

Selected comments

***on GCI's Research
and Advocacy
work***

***over the years
1993 - 2002.***

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“Aubrey Meyer is one of those rare individuals whose commitment and practical vision are leaving a decisive positive mark on the future.

Over the last ten years, while global negotiations on climate change have proved a bitter disappointment, the idea of Contraction and Convergence, which Aubrey and the Global Commons Institute have pioneered, has become accepted, throughout the world, as the key practical long-term solution which could mobilise all nations in an equitable response to the climate challenge.

Aubrey and his tiny Global Commons Institute have achieved this by tenacious personal effort. With no prestigious organisation or status behind him he has lobbied, persuaded, and dialogued with international climate negotiators at every level and in every part of the world, honing the C and C concept in the light of criticism, presenting it with intellectual force and clarity and persuading a growing global body of opinion formers, governments and interest groups that it offers the way forward.

As debate and decision-making on this momentous issue enter a decisive phase, Aubrey surely deserves support for his vital work.

He is one of the unsung heroes of our time.”

Christopher Layton

Hon Director-General, Commission of the European Union

“Aubrey has run the whole operation on less than a shoe string, from his front room, occasionally stopping to busk as a violinist on the Underground to raise money!

If I had to name ten people who have made an original contribution to life on the planet, Aubrey would be one of them. He is now consulted by Prime Ministers and the World Bank on a regular basis.

When I finish my book on Global Governance, the central chapter is about Aubrey and the Contraction & Convergence campaign. Financial support will make a huge impact on his fiercely independent organisation.”

Tom Spencer

European Secretary to the Commission on Global Governance, Former Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament and President GLOBE International

Aubrey Meyer's contribution to the policy debate on how to avoid dangerous climate change has been sustained and outstanding.

Since 1989 he and his tiny organisation - the Global Commons Institute (GCI) - have been successfully challenging officials around the world including politicians like myself to adopt "Contraction and Convergence", GCI's global framework for climate change policies based on precaution, logic and equity

With scant material support and an extraordinary dedication and persistence, he created and communicated this visionary concept for a long-term global framework for negotiating the international allocation of greenhouse gas emissions permits.

He has already convinced numerous leading figures in the international negotiating community, the insurance industry, the scientific community, the environmental media and politics of the absence of effective alternatives to "Contraction and Convergence". So much so that in June 2000, the UK's Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution made it a key recommendation to this government. The concept has been endorsed by the European Parliament and many members of the UK parliament as well, including the former Secretary of State for the Environment, John Gummer and Ministers from practically all European countries. Under GCI's advice the concept was led at the UN negotiations by the Indian Government in 1995 and again by the Africa Group of Nations in 1997. Again as a result of GCI publications, C&C has also been endorsed by numerous eminent individuals and institutions and is more and more widely quoted in prestigious academic publications.

Lest we make the planet uninhabitable, the international community must come soon to an agreement on how to organise the global effort to avoid this. Contraction and Convergence is a very powerful idea and I have no doubt that the concept will continue to be an influential force in discussions, as one model of how greenhouse gas emissions can be allocated in a fair and equitable manner.

If ever there was an initiative that deserved recognition and support, it is the brilliant and relentless campaign waged by this fiercely independent, creative and apparently quite tireless individual.

Michael Meacher

Minster of Environment, UK

I am pleased to extend the invitation to you that my colleagues and I would like to have a meeting with you when you visit Beijing in your convenient time during the second week of this July.

You are welcome to visit our institute as well.

The subject of the meeting is to discuss the possible use of model on analysis of entitlement of emission by per capita principle.

Zhou Dadi

Director Energy Research Inst. State Planning Commission, China

"I had occasion to discuss with the Global Commons Institute, various important issues related to Climate Change and the Montreal Protocol during my visits abroad. Their outspoken views and in-depth knowledge in economic analysis of the issues relating to equity, costs, benefits, disbenefits would go a long way in bringing out these important aspects in clear terms. Such analysis projected in the IPCC reports would certainly help the conference of the parties in arriving at an objective decision. I strongly recommend their names as lead authors for working group 3.

I also will support any funding proposal they may care to submit.

Kamal Nath

Chairman, Montreal Protocol negotiations, Environment Minister India.

Dear Environmental Friends

When I was in England at the University of York some years ago, I met former South African, Aubrey Meyer, who is with the Global Commons Institute (GCI) in London.

He is an outstanding and tenacious environmental activist, and is largely responsible for a brilliant and practical solution to deal with the global warming disaster looming ahead.

This is the mother of all environmental threats. The GCI solution has been gaining increasing international recognition.

You need to know about it.

Jim Phelps

Chairman of ZEAL, South Africa

Allow me from the outset to express my most sincere gratitude to Globe International, particularly its President Tom Spencer; the Director of Global Commons Institute (GCI), Aubrey Meyer...for inviting me to this very important meeting. Your support is greatly appreciated. As a non-Parliamentarian it is indeed a great honour to address such an august body. My credentials are simply that I have chaired the Africa Group since my election to the INC bureau at its tenth session and represented the region from COP1 through to COP3.

When we met amongst ourselves to exchange views on the progress of the negotiations, delegations from Africa felt something was not right. We failed to define our role on this process. We battled to find a common position that could influence the course of the negotiations. We were all aware that the ship was sailing without us but we needed a legitimate reason to jump on board too.

A long time had passed between the INC process to COP2, the momentum of the negotiations was slowly picking up as we were preparing for the COP3 and yet we could not find legitimate inroads into the negotiations. Having been faced with the responsibility to convene the Africa Group I took upon myself to try and establish that missing link.

It was at this point that GCI participants were called upon to explain their approach – this time very slowly.

It was then at AGBM 8 in August 1997 and after a series of early morning workshops that most of the African delegates present took a strong interest in what GCI was presenting all along. Their approach provided the link between our national goals and aspirations and realisation of the ultimate objective of the Convention with all parties playing an active role. Contraction and convergence is indeed the only approach available today that addresses questions of equity, fair and sustainable emission reduction targets, ensures that an acceptable level of per capita emission was agreed upon and maintained by all throughout the world. Furthermore this approach allowed growth in developing countries (increasing their emission levels) while developed countries are compelled to assume an environmentally sound economic growth pathways and reduced emissions. This then would level the playing field that has been skewed in favour of developed countries at the expense of developing countries. It was our belief that such an approach not only goes beyond merely linking environmental considerations to economic growth but also includes vital issues such as human development, participations of communities in decision making and social and economic justice.....Therefore the approach of contraction and convergence presents a new economic development paradigm for the twenty first century and beyond.

I believe that this is the time to lobby vigorously for support for the GCI contraction and convergence approach sooner rather than later.

The time to act is now. Mr Chairman. Let us go on the offensive to ensure that every citizen of the world has an equal responsibility for reducing emissions of GHGs.

Protection and preservation of mother earth should thus be our immediate preoccupation. Africa reaffirms its position on contraction and convergence included in her statement at AGBM 8 in Bonn in August 1997.

Mrs. Rungano Karimanzira

Ministry of Transport and Energy, Zimbabwe

"You raise very interesting, challenging and controversial issues in the dilemma of the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The way you address "Global Benefit" is impressive. I agree with you that the concept - as understood by the financial lending institutions - is neither exhaustive nor participatory. The effort you make to generate some statistics is very appealing. With no doubt the points you raise on institutional reform and equity are important and require serious attention. Institutional frameworks of the IMF and OECD among others need to be counter-checked in order to conform to the commitments of the Convention. Will you make a presentation to ACTS in Nairobi?"

Patrick Karani

Climate & Africa Project, African Centre for Tech. Studies, Nairobi

"We thank you for your information about the GCI campaign. We are eagerly following your work and find the information very useful.

A new democratic South Africa will be keenly interested in environmental issues and we are confident that your institute will play an important role in assisting us to deal with environmental issues in South Africa and internationally. Please continue to keep us informed about your activities."

Aziz Pahad

Deputy Head ANC Department of International Affairs.

Dear Aubrey

May I congratulate you, and GCI for the consistency you have demonstrated since the climate negotiations started. Climate Network Africa is very proud of your work and will continue giving our support

Please do not despair even if sometimes (and most of it) the G-77 reacts, rather than be on the offensive. I think it is mainly because of the complexity of the issue at hand and the diversity of the Group; politically, economically, socially and culturally. But let's just keep on hoping that one day we shall move mountains.

If you have energy left from your busy activities at GCI, please fundraise for CNA, for any of those project- proposals. We do not mind any good suggestions regarding their contents - if you have any. We have not been successful in project fundraising the whole of this year. Meanwhile, I must sincerely thank you for making it- possible for CNA to attend COP2 through your prompt intervention at Heinrich Boll Foundation. I therefore take this opportunity once more, to thank GCI and HBF on behalf of my colleagues.

Pass my regards to all your colleagues at GCI.

Grace Akumu

Coordinator Climate Network Africa.

“The Global Commons Institute is one of the few places in the world giving the necessary emphasis to a radical questioning of short-sighted economic theory. GCI’s approach is rational and compassionate. Their voice must be heard & should be further elaborated in the international debate on global warming & other global ecological challenges.

Their papers are stimulating. The characterisation of countries’ socio-economic efficiencies particularly, is quite original. It would be highly desirable to have them on board for future work on equity in the IPCC context.”

Dr Ernst von Weizacker

Director Wuppertal Institute for Energy, Climate and Transport, Germany.

“We would like to invite you to the IPCC Workshop on Equity and Social Considerations - Nairobi, (18/23 7 94) to make a presentation entitled
‘Unequal Use of the Global Commons: Consumption Patterns as Causal Factors in Global Change’.

We know that with your widely recognised expertise in this field, you would make an important contribution to the work of the IPCC. It is very much hoped that you will respond positively to this invitation”

Bert Bolin

Chairman Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
James P Bruce and Hoesung Lee
Co-Chairs, IPCC Working Group Three (WG3)

“We offer great thanks for coming to the Fourth IRNES (Interdisciplinary Research Network on Environment and Society) Conference and delivering such a stimulating and powerful talk.

Your presentation was the highlight of the whole conference in terms of its clarity, directness and passionate delivery. I really think you made people think that evening. GCI could not have a more eloquent and dedicated advocate than yourself.”

Peter Newell

Keele University, Co-Organiser IRNES conference 1995.

Thank you very much indeed for your letter and for the enclosed materials, which seem to me very valuable indeed.

I strongly support your aims. I’m trying to encourage more teaching on ecological issues in the LSE than exists at present. So perhaps we could keep in touch about this and I’ll ask one of my colleagues from the LSE to get into contact with you too.

Anthony Giddens

Director The London School of Economics

On behalf of the Secretary-General, I should like to thank you for your letter dated 1 September 2000 and the Contraction and Convergence Report you kindly attached.

The Report contains useful information and will provide valuable input for the Rio+10 preparations. We have sent a copy to Under-Secretary-General Klaus Toepfer, Director of the United Nations Environment Programme.

John Ruggie

Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations

May I take the opportunity of saying how much we value the pioneering work you have done over the years in making the case for contraction and convergence. It is work such as yours that has allowed us to develop our own arguments more effectively.

Sir Tom Blundell FRS

Chairman, Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution

I am writing to express my sincere thanks for your efforts in making the recent staff meeting at Henley a great success. It is very seldom that a speaker generates as much debate and reaction amongst all the different types and varieties of staff that we employ.

Several staff have said that it was the most interesting talk they have heard since they joined the Agency. There has been as much debate since as to how things can be taken forward.

Some staff have expressed the view that faced with such global problems, are we going to make a difference or are we destined to a very hot and sticky fate. At least by raising the profile we can help by keeping the issue high in people's minds. At the end of the day it is only by capturing sufficient minds that the necessary action will happen.

I am glad that you found my suggestion of using the mayors of major cities as a useful conduit. We have already raised the issue the GLA and the recent launch of the study on the impacts of climate changes on the south east has highlighted the issue of sea level rise with many people at an influential level in the Region.

Once again I would like to thank you for taking the time to join us for the day and making such an impact on us.

Simon Read

Regional EP Manager, Environment Agency, UK

Thanks very much for your recent letter and update materials on Contraction and Convergence. Good to see the latest information.

As regards my own influence, I don't take over as Chairman of the Sustainable Development Commission until our first meeting at the end of October, and until then I think I'd probably have to write as a private individual rather than in any formal capacity. But it's just possible that there may be a meeting with the Prime Minister before then, in which case I shall certainly raise the issue.

Jonathon Porritt

Programme Director, Forum for the Future

I write to thank you very much indeed for your splendid presentation at the SGR conference on 16th November. I had not heard of the Global Commons Institute until it was suggested that you be invited to speak at the Conference and I am delighted that I have had the opportunity to remedy the omission.

I have been interested in green policies for many years, and I was fascinated to hear your argument and justification for your suggested policy. I was also most impressed that you have had backing from, among others, Tory MEPs. The policies you describe are often supported by those who suffer from inequitable distribution, but by definition have little power. It is extremely encouraging that you are being supported by the establishment in the West.

Thank you very much again for offering the members of SGR such a stimulating and informative Keynote Address. It certainly provided the Conference with a most exciting start to the day. Now that I am aware of your Institute I shall certainly look out for any information in the press relating to it. Indeed, if you have any relevant publications I shall be most interested to see them.

Judith Furner

Scientists for Global Responsibility

“Global warming requires international collective action. There are many ways of achieving effective restraint. The Kyoto protocol approach is for rich countries to set themselves targets for emissions reductions, and the recent agreement between European nations and Japan to move ahead with the protocol is a positive step forward. Looking further down the road, it is critically important to get at least all of the E-7 involved.

The Global Commons Institute, an NGO, has come up with an innovative proposal for how to do this. The proposal entails agreeing on a target level of emissions by the year 2015 and then allocating these emissions to everyone in the world proportionally. Rich countries would get allocations well below their current level of emissions, while poor countries would get allocations well above. There would then be a market for emission permits.

Poor countries could earn income selling some of their permits; rich and poor countries alike would have strong incentives to put energy-saving policies into place; and private industry would have strong incentives to invent new, cleaner technologies. One of the hopeful things about globalization is how an innovative idea like this can quickly gain currency and support.”

Globalization, Growth and Poverty

World Bank Policy Research Report, 2002

I found your supporting pack on “Contraction and Convergence” persuasive and would encourage you to ensure that the DETR staff involved in climate change policy are aware of its contents.

Foina Strens

Ministry of Defence, UK

The Kyoto Protocol is only the first step, and in further commitment periods wider participation and deeper emission cuts will be necessary to achieve the ultimate objective of the Framework Convention.....In these negotiations, all options to limit and reduce emissions in a fair and equitable way will be discussed. Contraction and Convergence is one of the interesting alternatives in this regard.

Jean Francois Verstryngne

Acting Director-General, Directorate-General Environment, European Commission

I fully agree that our tasks will become easier as the political and financial community becomes advocates of "Contraction and Convergence".

Koos Richelle

The Director General, DG Development, European Commission

I note what you say about Aubrey Meyer's Contraction and Convergence proposal. I agree that, in the fight against climate change, this makes an important contribution to the debate on how we achieve long term climate stability, taking account of the principles of equity and sustainability.

Tony Blair

Prime Minister, UK

This does not deny the intuitive appeal to many of the case for contraction and convergence which Aubrey and GCI in general make. The debate on climate change is a lively one and rightly so. The Global Commons Institute's contribution to that debate is welcome and valued.

Hllary Benn MP

Under Secretary, Department for International Development, UK

I wish to thank you heartily for your excellent contribution to the Linz conference. The conference was deemed a success by the participants I had the opportunity to speak to, and we owe this success in no small part to your contribution, which was both passionate and very convincingly argued. The Contraction and Convergence idea is one which I am sure is destined to increasingly influence the agenda of negotiations in the future, and I wish you the best of luck in your advocacy work.

Ilona Graenitz

Member European Parliament

If CSE is the been the key Southern advocate of a per-capita climate treaty, the honor for main Northern advocate clearly goes to Aubrey Meyer of London's Global Commons Institute, which has put "Contraction and Convergence" on the map, particularly in Europe.

Tom Athansiou

EcoEquity, California

"I sincerely hope that we can stay in close contact and explore avenues of co-operation. The three documents you sent are particularly relevant for us in the design of the Earth Report. The information of "global benefit and disbenefit" and related themes for eg offers a very useful analytical approach as well as the trends of global industrial CO2 impact, GDP income and efficiency.

The GCI abstract for the US Global Climate Conference offers a very interesting methodological framework for a systematic analysis. We would very much appreciate if you could continue providing these very useful documents and information on the trends of sustainable development."

Alicia Barcena

Executive Director Earth Council, Costa Rica

"Congratulations on your success co-organising the Commonwealth Partnerships Conference. I am truly stunned by the extent to which GCI's ideas were incorporated into the conference statements. Your analysis is clear, rigorous and very useful to us. We want to keep in touch with you."

H E Ambassador Afamasaga Toleafoa

Ambassador of W Samoa to the EC.

"I recommend the Global Commons Institute as lead authors in the IPCC working group 3. I have been very impressed by the quality of GCI's work in developing comprehensive methodologies for conducting "benefit/disbenefit analysis", which seems the most appropriate first step in the development of genuinely sustainable solutions and policy formulation."

Dr Frank Rosillo Calle

Biomass User's Network, King's College.

"I would like to congratulate you for the (Benefit/Disbenefit) research done and for its wide distribution. I would ask you to send us, as soon as possible, the complete version of your work."

Carlos E Suarez

Institute of Energy Economics, Lead Author on IPCC WG3 Second Assessment Report.

"I feel that it is worth a concerted effort to finance the Global Commons Institute. GCI makes an important contribution balancing the key players from business, industry and government."

Jane Knott

European School Brussels

"Thank you very much for keeping me informed about your work. Its nice to have your support in this battle."

Dr (Mrs) Jyoti Parikh

Lead Author on IPCC WG3 Second Assessment Report - Indira Gandhi Institute.

“We strongly recommend to you the Global Commons Institute as lead authors for your report on the socio-economic framework for decision-taking concerning the economics of climate change. GCI includes a network of authors who are both literate and numerate in this debate. They have been involved with these matters at the UN and beyond over several years. They have built up a considerable reputation doing cross-cutting socio economic analysis. This has had a clear focus on benefits and disbenefits and who it is who provide these and who suffer these. This effort has been successfully challenging short-sighted economic theory still typical of the pro-growth lobby in the industrial countries. GCI has successfully been providing a focus for those who express a more globally responsible view. Support for their work is considerable and widespread.”

Nicholas Hildyard and Larry Lohman
the Ecologist Magazine.

“I did hear from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Working Group Three secretariat about your paper on “Global Benefit”. I think you should be very pleased at the response, because you have very effectively made the point that you intended.”

Dr R K Pachauri
Director TATA Energy Research Institute, India.
Lead Author on IPCC WG3 Second Assessment Report.

“We formally request a copy of your publication “Equity and Survival - Climate Change, Population and the Paradox of Growth.” This document is vital to this agency as a resource material on our awareness education on climate change and population growth - matters which globally affect mankind. Please will you inform us on all your priority areas and provide any relevant documentation. May God bless you in your service to his people.”

Rev Peter A Indalo
Programme Director, Oyani Christian Rural Services, Kenya.

“GCI are the best campaigners for non-industrialised people that we know.”

Tom Wakeford
Scientists for Global Responsibility.

“The paper on climate change, population and growth is most interesting. It will be very useful for our future work on post-UNCED strategies for the South.”

Branislav Gosovic
Director, the South Centre

“GCI should be very pleased with the influence they have already had on the economists at IPCC’s Working Group 3.”

Peter Sturm
OECD Economist, Head of Division “Resource Allocation”

"Please may we order the full 'Equity and Survival' series of GCI publications."

Joint International Monetary Fund/World Bank Library

USA

"It was a great pleasure to receive your paper "Equity and Survival - Who provides global benefit; who causes global disbenefit?"

This paper will be very useful for my section."

Sung Woong Hong

Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements and Lead Author on IPCC WG3 Second Assessment Report.

"We intend to disseminate the information in your booklet as widely as possible."

Riza Selahettin

Malaysian High Commissioner's Office, London.

"Your intervention here was brave and not the sort of thing we are used to hearing here. I agreed with everything you said."

Gerard Dorin

Head Administrator OECD Environment Directorate, OECD "Economics of Global Climate Change Conference"

"A quite excellent analysis and superb graphics. I'm impressed yet again by the concise way in which you tackle the subject in hand. I only hope it has the same impact on the UN Climate negotiations!"

Dr Julian Salt

Department of Peace Studies. University of Bradford.

"Thank you for the GCI materials. They are both useful and interesting. I am hoping you can speak at the Second "Science for the Earth" forum in Cambridge. Your perspective on the role played by economists in addressing global environmental problems would be interesting. We like the questions you pose."

Tim Lenton

Scientists for Global Responsibility.

"With regard to the intervention by the Global Commons Institute, my delegation wishes to support every word of what they have just said."

Mohammed S al Sabban

Head of Saudi Arabian Delegation to the IPCC - concerning the GCI rebuttal of the case made by the World Bank representative for measuring the incremental costs for protecting the global environment.

"Your papers are a real treasure. I enjoyed the graphs enormously."

Prof. Tim O'Riordan

University of East Anglia Environmental Sciences Department and Associate Director CSERGE.

"The principles of international equity that are embodied in sustainable development require that the industrialised countries recognise the global impact of their consumption patterns, and provide development opportunities for poorer countries. Recent papers provided new perspectives on the importance of the international dimension. The Global Commons Institute have highlighted the accumulated debt in terms of over-use of the atmosphere, and calculated an estimated debt value that vastly exceeds the financial debt owed by the South."

Barry Coates

WWF UK, Climate Action Network Conference on Transport & Global Warming

I have read several times GCI's submission to IPCC WG3. I have always been sympathetic to per-capita emissions allocation, but have never seen such a clear and persuasive explanation of why such an allocation is needed both for ethical and practical reasons. Also, I liked very much your point that climate policy analysts should make explicit the ethical positions and values inherent in their work. So much of the debate on tradable emissions quotas and JI avoids the crucial issue of allocation.

I also agree with you that the Climate Action Network should discuss this issue more.

My group is participating in a newly formed network of East Asian NGOs (Atmosphere Action Network for East Asia (AANE)) working on atmospheric issues. I want everyone in this network to read your paper, because we as a network need to develop a common position on the issue of equity, and your paper is the best base for discussions I know.

Dwight Van Winkle,

Citizens Alliance for Saving the Atmosphere (CASA), Osaka, Japan

Atmosphere Action Network for East Asia (AANE)

A new network for regional cooperation

Current AANE member organisations:

China:	Friends of Nature
Hong Kong:	The Conservancy Association
Hong Kong:	Environment Centre
Japan:	Citizens Alliance for Saving the Atmosphere and the Earth (CASA)
Japan:	Acid Rain Monitoring Network
Japan:	Air Pollution Victims Association
	Peoples Forum 2001, Global Warming Study Group
Mongolia:	Mongolian Association for Conservation of Nature and Environment (MANCE)
Russia:	Geographical Society Wildlife Foundation
South Korea:	Center for Environment and Development, Citizens Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ)
Green Korea	
Korean	Federation of Environmental Movements
Taiwan:	Climate Action Network Taiwan
Taiwan	Environmental Protection Union