

The Climate Quad: Geopolitics, Tactics and Quick Hits
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I have nothing to add to the excellent technical background papers. Let me however be brief but brutal about our approach to the Copenhagen Conference. We should not become too obsessed with the technical details of the negotiations at this stage. Three things matter. We must be clear about the relationships between the four key players which underpin the proposed deal. We need to consider the nature of the US return. The Institute for Environmental Security believes that the introduction of the subject of Climate Change and Security would be helpful in this context. We need some early successes, even if they are not currently included in the negotiations. Quick hits help political morale. The importance of further strengthening the Montreal Protocol, rapidly reducing the emission of Black Carbon and exploring the possibilities of *terra preta* and carbon sequestration into the soil, are my candidates to reflect the need for speed.

There is a Quad in the Climate Change negotiations of much more significance than the WTO Quad. Success requires a deal between the USA, China, India and the EU. Not surprisingly this reflects the current state of geopolitics, where all the major powers are re-assessing their foreign policy in the light of the emergence of a multi-polar world. A world in which the security of energy supplies and the impact of climate change on security are key building blocks.

I believe that an agreement amongst the Quad is possible around the principle of "Contraction and Convergence". It is important to recall that the American insistence on India and China accepting targets was not always merely a negotiating tactic. The idea of per capita equity in the Contraction and Convergence analysis of the Global Commons Institute was seriously discussed in all four capitals in the mid-nineties. It is often forgotten that the Byrd-Hegel Resolution of the US Senate took place before Kyoto and majored on the involvement of India and China. The 94 – 0 vote was not a rejection of the Protocol. Rather it was a statement of the obvious that rapid progress on climate change could only be made after a deal with India and China.

The importance of the relationships inside the Quad mean that no progress can be made until we know the result of the US Presidential Election. Elements of the US Military are engaged in a titanic struggle with Big Oil for the ear of the incoming Administration. These are part of some very interesting conversations taking place in Washington on the language that the US should use on its effective re-entry into the climate change negotiations under a new Administration. Climate Change and Security would be an

obvious subject for the Americans to bring to the table. In a world where food price increases threaten the stability of many governments, it is surely time that we recognised the impact of climate change on the security situation of countries faced by millions of environmentally-driven refugees or displaced persons. Interest in this issue is common to both the Obama and McCain campaigns.

However the relationship between the USA and China, which is freighted with geopolitics, is a different matter. An Obama Presidency would be able to reach out to the Chinese for a broad-based deal. On the other hand a McCain Presidency would be unlikely to have such an option, given the historic tension between Senator McCain and the Chinese Leadership. The Atlantic Dimension of the Quad is also interesting. There will clearly be linkage between climate change policy and security issues.

Historically the weakest relationship in the Quad has been between the EU and India. This appears to be changing. This was demonstrated at the recent High Level EU-India Seminar in Potsdam, organised by Action for a Global Climate Community. The background was not encouraging. India has the lowest recognition of the European Union of any major country in the world, preferring still to think in terms of the British, the French and the Germans. Much of the Indian political class is still in denial on climate change. Understanding the need for continuing growth in GDP for poverty reduction measures, they have been reluctant to invest in mitigation activities of the kind anticipated after Copenhagen. However recent data produced by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) highlighted an issue that galvanised the meeting. PIK's simulation of where and when the planet is heating up makes depressing reading. We are told that Black Carbon (soot) settling on the snow and ice fields of the planet reduces by 40% the albedo effect of white snow reflecting light and therefore heat back into space. Their research indicates that this is a major reason for the dramatic heating up of the Himalayas.

The early melting of glaciers, anticipated by PIK, threatens the great rivers of Asia. The human scale of such a disaster would be immense, effectively ending hopes of an "Asian Century". Yet it is the Asian failure to clean up their industrial production plants and their continued burning of forests which is helping drive the disaster forward. India can no longer take refuge in the old formulae about the developed world's responsibility for historical emissions. The Asians have an immediate responsibility to their own future populations. Decisive action to reduce Black Carbon emissions by Asia would have a real impact on global warming. However as Black Carbon is a climate driver rather than a greenhouse gas, it has not received the attention it undoubtedly deserves from the negotiators. There is a clear parallel with the prolonged refusal to recognise the significance for Climate Change of the Montreal Protocol.

Beyond early action to further strengthen the Montreal Protocol and to reduce the damage done by Black Carbon, there is an idea of interest, which is both new and very old. *Terra preta*, a form of sequestration of carbon in the soil, was practiced by the pre-Colombian peoples of the Amazon. The technology has now been updated by the Japanese and offers attractive possibilities.

My advice to all those who follow the climate negotiations is simple. Think Quad. Think Geopolitics. Think Quick Hits.