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# Copenhagen COP15/(MOP5) Back to the future?

Opening presentation to Earthscan  
Webinar, 27 Jan 2010

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# Copenhagen – run up

- Backdrop of Bali Action plan, launching ‘the most complicated set of global negotiations in history’
- New US Administration in summer 2009 tabled its support for a ‘bottom up’ process and stressed its need to have China in a comparable legal footing
- Little shift in positions until the last quarter of 2009
- EU announced at Bangkok in favour of a single unified structure whilst retaining the main features of the Kyoto Protocol
- Barcelona denunciations from developing countries, acknowledgement won’t be a Treaty at COP
- Progress in REDD, heavy emphasis on financing

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# Copenhagen - process

- Leak of draft political text fuels suspicions
- ‘Twin tracks’ negotiations neither merged nor concluded – struggle over continued existence of KP track impedes progress on components
- Mid second week – all awaiting engagement of Heads of State; Danish Env. Minister Connie Hildegaard moved aside to make way for Rasmussen to Chair
- ‘Ugly’ mood, officials preparing briefing notes on failure

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# Copenhagen - process

- Friday:
  - Obama arrives, statement on ‘transparency’ deemed inflammatory by Chinese commentators; diplomatic games
  - US+BRICS (‘Group of 5’) focus starts to craft Copenhagen Accord with limited outreach to others
  - Obama announces success on CNN before departing
- Angry COP reaction; emergence of ALBA as blocking group; Ban-ki-Moon rescues a measure of COP acceptance
- Further manoeuvring, Rasmussen set aside for UN official to chair final plenary, Copenhagen Accord formally ‘notes’ with invitation by supporting Parties to sign up
- Resulting uncertainty over its exact relationship to UNFCCC process, and a lot of ill-feeling to be overcome

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# Copenhagen Accord - content

- Endorses continuation of twin-track negotiations under UNFCCC
- “Recognise scientific view .. On 2 deg.C ... meet objectives consistent with science and on the basis of equity ... peaking of global and national of emissions”
- Adaptation, Forestry
- Annex I emission commitments to be submitted by 31 Jan (=> Appendix 1), reductions and finance subject to MRV

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# Copenhagen Accord - content

- Non-Annex I Parties mitigation actions to be submitted by 31 Jan (=> Appendix 2), biannual reporting, 'provision for international consultations and analysis under clearly defined guidelines .. ensure that national sovereignty is respected .. 'supported measures subject to international MRV
- Finance: "collective commitment by developed countries .. Approaching US\$30bn for 2010-12 ... goal of mobilising jointly US\$100bn/yr by 2020 ... "A significant portion to flow through Copenhagen Green Fund" .. As an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention
- Assessment of implementation of this Accord by 2015 in light of Convention's Ultimate Objective

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# Copenhagen COP15 / (MOP5) – humanity's "last chance" !?

- Judgements:
  - (EU) 'Diplomatic disasters don't come much bigger than this'
  - (US Administration) considerable success – Obama saved the day, outcome has most of the key elements necessary
  - (India) great success – finance, preserved non-legally binding process, etc
  - .....
- Uncertainty about the nature of the Copenhagen Accord in relation to UN will be partially resolved by the extent of sign-up on 31<sup>st</sup> Jan
- ... and continuation of twin track negotiations – next official staging post, Bonn, June 2010, leading up to Mexico, Nov/December - is the only formal extant process with legal mandate

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# From COP15 / (MOP5) to COP16 (MOP6) – a view to optimism

- Some useful progress (finance, REDD, technology) on which a lot more flesh will be needed
- Copenhagen clarified bottom lines at present:
  - China extreme sensitivity on sovereignty, internal struggles
  - US not ready, Senate resistance to UN / international law remains potent, ‘top-down’ international negotiations not necessarily helpful except as insofar as they increase pressure on China to which US willingness to commit is intimately linked
  - Developing countries *care* about Kyoto – and so they should

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# From COP15 / (MOP5) to COP16 (MOP6) – a view to optimism

- New Geopolitical groupings:
  - *BASIC*: the rights and responsibilities of a new power group that can negotiate a new deal to reflect the emerging economies, distinct from the unmanageable mass of G77
  - *Russian* position developed and became more integrated with other EITs; emergence of a clear 'eastern/EIT' group
- We will learn a lot more about current positions on 31<sup>st</sup> Jan
- Assessments almost certain to confirm that emission pledges are way off course from 2 deg.C

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# Concluding thoughts

- The EU can no longer keep fooling itself with wishful thinking
- It was always clear that the US and China needed another year – now we have it
- The likely *collective inadequacy of official* pledges by 31<sup>st</sup> Jan should ignite a global discourse on what to do about it; data will also now be updated to account for impact of recession on projections and potential abatement trajectories
- June UNFCCC has potential to set aside the bickering on 'twin tracks' and acknowledge that
  - most of the world *benefits* from a harmonised multilateral system with common accounting & offset rules (like Kyoto)
  - EU, Japan need to know that US takes *sufficiently comparable* action, and US & other ICs need to be satisfied that enough can be delivered in China and other BASIC countries (Accord process)

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# Concluding thoughts

- The world can then focus on ensuring *adequacy* of the twin tracks
  - Kyoto: 2<sup>nd</sup> period:
    - Sufficient commitments from EU, Japan, Australia, South Korea and maybe Mexico, Turkey ... as Annex B countries
    - Reform of the CDM and other institutional developments
  - Copenhagen Accord mitigation:
    - A sufficient domestic programme through US legislature to write in as a sufficiently equivalent offering
    - Enough from the BASIC countries to provide confidence of getting their emissions under control
  - Plus all the other elements identified under the Bali Action Plan / LCA process / Copenhagen Accord
- ... leading to a mutual toughening of commitments and twin track deal in Mexico

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# Further information available from:

- Own papers and presentations:  
[www.econ.cam.ac.uk/faculty/grubb/](http://www.econ.cam.ac.uk/faculty/grubb/)
- Recent research on international climate policy:  
[www.climatestrategies.org](http://www.climatestrategies.org)
- Climate Policy Journal [www.climatepolicy.com](http://www.climatepolicy.com)
- UK implementation and wider background:  
[www.carbontrust.co.uk](http://www.carbontrust.co.uk)
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# Thank you for your attention

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Climate Strategies aims to assist governments in solving the collective action problem of climate change. We connect leading applied research on international climate change issues to the policy process and to public debate, raising the quality and coherence of advice provided on policy formation. Our programmes convene international groups of experts to provide rigorous fact-based and independent assessment on international climate change policy.

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