

# Re-thinking the climate regime: From a science-driven problem to a societal-driven research ?

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Expertise , linear model, deficit model

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# Notion of (climate) *regime*

In the terminology, several notions coming from different disciplinary and epistemic universes:

- international relationships, Law: treaties, political organizations, juridical procedures etc
- discourses level (Foucault): framing, regime of truth, set of devices (institutional, cultural ...)
- Sciences studies: modes of production of knowledge; it often focuses on expertise, links between science and politics

# For 20 years, the climate regime was mainly constructed around three pillars:

- A political process and a climate assessment : separated but closely linked
- A strategy of « cake sharing » :
  - Kyoto protocol until 2012
  - the search of another treatise with US and the big emerging economies, with objectives of reductions, an agenda, according a formula (capacities, historical responsibilities)
- A clear distinction between industrialized countries and developing countries, with also a distinction between subjects concerning them: mitigation and reductions versus adaptation and transfers (finance and technologies)

# Coproduction

Refers to the idea of a joint construction between scientific order and political order and of devices or institutions which go on with it

General circulation models and global political treatment of the problem reinforce each other

IPCC- SBSTA a coproduction of the assessment

Hybrid objects: ex dangerous threshold of 2°C

# Thesis 1

The failure of Copenhagen Conference is not contingent. It reflects the fundamental wishes of the hegemonic powers of the geopolitical scene and the limits they don't want now to overcome. The negotiation process blocked mainly on questions of national sovereignty.

Emerging economies, as the US, are very far from any environmental discourse and for them climate change is a question of de-carbonization of economies at a rhythm which doesn't threaten their growth

The hope for a cosmopolitk governance (U.Beck) of the climate problem is over, so do are the hopes for a new treatise Kyoto 2

# The crisis of climate change regime

Failure or not failure ?

- The crisis concerns the political process, the scientific framing and the relation between the two aspects
- The attacks against IPCC are signs of this crisis. I take them seriously. They touch legitimacy, neutrality, validity of scientific consensus.

Two dimensions of the climate regime are particularly concerned :

- The relationship between science and politics ; with the singular institution of IPCC
- The onusian system of climate governance , constructed since 1990 around a strategy of sharing reductions objectives.

## Thesis 2

An increasing and very worrying gap appeared at Copenhagen between:

1) an alarming expertise, constructed around some key numbers, thresholds, carbon budgets etc, which presupposes an efficient top-down and global governance,  
2) the bottom up approach which prevailed in the Agreement imposed by US and China which wished only national policies, without constraining objectives.

The scientific expertise is fragilized. In these conditions, adopting the key number of 2°C as the dangerous threshold without saying how to avoid this temperature is the triumph of an “economy of promises”

## Thesis 3

For the IPCC, the shift between a purified position of “science- speaking- truth- to- power” and a very complex and hybrid practice cannot last anymore

The IPCC made a good scientific work, and a reflexive expertise. But he was also a crucial political actor, winning alliances, creating trust, increasing the consciousness on the climate risk, unifying a vast field of researches about the domain.

He must assume this double function which is not a shame but is inherent to expertise at this level.



## Thesis 4

The three groups of IPCC are composed of different disciplines, with distinct temporalities, methods, and uncertainties. They don't have the same function. The results and numbers given by climate modeling will continue to play a role of "coagulator" between different actors on the public space. The socio-economic scenarios could be crucial in the discussions about future, if they become more transparent and explicit about what has to be done and assessing the climate policies

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## Thesis 5

We are living a convergence between different crisis: environmental, climatic, energetic, economic and financial. Several contributors to the climate debate are right to suggest that a lot of climate policies could be taken with other reasons

But a bigger effort of coordination has to be done between , arenas like OMC and UNFCCC, or several policies (health, environment, reductions of CO2 emissions)

**The debate about measures and policies has to acquire more autonomy regarding the scientific debate.**

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## Thesis 6

Climate change is not only a global problem . It is a multi-scales problem which has to be tackled at all possible levels: international, by nations, cities, regions, firms, industries, people etc.

The onusian governance system focuses all the waiting around the global level, with a global voluntarism which tends to mask the blockages and the possible advances at other levels of governance. We plead for a “principle of subsidiarity” in climate arena in order to support and enlarge all local and national initiatives, and to lighten the international agenda of the negotiations.

Climate arenas (CoP) are still exceptional meetings between a huge variety of actors and stakeholders, very useful to launch new ideas, technologies, solutions etc, to discuss questions which had no other public forums: ‘green development, equity, responsibility, world solidarity... In the balance of the CoPs, the *off* has been much more useful than the *in*

The exceptional mobilization of the civil society at Copenhagen confirms the importance of these arenas. This presence is the principal argument to keep these arenas.

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Critics of the construction of the Climate Change problem as a public problem, by social scientists:

- Geographers (Mike Hulme...)
- Anthropologists, Sociologists, Science Studies scholars: S.Jasanoff, U.Beck, B.Wynne etc...

What is common in all the critics? :

- The climate question is not a a question of pollution
- the Kyoto strategy was doomed to failure, and therefore had feeble results
- against catastrophic vision, emergency discourse
- plea for a new relationship between global and local
- plea for placing the climate question in the mainstream of unsolved problems