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1995

April - Indian Environment Minister

"We face the actuality of scarce resources and the increasing potential for conflict with each other over these scarce resources. The social, financial and ecological inter-relationships of equity should guide the route to global ecological recovery.

Policy Instruments such as "Tradable Emissions Quotas", "Carbon Taxes" and "Joint Implementation" may well serve to make matters worse unless they are properly referenced to targets and time-tables for equitable emissions reductions overall. This means devising and implementing a programme for convergence at equitable and sustainable par values for consumption on a per capita basis globally."

1997

Richard Richels (EPRI), Alan Manne (Battelle)

At the Symposium on the Economics of Climate Change:

"We begin with one widely discussed proposal: a transition to equal per capita emissions rights (globally) by 2030," again allowing the expedient of a "prescription" to "solve" what is otherwise insoluble.

October - Dr Song Jian, China State Councilor Climate Change

"When we ask the opinions of people from all circles, many people, in particular the scientists think that the emissions control standard should be formulated on a per capita basis. According to the UN Charter, everybody is born equal, and has inalienable rights to enjoy modern technological civilization. Today the per capita consumption is just one tenth of that of the developed countries, one eighth of that of medium developed countries. It is estimated 30-40 years would be needed for China to catch up with the level of medium developed countries."

December - Prof Saifuddin Soz, Indian Environment Minister

"In any discussion, "Contraction and Convergence", the central point is entitlements - equitable per capita entitlements. At Kyoto we had stressed that any discussion on emissions trading ought to be framed in terms of per capita entitlements. Any trading can take place only after the emissions entitlements of the trading partners is defined and legally created - equitably of course. Historical emissions are iniquitous and cannot be the basis of entitlements. Entitlements will define the sharing of the atmosphere on an equitable basis which also brings together all the cooperative mechanisms in the Kyoto Protocol in a common framework."

December - Tom Spencer, Chair Euro-Parliament. Foreign Affairs Com.

"Many of you know the Contraction and Convergence analysis. It offers a framework for an answer. It offers an envelope of equity within which we can trade and barter our way to collective sanity in the coming decades."

1998

October - Tony Blair, Prime Minister United Kingdom

"In the fight against climate change the Contraction and Convergence proposal makes an important contribution to the debate on how we achieve long-term climate stability, taking account of the principles of equity and sustainability."

October - Sir Robert May, UK Government Chief Scientist

"Thank you for the information on "Contraction and Convergence" policy and the efforts by GCI and GLOBE to build up global support for it. These matters are clearly of great importance and I would agree that this approach merits full consideration, including at the senior international political level, along with other ideas contributing to the development of a workable global climate strategy."

November - 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."

1999

April - Michael Meacher UK Minister of the Environment

"I do believe that contraction and convergence provides an effective, equitable market-based framework within which Governments can co-operate to avert climate change, and again congratulate you on your campaigning to bring this about."

June 9 - David Chaytor MP

"In many analysts' opinion, a policy of contraction and convergence provides the way out of the logjam. Under such a policy, each nation would be allocated a quota of emissions based on population, and set in the context of agreed environmental limits. Over time, industrial nations would be required gradually to reduce emissions, while developing countries would be permitted gradually to increase theirs, until a point was reached at which the emissions quotas of all countries were relatively equal.

That seems to provide the only practical and principled resolution of the conflicting interests of the developed world and the developing world, based on equal rights for all human beings. I urge the Government to present the case for contraction and convergence as a realistic means of facilitating the ratification of the Kyoto protocol. I commend the research conducted by the Global Commons Institute in developing that model. "

June - Klaus Topfer, Director UNEP

"Convergence - The review system of Kyoto mechanisms can ensure equity. Currently CO2 emissions rights are allocated according to existing emissions patterns with a specified reduction percentage for various countries within a certain period of five years (2008-2012). The redistribution through the Kyoto Protocol could be continued until emissions rights are uniformly distributed on a per capita basis. This will be a critical element to ensure the poor also get rights to utilise the world's environment, or in this limited case, the assimilative capacity of the atmosphere, a global commons resource."

2000

February - Ambassador Raul Estrada, Chair Kyoto Negotiations

"Long before the end of the Framework Convention negotiation, the Global Commons Institute has presented a proposal on "Contraction and Convergence", aimed to reach equality in emissions per capita. We all in this room know the GCI model where contraction is achieved after all governments, for precautionary reasons, collectively agree to be bound by a target of global GHG emissions, making it possible to calculate the diminishing amount of greenhouse gases that the world can release each year in the coming century, subject to annual scientific and political review. The convergence part of the proposal means that each year's global emissions budget gets shared out among the nations of the world so that every country converges on the same allocation per inhabitant by an agreed date. Countries unable to manage within their shares would, be able to buy the unused parts of the allocations of other countries. The entitlement of rights transferred in this trading is legitimised by the per inhabitant criteria. Level of contraction and timing of convergence should be negotiated on the basis of the precautionary principle. Suggestions for emission reductions are well known and convergence should be achieved at medium term to satisfy legitimacy."

April - Svend Auken, Danish Environment Minister

"The approach of "Contraction and Convergence" is precisely such an idea. It secures a regime that would allow all nations to join efforts to protect our global commons from being over-exploited, without the risk that any country would be deprived of its fair long-term share of the common environmental emission space. And it allows for consistent and efficient management of the global emissions that would enable us to strive for constraining global interference with the climate below fixed ceilings, such as the max 2 degrees temperature rise, and the max. 550 ppmv CO2-concentration, recommended by the European council of ministers."

July - Jan Pronk, Chair COP- 6, Environment Minister Netherlands

"Contraction and Convergence" - most equitable . . . easier & cheaper than alternatives. "
. . . The debate about broadening participation of developing countries in the global effort to stabilize greenhouse concentrations in the atmosphere at sustainable levels has the tendency to focus first on the most advanced developing countries. Suggestions have been made for commitments for those developing countries in the period after 2012 in terms of increased energy or greenhouse gas efficiency. In other words: not an absolute cap, but a relative efficiency improvement in the production structure of developing countries. This strategy would imply that developing countries gradually start participating, as they achieve a certain level of economic development. That is a reasonable and realistic option. However, it can be argued that such gradual participation would only lead to a slow decline of global emissions, even if current industrialized countries would drastically decrease their emissions. As a result

global average temperature increase would significantly exceed the 2 degrees centigrade limit that could be seen as the maximum tolerable for our planet. There are alternatives for this scenario. Some developing countries have argued for an allowance of equal emissions per capita. This would be the most equitable way to determine the contribution of countries to the global effort. If we agree to equal per capita emissions allowances for all countries by 2030 in such a way that global emissions allow us to stay below the 2 degrees global temperature increase (equivalent to about 450 ppmv CO₂), then the assigned amounts for Annex B countries would be drastically reduced. However, due to the fact that all countries would have assigned amounts, maximum use of global emissions trading would strongly reduce the cost of compliance. So, in such a scenario, industrialized countries would have to do more, but it would be cheaper and easier . . . "

November - Jaques Chirac, President of France - COP6

"Since 1992, we have fallen too far behind in the fight against global warming. We cannot afford any further delay. That is why, I can confirm to you here, Europe is resolved to act and has mobilized to fight the greenhouse effect. Europe calls upon the other industrialized countries to join with it in this fight. And Europe proposes to the developing countries to join it in a partnership for sustainable development. Let us start thinking about the post-Kyoto period without further ado. Tomorrow, it will be up to us to set forth the rights and duties of each, and for a long time to come. To move forward while respecting individual differences and special circumstances, France proposes that we set as our ultimate objective the convergence of per capita emissions. This principle would durably ensure the effectiveness, equity and solidarity of our efforts."

May - Sir John Houghton, Chair IPCC WG1

"Three widely accepted principles will govern the international agreements needed to meet the threat of climate change. (1) The Precautionary Principle, already clearly embedded in the UNFCCC agreed at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. This states that the existence of uncertainty should not preclude the taking of an appropriate action. The reason for such action is simply stated as the stabilisation of the concentrations of greenhouse gases (such as CO₂) in the atmosphere in ways that allow for necessary economic development. (2) The Polluter Pays Principle, which implies measures such as carbon taxes or carbon trading arrangements. (3) The principle of Equity, both intergenerational and international - the most difficult to apply. However a proposal of the Global Commons Institute - "Contraction-and-Convergence" (C&C)" - that is being widely discussed applies these principles by allowing eventually for the allocation of carbon emissions to nations on an equal per capita basis while also allowing for emissions trading."

2001

June 26 - John Oliver, Lord Bishop of Hereford

My Lords

. . . We need to take to heart the advice of the Royal Commission published last year to put in place a programme which takes account of the legitimate needs and aspirations of the developing countries and works on the principle of contraction and convergence of greenhouse gas emissions.

August - Nyier Abdou, Al Ahram Newspaper

"This point is stressed by Aubrey Meyer, director of the UK group the Global Commons Institute (GCI) and author of -Contraction and Convergence: the Global Solution to Climate Change- (Green Books). Without a feasible and binding plan for dealing with global warming, Meyer predicts climate change will wreak havoc on the developing world. Talking to the Weekly, Meyer noted that population increases will inevitably increase the number of people affected by natural — and, indeed, "unnatural" disasters. "If these occur [in places] where there are already local conflicts over the use of land and other resources — as with storms in Orissa or droughts in the Middle East, for example — these impacts can only aggravate such conflicts."

.....

"The level of greenhouse concentration in the atmosphere at this time is higher than anywhere in data sets going back half a million years," says GCI's Meyer. "Historically these levels have varied but at significantly lower average value than the levels we have achieved since the industrial revolution began around 200 years ago. It is possible — perhaps probable — that continuing this unrelenting pulse of human emissions will trigger global climatic upheaval." Referring to the claim that it is not clear that anything has indeed gone "wrong," Meyer insists, "The point [Lindzen] makes is simply: if there isn't a problem, don't fix it. However, it is obvious that there is a problem, and that we are all going to be broke if we don't fix it."

August - Julian E Salt, UK Loss Prevention Council

Commenting for the UN Observer, on the risk management of climate change, Julian Salt of the UK Loss Prevention Council and BRE writes,

" Contraction & Convergence" would be the driving principle behind the new approach.

Contraction & Convergence targets (upper global cap on emissions and convergence point) would be adjusted according to the latest scientific findings emanating from the IPCC. The upper carbon cap could be adjusted downwards if the latest findings showed that climate change was increasing at a dangerous rate.

Two new protocols would be created to deal with the issue of sinks (forestry) and new technology (renewables). Carbon credits for enhanced sink capacity and use of renewable energy would be overseen by a Carbon Credit body.

Emissions trading would still exist but initial allocations of credits would be based on the equity principle (population based).

Ideally, the ultimate end time-frame for completion of the "C&C" process would be 2050 or sooner if possible. Emissions contraction should start immediately to be effective. Time is of the essence."

September - Kjell Larsson, Swedish Environment Minister

"On the issue of equity, Sweden strives for a global convergence, meaning that the long term objective of the international community should be a per capita emissions target equal for all countries. The work towards sustainability embraces the right for the poorest countries to continue their development and requires that the developed world contribute to this. In other words the industrialised countries must reduce their emissions in order to enable the least developed countries to develop."

October - John Porter, US Parliamentarian Chair GLOBE USA

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

October - Robert Stavins, Director, Environment Economics Program, JFK School of Government, Harvard University

"This (Contraction and Convergence) is a long-term standard that is difficult to find fault with, and has much to recommend it on ethical grounds and in terms of parsimony.

I think it's quite reasonable that the ultimate greenhouse-gas emission standard (i.e. allocation mechanism of targets among countries) toward which the entire community of nations might work over the long term would be one linked with equal per capita emissions assuming that cost-effectiveness could still be achieved through simultaneous provision for international trading or some other mechanism that would facilitate the equating of marginal abatement costs."

November 22 - Michael Meacher, UK Environment Minister

At the UK Environment Council's climate conference for business in London, Michael Meacher was the keynote speaker.

In answering questions from the Loss Prevention Council regarding the relationship between Kyoto Protocol and C&C, Mr Meacher gave a detailed explanation of C&C saying,

'C&C is not 'Plan B', it is 'Plan A-Plus'

(see announcement at: - <http://www.the-environment-council.org.uk/>)

November - Olivier Delouze, Belgian Environment Minister

"We are conscious that in the end, we will have to inevitably evolve towards a more equitable partition between the north and south, of the capacity of our common atmosphere to support green house gases, by a gradual convergence of the levels of emissions on a per capita basis."

October - Michael Meacher, UK Minister of the Environment

"I find it an appealing concept. It is obviously absolutely profound in its implications. It is normally known under the title of Contraction and Convergence, in other words the developed countries contract their emissions, which is what Kyoto is all about, and we get convergence with the developing countries as they industrialise and increase their emissions....I do not think it is pie in the sky. It is certainly not just a conceptual philosophy. We are moving remorselessly in that direction"

2002

January - Adair Turner, former Director of the CBI

(His) "... analysis really starts to pack a punch when he turns to the environment. Here, after all, is a case of massive market failure.

Take climate change, which "is likely to impose massive economic costs... The case for being prepared to spend huge resources to limit it is clear," he says, arguing that the cost will be repaid many times over by the avoidance of disaster.

In any case, "the developed world does not have the moral right to increase the risk of flooding in Bangladesh"; and, he adds acidly, "European executives worried about the cost of action should perhaps consider it the necessary price for preserving at least some skiing in the Alps."

Long term, says Turner, the only sound strategy is that of 'contraction and convergence' – cutting greenhouse emissions to the point where they are shared equally, worldwide, on a per capita basis."

Article at: <http://www.greenfutures.org.uk/features/default.asp?id=905>

February - Marcel M. Berk, Michel G.J. den Elzen.

"Options for differentiation of future commitments in climate policy: how to realise timely participation to meet stringent climate goals?"

"Where climate change limits are stringent, a C&C regime seems to provide more incentives for a timely participation of developing countries, and better opportunities for an effective and efficient regime for controlling global GHG emission control than increasing participation."

Netherlands National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), P.O. Box 1, 3720 BA Bilthoven, The Netherlands

Paper retrievable at: <http://www.gci.org.uk/papers/berkelz.pdf>

February - Hans H.Kolshus, Cicerone

"While the Kyoto Protocol may represent an important political achievement, its expected impact on the climate is marginal at best. The agreement is nowhere near sufficient for stabilizing or reducing the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, partly because developing countries have not committed to reducing their emissions in this round. Future climate negotiations must therefore contain more ambitious targets as well as the participation of developing countries. In an attempt to realize this aim, the Global Commons Institute has proposed that emissions entitlements be allocated on a per capita basis....

The method, called "contraction and convergence" (C&C), was first developed by Tony Cooper and Aubrey Meyer in the spring of 1996....

A team from GCI then presented the idea to the second Conference of the Parties (COP 2) in Geneva, in July 1996. Since then, the idea has garnered support from more and more governments and NGOs."

Article at: <http://www.cicero.uio.no/media/549.pdf>

July - John Ritch - Director General World Nuclear Association

" A serious climate regime – if one is to evolve – must go far beyond Kyoto, by encompassing all nations and by employing some variation of the concept known as "contraction and convergence":

Contraction means that over the century ahead we must plot a path that will reduce overall global emissions by at least 50% – even as populations and economies expand. Convergence means that, in this process, we must accept the principle that every person on Earth is entitled to an equal per-capita level of emissions.

Stated in this stark manner, the goal of 50% contraction seems draconian, while the principle of equal entitlement to emissions seems utopian. In fact, both concepts are eminently practical.

As to contraction, nothing short of a 50% emissions reduction offers any hope of averting catastrophic climate change. This cutback – entailing a 75% reduction in today's advanced economies – accomplishes no more than stabilizing global greenhouse gases at a level over twice that which existed just two centuries ago.

As to convergence, nothing other than the principle of equal entitlement offers a basis for the global consensus on which an effective climate regime must depend. Equal entitlement does not mean equal emissions; it is, rather, the basis for an allocation of rights on which a fair and rational emissions trading system can be built.

A system based on this principle – and, I venture to say, only a system based on this principle – can be designed to produce the sense of equity, the predictability, and the sound economic incentives needed for smooth transition into a clean-energy future. These incentives can work constructively in developed and developing countries alike.

In this schema, the sense of equity and predictability are created at the very outset of the regime. A nation's population size at an agreed point would be the basis for establishing its long-term emissions ceiling, toward which it would be committed to move on a steady path. To facilitate a smooth and economically rational transition toward that goal, emissions trading would enable countries and companies to chart their own best path – selling permits where possible, buying them when necessary. The rate of convergence to a common level would be designed to ensure that, during the long transition, already-industrialized nations as a whole would find it advantageous to purchase emissions permits from countries less developed. This capital flow could serve the common interest in sustainable development by financing clean-energy infrastructure in the developing world.

Building this regime is not beyond human wit. Indeed, its simplicity and feasibility stand in favourable contrast to the chaos, social dislocation, vast expense and human misery that unrestrained climate change could bring – and from which no nation would be immune."

June 1 - Rodney R. White - Department of Geography & Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Toronto

Today I am going to take the position that an essential part of a successful implementation phase for the (Kyoto) Protocol is a progressive reduction in emissions, moving towards equal per capita emissions rights throughout the world.

This position is sometimes called 'contraction and convergence'. It may seem like the other end of the traditional ideological spectrum compared with a position that espouses emissions trading.

Contraction and convergence is based on equity – in the justice sense. It may seem absurdly optimistic. However, I think it has to be part of the plan, so that we can all share a common sense of direction."

<http://www.gci.org.uk/papers/SilvLining.pdf>

August 18 - Right Reverend John Oliver - Bishop of Hereford

"Contraction and Convergence...is a system whereby everybody in the world, every human being, is given as it were a permit to pollute, and a financial value is put on that. Countries that are polluting more than their fair share at the moment, including in particular the United States would obviously have to buy permits from the poorer countries. That money would help the poor countries in their own development while the process of convergence took place"

<http://www.gci.org.uk/Interviews/Hereford.pdf>