



**University of  
Zurich** <sup>UZH</sup>



Climate & Development  
Knowledge Network

**Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS)**

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# **Building capacity of developing country leaders and negotiators to influence international talks**

Side event organized by

**Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN)**

and

**Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS)  
of the ETH and the University of Zurich**



## Programme:

Timothy Ash-Vie (CDKN): *Supporting capacity building for LDC countries in the UNFCCC process.*

Benito Müller (ecbi): *Capacity building for developing countries' negotiators – The experience of ecbi.*

Paula Castro and Katharina Michaelowa (CIS): *Determinants of success of developing countries in international climate negotiations: some case study evidence.*

**Panel discussion** moderated by Christoph Bals (Germanwatch):

Orlando Rey (Cuban delegation)

Ephraim Mwepya Shitima (Zambian delegation)

Farhana Yamin (the Children's Investment Fund Foundation).

**Q+A session**



# **Negotiating Climate Change**

Research project carried out by the Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS), ETH and University of Zurich,  
in cooperation with the Graduate Institute, Geneva,  
and Germanwatch

financed by the Swiss Network for International Studies

## **Core project team at CIS**

**Paula Castro, Katharina Michaelowa, Axel Michaelowa (University of Zurich)  
Stefanie Bailer, Florian Weiler (ETH Zurich)**

## **Cooperation**

**Liliana Andonova and Assia Alexieva (Graduate Institute, Geneva)  
Christoph Bals (Germanwatch)  
Bettina Ryf (University of Zurich), Carola Betzold (ETH Zurich)**



## Negotiating climate change - background

- Main factor for success found in prior studies: Power!
  - Climate negotiations show that this does not always need to be the case.
- ➔ What drives success?
- ➔ How can developing countries, too, be successful negotiators?

Large data collection through interviews with delegates and coding of country submissions as well as statements in ENB.

First general results point at power + vulnerability

Analysis of hard versus soft strategies so far unclear

➔ We start examining particular cases in more detail:

(1) AOSIS

(2) India

[(3) Russia]



# The vulnerable developing countries: Drawing resources out of need

by Carola Betzold, Paula Castro and Florian Weiler

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## **AOSIS and LDCs in the climate negotiations**

- Small Island States and Least Developed Countries are among those that have contributed least to climate change, but suffer most
- AOSIS, the Alliance of Small Island States, founded early 1990s as a negotiating coalition specifically for the climate regime
- The Least Developed Countries, LDCs, is a UN-recognized group of countries considered the most vulnerable in terms of development needs; the concept exists since the 1960s
- Both groups officially recognized as among the most vulnerable countries in the climate regime

***Given their limited power and high vulnerability, how can they influence the climate change negotiations?***



## Role of power and vulnerability in the negotiations

- Preliminary statistical analysis suggests that **power resources** and **high vulnerability** are factors that make countries more successful in reaching their negotiation goals
- In line with negotiations theory: the more power a country has, the better chances it has to influence the negotiation process
  - Internal power: size, resources and experience of negotiating team
  - External power: economic size, wealth, military power, trade power
- Salience of the issue for a country makes it more likely to be heard → visibility, attention and leverage in the negotiations

***What else helps vulnerable countries in the negotiations?***



## **“Borrowing power” for exerting influence in negotiations**

- Theory: weak actors can exert influence by drawing on external sources of power (Zartman and Rubin 2000; Pfetsch 2000; Pfetsch and Landau 2000)
  - Ethical arguments
  - Appeal to common interests
  - Use of scientific evidence and third-party expertise (NGOs)
  - Influencing the process
- Achievements:
  - Not yet a negotiation outcome, but changes in the process (e.g. getting new topics in the agenda, blocking others)





## Ethical arguments

- Vulnerability discourse
  - AOSIS countries “are being hit first and hardest by climate change that *they are not responsible for*” (Samoan ambassador Tuiloma Neroni Slade, in ENB 1995)
  - “Barbados was right to ask the EU whether its reluctance to go beyond 30% cuts was, in effect, condemning the vulnerable countries to extinction” (ECO, COP 14, Issue 3)
  - “Many impacts are already being felt, especially by the poor and those that have contributed the least to the problem, as reported by leaders from LDCs and AOSIS” (ECO, COP 15, Issue 11)
- Setting the example: Maldives as first country pledging to go zero carbon by 2020



## Appeal to common interests

- Argument: Vulnerable countries will be the first victims, but everybody will suffer from climate change sooner or later
  - “AOSIS states will be the early victims – not the only victims,’ hence ‘AOSIS’s interests are everyone’s interests’ (Teuatabo et al. 1992, in ECO LXXX, Issue 3)



## Use of scientific evidence and external expertise

- IPCC reports and new scientific evidence are frequently put forward in submissions and oral interventions
- NGO experts, researchers, lawyers are brought into national delegations, e.g. FIELD in the case of AOSIS
- Presenting positions and research at side events
  - Out of 272 side events proposed by parties between Bali and Cancun, 18 were by AOSIS countries, 19 by LDCs
    - PNG: 4
    - Micronesia: 4
    - Zambia: 3
    - Madagascar: 2
    - Bangladesh: 2



## Influencing the process

- Approaching the negotiations as tight coalitions
- Putting forward new arguments
- Being involved as chairs of contact groups



## Some successes

- Special seat for AOSIS in the COP Bureau (additional to regional representation)
- Special representatives of AOSIS and LDCs in Adaptation Fund Board
- “Ray of the Day to AOSIS, SIDS and LDCs: For successfully restoring the reference in the Shared Vision text to a global goal of a 1.5° C maximum global temperature increase” (ECO Newsletter COP 16, Issue 11)



## Some differences between AOSIS and LDCs

- AOSIS so far appears more visible as negotiation leaders
  - AOSIS (or individual SIDS) mentioned very frequently in ECO Newsletters throughout the COPs between Bali and Cancun as leaders, proposers of bold or innovative solutions, victims, “standing firm against bullying” by other countries.
- AOSIS appears to focus on mitigation, LDCs on adaptation
  - 17% of LDCs but 28% of SIDSs interventions on mitigation (ENBs between Bali and Cancun)
  - 12% of LDCs but 8% of SIDSs interventions on adaptation (ENBs between Bali and Cancun)
  - 9% of LDCs but 4% of SIDS interventions on finance for adaptation



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## Question for discussion

***Which of these strategies do you think are being effective for vulnerable countries?***



# India – an emerging power in international climate negotiations

## Positions and strategies in a comparative perspective

by Katharina and Axel Michaelowa

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## India in international climate policy, first decade

- Late 1980s: only a few officials involved
- Industrialized countries should reduce emissions and finance abatement costs in developing countries
- 1990: “WRI emissions numbers scandal”
  - India: differentiate “luxury” and “survival” emissions
- 1992: “Common but differentiated responsibilities” in UNFCCC
- 1995: India leads “green group” within G 77, isolates OPEC and plays a crucial role to secure the mandate leading to Kyoto
- 1997: Kyoto. India is eclipsed by Brazil-US collaboration that leads to the emergence of the Clean Development Mechanism



## India's changing negotiation positions in 2000s

- 2002: India hosts COP 8 in New Delhi but is not willing to offer a “host government concession” to speed up the process
- 2003: India gives up opposition to market mechanisms, embraces the CDM and rapidly becomes a key player
- 2007: Pledge not to overtake OECD per capita emissions
- 2008: National Action Plan on Climate Change
- 2009: India takes centre stage finalizing the Copenhagen Accord with the US, South Africa and Brazil. BASIC becomes the pivot of world climate policy.
- Current positions: Strong technology transfer regime, adaptation finance, liberal CDM regime
- Professional and experienced, but small delegation



## More detailed look at India's strategies with evidence for Bali - Cancun

In the general literature (trade, nuclear power etc.)  
India is often associated with a “strict distributive strategy”.

Is this true for international climate policy?

Is there any change over time, in line with the change in  
positions? → “from porcupine to tiger” (Mohan 2003) ?



## Characteristics of a strict distributive strategy (Odell 2000):

- (1) *Value claiming strategy* ✓
- (2) *Very high opening demands* ✓
- (3) *No concessions (nay-saying)* ?

ad 1: fairness for DCs, luxury versus survival emission,  
focus on historical emissions, per capita emissions  
and on 'common but differentiated responsibility'

ad 2: unchanged high opening demands according to  
Indian negotiators themselves



## ad 3: No compromise / nay-saying?

At least, this does not correspond to the Indian negotiators' own perception:

**“We want to be deal-maker, not deal-breaker”**

Environment minister Jairam Ramesh (The Hindu, 23/9/2009)

Indeed, Ramesh started a discussion questioning the traditional nay-saying policy (confidential letter to PM Manmohan Singh) made public by the Times of India (approach facing strong criticism by the national public).

**“Often no concessions, but when we arrive near agreement, lots of concessions.”**

Interview with member of Indian delegation to Copenhagen

Also: Positions stated in interview often less strict than official negotiating positions. Indicating room for compromise?



## Table 1: Strategies in open negotiations (self reported)

Strategy	India	Average
Propose new solutions in common interest	9	6.4
Exchange concessions for mutual benefit	4-5*	4.8
Declare not to change position under any circumstance	3	4.3
Ignore demands made by others	7	4.8
Criticize other's positions	7	4.5

Note: 1-never,..., 9-very often.

\* See quote of delegate.

In a recent visit to India (Feb 2011), Christiana Figueres confirms that India, while staying firmly behind its own interests and with other DCs, **“then was incredibly helpful in showing that it is mostly in the interest of DCs to move forward”**.



## Change in core coalitions in run up to BASIC?

Table 2: Most important allies (joint statements)

Rank	Country	Number	Share (%)
1.	China	41	20.0
2.	Brazil	23	11.2
3.	Saudi Arabia	19	9.3
4.	African Group	11	5.4
5.	Philippines	10	4.9
6.	Algeria	9	4.4
7.	South Africa	9	4.4
8.	AOSIS	8	3.9
9.	G-77	7	3.4

Source: Coding of ENB (Bali-Copenhagen)

For China, 41 joint statements  
= 20% of all Indian statements

(and 15% of all Chinese statements).

G77 explicitly supported India only in 3.4% of India's statements

(and India explicitly supported G77 only in 1.8% of G77 statements).



## Preliminary conclusions

- In international climate policy, India is no (more a) porcupine.
- Newly gained strong position within BASIC.
- However, some features of distributive strategy are left, and the national public does not value the move towards concessions.
- Yet, India is highly vulnerable to climate change – which is recognized locally and has led to some local measures – but so far largely disconnected from the international negotiation process.
- The Indian government moved from “growth-first stonewallers” to become “progressive realist” while “progressive internationalists” remain a rare species due to lack of trust in the West (Dubash 2009). Perhaps Jairam Ramesh?





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