

Rethinking growth in the light of Contraction and Convergence



Data of Your Paper



Topic

- Resilience
- Lifestyle
- Building
- Resources
- Tourism
- Energy

Title of the Paper

Rethinking growth in the light of Contraction and Convergence

Form of Presentation

- Poster
- Presentation

Short Description (maximum 2500 characters)

The CONVERGE research project is predicated on the concept of 'Contraction and Convergence'(C&C) that informed the Kyoto process. It explores how this simple and elegant concept might be extended to other areas of human activity - particularly consumption of materials and services.

C&C links the key social concept of equal rights to emissions with the key ecological need to reduce emissions. It issues a challenge to existing economic systems to develop equitable processes for emission reductions. CONV aims to rethink globalization by developing our understanding of convergence beyond greenhouse gas emissions to the wider social, economic and ecological dimensions of sustainability. Implicit in this project is the search for an alternative structuring of the growth model of contemporary capitalism.

Firstly, we introduce the CONV project and its theoretical background in more detail. We start with the definition of Sustainable Development proposed in the Brundtland Commission Report "Our Common Future" and unpack it into its constituent elements. These are recognising and meeting human needs (intra and intergenerational perspective) and employing a mode of development which operates within environmental resource limits. We then provide an overview of the strong equity-based Carbon resource management framework that inspired the CONV project which addresses both of these fundamental issues – the original concept of C&C as proposed by the GCI.

We then provide a review of literature relevant to the 2 concepts of a)planetary limits and, b)equity approaches in resource management regimes. We refer firstly to the ways in which ecosystem limits have been proposed and recognised (such as thermodynamics, planetary boundaries, and the ecological footprint, as well as other resource specific limits) in order to provide the theory behind the concept of the need for 'contraction'. We then describe how intra and intergenerational equity is dealt with in resource management regimes (using the concepts of environmental space, budgeting, the idea of the Commons, environmental justice and environmental debt and 'just sustainability') in order to illustrate how the concept of 'convergence' can be

understood. We then introduce in brief one or two examples of the initiatives which the CONV project is studying in detail to illustrate how both C&C may be pursued simultaneously, and in some cases independently. We highlight the different levels and processes of C&C observed.

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