The Rocky Road to Durban:
The current state of the global climate change negotiations. Some reflections.....

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The Global Climate Change negotiations for dummies

1992
UN Earth Summit (Rio): 3 conventions: UNFCCC* (desertification, biodiversity).

1995
First ‘Conference of the Parties’ – COP 1 (Berlin)

1997
Kyoto Protocol commits signatories to stabilise GHG emissions through binding targets.

1992
UNFCCC*

2000

2005
Convention and KP signatories (COP serving as a meeting of the Parties: CMP 1) meet together for first time

2009 & 2010
Copenhagen Accord & Cancun Agreements

2007
Bali

2008
Poznan

2009
Copenhagen

2010
Cancun

DBN: COP17-CMP7

*United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
Encourages industrialised countries to stabilise greenhouse gas emissions voluntarily.

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COP 15 2009: legally binding agreement to “stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate” : Goal 2°C (350-450ppmCO₂)

Shifting goalposts in terms of what is acceptable:

Most Vulnerable Countries (MVCs) i.e. SIDs and LDCs calling for 1.5°C (about 280ppmCO₂/350ppm CO₂eq).
The COP out at COP15 in COPenhagen!

- 2 Ad Hoc Working Groups – 1 under the Convention (AWG – Long-term Co-operative Action) and 1 under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP).
- Negotiating since 2005 (KP) and 2007 (Convention) with deadline of 2009 in Copenhagen.
- Achieving a legally binding agreement would be difficult – Danish COP Presidency intervened to try and achieve a political agreement.
  - 1st - ‘Danish Text’ (leaked to the Guardian and published 8th Dec).
  - 2nd - Final days, negotiations in disarray brought back idea of a COP Presidency proposal (16th Dec) - massive opposition – eventually gave up.
  - 3rd - As fear of failure mounted convened “Friends of the Chair” - 30 heads of state (out of 120) rest left downstairs! Separate from UNFCCC process and met entirely behind close doors.

- Breakthrough as a result of meeting between President Obama and BASIC countries (Brazil, South Africa, India and China).
- Reached agreement on key issues which became the Copenhagen Accord – further refined together with other “Friends of the Chair”.

Yvo De Boer (UN Climate Chief): “destroyed two years of effort in one fell swoop”
Saturday 19th Dec Danish Prime Minister reopened COP plenary at 3am and delegations were given an hour to review the Copenhagen Accord.

Objections to the CA in terms of **process** i.e. non-inclusive – particularly excluding ALBA countries: *‘anti-democratic, anti-transparent and unacceptable’* (rep from Bolivia).

Objections in terms of **content** – LDCs and SIDs attacked accord as being too weak.

Further exacerbated the **high levels of distrust**

CA could not be formally adopted (i.e. unanimously) due to opposition by Bolivia, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Cuba and Tuvalu – **only noted.**

**Actual Brokenhagen 2009 outcomes** –
- The Copenhagen Accord was noted and
- Agreement to continue negotiations until COP 16 in Mexico (2010)
Copenhagen Accord?

- Recognizes (i.e. doesn’t commit to) "the scientific view that the increase in global temperature should be below 2 degrees Celsius“ – calls for a review in 2015 which would include a consideration of the 1.5°C target.

- developed countries (Annex I Parties) would "commit to economy-wide emissions targets for 2020" to be submitted by 31 January 2010.

- developing nations (non-Annex I Parties) would "implement mitigation actions" (Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions) to slow growth in their carbon emissions, to be submitted by 31 January 2010.

- developed countries would raise new and additional resources accounting to $30 billion from 2010-2012 (balanced between adaptation and mitigation).

- "goal" for the world to raise $100 billion per year by 2020, from "a wide variety of sources", to help developing countries cut carbon emissions (mitigation).

- Copenhagen Green Climate Fund, as an operating entity of the financial mechanism.

Questions as to whether this will be truly additional to Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments – existing 0.7% GDP commitments have only been met by a handful of countries.

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Some of the problems:

• The accord is not legally binding.
• No decision whether there will be a legally binding successor to the Kyoto Protocol.
• The accord sets no real targets for emissions reductions.
• The accord was drafted by only five countries.
• There is no guarantee or information on where the climate funds will come from.
• Earlier proposals, that would have aimed to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C and cut CO₂ emissions by 80% by 2050 were dropped.
• Analyses of current pledges indicate that they will result in a 3.5°C to 3.9°C temperature increase by 2100.
The US State Department is denying climate change assistance to countries opposing the Copenhagen Accord. The Washington Post reported in 2010 that Bolivia and Ecuador were denied climate aid after both countries opposed the accord.

Developing countries find themselves caught between environmental principles and economic realities.
In reply, Ecuador’s UN Ambassador, María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés stated:

“Ecuador is not going to accept these forms of extortion. In return, the president of Ecuador and the people of Ecuador have said to the United States with all seriousness that Ecuador offers the United States $2.5 million if the US would sign the Kyoto Protocol. [applause] And we say it seriously. If the United States signs the Kyoto Protocol, we will transfer $2.5 million in cooperation to that country to help them in their process of technological conversion that will so help the planet.”
Political challenges in negotiations of....

1. **Differentiation** – “common but differentiated responsibility”. How to reflect commitments, that:
   - Quantify **absolute targets** for emission reduction for developed countries (including the USA)
   - Ensure **relative actions** (responsibility and capability) by developing countries
   - Provide **support** (finance & technology) for developing countries
   - Ensure international **verification** of targets, action and support

   - Copenhagen Accord addresses this challenge to some extent but not the ? Of

2. **Fairness/equity:**
   - **how much more carbon** can the atmosphere absorb before there are disastrous consequences and how should the remaining “carbon space” be allocated?
   - **developed countries** have over-used their share of the “carbon space” while developing countries had contributed far below their proportionate share.
Dual character of CO$_2$ emissions: both as a ‘global warming agent’ and ‘development necessity’.
Current occupation of carbon space

Per capita entitlement: establishes an allowable level of global emissions, e.g. the amount of GHGs that can be safely emitted in the atmosphere. This is then distributed equally among the global population, with each country getting an entitlement proportional to its population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>*Non- LULUCF Only</th>
<th>Fair Share</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1850 Basis</td>
<td>1970 Basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Annex-1</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Annex-1</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Future occupation of carbon space

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Seen as a recipe for economic disaster. A table illustrates model allocations for different regions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1850 Basis - Constant Population</th>
<th>Future Entitlements 2010-2050</th>
<th>Model Allocation (Scenario IV, Option A) 2010-2050</th>
<th>Model Allocation (Scenario IV, Option B) 2010-2050</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>-66.81</td>
<td>18.41</td>
<td>14.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>-41.17</td>
<td>14.38</td>
<td>11.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Annex I</td>
<td>-19.43</td>
<td>17.39</td>
<td>13.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Annex 1</td>
<td>427.14</td>
<td>248.02</td>
<td>258.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>299.73</td>
<td>298.20</td>
<td>298.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Linked to issues of differentiation and equity is the difficult question of legal form

- Will Kyoto Protocol continue beyond 2012; or will it be replaced
- Do we go for a “new universal framework” which includes USA as well as China, India, Brazil, SA etc;
- Or do we abandon the ideal of an international legally binding system and replace with a bottom-up approach.
What did Cancun bring to the table?

– Got the **multilateral process** started again.

– Process run by Mexican COP presidency was **transparent, inclusive, established a basis of trust** – no fear of secret text! However, still no clear path to a binding agreement.

– “**Balanced package of decisions**”. Fearing another failure parties were quicker to accept incremental outcomes (falling well short of initial demands) to keep the process alive – except for Bolivia!

*Cancun can!*

“Cancun has done its job. The beacon of hope has been reignited”
Christiana Figueres

“Survival is what is important to us”
President of Nauru

“It’s a question of survival”
Prime Minister of Central African Republic
**Highlights:** major success was around Institutions such as Green Climate Fund, Technology Mechanism and Adaptation Framework.

- **Cancun Adaptation Framework** to enhance adaptation and Adaptation Committee to provide technical support to parties etc.

- Began the process of making the Green Climate Fund operational: governance similar to Adaptation Fund – governing board with members from developing and developed countries. (GEF, WB, IMF controlled by developed countries). WB is interim trustee. Minister Manuel is co-chair.

- **Technology Development and Transfer**: established a Technology Mechanism comprised of a Technology Executive Committee and a Climate Technology Centre and Network.
What did Cancun bring to the table?

**Highlights:**

- **Reiteration of original KP mandate** “to ensure that there is no gap between the first and second commitment periods”.

- **Adhered to goal of 2°C above pre-industrial levels.** Periodic review to consider strengthening the goal. First review in 2013.

- **Strengthening of Monitoring, Reporting and Verification.** Greater transparency in emissions reporting by all countries.

- **REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation).** Agreed on a phased approach starting with the development of national strategies and evolving into results-based actions.
What did Cancun bring to the table?

- In addition, Global Cities Covenant on Climate and carbonn Cities Climate Registry: the global response by local governments to measurable, reportable, verifiable (MRV) climate action.
- 1 UN – 200 Countries – 1 million municipalities worldwide!
What did Cancun bring to the table?

Lowlights

- Mitigation targets and actions pledged under CA imported into the UNFCCC. Cements shift from legally binding agreement based on science, to politically palatable pledges.

- Growing gap between governments’ stated ambition (2°C or even 1.5°C) and action i.e. pledges that fall increasingly short of the goal.

- Funding commitments. Little clarity on how funds will be generated, governed, prioritised and used.

- Issue of new binding targets for Kyoto Protocol deferred.

- Legal form of agreement not resolved: will be discussed in lead up to Durban.

- Response measures: Forum to further consider the economic and social impacts on fossil fuel producing countries (OPEC) of declining demand due to emission reductions. (Saudi Arabia, Russia, USA, Iran, China, Canada, Mexico, UAE, Kuwait, Venezuela)
So where did it end?

- Closed at 3.30am on Saturday 11 Dec. Tension was high in final hours as Bolivia emphatically rejected the texts as being too weak. Texts were gavelled through despite Bolivia’s objections. Violation of the consensus rule?

- Main problem is **US is unable to move forward and most other countries tie their positions to what the US is doing.** Given political situation in US, the window for the “grand bargain” hoped for in Copenhagen has probably closed for the foreseeable future (will have to wait for next US elections?).

- Necessary for progressive actors at all levels to step up their efforts. Have to grow a patchwork of regimes into effective climate change response strategy. **Many small people in small places doing small things can change the world.**
Durban: host city for COP 17-CMP 7
20 000 – 30 000 delegates - Over 190 countries
28th November – 9th December 2011
What are the expectations from Durban for COP 17-CMP 7?

- **Durban package**: will focus on 1) **Mitigation**: must pronounce on 2\(^{nd}\) CP. Will look different to 1\(^{st}\) CP if it happens. Will also seek to define what kind of legal form is wanted – will be linked to legal form of outcome under Convention. 2) **Operationalisation of institutions**.

- **Adaptation**: will be **central in Durban** because of significance to Africa/Global South – but adaptation tends to be held hostage as soon as there are difficulties elsewhere. Will have to work hard to keep a focus on adaptation.

- If can’t get a **credible adaptation deal** this is likely to affect overall outcome of negotiations as Africa, LDC, SIDS etc see **mitigation and adaptation as linked**.

- **Raise the profile of local government**
  - Adaptation Convention
  - Local Government Lounge
  - Reporting Session on progress on the Global Cities Covenant on Climate
Durban becomes final battleground

The Kyoto Protocol looks set to be the climate conference in South Africa, where countries push for voluntary targets.

JUDGING by what transpired at last week’s Bonn climate negotiations, it is now certain that five months and one week from today, a conference of procrastinators will launch in Durban, the “COP17”, dooming the Earth to the frying pan.

Global inaction on climate change will make our city’s name as infamous for elite incompetence and political betrayal as is Oslo’s in the Middle East.

For it appears certain that Pretoria’s alliance with Washington, Beijing, New Delhi and Brasilia – witnessed in the shameful behind-closed-doors Copenhagen Accord over two years earlier – will be enlarged, with yet more saboteurs of the Kyoto Protocol (especially from Ottawa, Tokyo and Moscow) and with Brussels and London carbon traders.

What everyone now predicts is a conference of paralysis during which not only the Kyoto Protocol will expire but also at the end of its first commitment period in 2012.

Far worse, Durban will primarily be a conference of profiteers, as carbon trading – the privatization of the air, selling rich states and companies the property-right to pollute – is cemented in at the foundations of global climate malgovernance.

Indeed, a telling diplo-

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Eye on Society

By Patrick Bond

when Pretoria negotiators, inexplicably weighed down by team members from.max-polluters Eskom, Sasol and the Business Unity of South Africa, tried to break African solidarity against EU plans for opening up new carbon markets (in exchange for EU emitting much more) with House Gas or from power producers.

African governments have an open, accountable and accountable Climate Fund, far larger than any other financial arrangement ever assembled by another Pretoria or Washington.

$100bn (R679bn) a year Green Climate Fund, far larger than any other financial arrangement ever assembled by another Pretoria or Washington.

Maynard continued, "This is all the more urgent as we hear that New Zealand and the US are driving the introduction of ‘soil carbon’ markets into the negotiations. These markets are false solutions that will only fuel the land-grab in Africa and seriously undermine the ability of poor Africans to feed themselves."

The Kyoto Protocol will be the first casualty of Durban, everyone predicts. The North wants a voluntary “political commitment” – sometimes

1987 in Montreal to ban CFCs, the chemical that threatened to widen the deadly ozone hole. But at the last two climate conferences of Parties (COP), in Copenhagen (2009) and Cancun (2010), Pretoria bucked squarely with the false deal cheaters.

According to Bolivia’s ambassador to the United Nations, Pablo Solon, at a Bonn press conference, "We have come out with commitments of emissions reductions that leads us to a scenario of a temperature increase of 4°C. And that is absolutely unacceptable.

"We need to come out of South Africa with commitments of emissions reductions that will put us in a scenario of between 1°C to 1.5°C in order to preserve our planet and life as we know it."

Solon, who has gained enormous stature as one of the few brave enough to speak truth to power inside the UN’s dead space, concluded, "South Africa is the place to fight against the new apartheid against Mother Earth and its vital systems."

Otherwise Durban will be termed the Conference of Polluters.

1 Patrick Bond directs the UKZN Centre for Civil Society and is author of the forthcoming book, Politics of Climate Justice.
Consequences for cities in the Global South

2°C
- 2°C seems inevitable – particularly given weak political will.
- We can no longer mitigate ourselves out of dangerous climate change.

4°C
- 3°C or 4°C now more likely based on current emissions growth and inadequate responses (Copenhagen Accord etc.): “4°C and beyond”.
- Adaptation becomes the priority (esp. for Africa) and mitigation becomes a tool to reduce the costs of adaptation!

Cities
- World Bank estimates that adaptation costs will be $80-$100 billion per annum.
- 80% of these costs will be borne by cities in the developing world.
- In next 40 years have to build the same urban capacity that was built over the last 4000 as we move from 3.5 billion city dwellers to 7 billion – the resources are not available to do this!
What can you do?

“By turning on the lights, filling the kettle...driving to the shops, we are condemning other people to death.” G. Monbiot (2007)

- Change a light
- Drive and fly less
- Recycle more
- Check your tyre pressure
- Use less hot water/geyser blanket
- Avoid products lots of packaging
- Plant an indigenous tree (38!)
- Turn off electronic devices
- Clean/replacement filters in your air conditioner
- Switch to green power
- Eat less meat