NEGOTIATING EQUITY

Essential? Yes.
Possible? Maybe.

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EARLY DAYS OF EQUITY

- Equity has always been central to international climate negotiations
  - UNFCCC including principles of equity and CBDR+RC
  - 1997 initial submission of Brazilian proposal

- Kyoto
  - Binary annexes and commitments
  - First step trust-building approach
  - US domestic push-back, Byrd-Hegal resolution

- Bali
  - Adaptation, technology, financial support
  - NAMAs
EQUITY PHASE TWO

• Range of proposals leading-up to Copenhagen
  • Global carbon taxes/trading schemes + variants
  • Contraction and convergence + variants
  • Brazilian proposal revisited
  • Global triptych
  • Greenhouse Development Rights
  • Large emitters only processes +variants

• Copenhagen fallout
  • Some financing
  • Loose mitigation pledges
  • Domestic public questioning of the UNFCCC process
EQUITY PHASE THREE

• Geopolitical Lead-up to Durban
  • Economic crises
    • Shifting perceptions of global wealth
  • Global emissions increase, shifting projected future emissions
  • Fukushima
  • Just after Durban: Canada officially withdraws from Kyoto
  • BASIC

• Durban Platform
  • BASIC expert papers released
  • No explicit reference to equity in platform
  • CBDR+RC and applicable to all

• ADP negotiations
  • Equity and ambition
  • Adaptation and mitigation
“We need to consider the past in addressing the future”
BASIC experts, 2011

“I don’t understand what the past has to do with it, we all need to reduce emissions to avoid catastrophic losses”
AOSIS Delegate

“We want ambition to be framed in terms of self-interest.”
AILAC Delegate
CURRENT EQUITY DISCUSSION

• New equity proposals for 2015 agreement
  • Ongoing ‘pledge and review’ bottom-up strategy
  • BASIC carbon budget/ EASD frameworks
    • Burden sharing adaptation goal framework
  • Equity reference framework + variants
    • Include mitigation, adaptation, support
  • AILAC and others positive sum ambition + equity framework
    • Include mitigation, adaptation/climate impacts
  • Green growth options, positive-sum frameworks
EQUITY TRENDS

• Shift from mitigation focus, to mitigation, adaptation, finance/support, loss and damage

• Key issues remain through time
  • Historical responsibility
  • “collective” burden sharing
  • Acknowledgement of needs and rights based approaches, although inconsistent traction
  • Underlying geopolitical concerns centred on economic growth

• Several new attempts at
  • Finding middle ground (ERF)
  • Paradigm changes (ie. positive sum frameworks)
POSSIBLE? MAYBE....

• International treaty making depends on domestic politics
  • Final package must be “fair enough” for domestic ratification and implementation

• Under the majority of current equity proposals, major developed countries face profound emission reductions and financial payments

• What would be needed for these countries to be able to sign, ratify, and implement the required domestic policies?
CANADIAN DOMESTIC CLIMATE EQUITY EXPERIENCES

- Canada’s short CDM history
  - KP compliance plan centred on CDM credits
  - Public backlash against buying international credits
  - In Canada and US public largely overestimates amounts of overseas assistance

- BC Carbon tax
  - Adopted 2008
  - Comprehensive revenue-neutral carbon tax
  - Tax based on fuel carbon content, taxed at end-use
  - Deep divides about equity
    - Regional disputes, multiple concessions
    - Narrowly avoided being scrapped in 2013 review
US CLIMATE EQUITY EXPERIENCES

- WCI
  - Regional bottom-up cap and trade
  - Diverse actors – potential losses to some, regional rifts
  - Stringent limitations on international offsets
  - Limitations on uses of revenue (domestic mitigation only)
  - Disintegrated for political, ideological and equity reasons

- California
  - EJ community resisted cap and trade
  - Protested use of trading mechanism
    - Concerned about local air pollutants
    - Unconvinced by effectiveness and equity of market mechanisms
ESSENTIAL? YES.
POSSIBLE?

• Equity at heart of international negotiations
  • Without “fair enough” deal, will not be an agreement

• But, international treaty making depends on domestic politics

• Key geopolitically powerful nations face:
  • Profoundly steep mitigation curves
  • Large costs for adaptation, support, (loss and damage)
  • Internally limited appetite for international speaking
  • Ongoing internal rifts regarding goals and approaches to climate policy
BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

• Extremely strong claims to equity internationally

• Equity is an essential part of a 2015 deal
  • Must include mitigation, adaptation, support (probably also loss and damage)
  • Must be “fair enough” for all parties to accept

• Profound challenges for domestic politics within key developed countries

• How do we reconcile global and domestic requirements for functioning climate policy without eroding ambition?