
TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENDAS: FINDING COMPROMISE ON THE PATH TO CLIMATE SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Tracking the parallel negotiations of a new climate change agreement and the post-2015 development agenda, highlights the pervading dominance of a neo-liberal approach of economic growth for poverty alleviation. However, climate scientists are certain that greenhouse gas emissions should peak by 2020 and reach zero net emissions by 2100 if we are to avoid catastrophic climate change. This paper considers how the international climate change regime is working to find a means to negotiate a compromise between the push for economic growth and the need for a transition to low-carbon development. It considers the limitations of existing institutions, and argues that an integrated approach of collective action can enable the innovation and the creative solutions required to address such an unprecedented and complex challenge. This means multi-sectoral engagement with non-state actors across a range of scales to encourage new knowledge and actions to be introduced into an otherwise gridlocked system.

Keywords

Climate change – sustainable development goals – UNFCCC – COP20 Lima – international regime – institutions – non-state actors

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AGENDAS DE TRANSFORMACIÓN: LA BÚSQUEDA DEL COMPROMISO EN EL CAMINO DEL DESARROLLO SENSIBLE EN MATERIA CLIMÁTICA

Resumen

El seguimiento en paralelo de las negociaciones internacionales sobre el cambio climático y la agenda post-2015 para el desarrollo sustentable enmarcan la narrativa dominante neoliberal poniendo énfasis en la necesidad de crecimiento económico como estrategia para aliviar la pobreza mundial. Lo cierto es, al fin y al cabo, que según proyecciones científicas sobre el proceso de cambio climático, para evitar una catastrofe climatica las emisiones de gases deberán llegar a su pico máximo en 2020 y ser neutras antes del 2100. En este contexto, este ensayo considera y examina cómo las negociaciones internacionales sobre cambio climático han efectuado compromisos entre el imperativo del crecimiento económico y la necesidad de minimizar las emisiones de gas al medio ambiente. Para ello, se considera en detalle los límites estructurales de cada uno de los actores en las negociaciones, argumentando que este problema debe incluir una solución integral basada en la colaboración entre actores mas alla de estados miembros. La única manera de repensar la estrategia para el cambio climático debe basarse en la colaboración activa de diversos actores, desarrollando nuevos modelos de conocimiento como también acciones coordinadas para introducir reformas claves al sistema internacional de negociaciones climáticas. En este sentido, el ensayo explora de que maneras la acción multisectorial puede proponer soluciones a la encrucijada climática que afronta el mundo.

Palabras clave

Cambio climático – objetivos sustentables para el desarrollo – UNFCCC – COP20 Lima – tratados internacionales – instituciones – actores no-gubernamentales

Introduction

Climate change is unquestionably the greatest global challenge of our time. Increasingly the science demonstrates that the planet's climatic systems are changing with wide-reaching effects that are happening now and will end in catastrophic results if the global community continues on a 'business as usual' model (IPCC, 2014a). The question that arises now is whether or not our current international system is responsive enough to

address an issue of such unprecedented complexity, or whether less traditional actors will lead the way in supporting effective action to address climate change.

In 2015 the international community will address two main agendas: 1) the negotiation of the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals and 2) a new climate agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (hereinafter, the “UNFCCC”). These parallel negotiations can appear juxtaposed: the traditional narrative of economic growth continues to push a neo-liberal development agenda, while climate scientists argue that growth needs to be slowed in order to enable investment and infrastructure for low carbon economies. In order to find a synergistic compromise that supports both the right to development and the right to a safe and healthy environment requires a radical shift in international policy and governance, as well as new and innovative ideas.

This paper considers the limitations in the global system, and what norms and assumptions need to be changed if the global community are to achieve the dual agenda of eradication of poverty and reducing emissions to limit temperatures to a 2°C increase from pre-industrial levels. The limited success of the climate change negotiations to date, and the pace at which global governance systems function, suggest that while international agreements have an important role to play, they will not be the whole solution. It is here argued that an integrated approach of collective action can enable the innovation and the creative solutions required to address such an unprecedented challenge. This means multi-sectoral engagement with non-state actors across a range of scales. Embracing alternate actors outside of nation states encourages new knowledge and actions to be introduced into an otherwise gridlocked system. Non-state actors should be enabled to take greater risks and explore different and new ideas – ideas that could be crucial in supporting global adaptation to our changing climate. Mobilising trans-national networks within civil society has been proven to be effective in creating conditions for normative changes, a necessity for establishing a new paradigm of low carbon development that can achieve poverty alleviation with the mutual benefit of addressing climate change.

I. Shifting the normative frame

The UNFCCC is a political process. Therefore, following constructivist thinking, it is shaped by institutions; a cluster of rules, procedures, and assumptions that give rise to a collectively understood series of social practices and assigned roles (RUGGIE, 1998). Within

this framework, there are a series of assumed and understood normative foundations, most of which are derived from the traditions of global environmental governance. Since the last attempt at a new agreement and the eventual collapse of negotiations in Copenhagen in 2009, there has been an intensified study of these institutional and normative underpinnings, generally hypothesising the need for a fundamental change in assumptions and norms in order to progress global climate action (SCHÜSSLER *et al*, 2014; SAVARESI, 2013). Constructivist theory provides an important analytical framework for understanding how these normative narratives can be challenged and existing paradigms can be pushed into new dimensions.

In a climate policy context, the complexity of the regime is significant. Plagued by widely distributed interests and exacerbated by uncertainty, finding an integrated and comprehensive approach to developing a global climate regime remains the greatest challenge. However, KOEHANE and VICTOR (2011) argue that it is this complexity that also creates opportunity. The diversity of actors and organisations enables a flexibility and adaptability rarely seen in other international regimes (*id.*). In the climate context, understanding the role of non-state actors is essential, particularly the way in which effective mobilisation of trans-national networks can engender a change that resonates from local to global spheres.

KECK and SIKKINK state that while trans-national networks have no 'traditional power' in the international relations sphere, they capitalise on informal means to influence, persuade and socialise new normative ideas, drawing on the political strategies of information and awareness, symbolism, leverage and accountability (KECK & SIKKINK, 1998). Furthermore, they employ these strategies across a range of scales. When there is no domestic will for change, norm entrepreneurs are required to take their issues to regional or international levels. They become intermediaries that play two crucial parts, they draw attention to the issue at a global level and re-fashion global policies to address local issues (ENGLER MERRY, 2006). This is what RISSE *et al.* (1999) term "the boomerang effect", where local groups utilise external pressure to initiate implementation of newly established international norms domestically.

The civil society space in the climate negotiations has been well researched. Broadly defined it can be considered as organised groups, formed around common interests (LACHAPPELLE & PATERSON, 2013; BÖHMELT, KOUBI & BERNAUER, 2014; BÖHMELT, 2013a; BÖHMELT, 2013b; STEFFEK & FERRETTI, 2009; STEFFEK, 2013). This may include *inter alia* businesses, indigenous peoples and not-for-profit groups. It is generally understood that these actors

pursue issues of their own purpose, leveraging international negotiations as a mechanism to align national policies more closely with their own particular interests (STEFFEK & FERRETTI, 2009). The annual UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (“COP”) provides a microcosm within which the interactions and actions of these groups can be understood. Non-state entities often play a dual role, as implementers of climate action and policy, and key change agents bringing lessons and innovation from a domestic level to the global stage (BURCH, 2014). The ability of non-state actors to move between sectors and influence across scales, gives them the opportunity to harness multiple *loci* of agency, arguably providing flexibility beyond the accepted political system of the UNFCCC and potentially increasing their overall effectiveness (*id.*).

In the climate context, civil society has performed an important role in ensuring answerability of pivotal actors, generating an important context of accountability for the international regime (NEWELL, 2011). Accredited observer organisations within the UNFCCC play the role of experts and consultants on technical points, they perform stunts that raise awareness or simply shame and humiliate inaction.¹ More importantly, they create spaces for knowledge sharing, discussion and learning. This last function is important as it is this role that creates a place for geographically disparate groups with like challenges to link together and share ideas, generating a space for innovation (BACHOFEN *et al.*, 2014). While neo-liberal theory reiterates that state preferences are derived from domestic agendas (DOWNIE, 2014a), the agentic ability of individuals should not be overlooked, particularly in the context of prolonged international negotiations (DOWNIE, 2014b). COP’s become flashpoints where networks and alliances between actors, both state and non-state, are forged and broken and power can be redistributed (DOWNIE, 2014a). When understanding the conditions for transformative policy shifts, it is relevant to consider that human consciousness and capacity can have heightened impact within these key platforms for international discussion (Sikkink, 2011).

II. The climate regime and its actors

The World Climate Conference in Geneva in 1979 is generally considered the starting point of international climate policy. From the beginning it was a question of management

¹ During COP20, the Climate Action Network awarded a daily “Fossil of the Day” to the worst performing countries. These daily stunts receive significant media attention and work to shame countries into Action.

and access of the world's most important global commons, our atmosphere (KUNDIS CRAIG, 2014). With the establishment of UNFCCC in 1992 climate change was seen as a concerning environmental problem, one which sat neatly within the international regime of global environmental governance.

Negotiations have always viewed climate policy as question of resource management and allocation and as a result discussions are generally framed in relation to politico-economic interests (BRUNNENGRÄBER, 2013). This is evident in the ongoing trend of relying on economic mechanisms to reduce emissions such as the Clean Development Mechanism ("CDM"). However, in the last decade there has been a broadening realisation of the extent to which climate change impacts on all aspects of humanity. This has been elucidated by growth in scientific certainty through the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ("IPCC") and the real experience for many communities of increasing extreme weather events. As a result there has been an expansion of the agenda and issues associated with climate, and interest in the climate negotiations themselves. While still predominately placed within the realms of global environmental governance, the link with other regimes such as development, human rights and international finance is increasing.

The shift to broad multi-sectorial engagement was clearly demonstrated in the Climate Summit held by UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon in September 2014; designed to deliver leadership and commitment by world leaders. In the days preceding the summit, the finance industry spurred on climate action with over 340 global institutional investors to calling for an agreement to provide stable and meaningful carbon pricing (UNEP, 2014b). Civil society groups took to the streets in extraordinary numbers around the world, demonstrating the weight of concern by civil society, as well as their ability to mobilise trans-nationally.² Furthermore, the release of a Pentagon White Paper decisively stating that climate change poses an immediate threat to national security, demonstrates that climate change is no longer simply an environmental challenge, but a factor firmly embedded within the security discourse (DoD, 2014). Finally following a call from a group of Bishops to end the fossil fuel era, the interfaith movement, led by Pope Francis are placing powerful pressure on states to reach an ambitious agreement in Paris (IISD, 2015). The scale of this engagement shows that climate change discussions have shifted into the mainstream, and are being considered in all aspects of governance for the future, from sub-national through

² Avaaz and 350.org, "Peoples Climate March: To Change Everything, We Need Everyone," [<http://peoplesclimate.org/>].

to the international spheres. More particularly, it shows that non-state actors are willing to actively engage in international decision making processes.

More than 20 years on from agreement to the Kyoto Protocol, the growth and development of the climate regime provides a radically different context for climate negotiations in the lead up to a new agreement in Paris 2015. There has been a shift in climate policy from a global regulatory approach, characterised by the Kyoto Protocol, to a new climate agreement that will be based on Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, a “bottom up” state driven approach to commitments. Observers from civil society organisations have had a greater opportunity to participate in actual negotiations in a way that is largely unprecedented within the UN system³. Despite the broader engagement there still remains significant scepticism as to whether or not states will reach an agreement with enough commitment to have the real and immediate impact necessary for addressing climate change (UNEP, 2014a).

III. Climate Reality – the state of play

The synthesis report of the Fifth Assessment (AR5) of the IPCC is damning. At the release of the report the head of the World Meteorological Association highlighted the scientific progress made since the failure of talks in Copenhagen in 2009 (BODANSKY, 2010). The science is now unequivocal; the climate is changing. There is sound evidence that concludes that human influence is now “*extremely likely*” to be the dominant cause of climate change (IPCC, 2014a). There is a strong anthropogenic link between human action and rising ocean temperatures, the global water cycle and the loss of arctic sea ice (*id.*). In Copenhagen the level of scientific uncertainty left room for scepticism and reserved action, however with the clear modelling and strong evidence released in AR5, the negotiations in Lima, Peru, in 2014 had a different tone to those five years earlier. There is a greater urgency and determination and acknowledgement that action needs to be taken by the global community. Whether the action will be significant enough to prevent irreversible damages remains questionable.

³ The tradition of civil society participation echoes precedents set in the Ramsar Conventions and Convention on Biological Diversity. Formal involvement such as the submission of shadow reports remains limited (BÖHMELT, 2013b).

In the opening remarks at COP20 the chair of the IPCC highlighted key findings, emphasising that ambitious mitigation is important, and that any delay will simply increase the challenges and cost for action in the future (ENB, 2014). Reiterating the paradigmatic economic underpinnings that have characterised negotiations to date, the IPCC have estimated a "carbon budget". That is the estimated amount of future carbon dioxide emissions possible in order to maintain a chance of holding global warming to 2°C above pre-industrial levels (IPCC, 2014b). While this idea of a budget provides space for action and transition to low carbon economies, it emphasises the idea of the atmosphere as a global resource. A resource, which some argue, they have greater rights to use than others.

The carbon budget, like many other mitigation discussions looks at a longer time scale for climate action, and enables action to be deferred. There is emphasis on a global peak in emissions, ideally by 2020 and declining towards zero by 2100 (IPCC, 2014b), but this appears unlikely and is reliant on major economies making significant commitments. The AR5 acknowledged that there is a level of inertia present in the global climatic system, but changes are now reaching a tipping point where they will be locked-in and irreversible. This is highly relevant for decision-makers as it emphasises the importance of near-term mitigation efforts. It also highlights the ongoing need to support adaptation and consideration of the, now inevitable, loss and damage that will occur through climate change (WARNER & VAN DER GEEST, 2013; SURMINSKI & LOPEZ, 2014; HUQ, ROBERTS & FENTON, 2013). Delays in action mean that intervention will be increasingly difficult and costly.

The chair of the IPCC reiterated to decision-makers at the opening of the Lima negotiations that, while the best available scientific knowledge is key, decisions are inherently formed and based on value-laden judgements. This is a particularly important consideration in the context of the climate and development nexus. It is generally acknowledged that the impacts of climate change are asymmetrical, often being geographically and temporally dislocated (RICHARDSON, STEFFEN & LIVERMAN, 2014; MARKANDRYA, 2011; IKEME, 2003; DERMAN, 2014, WORLD BANK, 2009). Modelling demonstrates that climate change will impact food security through reducing crop yields, and increasing vulnerability through unpredictable and high variability of weather patterns, including extreme weather events (IPCC, 2014b). Increasing temperatures also limit outdoor work, common to labouring and lower socio-demographics. This evidence culminates in the conclusion that climate impacts are reinforcing poverty traps and, in some cases, creating new ones (GRANOFF *et al.*, 2014). The burden of impact occurring now is being felt by the most vulnerable states and marginalised groups and delays in action will simply increase these pressures, exacerbating existing global social challenges. In this context, climate

mitigation is a global collective good which ultimately requires collective action (Bernauer, 2014). In ethical terms, it places the responsibility on those that have the capacity to act to do so now.

The rising understanding of the security dimensions of climate change are evident in the fact that Working Group II of the IPCC for the first time included a chapter on human security, under impacts, adaptation and vulnerability (ADGER *et al.*, 2014). This report demonstrates that the presence of factors such as conflict or failing state institutions, inhibits people's capacity to adapt to climate change, and at times exacerbates the impacts (*id.*). In 2014 report released by the Pentagon, supports these claims and drawing a link between climate change and increased risks of terrorism, infectious disease and global food shortages (DoD, 2014). The report identified climate change as a "threat multiplier" recognising, that while the understanding of causality in the context of climate impacts is complex, it should be factored into risk analyses. Both of these inclusions demonstrate that there is an overall paradigm shift in understanding about climate change. No longer is it relegated to simply being a global environmental challenge, but rather it is an issue of great complexity that has the ability to impact every aspect of our global system. The greater integration of climate change into international fora indicates that there is a growing normative shift that may enable the transformative change to traditional global order required if effective action against global warming is going to happen.

IV. Development Goals

Considering the parallel development agenda under the UN General Assembly, the eradication of extreme poverty remains the core focus of global development efforts, and remains the ethical minimum guiding these efforts (GRANOFF *et al.*, 2014). This is clearly articulated in ongoing negotiations regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in which the first two proposed goals state unequivocally the need to end poverty and hunger. The mixed success of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has seen a change in the policy direction (VICTORIA *et al.*, 2011). The Secretary General's High-Level Panel proposed five "transformative shifts" for the post-2015 development agenda. The first is the principle of "leave no-one behind"; a deeply emotive language that arguably is aimed to be a rallying call for international responsibility and response. The second shift is "put sustainable development at the core". While the three remaining points focus on economy, peace building and global cooperation, the appearance of sustainable development high on the agenda is indicative of a broader recognition that extreme poverty is highly impacted by environmental factors (HLPEP, 2014).

Macroeconomic projections estimate that eradication of poverty can be achieved by 2030 (GRANOFF *et al.*, 2014). However, these projections are based on a model of continued economic growth, or a 'business as usual' approach. What this does not consider is the destabilising effect of climate change on poverty and human security. Modelling undertaken by the IPCC has suggested that in order to limit the global mean temperature rise to 2°C, there needs zero net emissions by 2100 (IPCC, 2014b). The transformative process of lifestyle, industry and transport required to transition to a low carbon economy will require significant economic investment by nation states and therefore is likely to result a reduction in economic growth rates. This disconnect between these two models suggests that poverty eradication cannot be achieved in the same time-frame if we are also to achieve emissions reductions. Moreover, the uncertainty of how the changing climate will interact with traditional projections of poverty, make realistic modelling a major challenge (STERN, 2013).

Increasingly, research is suggesting that the link between economic growth and poverty reduction is not directly correlational (BASU, 2013). Embedded structural barriers, including political fragility and location, demonstrate that economic growth can exacerbate inequality. If poverty eradication is to be achieved, alternative and more holistic development pathways that incorporate broader factors than just the 'development as usual' with the focus primarily resting on economic growth (INDERBERG *et al.*, 2014). The SDG process currently being negotiated is already mooted to move away from the traditional "benchmark" development processes to a more integrated approach.

The SDG text is still to be finalised, however it consists of 17 draft goals including a dedicated goal on climate change. This goal is accompanied by a footnote stating that the primary responsibility for climate action sits with the UNFCCC. It goes further, referencing the expected agreement in Paris in 2015 and the mobilisation of adaptation finances through the Green Climate Fund (OWG, 2014). While the reference and compatibility between the two negotiations is promising, it is not surprising that commentary suggests that, in the context of sustainable development, the priority remains the development rather than sustainability or environmental considerations. As the negotiations progress there is evidence of the climate change language weakening and there has been discussion suggesting complete removal, leaving climate negotiations entirely to the UNFCCC forum.

Part of the reluctance to address climate change in the SDG forum may simply be a pragmatic exclusion to enable it to be more directly addressed through a tailor made forum with existing experts. This raises the question of how successful the UNFCCC can be as an

international mechanism to unite and implement cooperative global action in response to climate change while continuing to support the poverty eradication agenda.

V. COP 20, Lima, Peru

The two week conference in Lima extended 33 hours beyond the scheduled time, as painstaking textual negotiations produced the "Lima Call for Climate Action". While this text provides a foundation for negotiation of a new agreement, many groups were disappointed by the outcome. The agreement sets up a framework for countries to determine their own national contributions. This tactic essentially creates peer pressure for all member countries to reveal their intentions before the final negotiations, with the intention of fostering a sense of trust, accountability and transparency. This state driven strategy may avoid the failure of Copenhagen in 2009, however some commentators still believe that many countries will make conservative contributions, and there will remain a significant gap between the committed contributions and what is required to keep temperatures below the agreed threshold.

Since 2010 the UNEP's emission gap reports have analysed the difference between temperature limits and the level of ambition. While this scenario based modelling is based on a range of assumptions, it does demonstrate that state ambitions are failing to deliver the emissions reductions required by 2020 and beyond (UNEP, 2014a). The bilateral agreement between the China and the US, has demonstrated a positive shift towards greater ambition by major economies.⁴ However, the reversal of the carbon tax by the Australian government (INNIS, 2014), demonstrates that policy ambition is politically driven regardless of strong scientific evidence and therefore remains unpredictable.

The growing emissions reduction ambition is becoming evident from the BASIC countries coalition. Traditionally this group, which includes Brazil, South Africa, India and China, has argued that they have a right to emissions in order to be able to develop to the standard of other industrialised nations (HALDING *et al.*, 2013). The China-US agreement has changed the narrative to a right to energy rather than emissions. This echoes the growing

⁴ In November, the US and China announced their respective post-2020 climate actions in a joint agreement for bilateral cooperation on climate. See Office of the Press Secretary, "U.S.- China Joint Announcement on Climate Change," en *TheWhiteHouse.gov*. Disponible en [www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/11/11/us-china-joint-announcement-climate-change].

global consensus that we need to phase out fossil fuels regardless of development status. Much of the negotiation challenged the arbitrary divide between Annex I (industrialised nations) and Annex II (developing nations). In the first week of the conference Brazil proposed a concept of "concentric differentiation" with Annex I parties being at the centre with absolute reductions, and concentric circles tracking less rigorous commitments as they move out from the centre. All parties should then be encouraged to move towards the "centre" (CAN, 2014b). This facilitates voluntary graduation in emissions reductions by developing countries, rewarding ambitious mitigation efforts.

What is becoming clear is that the new agreement in Lima reflects soft diplomacy, with the aim of keeping countries negotiating and reaching a commitment without the binding targets of the Kyoto Protocol. This sort of international agreement may have greater success, incentivising countries for ambitious action at a domestic level, while continuing to maintain collegial pressure at a global scale. Central to the effectiveness of this process in addressing climate change, will be maintenance of domestic pressure and demand for national action by non-state actors, in addition to trans-national connections for the promotion of global knowledge sharing and innovation.

The Climate Action Network, representing a coalition of progressive civil society groups has reiterated that the weak outcome in Lima demonstrates that most governments are still bound by their own domestic agendas, committing to decisions that will enable them to determine climate action in response to their own domestic economic priorities, rather than in response to scientific modelling (CAN, 2014a). The executive director of Oxfam, has highlighted that the inability to set or agree to any form of emissions reduction targets demonstrates a growing gulf between climate negotiators and the public demand for action (*id.*).

The conference in Lima was the largest yet and had over 14,000 official participants, including governments, civil society business and authorities from over 195 countries. This does not include participants who travelled to join in action at a range of public side events. Recognising the important role of observers, the President of COP 20, proclaimed that it was a COP for civil society (ENB, 2014). The inclusion of more than 400 conferences and side events, demonstrates that these conferences are a powerful platform for networking and collective action.

This is clearly reflected in the launch of the Non-state Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA) portal,⁵ an online database enabling groups working from a local to a global scale to register their activities. Notably, this branches out from traditional non-state actor groups and emphasises the responsibility of business and companies to take action. To date, 261 companies across a range of sectors have registered their action on climate change.⁶ Not only is this a valuable platform for knowledge brokering, it also performs the important function of promoting and normalising the expectation that any non-state actor, including corporations can take action on climate change.

Social Media and the proliferation of online platforms are powerful tools for harnessing global consensus around topics. By engaging non-state actors as change agents, greater and instantaneous global connectivity is amplifying the impact of these actors enabling quick and effective mobilisation (CASTELLS, 2013). The rise in prominence of non-state actors within climate negotiations and the work program of the UNFCCC demonstrates that already, these actors are playing a significant role in determining the course of future climate action.

An international agreement in Paris can provide an overarching legal architecture that: a) creates a mechanism for ambitious commitment; b) provides opportunities for accountability and transparency to ensure that pledges are met; and c) mobilises much needed finance to facilitate adaptation. Much of the discussions within the climate negotiations are addressing the question of technology transfer, capacity building and knowledge brokering, all functions which are continuing to happen on an informal basis outside of the UNFCCC, facilitated by non-state actors. The greatest need is for a strong statement from nation states prioritising the phasing out of fossil fuels. A strong international agreement on this position, regardless of functional mechanisms for mitigation will provide policy security. The ramifications of this may include the financial sector will have gain the stability and reliability of energy policy that will support the redirection of investment commensurate to the scale of the climate change challenge and develop plans to phase out fossil fuels (UNEP, 2014b). Major oil producers would then face greater business incentive to invest in research and development for more sustainable energy sources. While an international agreement is important in providing leadership and

5 UNFCCC, "The Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action," <http://climateaction.unfccc.int/>

6 Ibid.

direction on climate change, there are significant opportunities for action outside of this framework (HOLZER & JOËLLE, 2014).

VI. Bridging agendas

The pervading dominance of a neo-liberal development agenda in climate change negotiations and the development of Sustainable Development Goals brings into doubt the true integration of climate and development. The report of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the 77th Session of the General Assembly, reiterates the calls for reductions in Green House Gas Emissions, and a commitment to a less than 2°C temperature rise. However, more than this it calls for the need to transition to 'sustainable development', placing the responsibility on states for their own domestic response to broad 'aspirational global targets'. Likewise, the draft negotiating text for a Paris agreement under the UNFCCC highlights the right to development for Annex II countries, and that countries development priorities should be considered as a factor in "common and differentiated responsibilities" (STRECK & BRUNNÉE, 2013). Both of these documents reiterate traditional paradigms preferencing state sovereignty over global collective action and development over environmental priorities. The fundamental normative changes that are needed to facilitate a transformation to low-carbon development pathways are simply not being realised.

A report from the Overseas Development Institute, demonstrates the overwhelming transitional challenge of working towards zero net emission and zero poverty by 2030. It requires transitioning major sectors: transport, energy, agriculture and the human habitat. They predict that for countries with large populations living in poverty it will take 3 trillion US Dollars in investment to transition to a low carbon economy (GRANOFF *et al.*, 2014). What this report emphasises is the sheer breadth of transformation required; it is multi-sectorial and across scales from local livelihoods through to global trans-national companies. This challenge is beyond states and needs a fundamental paradigm shift, one that places sustainability ahead of unbridled economic growth and embraces collective action.

What the leading negotiating documents from both the Sustainable Development Goals and the Climate agreement demonstrate is that states continue to be bound by traditional institutional boundaries and political expediency takes precedence over scientific evidence. Climate negotiations have progressed significantly since Copenhagen, and this is largely due to an active and growing role of non-state actors. Changing the

embedded normative institutions of state-centric global governance is challenging and incremental. What is evident is that an expected global agreement is likely to fall short of the ambitious action needed. However, if a simple international agreement for action is reached, this will then provide space for non-state actors to take more radical and positive action. Multi-sectorial initiatives will harness a greater breadth of experience and ideas, empowering change agents that may sit outside the traditional realms of global governance institutions. The increasing flexibility of regimes such as the UNFCCC to accommodate non-state actors suggests that these normative changes are happening, and they too recognise that collective action is central to finding a way forward.

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