

Responses in India towards the Clean Development Mechanism

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(ABSTRACT)

Recognizing the grave danger that climate change poses to mankind, the United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted in 1992 by 150 nations. Subsequent climate change negotiations were to be guided through the principles of “equity,” “common but differentiated responsibilities” and respective “capabilities,” while developed countries were to take lead in combating climate change. The Kyoto Protocol amended the FCCC in 1997 and set legally binding emission reduction targets for industrialized countries. No such commitments were mandated for the developing countries. The Kyoto Protocol, however, created the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), which required participation of developing countries as hosts for CDM projects. Though it faced significant opposition at the onset it was adopted by many developing countries later. This paper outlines the responses towards the CDM in India.

Many developed countries, such as the United States, have sought to include participation of developing countries in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through binding growth caps. Since 1997, this call for “meaningful participation” has stalled the US ratification of the Kyoto Protocol. In response some scholars have tried to link initiatives like CDM to “meaningful participation”. This paper suggests that rather than relying on the CDM, this contention regarding commitments can be resolved on a long-term basis if only there is a fair and explicit allocation of GHG emission quotas incorporating “equity” concerns. Meaningful participation, which might mean quantified commitments, does not take into consideration “equity”, a key criteria for developing country participation. Full participation can only result when Southern demands are given equal importance.

Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	iv
Introduction.....	1-3
Chapter 1: A Brief History of Climate Change negotiations.....	4-14
1.1 GHG emissions	
1.2 International Attempts to Counter Climate Change	
1.3 Summary	
Chapter 2: Background on CDM.....	15-24
2.1 The History of the CDM	
2.2 The CDM	
The CDM is a private sector effort	
Efficiency and Equity Perspectives in the CDM	
2.3 Some Technical and Operational Issues in the CDM	
2.4 Types of CDM	
2.5 Summary	
Chapter 3: Responses in India towards the CDM.....	25-37
3.1 Response of the Government	
3.2 Response of the Private Sector	
3.3 Response of the NGOs and Research Institutions	
3.4 Summary	
Chapter 4: A Need for Allocation of Global Carbon Emissions.....	38-49
4.1 The History of Meaningful Participation	
4.2 Can CDM be Meaningful Participation?	
4.3 Meaningful Participation, Equity and Future Commitments	
4.4 Conceptual and Operational Dimensions of Equity	
4.4 Per capita, Grandfathering and Carbon Emission Intensities	
4.5 The CDM and Equity	
4.6 Prospects of US Ratification	
4.7 Equity as a means to an end	
Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations.....	50-50
References.....	51-55
Appendix.....	56-56
List of Tables	
Table 2.1.....	21-21

Acronyms

AIJ	Activities Implemented Jointly
CSE	Center for Science and Environment
COP	Conference of Parties
CDF	Clean Development Fund
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CII	Confederation of Indian Industries
DA	Development Alternatives
FCCC	Framework Convention of Climate Change
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GOI	Government of India
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JI	Joint Implementation
KP	Kyoto Protocol
LBG	Louis Berger Group
MNES	Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources
MOEF	Ministry of Environment and Forest
NAM	Non Alignment Movement
TERI	Tata Energy Research Institute
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
US	United States