

Justice and International Climate Change Negotiations

Objectives:

- I. Introduce basic issues and concepts
- II. Discuss some ethical issues
- III. Provide a historic overview
- IV. Emphasize the importance of justice/equality

I. Basic Issues and Concepts

“Tragedy of the Commons”

Garrett Harden, *Science*, 162 (1968): 1243-1248



“The essence of dramatic tragedy
Is not unhappiness. It resides in the solemnity
of the remorseless working of things.”



“Ruin is the destination towards which all men run, each
pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in
the freedom of the commons.”

Solution: “Mutual coercion, mutually agreed upon.”

The atmosphere’s ability to regulate climate is a public
good.

The ability of the atmosphere to assimilate wastes (GHGs)
while regulating climate has limits.

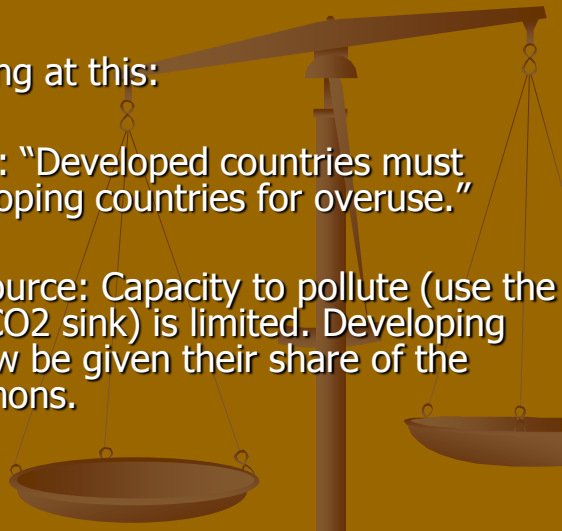
Developing Countries

Problem: how to allocate future emissions.

Two ways of looking at this:

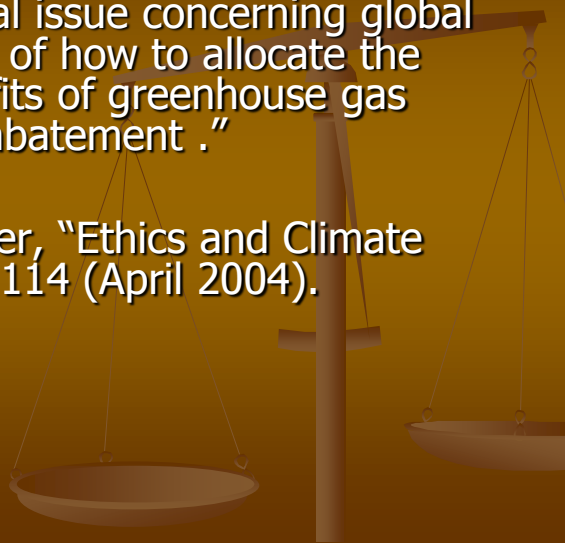
Historical principle: “Developed countries must
compensate developing countries for overuse.”

Common pool resource: Capacity to pollute (use the
atmosphere as a CO2 sink) is limited. Developing
countries must now be given their share of the
atmospheric commons.



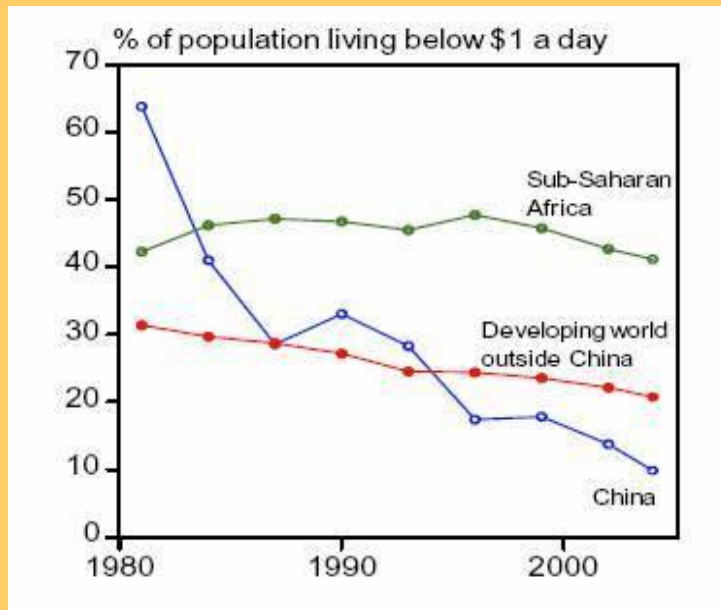
"The core ethical issue concerning global warming is that of how to allocate the costs and benefits of greenhouse gas emissions and abatement ."

Stephen Gardiner, "Ethics and Climate Change" Ethics 114 (April 2004).



Prisoner's Dilemma

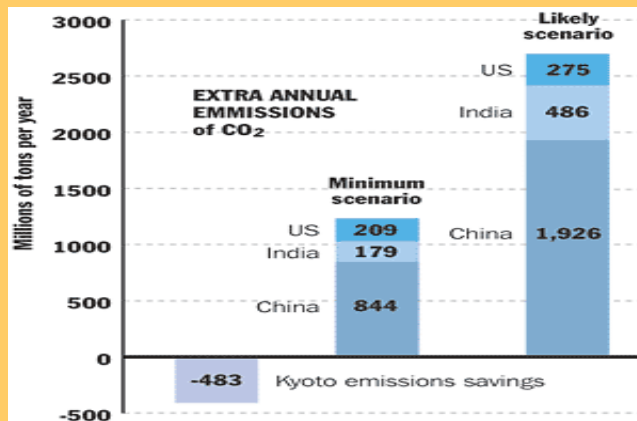
	Confess	Do Not
Confess	(-10, -10)	(-1, -25)
Do Not	(-25, -1)	(-2, -2)



“China is on track to add 562 coal-fired plants—nearly half the world total of plants expected to come online in the next 8 years. India could add 213 plants and the US 72.”

The cheapness and security of coal are overwhelming the desire to be clean.



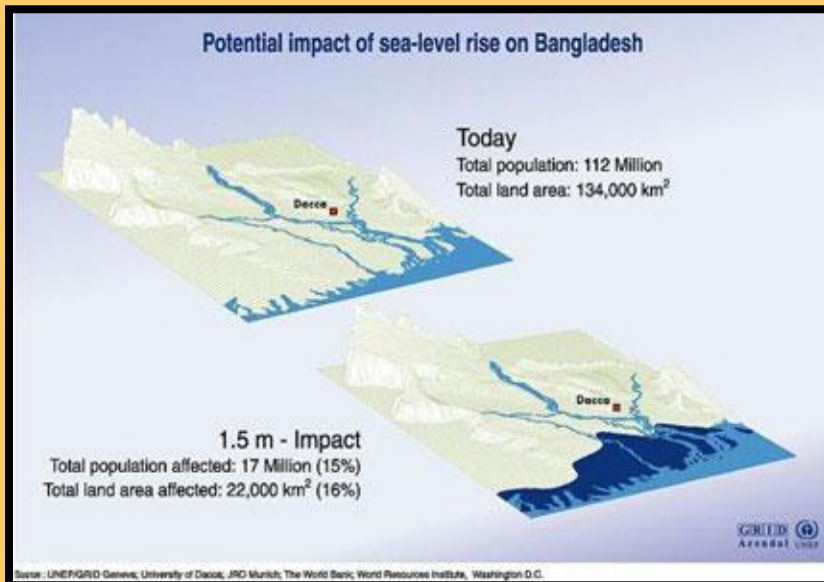
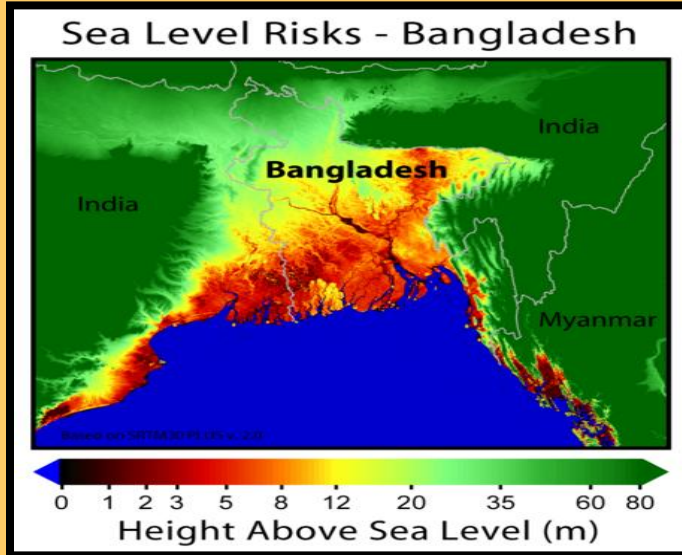


COAL'S KNOCKOUT BLOW TO KYOTO: By 2012, expected cuts in greenhouse-gas emissions under the Kyoto treaty will be swamped by emissions from a surge of new coal-fired plants built in China, India, and the United States

SOURCES: UDI-PLATT'S, US ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION, AND INDUSTRY ESTIMATES; SCOTT WALLACE - STAFF

II. Discuss Some Ethical Issues





Climate Change and Sub-Saharan Africa

- 75-250 million people could face water shortages
- Agriculture fed by rainfall could drop by 50% in some African counties by 2020 (IPCC Report, 2007)
- “Climate change threatens to increase the number of world’s hungry by reducing the area of land available for farming in developing countries. (FAO Report, 2005)



III. Historical Overview

“The Parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Accordingly, the developed country Parties should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effect thereof.” Article 3, 1992 U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change

The Three Phases of International Climate Change Negotiations

Phase I

- 1992, Rio Earth Summit, United Nations, Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC)
- Annex I countries (industrialized countries) should voluntarily stabilize their emissions at 1990 levels by 2000. Voluntary commitments were ineffectual.

Phase II

- Berlin, 1995 & Kyoto, 1997
- Binding emission targets are necessary.
- Kyoto Protocol
- Annex I countries should accept binding constraints and commit to reducing emissions to 5% below 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012.
- Two major compromises: it allowed countries to count forest sinks and to meet their commitments through buying unused capacity from others, through permit trading.
- Hague, 2000 negotiations brake down amidst angry disagreements
- March, 2001, Bush administration withdraws support