

Training Program for Icco Program Officers & Climate Stakeholders An Introduction – A Moral Climate

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Dear Friends,

I would like to officially welcome you all here in Bagepalli on behalf of the FairClimate staff of the GO of ICCO and Kerk in Actie. We are very grateful that we are together now and have the opportunity to meet one another and discuss climate issues in the context of the FairClimate program and broader. We come from different and far off place. It is good to getting to know each other, to share our backgrounds, hopes and believes, to share our ideas about climate change and sustainable development, the programs in which we are involved and want to expand.

A special word of thanks to Ram, Mario and the staff of ADATS who are making this training possible. When we were discussing the possibilities of organizing training in the context of the new program submitted to the Netherlands Government for co-financing, we thought it a good idea if it could be held in Bagepalli. Because this is the centre of the word for pro poor, fair trade carbon development. And that is an important angle of the work we are involved in. And Ram responded quickly and enthusiastically on our question whether we could do it here. And this notwithstanding the fact that there are so many people coming to this area to familiarize themselves with community based carbon projects. So, thanks Ram and Mario for making this training possible.

For me, personally, this is a great moment. I am working on climate change issues since the Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992. We have long struggled in working out a proper relationship between environment and development from a global perspective. When climate change came up as an important issue in the 1990's we slowly developed the concept of atmospheric space and carbon footprint. It was actually Anir Agrawal's paper 'Global Warming in an Unequal World' from the Centre for Science and the Environment in Delhi, who put us on track of what has later become the FairClimateProgram.

However, it was very difficult to convince development organizations like ICCO that climate change was a real development issue. They thought that environmental organizations like WWF and FOE better deal with it. More than ten years ago Hans Heijns wrote a note indicating why it was important for ICCO to pay attention to climate change. It took another ten years (2007) before CC was incorporated into the work of ICCO although the program was not part of MFS1. In 2007 I joint the newly formed international department of ICCO & Kerk in Actie, coming from the last organization with the Climate Plan, as it was called at that time. We had already bought our first carbon credits from our partner NOVA in South Africa. For many from within ICCO that was 'cursing in the church' as the expression is in Dutch. We had to reduce our CO2-emissions ourselves in our own society and we should not offset our footprints with carbon credits from the South. Beautiful ethics but far off from reality.

Then, it must have been during the early summer of 2007 that by accident I heard about Ram and ADATS, a long standing partner of ICCO. That they were pioneering with pro-poor carbon development for already quite some time. That ADATS was setting up an afforestation/reforestation and also a biogas project under CDM. This was for me a present from heaven. I had never imagined that an old partner of ICCO would be involved in carbon development. I sent a small paper to Ram about our Climate Plan. He responded immediate and invited me to come to Bagepalli. You know: Ram has no passport. Everybody is coming to

ADATS' place. So I came in autumn 2007. It was a delighted visit. What I had not found in the Netherlands was ample available in India.

We had long talks about the possibilities and dangers of involving community based organizations in carbon development. Setting up projects which contribute to poverty alleviation but which are financed via the sale of carbon credits. The forming of networks of NGO's/CBO's working together on this. Since then, Ram took the lead in forming the FairClimateNetwork India and the Tech team. A pro-poor and fair carbon movement has come of the ground.

Since then, I have come to Bagepalli many times. It was quite often a relief to be away from the office in Utrecht and have the opportunity to have stimulating discussions about the real work. I have seen the tremendous progress which has been made in the context of the network.

And now we are gathered here. ICCO and Kerk in Actie have submitted a new business plan to the Netherlands government. FairClimate is a separate and important component of that plan. It focuses on mitigation in relation to carbon credit generation. We see the carbon market certainly not as an end in itself but as a means to work towards a sustainable and better world in which North and South participate on an equal basis.

A Moral Climate

Some thoughts on global warming and a new paradigm for international cooperation

I would like to start by making a number of general remarks about global climate change.

Over the last couple of years there has been a lot of discussion about the question whether human induced climate change is actually taking place. There are three positions on this:

- Global warming is of all ages. There is nothing special about the current situation;
- Global warming is a serious problem but we can conquer it if we act now (IPCC);
- Global warming is much more serious than the IPCC is indicating (Hansen).

I do not want to be too pessimistic. I think we can still change the tide. But the results of the last IPCC-report still stand: It has concluded with 'very high confidence' that 'the global average net effect of human activities since 1750 has been one of warming'. Since 1970 human caused greenhouse gas emissions have increase globally by 70 percent, with carbon dioxide increasing by 80 percent since 1995 (IPCC). The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is now about 391 parts per million; compared to 280 ppm prior to the Industrial Revolution; with an annual increase of about 2 ppm per year.

The IPCC projects that there will be an increase of 0.2 degrees Celsius per decade under most emissions scenarios. Global average temperature is predicted to rise by 1.4 to 5.8 degrees Celsius this century. Although this will depend on worlds' responses. But for the

next decades we are locked in to an unavoidable rise in global mean temperature because of our past emissions.

Human activities are essential as contributor to climate change. Some people suggest that population is therefore a key driver of climate change. But, to be fair, we should not focus on population per se but on industrialization and modern consumption choices. Therefore, modern lifestyle is the major cause of climate change.

An example of this can be found in what people choose to eat. One major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions is the rapidly increasing consumption of meat, which is expected to double by 2050. With rising wealth, people will eat more meat. But already now meat production produces more greenhouse gases than does the entire transport sector accounting for about 18 percent of all human induced greenhouse gas emissions worldwide.

By now, we all know the consequences of climate change. Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, melting ice caps and glaciers, negative health effects, more food insecurity, biodiversity loss, etc. If temperature increase exceed 1.5 – 2.5 degrees Celsius, the negative consequences for biodiversity, water and food supplies as well as other ecosystem services, will be major.

The consequences of climate change will not fall on people proportionally all over the world. Africa is among the continents most vulnerable to climate change, both because of the impact themselves, which are multiple, but also because in most parts of Africa the ability of people to adapt to those impacts is generally very low.

In general there is a very close relationship between climate change-related suffering and poverty. As climate change increases, so too does the poverty of poor countries and poor people and as climate change increases so too does suffering of the poorest countries and people. Thus, those people who will suffer the most from climate change are those who already suffer from poverty and destitution. And also by their very nature, those people who will suffer the most from climate change are those who have contributed, and are now contributing, the least to it. This is making climate change reflecting grave injustice in the world; or the most unjust situation human kind is encountering at present.

The world has to a certain extent (but not strong enough) responded to global warming. In 1992 the Framework Convention on Climate Change was signed in Rio as part of the Earth Summit with the UNFCCC as executing body. As a result of the convention the Kyoto protocol was drafted and finally ratified in 2005. The primary objective of the climate change convention is to stabilize the concentration of greenhouses gasses in the atmosphere at a level where they will not result in dangerous changes to the Earth's climate system. Some are saying this level is an increase in temperature of not more than 2 degrees C. which corresponds to 450 ppm. Others are saying, this level is too high. It should not be more than 350 ppm. I actually agree with this position.

To achieve the above objective, no major consequence for the Earth's climate system, government in 1992 agreed that climate change is a common but differentiated

responsibility. All states are responsible for addressing climate change, but the affluent ones, which are the largest historical polluters of the atmosphere, agreed that they were obliged to act first to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gasses before the developing countries would be required to limit theirs. In the context of the Kyoto protocol the industrialized countries (except USA, Canada) have agreed to reduce their emissions by 6 percent. This should have been reached in 2012 in relation to the emission level of 1990. Six percent while most scientists agree that we have to reduce the emission level by 80/90 percent. As soon as possible. By 2015 the total emissions worldwide should already go down. This needed reduction is not going to happen. The targets are not set high enough and the pace is too slow. In this way we are not going to win the battle.

Climate change reflects the so-called ‘tragedy of the (atmospheric) commons’. Because the atmosphere is not possessed by anybody, nobody cares about its condition. The problem in this is the pre-occupation of governments and societies with political independence and national sovereignty. Governments (and blocks of countries like the EU) only act if measures are to a major extent in the interest of their own citizens. This goes back to the so-called *Treaty of Westphalia* in 1648. It was decided then that the world should be guided by state recognition, sovereignty and non-intervention. Countries and states should deal with problems which occur within their boundaries. This approach or attitude leads to a ‘you-go-first’ mentality, even as global greenhouse gasses are skyrocketing. The national approach serves national interests and leads to national selfishness.

But there do is a kind of international environmental justice agreement. This is embedded in the *common but differentiated responsibility* principle of the Climate Convention. But countries/states fail to a large extent to implement it.

My conclusion: we cannot expect too much from (blocks of) states in solving the climate change problem unless they accept other principles on which the world should be build and problems should be solved; especially global problems.

The world needs another ethical framework reflects much more the reality of the 21st century. Especially in relation to the process of globalization and the global problems which have emerged. We need, what is called *cosmopolitan ethics* and global conceptions of justice. What do I mean by that?

As I was trying to explain, international justice sees national boundaries as being the basis for justice. A cosmopolitan approach, on the other hand, places rights and obligations on the individual level. Not states/countries should (only) pursue justice. No, you and I, and every person on earth, have obligations and duties to do the right thing; regardless of nationality. From a cosmopolitan perspective, there is no difference between an affluent American and a rich Chinese. It does not matter whether they are a citizen of the USA and China as countries. People in one country do not matter more than people in another. We all have the obligation to do no harm, to prevent extreme suffering, to fix it when we broke it. Cosmopolitan justice accepts the importance of national borders in the world but these are not the basis of justice. It is not vital how much CO₂ a

country like the USA in total is producing but how much individual Americans are contributing to climate change.

This is especially important in the context of climate change. I indicated already that since the 1970's the total amount of greenhouse gas emissions has increased tremendously. What the world is facing today is the increase of hundreds of millions of new consumers in a number of developing countries. Before it was possible to exclusively pointing to the responsibility of developing countries and their citizens as the causes of atmospheric pollution as the bearers of duties to end that pollution and to compensate those who suffer from it. But the world has changed drastically over the past decade. The rich in developing countries now produce fully half of the world's greenhouse gasses. China has overtaken the USA to become the largest national emitter of greenhouse gases. But this does not in itself alter the moral principle very much because the per capita emissions in China remain low in comparison with those in the developed countries. What has changed, however, is the increasing number of new consumers in these countries, many of them very affluent indeed. They are living lifestyles which can be compared with those in the industrialized countries.

I do think that cosmopolitan aims should be incorporated as objectives in climate change diplomacy and policy. Because cosmopolitanism takes individuals as starting point (and not national states), it can help the world to overcome the status quo in national and international policies with regard to climate change policy. Cosmopolitan justice points us to a fundamental conclusion: that affluent people everywhere in the world should limit/reduce their carbon emissions, regardless whether they live in industrialized countries or developing countries. Cosmopolitanism is all about global citizenship and personal responsibility.

However, this all does not mean that North and South are already in balance. If the rich in the world would pay for the fact that their atmospheric footprint is beyond the sustainability level, it would mean that a lot of money would flow from North to South. Not to speak about the ecological debt which has been built up. It amount to 200 billion Euros yearly. This is much more than the total amount of development aid which flows from the North to the South. This is also based on justice, not charity and therefore preferable.

I think that climate change (and global environmental sustainability) needs a new paradigm for international cooperation. It should not relate anymore to North and South, East and West or left and right. The central question is whether the global community is prepared to live within ecological boundaries, within one's individual, atmospheric space. If the world is not prepared to do so, we will eventually all perish. The rich and the poor alike.

But there is something interesting about the above described situation. The poor in the world do not contribute to climate change. But this situation, the fact that they are poor in a material way, expressed in terms of a low carbon lifestyle has, for the first time in history, become an asset. They can earn money with it and at the same time develop themselves. The affluent in the world 'need' these families to buy time in the process of

decarbonization. The rich in the world can not reduce their CO₂-footprint overnight (although they have to bring down their carbon emissions as soon as possible). If they take their global citizenship seriously they have to buy carbon credits till the moment they have reached their personal atmospheric space. The rich and the poor in the world are linked in a process towards low carbon development. The rich have to decrease and the poor can still grow. But both aim at one's personal atmospheric space.

With respect to climate change poor people and communities render an atmospheric service to the affluent in the world. And they have to be paid for it. I think (and hope) that many more payments for environmental services will follow. In relation to biodiversity, water, etc. This is one of the ways forward to generate money for global sustainability and development.

In the book *Why we disagree about climate change* by Mike Hulme, recommended by Ram and of which you will all receive a copy, the writer describes a number of categories of responses to climate change: correcting markets, establishing justice, transforming society and oneself. A few remarks about these responses.

Carbon dioxide has rapidly become a commodity and the markets for carbon permits have become the fastest growing trade in the world. Many people feel uneasy about this development. Climate change is to a certain extent the consequence, or closely related to the problem of globalization and an immoral neo-liberal market economy. If climate change is the consequence of 'unsustainable material consumption, of selfish capitalism', how can the market play a role in solving it? Something deeper, more fundamental is needed than the free-market economy is needed to tackle global warming, is the reasoning of many people. You will find this in Climate Justice Brief nr. 8 (The Dangers of Carbon Markets). And yet we are gathered here to discuss the possibilities of poor, fair trade carbon development. We certainly have to deal with this response to climate change. How we stand in this and which role we would like to play.

The second category of responses is related to different conceptions of justice. I have said a few things about it. The question is how we can stimulate cosmopolitan justice and how do we, as people involved in climate issues, relate to one another and to our societies? How can we stimulate a sense of mutuality and cooperation; that we need each other in working on this issue?

The last category of responses to climate change – beyond correcting markets and appealing to principles of justice – is rooted in the idea of transforming society and personal commitment and transformation. We probably and hopefully all have our own personal values in being here and doing this work. I do hope that this week will provide us with the opportunity to share these thoughts, visions, the good course with one another. They are very important in keeping us going and motivated. This is also a reason why we are gathered here in Bagepalli. Ram, Mario and Pradeep (the third brother) 'landed' in this place a long time ago. They had this vision of transforming Indian society. They are still here. I do hope Ram that you will share your dreams and hopes with us. Because that is the most important thing to keep us going.