

EQUITY IS FUNDAMENTAL: BASIC COUNTRY EXPERTS PROPOSE WAYS TO OPERATIONALISE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

Durban, South Africa (30/11/2011) - Leading climate change experts from Brazil, South Africa, India and China have collaboratively produced a paper on '*Equitable Access to Sustainable Development*' (EASD). EASD operationalises equity in the both the access to atmospheric space and in the time for development and support. The paper will be launched at a side event on Saturday 3rd December 2011 at 18:30 in the Apies River Room of the Conference Centre.

The publication of *Equitable Access to Sustainable Development* is a proactive contribution from the BASIC Expert Group which may help to open up the climate negotiations. Key to the paper is the assertion that developing countries should have both equitable access to the remaining carbon budget or fair distribution of mitigation effort and the time necessary for them to develop to lift their people out of poverty. The paper contains a joint chapter, underpinned by analyses from experts from each BASIC country.

The paper examines both resource sharing and effort / burden-sharing approaches. If future global carbon budget is limited to 1440 Gt CO₂ over the first half of the 21st century, temperature has a half:half chance of staying below 2°C. The paper outlines allocations of this budget, and also how efforts to reduce emissions from current trends could be shared fairly. This paper is intended to open discussion on this serious issue and enable a more constructive discussion.

Annex I countries have already achieved development by consuming more carbon space than an equitable allocation would entitle them to, leaving but a small remainder within which NAI countries are now expected to develop. This conceptualisation should be reversed: NAI countries should implement the actions which they have pledged and the Annex I countries then work within the constraints of the remainder of the carbon space.

Several criteria that have been proposed for sharing the effort or burden among Parties are explored in the paper. All experts refer to historical responsibility and the contribution by developed countries, as measured by the induced change in global mean surface temperature. Entitlements based on cumulative emissions per capita are also explored, as are approaches based on the right to promote sustainable development. In all approaches, developed countries will need to commit to deeper cuts, and bridge the finance gap – which is quantified in the paper.

An innovative proposal in the paper is for a South-South cooperation mechanism. BASIC experts have started exploring means to address the situation of developing countries that have used up more than 50% of their fair share of carbon space.

The equity-based reference framework of the EASD provides “a reference point that is not purely based on political power and willingness to pledge, but [is] based on what is required by science, what is good for development and what is fair. It also satisfies the precondition for setting a long-term global goal for emission reductions and the means needed for sustainable development consistent with such a goal.”

LAUNCH INFO:

The paper will be launched at the **Research Centre for Sustainable Development (China)** side-event entitled, “**Equal access to sustainable development: balancing carbon and financial budgets**”, on December 3rd 2011, in the Apies River room between 18:30—20:00.

Attached is a copy of the paper – embargoed until 3 December 2011, 20:00.

Hard copies will be available at the launch.

INFORMAL TECHNICAL DISCUSSION: For a more technical discussion please join some of the Expert Group authors for an informal get-together on Wednesday 7th December.

Time: 18:30 to 20:00; a light finger-dinner and drinks will be served.

Venue: The OASIS of Fresh Thinking, 44 KE Masinga Road Durban

[From the ICC walk east along Bram Fischer Rd. At the intersection with Sylvester Ntuli Rd take a left and then a right onto KE Masinga Rd (the M4). The Oasis is #44 on the left].

BACKGROUND:

In Copenhagen, BASIC countries insisted that a global goal for emission reductions should be preceded by the definition of a paradigm for equitable burden sharing. Ministers from Brazil, South Africa, India and China have met quarterly since November 2009 to work together on issues in the climate change negotiations. They requested the Expert Group was formed to provide detailed and scientifically based analysis to feed into the high-level discussions held at the Ministerials.

The BASIC Expert Group is a group of leading researchers tasked by BASIC Ministers to provide advisory analysis. Over the course of six meetings, the experts developed analysis of the issue of equitable access to sustainable development contained in this paper. The group made remarkable progress in converging different approaches, as reflected in the joint paper, while respecting different approaches taken in respective country chapters. Through discussion, experts reached a robust compromise on the way forward which is grounded in detailed scientific analysis. The BASIC experts look forward to engagement and constructive dialogue with experts from other countries.

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