

Roundtable for Dialogue on Developing an Ethics Based Climate Change Regime

Patcharapa hall, Prince Palace Hotel, Bangkok

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Background

One cannot conceive of climate change as a problem demanding a status of emergency if the ethical and moral concerns are put aside. In the absence of conceptual frames of equity, environmental justice, inter-and intra-generational equity and global commons, it is almost impossible to appreciate the essence of the UNFCCC. The research agenda, however, for climate change negotiations has been largely influenced by scientific and economic perspective. The negotiations are constantly looking into the economic aspects of climate change regime. The idea of finding an economically optimal ('efficient') climate path, however, is not always ethically efficient. Many value-laden problems are implicitly entailed in economic modelling (value of a statistical life, damage function, rate of discount, distribution of benefits and disadvantages, etc.). Subjecting these variables to empirical methods alone may not be desirable, particularly when these methods are devoid of ethical judgments. Therefore there is an urgent need to redirect focus of research to the interfaces between ethical, legal, economical and political aspects of the climate change regime and involve actors from different regions. An effective governance structure to address climate change should incorporate participatory approach to address global environmental challenge and must take into account the differential capabilities of various stakeholders.

The Roundtable aims to bring together experts from various disciplines and stimulate debate and discussions on a range of related issues exploring the inter-linkages amongst them. By offering a forum for open and inclusive dialogue between various stakeholders, the roundtable tries to find practical and empowering solutions to the problem of global climate change governance. The objective is to locate some of the key questions in the climate change negotiations in an ethical context and undertake discussions pertaining to their legal, economic and political aspects. In order to keep the discussions focused, the Roundtable invites exchange of thoughts and ideas on three debates in climate change negotiations: Intellectual Property Rights; Measurable, Reportable and Verifiable Actions by Parties; and Funding for Adaptation.

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