a threat to the Kyoto Protocol. But the Kyoto Protocol expires at the end of this year and a growing group of countries - including the US and Japan - are now refusing to renew it. At the same time, please note that the high level support for C&C comes from the authoritative reports of a wide range of bodies and support from individual scientists, economists, environmentalists, faith leaders and medics rather than (pace GCI) green NGOs. If this support were properly coordinated, it would become more influential.

16) Aubrey Meyer brings an original and authentic voice to the debate which has not been reported widely. This is why I believe a film is necessary - though the first steps should be to create fast turn-round, less ambitious, material for the web and TV. I am approaching Channel 4 about the project again. They showed interest eighteen months ago - saying it was a story that had to be told - but were deterred by audience research that showed viewers are bored by climate change (not surprising since every programme they have shown on the topic is so deeply depressing...) and therefore concerned about justifying the cost of making the film. The recent news that global carbon emissions have risen faster than expected over the last year will, I hope, provoke renewed interest at Channel 4. I am also in touch with Jon Snow, who has a long-standing interest in C&C.

17) Atmospheric and ocean carbon concentrations are rising faster than predicted and the same is true of the consequential ocean acidification. This is why the impending failure at COP-17 UNFCCC at the end of the year is so worrying. Another clash over the one-sided propositions of the Kyoto Protocol will not address or resolve this. C&C does and can, with effective advocacy, play a key role in reaching an effective global deal that delivers Climate Justice without Vengeance.

18) C&C is the only proposal that has put the climate deniers in check - i.e. they have made comments on the lines that if climate change were a problem, then C&C would be the way to organise a solution: *"A new climate treaty would at least pay lip service to the obligations of developing nations, although it could probably not require them to reduce emissions. Instead, a new Kyoto might be shaped by the notion of "Contraction and Convergence" [Meyer 2000] now popular in European environmental circles".* (Fred Singer, Dennis Avery)
<http://books.google.com/books?id=mFl6YYsRNpgC&pg=PA231&dq=contraction+and+convergence&hl=en&ei=KQfcTd3rDlyq8APUhoUD&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=2&ved=0CCwQ6AEwATi-AQ#v=onepage&q=contraction%20and%20convergence&f=false>Unstoppable Global Warming

Two more top sceptics: -

"I agree that to stabilize concentrations you have to have emissions contraction and that to have contraction you have to have convergence. I just don't believe that humanity has the wit to organize that." Richard Lindzen; Pisa 2004, after IPCC 3rd Assessment.

"I have a great deal of admiration for Aubrey. He is interested in solving a problem and has a legitimate and well thought out programme."

Myron Ebel; 'sceptic' CEI, COP-1S Copenhagen 2009, after IPCC 4th Assessment.

Finally, Constance Cumbey a US lawyer in Detroit. She hates C&C because she thinks it is global governance etc but credits Aubrey Meyer with having persuaded NATO etc etc to support C&C: - *"Aubrey Meyer's dedication is clear. So is his genius. This is one favorably stated summary of his plans."* <http://cumbey.blogspot.com/2007/09/total-new-age-control-energy-and.html>

19) Comments by Chris Rose, (former Campaigns Director for Greenpeace) offer illuminating insight into the failure of the mainstream environmental movement over the last fifteen years or so:

"Here are ten factors which have made it hard to campaign effectively 'on climate'.

1. Scientists defined the issue
2. Governments ran off with the issue
3. There was no campaign [sequence]: NGOs adopted secondary roles
4. The issue had no public
5. The media were left to define the issue in visual terms
6. Governments soft pedalled on the issue
7. Scientists led calls for education of the public
8. Many NGOs tried to make the Framework Convention 'work'
9. Other NGOs tried to connect it with "bigger issues"
10. There is no common proposition

...Only extraordinary individuals such as Aubrey Meyer, father of '<<http://www.gci.org.uk>>contraction and convergence', managed to penetrate this remote citadel. NGOs could prioritise it but they were stuck in someone else's game....

<http://www.campaignstrategy.org/articles/climate_difficulty.html> Why Campaigning on Climate is Difficult - Chris Rose

20) C&C isn't going away and I would greatly appreciate your support and advice. I'd add another obvious point: whatever the mainstream environmental movement has been doing for the last twenty years to address climate change has clearly not worked. C&C offers a science-based and, as Chris Huhne has said, a 'morally compelling' rationale for action - yet, thanks in large part to the major green NGOs - the one proposal that has a real chance of working hasn't even made it onto the formal agenda of the UNFCCC.

21) I would urge you and your colleagues at Esmée Fairbairn to reconsider and remember that C&C has been deliberately marginalised by the mainstream environmental movement - not least in terms of funding - and urgently needs resources to enable effective advocacy in the critical months ahead. As a film maker, I see film as the best medium for communicating ideas, but the immediate priority is to create engaging material for the web and a well-designed strategy to gain institutional support for C&C.

22) The C&C Foundation will soon have charitable status and will be a useful vehicle for audio-visual and web-based education and advocacy of C&C and for coordinating institutional support for C&C.

23) Mayer Hillman suggested we should ask Esmée Fairbairn to consult another independent reviewer who has a better understanding of C&C. I think that would be helpful and we can suggest potential candidates. Meanwhile, please take a look at the extensive list of endorsements for C&C here <<http://www.candcfoundation.org/pages/endorsements.html>> and on GCI's website: <<http://www.gci.org.uk/endorsements.html>>

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