

Post-2012 Burden Sharing Symposium – 29 July 2008

On 29 July 2008 the Institute of Policy Studies and the Climate Change Research Institute of Victoria University of Wellington, in collaboration with the New Zealand European Union Centres Network, hosted the *Post-2012 Burden Sharing Symposium* at the National Library in Wellington. The event was attended by almost 200 people, including senior diplomats, academics, students, public officials, business people and members of the general public.

Professor Martin Manning, Director of the Climate Change Research Institute, opened the first session, *The Nature the Challenge: Issues and Options*. Next, Hon David Parker, the Minister in Charge of Climate Change Issues, addressed the delegates, providing a broad summary of the issues facing New Zealand with respect to ‘sharing the burden’, or as he preferred to call it, ‘doing our part’. In particular, he emphasised the need to set the rules and accounting framework that govern a future climate change protocol (or agreement) *before* developed countries like New Zealand agree to binding (responsibility) targets for a second commitment period (e.g. 2013-20). If this did not occur there was a risk that the outcome would not be fair, especially for smaller countries like New Zealand.

Dr Malte Meinshausen (Potsdam Climate Impact Research Institute) then discussed the principles, models and options for burden sharing, stressing both the need for a strong international treaty to tackle climate change and the importance of a global carbon market. He also highlighted the fact that New Zealand, as one of the four countries that has so far committed to the goal of carbon neutrality, was in a position to take a strong leadership on the issue of burden sharing.

Paule Stephenson (Visiting Fellow, IPS) explained the ‘Effort Sharing’ framework developed by the European Union to divide emission reductions targets and renewable energy targets between its member states. She suggested that there was some potential to apply this approach more broadly to help determine effort shares between developed countries and possibly between other country groupings. The first session concluded with a brief presentation by Professor Jonathan Boston (Director, IPS) on the concept and meaning of ‘comparability of efforts’, and its potential implications for global burden sharing post-2012.

Professor Martin Holland, Director of the European Centres Network, opened the second session, *Perspective on Burden Sharing*. His Excellency Bruno Julien (the Ambassador and Head of Delegation of the European Commission to Australia and New Zealand) gave an EU perspective on burden sharing, emphasising that the EU is willing to take the lead on climate change. He also stressed that action against climate change should not be seen primarily as a cost to be shared amongst countries but rather as a necessary investment to avoid a global catastrophe.

Dr Frank Jotzo (from the Australian National University) discussed Australia’s perspective on burden sharing and in particular, the proposals and recommendations of the *Garnaut Climate Change Review*. He suggested that a contraction and convergence approach was the most appealing of the available options for sharing the burden globally – partly because of its simplicity but also because it was the option most likely to win support across the developing world.

Dr Graham Sem presented a Pacific perspective, pointing out the disproportionately large impact that climate change was already having on the small island states of the Pacific ocean. He also highlighted the need for a greater focus to be placed on the issue of adaptation.

Dr Lavanya Rajamani (from the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi) offered an Indian perspective on burden sharing. She highlighted the fact that India was not willing to take on binding emission reduction targets in the short-to-medium term, but also noted that India was prepared to limit its per capita emissions to the OECD average. If this average were to fall substantially over the coming decades then India's stance would have potentially significant implications. She also commented on the need to distinguish between the responsibilities of China and India, given that China's emissions per capita are over three times those of India.

Professor Boston chaired the third session, *Further Perspectives on Burden Sharing*. It started with an audio-visual presentation from Ned Helme, President of the Centre for Clean Air Policy, who spoken on a number of topics surrounding the US position on burden sharing. In particular, he highlighted the fact that a new Administration is likely to take a more pro-active stance in international climate negotiations regardless of which candidate wins the presidential election.

Dr Adrian Macey, New Zealand's Climate Change Ambassador, discussed New Zealand's position on burden sharing. He pointed out that the two-track process confirmed in Bali was not conducive to producing a fair agreement but counterpoised this with the fact that there was significant international commitment for reaching a deal. His Excellency Dr Beat Nobs, the Swiss Ambassador to New Zealand, talked about how Switzerland has addressed the issue of burden sharing on the national level by using a mix of carrots and sticks to get local industry to take action. He then reflected on the challenges facing the international community and suggested that to overcome the problem of climate change countries must focus on their wider collective interests rather than their narrow particularistic concerns. Zhao Yanbo, the Political Counsellor and Deputy Head of Mission at the Chinese Embassy in New Zealand, observed that developed countries had created the overwhelming bulk of emissions and argued that developed countries should take responsibility for these emissions. He also noted, however, that China was taking significant action to address climate change as could be seen in their ambitious energy intensity and renewable energy targets. Tri Purnajaya, the First Secretary of the Embassy of Indonesia in Wellington, stressed Indonesia's commitment to doing its part to address climate change, but pointed out that this was contingent upon adequate technological assistance and financing from the developed world.

The fourth session involved a lively panel discussion chaired by Professor Boston. The Panel consisted of Dr Jotzo, Dr Macey, Dr Meinshausen, HE Dr Nobs, Dr Rajamani, Dr Sem and Tri Purnajaya. Finally, Professor Boston and Professor Holland offered some concluding remarks and closed the conference.

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