

Sufia Khanom

CLIMATE CHANGE NEGOTIATIONS: PERFORMATIVES, PRACTICES AND POLITICS

Abstract

Climate negotiation is a complicated affair. It tackles worldwide environmental issues and necessitates global cooperation among all nations. Countries (parties) may have varying motivations and capacities to contribute to climate policy solutions. Despite significant efforts in discussions, it is claimed that most of the theories, discussions, evidence-gathering and implementations connecting climate change and development presume a fundamentally apolitical and linear policy process. In this context, the primary goal of this study is to examine the key milestones of negotiation efforts, the unique methods of negotiation, and the politics surrounding climate talks among diverse organizations, coalitions, and regions. Since the establishment of the UNFCCC, little progress has been made in avoiding hazardous human intervention in the climate system. Three underlying conflicts have so far eclipsed all attempts to reach a meaningful deal. The first and second conflicts occur inside developing and developed nations, respectively, whereas the third conflict occurs between developing and developed countries. The latter dispute is over how much and by whom emissions should be decreased in the future. A narrative of global talks that ignores justice demands would neglect critical political aspects of the history, present, and future of climate negotiations.

Keywords: Diplomacy, UNFCCC, Paris Agreement, Kyoto Protocol, Conference of Parties (COP), Equity, Global South, Coalition

1. Introduction

The pressing environmental challenges and greatest global concerns for today's world are climate change and global warming. Climate change results from the issues of inequality and unfairness in terms of the contribution of developing and the least developing countries for global warming and their capacity to adapt the environmental changes. Although lots of initiatives have been taken by international communities during the climate change negotiation processes for minimizing the loss of global warming, the theories, understanding the extends of loss and damage, data and information collection methods and implementation regards to climate

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change remain largely considered as apolitical and linear policy process. Cammack points out two problems, namely “the disconnection between the proposed solutions to climate change from different disciplines, and the devoid of politics in addressing climate change at the local level.”¹ Besides these, there are other major issues that need to be considered and stressed in suggested solutions, such as, lack of resources for being resilient and conflict over resources in the developing countries as well as the tendency of capturing resources by the elites. Therefore, Tanner and Allouche suggest that “climate change initiative must explicitly recognize the political economy of their inputs, processes and outcomes to find a balance between effectiveness, efficiency and equity.”²

The issue of climate change has been first discussed in several conferences in the late 1960s and the early 1970s. In 1979, the first World Climate Conference was held. Climate change as a result of increased temperature was first scientifically identified with evidence and was called for joint international collaborative actions in the 1980s. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The Conference identified the “common but differentiated responsibilities and responses to various capabilities.” These assisted in identifying the specific needs and the contribution to greenhouse gases of both developing and developed countries. Therefore, the developing countries are categorized as Annex-1 Parties and developed countries as non-Annex-1 Parties to the convention on the provision of support or on reporting.

Most of the countries signed and ratified the Convention in the Rio Conference in 1992 and it entered into force on 21 March 1994. The first Conference of the Parties (COP) took place in 1995 in Berlin after it came into force. Besides COP, the followings are other bodies under the Convention with specific tasks: a) Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) assesses the state of scientific knowledge relating to climate change and responds to scientific, technological and methodological questions raised by the COP; b) Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) considers the information provided by Parties and assists the COP in the preparation and implementation of its decisions; c) COP, serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP), keeps the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol under regular review and promotes its effective implementation; d) COP, serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA), periodically takes stock of the implementation of the Paris

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¹ Diana Cammack, “Understanding the Political Economy of Climate Change is Vital to Tackling It,” Opinion 92, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), December 2007, accessed 25 December 2020, <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/792.pdf>

² Thomas Tanner and Jeremy Allouche, “Towards a New Political Economy of Climate Change Development,” *IDS Bulletin* 42, no. 3 (05 May 2011).

Agreement and promotes its effective implementation. Therefore, climate change negotiation process happens all over the year through various bodies of COP.

In this context, the main objective of this article has been to analyze the major milestones of climate change negotiation initiatives, the distinctive practices of negotiations, and the politics around the climate negotiations among various groups, coalitions and regions. This article is qualitative in nature and based on the secondary information collected from various academic journals, books and relevant web pages of different climate-related organizations. It is based on 3Ps: Performative, Practices and Politics which are the major parts of the article. Performative means the depicted performance of climate negotiations, the behavioural pattern of individual countries and groups, and, the internal causes of these behavioural patterns. The article consists of six sections including the introduction and conclusion. The second section provides an idea of different groups to understand the common interest areas for climate change negotiations. The performatives, practices and politics of global climate negotiations are discussed in the following three sections of the paper. The paper ends with a brief conclusion. Before getting into the main discussion on the climate change negotiations, the following section discusses about groups of Parties and their positions in the negotiation process.

2. Positions of the Groups of Parties in Climate Change Negotiation

About 10 Groups of Parties have been formed in the negotiations under the UNFCCC for regularly coordinating their positions. For example, “G-77 and China” groups generally coordinate the UN negotiation processes. The Groups of Parties are formed based on the United Nations Regional group such as Asia Pacific States, African States, Latin American and Caribbean States, Western European, Eastern European and other States. The COP Presidency rotates among these groups and the groups also appoint their representatives into various groups during negotiations. On the other hand, groups also formed according to their interest rather than their geographical proximity. All the Groups of Parties are not equally active in all the conferences at the same level, and it always fluctuates according to their interests and contexts. National delegations consist of one or more officials on behalf of the government and they are empowered to negotiate as representatives of the Convention bodies and in the Kyoto Protocol.

To establish a common negotiating platform, the developing countries generally work through G-77. The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) formed the G-77 in 1964 and it has been working through the UN system since then. There are about 133 members are in this group. The Party holds the Chair which rotates every year and speaks for both G-77 and China. As G-77 is a large group, there are diverse interests and debatable issues with the group

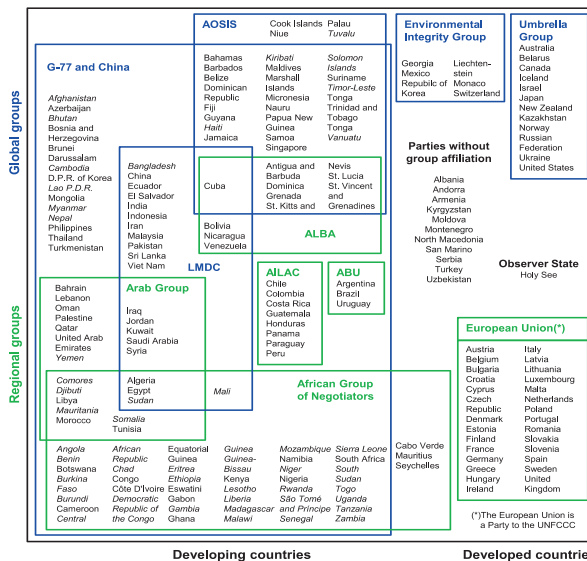
members, such as, the Group of Least Developing Countries (LDCs), the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the African Group.

The 54 African member states established the African Group in 1995 in the First COP in Berlin. It represents the common interests of the African region with a common and unified voice in the negotiation process. All aspects of climate change including vulnerability, mitigation and adaption to climate change are active and supportive concerns for the African Group.

Twenty-two members including the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Sudan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Jordan, Algeria, Comoros, Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco, Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Mauritania, Somalian and Yemen. Mexico, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Georgia, Monaco and the Republic of Korea have formed the Environment Integrity Group (EIG) in 2000.

The European Union (EU) and the UK, the 27 member states, agreed on the common negotiation points. The Presidency of the EU negotiator team rotates after every six months and speaks for its 28 member states. The EU can be and is a Party of Convention for its regional economic integration organization. Still, the member states do not have any individual voting rights.

Figure 1: Parties and Observer State to the UNFCCC and Group Affiliations³



Source: AGN (2019), AOSIS (2019), UNFCCC (2019e), Moosmann et al (2017)

³ The Group members of Least Developing Countries (LDCs) are shown in Italic in the above picture. About 197 countries are the Parties of the Convention where the Holy See is the only observer state in the climate negotiation.

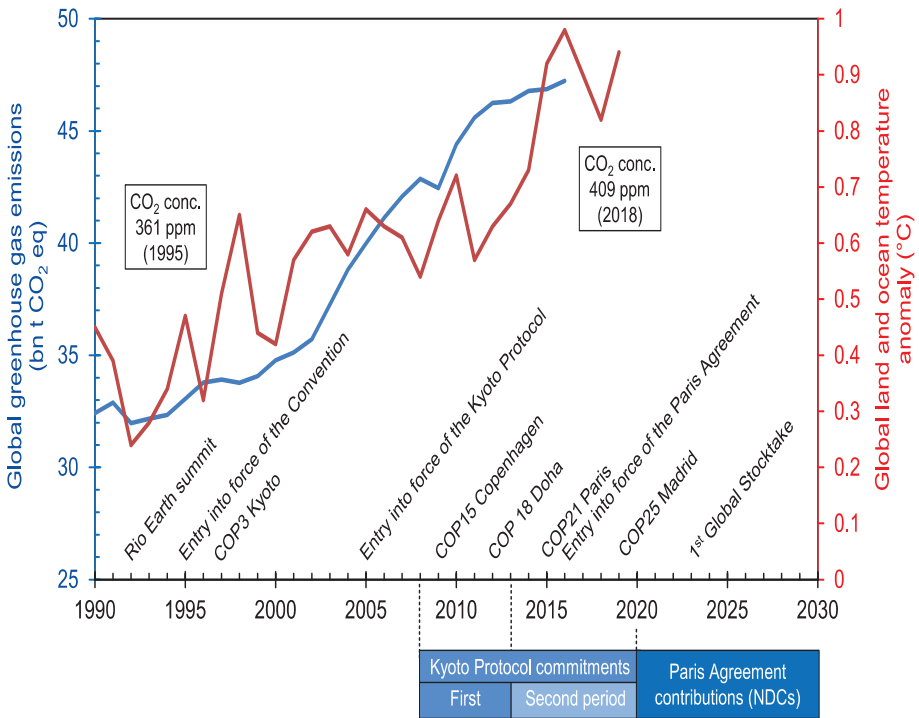
46 Parties are defined as LDCs in the UN negotiating process and their participation is actively observed in the UN system. They are united to find out the sustainable solution of climate vulnerability and adaptation in response to global environmental changes. The SIDS consists of 38 countries, mostly, low-lying islands. These countries are also members of G-77 and are especially concerned with the sea-level rise due to global temperature rise. They are united as climate change poses a threat to their survival, and stand together frequently during negotiation. SIDS first proposed to cut off the Carbon dioxide emissions while drafting the first text for Kyoto Protocol negotiations and asked the parties to keep the emission level by 20 per cent of 1990 levels by 2005.

The United States, the Russian Federation, New Zealand, Japan, Canada, Australia, Iceland, Belarus, Israel, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Norway made a coalition of Parties named as the Umbrella Group. This group also adopted the Kyoto Protocol. Several other groups, for example, a group of countries of Central Asia, the Cartagena Dialogue, the Basic group (Brazil, South Africa, China and India), the Coalition for Rainforest Nations, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Caucasus, Albania and Moldova (CACUM), the Independent Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (ALIAC), the like-Minded Group and the Bolivian Alliance for the People of our America (ALBA) work together in the climate negotiation process. Although there are different groups of parties or coalitions in the global climate negotiations, they are all concerned about the well-being of human society and want to reduce the vulnerabilities of climate change. The following section discusses about the major achievements of climate negotiations so far which depict the success stories of various groups of parties and different coalitions.

3. Climate Change Negotiations: The Performative

There are 197 Parties are involved in the Convention at present including the EU. UNFCCC saw both progress and setbacks since its inception 25 years ago while the greenhouse gas emission continued to increase with the increase of earth surface temperature. Figure 2 depicts the selected key milestones:

Figure 2: Milestones under UNFCCC



Source: Gütschow et al. (2019), NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (2019)

The emerging countries, most notably China, have increased remarkably since the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. The international community has formed a group of successors to the Kyoto Protocol in order to follow the developed countries' commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The major attempt of mitigating greenhouse gases committed by the larger group of countries ended with a failure in COP-15 in Copenhagen where the major contributing countries only took notes of limiting their emission voluntarily by 2020.

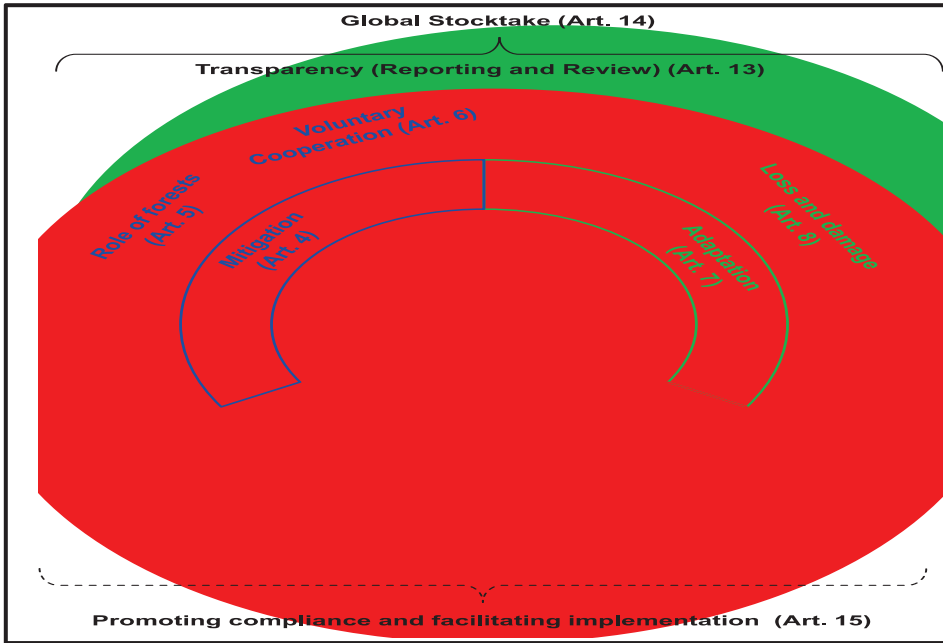


Figure 3: Global Stocktake on NDCs

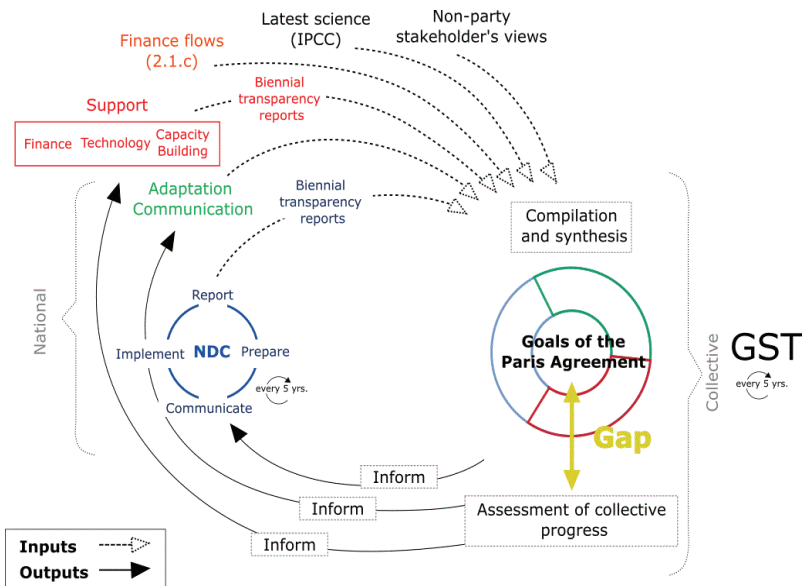
Source: Gütschow et al. (2019), NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (2019)

The main objective of the subsequent negotiations phase was to follow the bottom-up approach which would allow the Parties to determine their minimum contributions to global warming. However, there was a need for legal force and united commitment from all the parties. In 2015, the negotiation over greenhouse gas mitigation under the Kyoto protocol came into closure with the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Sendai Disaster Reduction Framework. The COP-21, a decisive conference, was preceded by the announcement from many countries that they would determine their emission contribution level-so called Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs).

On 12 December 2015, the Parties reached an agreement guided by the French COP presidency. The agreement is widely known as the Paris Agreement. The outcome of that agreement was the first document for climate change negotiation regarding mitigation and adaptation initiatives from all the Parties. The Parties agreed to determine the extent of its action through the bottom-up approach of NDCs. Thus, Paris Agreement contained a universal legal obligation for the Parties to apply the top-down approach and established the shared rules-based system of reducing greenhouse gas emission.

There are three broad goals in Article 2 which guide the Paris agreement. “The temperature goal aims to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above the pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit this increase to 1.5°C. The adaptation goal aims to increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and to foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development. Finally, the ‘finance flows’ goal aims to make finance flows consistent with a pathway towards a low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.”⁴ 187 countries out of 197 Parties to the Convention have ratified or agreed to the Paris Agreement on 06 November 2019. Recently, a powerful member Party in global politics, Russia, has acceded to the agreement on 07 October 2019. Still, some large emitters, for example, Iran and Turkey have not ratified the Paris Agreement.

Figure 4: The Ambition Cycle and the Global Stocktake



Source: Adopted from the UNFCC 2015

⁴ Lorenz Moosmann, Cristina Urrutia, Anne Siemnos, Martin Cames and Lambert Schneider, “International Climate Negotiations: Issues at Stake in View of the COP25 UN Climate Change Conference in Madrid”, Policy Department for Economic, Scientific and Quality of Life Policies, Directorate-General for Internal Policies, Environment Committee (European Parliament PE 642.344, November 2019).

The Montreal Protocol, other than UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement also addresses the issue of greenhouse gas emission. It schedules the phase-down of hydrofluorocarbons through the Kigali Amendment as these groups of gases gained importance for substituting the Ozone layer depletion substances. In addition to that, two specialized United Nations Agencies like the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) are concerned about the emission caused by international aviation and shipping. Three other UN initiatives link the Paris Agreement to climate support action. These are the following:

In March 2015, at the third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, delegates adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 to 2030. The Framework sets seven targets to assess progress in reducing the risks associated with natural disasters

In July of the same year, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda was adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing and Development. This Agenda identifies action areas at domestic and international levels in order to provide financing and enabling environments for sustainable development.

Finally, in September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The agenda sets 17 SDGs, each of which is subdivided into several more specific targets. The most prominent feature of the SDGs is that the goals are closely interlinked.⁵

The above-mentioned climate negotiations take place without any enforced compliance in the absence of an overarching authority with the agreed objectives. Therefore, countries are motivated to join any climate coalition in the negotiation process both from international and socio-economic perspective. The climate negotiation processes need to be focussed on a win-win solution for both the Parties as well as flexible for effective climate action. The course of negotiations is needed to be tactical if necessary. New scientific insights and key personalities in the negotiation groups are used as tactics. The followings are some practices to do the timely agreement for ensuring the effective approaches and addressing the evolution of emerging issues through negotiations.

4. Climate Change Negotiations: The Practices

The debates over national interest and international cooperation interfaced with the climate negotiations. To find the space for agreement, interests and intentions of countries are ensured through accurate assessment. Low carbon business opportunities, sovereignty, high carbon asset exposure, and perceived

⁵ Moosmann et al., "International Climate Negotiations."

fairness around climate vulnerability of a country reflect conflicting national interests. National priorities are reflected and understood through climate negotiations in the form of international climate change agreements. For example, the Government has initiated the discussion on “Loss and Damage” in the international climate change negotiation forums through their expertise in managing national climate change impacts. Some climate negotiation practices as follows:

4.1 *Are the Impacts of Climate Change Simply a “Global” Issue?*

Impacts of climate change, adaptation and mitigation strategies, and governance are tended to be evolved from a global scale. On one hand, global political action has stepped positively in the development of international agreements. On the other hand, this globally led governance process hinders some of the specific national and sub-national conditions to provide adequate flexibility. The issues of equity and global environmental justice require a fair international platform from the development perspective where the vulnerability of climate change and poverty can be dealt simultaneously. Therefore, climate change is not only a challenge for national and regional governance but also a global crisis which seeks international political attention. The national and regional policy initiatives could explain the context of formulation of international initiatives by the understanding of the political economy of climate change.

4.2 *Coalition Formation*

The emergence of coalitions is the most important feature of multilateral negotiations. Coalition allows their members to act actively in the negotiation process than their presence as a single member. There are two functions of coalitions: i) negotiation becomes simpler when an expert group talks or leads for 200 members. So, coalition reduces the complexity of climate negotiations ii) Coalition strengthens the bargaining power. The member countries can pull up their resources and can take part in the negotiation more confidently.⁶

The member countries feel that their positions are more represented as most of the coalitions and groups are formulated based on their geographical and regional proximity. The number of coalition members has been increased dramatically in 2005 due to the members’ dependence on the coalitions. Some of the coalitions are small in size but powerful in negotiations, for example, BASIC, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), OPEC and LDCs.⁷ Even within the coalition, it is important to ensure that every member of the group can raise their voice. There are also winners and losers even in the same coalition, especially, for the large group such as

⁶ Carola Klöck and Paula Castro, “Coalitions in Global Climate Change Negotiations,” Policy Brief: Innovations in Climate Governance (August 2018).

⁷ Anesu Makina, “Managing Climate Change: The Africa Group in Multilateral Environmental Negotiations,” *The Journal of International Organization Studies* 4, no. 1 (2013): 37-48.

G-77. Less powerful or weak countries may be marginalized by comparatively powerful members. Although solidarity is very important for negotiations, the members can engage themselves in debate before starting the negotiation. Delegates always have the right to negotiate texts, address the floor, and introduce the proposals irrespective of the internal voting procedures. Therefore, developing countries with minimum bargaining capacities, sometimes cannot receive the full benefit or influence within the coalitions.

4.3 *Matching Strategy Negotiations*

According to recent studies, countries should propose mechanisms in terms of international public goods for implementing efficient climate change mitigation strategies. Without an enforcing authority, Kotaro proposed a mechanism for dealing with the free-riding problem in particular. The “conditional contribution” or “matching” approach voluntarily subsidizes each other’s contributions in regard to the supply of public goods. “Each player individually finds it optimal to match other players’ contributions, and this matching behaviour leads to a Pareto-optimal outcome from the viewpoint of the whole group utility.”⁸ Some countries including Japan, Australia and the EU proposed major emitters’ comparable contributions condition for higher reduction target. This cooperative arrangement would offer positive output for each party in comparison to the baseline policy. Recent analysis on the EU’s conditional contribution also supports the mechanism. Any desired emission reduction can be achieved by implementing this mechanism. For establishing these emission reduction strategies, the countries might need a prior arrangement for cooperation and a common understanding of how to allocate the surplus among members. “Strategyproofness” or assurance from members on implementing mechanism is one of the significant aspects in order to make such cooperation functional.

4.4 *Considering Adaptation as a Strategic Issue*

The strategic policy focus has been shifted from mitigation to adaptation in the early 21st century. Adaption approaches emphasize on the behavioural changes for the ongoing and predicted climatic vulnerabilities. According to Klein, Schipper and Dessai, change in human behaviour is important for sustainable adaptation practices without neglecting the mitigation strategies. Haibach and Schneider also suggest that climate change policy should not only focus on preventative measures, i.e., mitigation but also move towards crisis management. “Exposure to predicted climate change impacts” stresses on the adaptation which has been also reiterated the evolving address of UNFCCC.

⁸ Kotaro Kawamata and Masahide Horita, “Applying Matching Strategies in Climate Change Negotiations,” *Group Decision Negotiations* 23 (2014): 401-419.

Adaptation is a discrete and localized solution of comprehensive development-based perspective. From the justice point of view, it is argued that developed and industrialized countries should bear legal and moral responsibilities to support the developing countries for their adaptation initiatives. The developing countries should also have enough absorptive capacity to use the financial flows supported by the developed nations for effective and efficient adaptation activities. These need a holistic development of knowledge and expertise, good governance, accountability, institutional strength and transparency. The ideal practice is that both developed and developing countries should consider the discussion on financing (how to share the burden/cost of adaptation) and implementation (how efficiently the resources will be used by the stakeholders). However, it is very difficult to make a consensus between these two groups as they are divided between the questions of responsibility and the adaptation capacity and to utilize the funds. Therefore, adaptation is a very important strategic issue in climate change negotiation.

4.5 Pledge and Review

The procedure for the pledge and peer review is the main novel feature of the advancement of the negotiation. The negotiators have also appreciated the procedure of pledge and review for evaluation and monitoring. However, Aldy noted that UNFCCC had not include a formal review process before Paris Agreement.⁹ Paris moved the review process a step closer in this direction. “In order to build mutual trust and confidence,” Article 13 and 14 of the Agreement establishes “transparency framework” and “periodical stock take” for the “tracking” of a country’s “progress towards achieving NDCs and GST.” It is still confusing whether the new approaches work more properly than any of the previous approaches. It may take many years to know. By 2025 and 2030, the countries will declare their nationally determined contribution to Green House Gas according to Paris Agreement. Therefore, it will take several decades further whether the pledges made by the countries are actually fulfilled.

4.6 Advocacy Strategy for Non-State Actors (NSAs)

In the climate change negotiations, the non-state actors do not have formal voices. They take several initiatives to make their voices heard. These are direct connections to government delegations or negotiators, media contacts or demonstrations by arranging side events. All these initiatives taken by the NSAs can be categorized into two groups such as an insider or outsider strategic partner. It depends on whether they want to influence from outside through media and side events or they directly want to participate and influence the politics. There are three reasons that NSAs participate as insiders and outsiders in the negotiation process.

⁹ Scott Barrett and Astrid Dannenberg, “An Experimental Investigation into ‘Pledge and Review’ in Climate Negotiations,” *Climatic Change*, 06 June 2016.

“First, the goals of NSA participation (namely, to provide accountability and improve the negotiation process) are potentially conflicting. Second, groups differ in the degree of access to policymakers. If they lack access, they are unable to engage in inside advocacy. Third, groups do not only seek to influence policy, for which inside advocacy is presumably more suitable; they are also interested in their survival as organizations, for which outside advocacy seems more appropriate.”¹⁰ For example, the business groups are more interested in inside advocacy whereas the environmental organizations more rely on engaging themselves for outer advocacy.

4.7 *The Problems of Fragile State*

Effective usage of climate fund is a difficult task for the fragile states. The impacts of climate change exacerbated the issues of power and social inequality due to the dysfunction of the fragile states. The problems associated with state-building, conflicts, and weak capacities are better understood through the political economy approach to understand the long-standing constraints upon capacity and resilience.

4.8 *Informal Governance*

The distribution and use of state resources as well as the decision-making process are driven by private incentives and informal relations than formal state institutions in many poorly performing countries. Rational functioning of political systems and structures are prevented by the informal governance natures with underlying weak domestic social structures. All these factors hinder the effective and efficient management of climate action. So, domestic institutions and incentives are two critical aspects for the adoption of reforms. The determinants are identified by the political economy analysis for the effectiveness of climate change action initiatives categorized into social structures and systems.

4.9 *Small Players Play Big*

There are some groups like BASIC and SIDS that are small in size but play a significant role in climate change negotiation. For example, SIDS along with AOSIS is playing a major role in creating awareness in terms of impacts in international platforms and raising voice for strong climate action. Although SIDS and AOSIS are heterogeneous in their nature, they have successfully built a common consensus and diplomatic discourse. They also influence the climate action strategies through political leaders, expert negotiators and advisors. It is easier for them to showcase their vulnerability to sea-level rise and other disasters due to

¹⁰ Carola Betzold, “Business insiders and environmental outsiders? Advocacy strategies in international climate change negotiations,” *Interest Groups and Advocacy*: Palgrave, volume 2, no. 3 (2003):302-322.

global warming. They termed it as “the visible part of the iceberg.”¹¹ SIDS played a major role in COP-21 and for the entry into force of the Paris Agreement. SIDS also succeeded in securing their leadership position as vulnerable countries and strongly demonstrated the leadership for raising the ambition to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the temperature goal of limiting global warming below 1.5 degree Celsius. It further advanced the discussion on the complex issue of loss and damage into the negotiation.

5. Climate Change Negotiations: The Politics

The climate change negotiation started to reduce human intervention in the contribution of Green House Gas into the climatic system through Framework Convention. There are three distinct conflicts overshadowed by all the negotiation efforts. The first two conflicts are within the developing and developed countries. The third conflict is between developed and developing countries. Therefore, the questions remain, who is contributing to GHGs? Who is responsible to invest in mitigation and adaptation? And how could the emission be reduced to reduce the trend of temperature rise? The followings are the politics behind the negotiations:

5.1 *Equality and Justice in the North-South Relations*

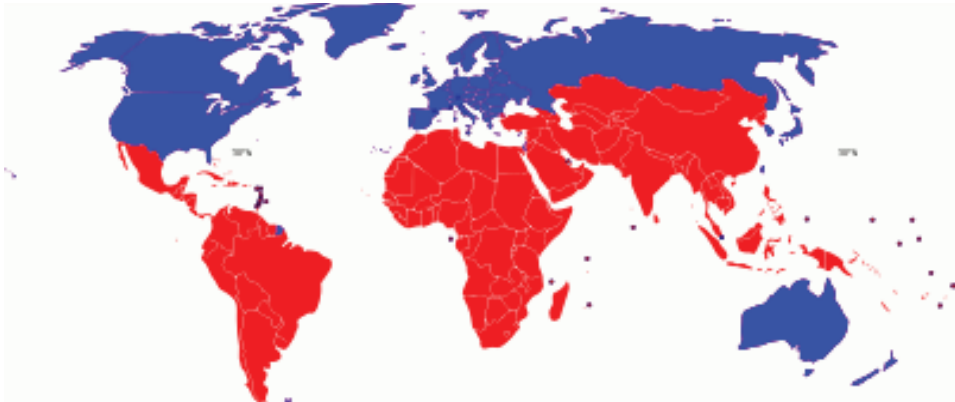


Figure 5: World Map Showing Global North (Blue colour) and Global South (Red colour)

¹¹ Timothée Ourbak and Alexandre K. Magnan, “The Paris Agreement and climate change negotiations: Small Islands, big players,” *Regional Environmental Change* 18 (2018): 2201-2207.

The major stumbling block in reaching agreements on climate change is the North-South divide. Experts always propose to move away from this debate on the North-South paradigm as this politics is demonetized and blamed for the failures of various climate agreements. Studies propose “the reconsideration and rejection of the North-South divide, because negotiations within this premise always begin with political rhetoric about the inequality in the international economy, about historical responsibility, about the need for a radical restructuring of the international political and economic system, about the predisposition for suspicion of environmental issues, and the negotiations usually end up with either deadlocks or unsatisfactory compromises over the core issues”¹² that have been raised. The Global South usually takes a step back and emphasizes on risk minimizing strategy. As a result, both groups ended up with frustration.

5.2 Climate Change: Is It Science or Social Science?

The politics regarding climate change have been already discussed. However, little effort has been initiated on how the politicians articulate or understand this global environmental change. According to a Corpus analysis¹³ (a method developed within linguistics) on the speech delivered for Climate Change Bill 2008 by the UK politicians, they frame climate change issue as a scientific or economic issue neglecting the human and social dimensions. With little mention of abrupt or irreversible change, they are selective in using scientific terms and pieces of evidence. “In doing so, they attempt to ‘tame’ climate change, rather than confronting difficult realities. While this strategy has the benefit of political acceptability, it does not allow for discussion of the full political and social implications of climate change and precludes more radical responses.”¹⁴

Science is a dominant policy driver in recent days. Most of the policy perceptions and actions in climate negotiations are made around the assumptions around economic rationality, standardized governance and planning system, the ability of scientific technical knowledge to overcome the gaps, readily transferable technology, and linear policy processes. Therefore, climate change turns into an apolitical term focussed on technology-led and managerial approaches. Besides this, there is a wide range of diversity in terms of perception of climate change solutions that are led by different ideological worldviews. From a political economy perspective, it provides the opportunity to explore the “complexity of politic and decision-making processes in tackling climate change, the power relations mediating

¹² Ariel Macaspac Hernandez, “Politics of Equity and Justice in Climate Change Negotiations in North-South Relations,” in *Coping with Global Environmental Change, Disasters and Security- Threats, Challenges, Vulnerabilities, and Risks*, ed. H.S. Brauch, U O Spring, C. Mesjasz, J. Grin, P. Kameri-Mbote, B. Chourou, P. Dunay, J. Brikmann (Springer-Verlag, 2010).

¹³ Corpus techniques, including keyword analysis, collocation and semantic tagging, are used, alongside critical reading of the text.

¹⁴ Rebecca Willis, “Taming the Climate? Corpus Analysis of Politicians’ Speech on Climate Change,” *Environmental Politics*, no. 2 (2017): 212-231.

competing claims over resources, and the contextual conditions for enabling the adoption of technology.”¹⁵

5.3 *Negotiations for What: Environment or Economy?*

Balancing competing regarding social, economic and political interests are required for successful adaptation to climate change. The benefits of adaptation initiatives may turn into harmful unintended consequences in the absence of such balance. For example, people in Tanzania were forced to practice farming instead of fishing for protecting the coral reef which caused more production of greenhouse gases.¹⁶

Theoretical conclusions and influence remain scattered among environment-based NGOs (ENGOS) and business or industry-based organizations (BINGOs) in the environmental negotiations. Explanatory framework resulting from the empirical material during the reform of Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) show diversified conclusions drawn by ENGOS and BINGOs. BINGOs are in a favourable position than ENGOS in any negotiations due to their structural influence over monetary flow. This is very problematic from a democratic point of view as public and private interests are diverse and different.

Under the climate change arena, there is a shift in financial flows and developmental mechanisms in recent years. Mexico, during the United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2010, has committed a significant amount of money for developing countries to support the adaptation and mitigation technologies. The UNFCCC, Official Development Assistance (ODA), and the Global Environmental Facility are the various bilateral and multilateral financial flow channels which were supposed to start primarily. Besides these, greater incentives were taken in the developing countries to tackle climate change by various public funds. For example, approaches regarding the adaptation of climate change in some low-income countries and preparing for future finance flows were created an integrated and scaled by the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience. Moreover, the notion of developed and developing countries regarding “common but differentiated responsibilities” could potentially influence the financial flow mechanisms in developing countries. The culpability of damages caused by the developed countries are increasingly echoed based on climate justice and equity. For this blame game between developed and developing countries, it is necessary to bring drastic changes in the governance system of developing countries to break the traditional donor-recipient relationships. The multinational companies, as well as the BINGOs, are

¹⁵ T. Tanner and J. Allouche, “Towards a New Political Economy of Climate Change and Development,” *IDS Bulletin Special Issue: Political Economy of Climate Change*, 42(3) (2011): 1-14.

¹⁶ Emma Lund, “Environmental Diplomacy: Comparing the Influence of Business and Environmental NGOs in Negotiations on Reform of the Clean Development Mechanism,” *Environmental Politics* 22, no. 5 (2013): 739-759.

mainly based on the developed countries and the developed countries have to follow their interest and influence of ENGOs demand or expectations. The knowledge on the political economy process of financial flow to adapt and mitigate the impacts of climate change would be crucial to effectively govern the resource transfer and the flow to tackle the environmental changes.

5.4 *Political Economy of Bargaining Resources and Strategies*

In international negotiations, two instruments (resources and activities) are disposed by the government to increase their impacts. Bailer argues that their bargaining positions reflect structural, economic, and domestic factors, but less so strategic factors.¹⁷ A country's choice for negotiation position is predicted by its vulnerability to climate change, power, international connectedness and democratic status. Regarding reducing emissions and financing climate change negotiations in terms of compensation mechanisms, the democratic countries never commit to reduce greenhouse gases due to their domestic pressure as it needs to reduce industrial production. They are, however, more prepared than other states to pay for projects that help to reduce emissions.¹⁸ It explains that why the state cannot perform effectively. Their bargaining positions have to be shifted from their normative position and real domestic pressure for economic growth.

Countries try to increase the number of negotiation team members by appointing various representatives from research, business community, NGOs or any other experts besides exogenous negotiation resources such as economic strength. There are different negotiation positions identified among the parties such as: "i) hard and soft bargaining strategies (soft bargaining strategies were proposals in the common interest, exchanges of concessions, expressions of understanding for other country's positions; while the hard bargaining strategies were threats, promises, direct criticisms, open declarations not to change a position, demands for concessions from others, ignoring demands of others, and hiding one's real negotiation objectives); ii) external power (Gross Domestic Product or GDP); iii) internal power (delegation size); iii) actor-specific salience (vulnerability to climate change impacts); iv) issue-specific salience; and v) extremity of negotiation position (taking extreme positions during the climate change negotiations has greatly diminished bargaining success)."

5.5 *Inefficiency of Managing Decision Making*

¹⁷ Stefanie Bailer, "Bargaining Resources and Strategies in Climate Change Negotiations," Research Report on Negotiating Climate Change, the Swiss Network of International Studies (SNIS) (University of Zurich, 2009) available at: <https://snis.ch/projects/negotiating-climate-change/>

¹⁸ Stefanie Bailer and Florian Weiler, "A Political Economy of Positions in Climate Change Negotiations: Economic, Structural, Domestic, and Strategic Explanations," Project Report, ECPR Joint Sessions Workshop "Preferences in the European Union and Beyond" at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (Washington, 2-5 September 2010 and St. Gallen, 12-16 April 2011).

After every yearly UN climate change meeting, negotiators, civil society organizations, reporters and academics criticize the performance of UNFCCC for producing another disappointing outcome. So, the reform of the UN is proposed regarding multilateral negotiations. Some Parties call for abandoning the talks together or propose to continue the discussion somewhere else. All these suggestions influence the expert and public consciousness via mass media. Indeed, the UNFCCC negotiations have been constantly hampered by procedural disputes and unclear decision-making.¹⁹ Climate negotiations have been accused of creating controversies over agendas, interpretations of consensus requirements, decision-making procedures, transparency and various other procedural issues. Since the launching of the UNFCCC in the 1990s, many levels have been intensified in climate change negotiations. In recent years, there is a growing trend of increasing participation by heads of states, ministers, documents, sessions, money in the UNFCCC System and sub-groups.

5.6 *Climate Rights Arguments*

There are two basic arguments on the analysis of climate change rights: to capture the normative dimension of climate change, and its ability to generate political measures or security threats.²⁰ For meeting these arguments regarding climate rights, the following conditions must be fulfilled: i) there is an identified rights-holder and obligation-bearer; ii) this relationship is codified in a legitimate formal structure; iii) it is feasible to claim the rights; iv) an “enforcement mechanism” (not necessarily of legal character) could strengthen compliance.²¹ It is insufficient to consider the actual enforcement possibilities by themselves or moral ground when asserting climate rights as these two are closely interlinked.

5.7 *Fragmented Leadership*

Still now, leadership is precious specially when it comes to shedding light on leadership recognition and selection. Study findings²² show how the fragmented leadership landscape²³ that the world currently sees would be understood. There are

¹⁹ Antto Vihma, “Climate of Consensus: Managing Decision Making in the UN Climate Change Negotiations,” *Review of European Community and International Environmental Law*: RECIEL (2014): 1-11.

²⁰ Ingrid Boas and Delf Rothe, “From conflict to resilience? Explaining recent changes in climate security discourse and practice,” *Environmental Politics*: Routledge, volume, no. 4, 2016, pp. 613-632.

²¹ Eric Brandstedta and Anna-Karin Bergman, “Climate rights: feasible or not?,” *Environmental Politics*, volume 22, no.3 (2013): 394-409.

²² Charles F Parker, Christer Karlsson and Mattias Hjerpe, “Climate change leaders and followers: Leadership recognition and selection in the UNFCCC negotiations,” *International Relations* (SAGE, 2014): 1-14.

²³ Historically, leadership on climate change has primarily been exercised by the US and the EU. In the last 30 years, both have attempted to exercise leadership on this issue. However, as noted above, in recent years, the landscape of international environmental cooperation has changed, with new actors and coalitions now vying for leading roles. One important and already highly influential new leadership contender is the BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, and China) coalition. The BASIC group made a real impact at COP 15 and played a major role in shaping the Copenhagen Accord. The addition of these new would-be leaders means that the supply side of the leadership landscape is more fragmented than ever. The key question then is whether and to what

countries who struggling to create leadership images, for example, US, EU, and China. The main challenge for securing the leadership position is to convince the contenders that they will truly work for climate change, although this work needs to start a meaningful engagement at the domestic level. And constructive cooperation of existing big leaders in global politics may repair the fragmented leadership situation.

5.8 Consistency on Strategies

Over the years, LDCs have raised the issues regarding effective technology transfer, choice of negotiating instruments, financial supports and other related issues in the climate change negotiations. For the last 10 years, the developing countries were kept sidelined in the negotiations. The dependency between developing and developed states have been increased over time in terms of various opportunity and responsibility. It is the right time to work together actively to combat the vulnerability of environmental changes. The world's attention is already directed towards them and it seeks, what the US has called, "meaningful developing country participation"²⁴ in the climate regime. The developing countries have maintained a fairly consistent position.²⁵ Most of the discussions are centred around the reduction of emissions rather than the technologies or initiatives of achieving their targets through trading emissions permits and other offset mechanisms mentioned in the Kyoto Protocol. Countries focus more on the issues and principles regarding the "defensive" strategies rather than their interests. This allowed the developed countries to preclude their active participation in negotiations and settle for weaker targets. The climate change "mitigation" agenda has become as significant as "adaptation" to the developing countries.

5.9 Emerging Power

Global power has been shifting politics and it is assumed that this power has a great influence on the existing prominent power structure and has the ability to play an active and important role. Therefore, there is a great diffusion of power. Ideas, values, and preferences are increasingly characterized by the emerging global power. Although the global climate politics is greatly seen to be dominated by the Anglo-Americans and the Europeans, the recent climate negotiations

extent any of these leadership candidates are actually recognized as leaders by potential followers, or whether we simply have a number of self-proclaimed leaders with no real support? The overall picture, however, is clear: The EU, the US, and China are indeed the Big Three when it comes to who is seen as climate change leaders. However, all three of the main leadership contenders are at the moment struggling to gain recognition as leaders by even a majority of respondents, and therefore, the legitimacy and effectiveness of their leadership bids can rightfully be called into question.

²⁴ Sheila Page, "Developing Countries in International Negotiations: How they Influence Trade and Climate Change Negotiations Developing Countries," *Globalization and Poverty: IDS Bulletin* (2004), no. 35.1.

²⁵ Adil Najam, Saleemul Huq and Youba Sokona, "Climate Negotiations Beyond Kyoto: Developing Countries Concerns and Interests," *Climate Policy* 3 (2003): 221-231.

dimensions cannot avoid the influence of emerging powers on it. The shifting power was first visible during the Copenhagen Climate Conference in December 2009. There is a major concern regarding the emergence of new power as it may further complicate the existing power structure of negotiation. The increasing share of greenhouse gas emission, economic size and dynamism, foreign policy activism and political salience have become more significant than the past. But, on this account, they have failed to recognize or live up to the responsibilities that go with their newly acquired roles.²⁶

Emerging power represents a particular characteristic of states, for example, major economies and advanced developing countries. Their development choices are politically critical and subject to the future of climate change. Some states are characterized by all the above-mentioned features and have also been proved as obstructionist and negative. The BASIC countries are villains for many countries in Copenhagen. It has been well-characterized as “a truly diabolical problem” and “a perfect moral storm”.²⁷ Therefore, evolving the emerging power in climate change negotiations is adding up another twist to an already complex issue. This pessimistic view can be unpacked in three²⁸ ways: i) the dynamics of power competition; ii) the subjective understandings of legitimacy, fairness and responsibility to increased contestation; and iii) the increasingly central role that they are playing within a global capitalist system.

5.10 Gender Perspective

The Global South suffers more than the North due to its vulnerability and low capacity to adapt. Apart from that, do the impact of climate change affect men and women equally? Do women in the South and women in the North experience the same? Has the climate change debate addressed gender issues properly? Some gender issues are more strategic than others in the climate change convention and instruments. There is little to be gained by looking at the responsibility for emissions on a gendered basis.²⁹ But in mitigation activities, capacity building, projects for adaptation, CDM, technology transfer, and vulnerability studies, women should be targeted and included as active members in decision-making.

6. Conclusion

²⁶ Andrew Hurrell and Sandeep Sengupta, “Emerging Powers, North–South Relations and Global Climate Politics,” *International Affairs* 3 (2012): 463-484.

²⁷ Kathryn Hochstetler and Manjana Milkoreit, “Emerging Powers in the Climate Negotiations: Shifting Identity Conceptions,” *Political Research Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (2014): 224-235.

²⁸ Katharina and Axel Michaelowa, “India in the international climate negotiations: from traditional nay-sayer to dynamic broker,” No 70, CIS Working Paper: The Centre for Comparative and International Studies (ETH Zurich and University of Zurich, 2011).

²⁹ Njeri Wamukonya and Margaret Skutsch, “Is there a Gender Angle to the Climate Change Negotiations,” *Energy and Environment* (January 2002).

Long-term cooperative actions regarding climate change are primarily focussed on the UNFCCC negotiations. Financial support for the developing countries is required to make negotiation a success along with the shared adaptation and mitigation actions. Climate change is a human rights issue for its impact and actions to combat it. Therefore, the Parties need to recognize the human rights angle within UNFCCC. For example, all parties should consider, respect and promote the Paris Agreement explicitly in climate change related activities.

The history of global warming is a political as well as a scientific issue. The then ill-defined condition has gradually emerged as a public problem which draws attention to the national policy agenda. Recent climate change politics show a strange dual contrast. On the one side, UNFCCC has failed to produce a formal agreement and to find out the options for resolving the conflicts among the US, Europe, China and India. On the other hand, one cannot deny the fact that climate change policies are developing and progressing with time.

Although climate negotiation has many drawbacks, it has successfully introduced the idea of equity in climate politics. Systematic and rigorous analysis of equity is essential to understand the politics of climate actions specially the post-Paris world. Scholarship should include the justice dimension of climate change i.e., the procedural justice in order to focus human wellbeing.

People take actions based on their experiences and perceptions. They build coalitions, articulate their objectives and vision, fight for the outcomes which seem more equitable and desirable to them. Even the group/coalition claims compensation due to sufferings together for the harm caused by others or experienced by those who are identified as emitters or causing harm. Justice remains the central goal of the climate political process which is evident at all scales. The aspiration of countries and diversity in the contexts animate political debates both within and beyond climate conventions. Over the decades, the fairness of agreement on climate actions are systematically hampered by different worldviews and structural inequality. Demonstrable inequalities in the cause of climate change, vulnerabilities and biophysical impacts amplify the structural inequalities. For these reasons, the differentiation within the taken and planned initiatives taken by nations also creates difficult political issues within the climate regime. If justice claims are overlooked within an account of global negotiations, future climate regimes would miss the crucial political elements of it.