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Assignment #2: Prospectus

6 February 2017

### A Local Approach to Climate Change

Changes in global climatic conditions have increased sporadically over the last few decades. Concerns are being raised regarding the possible implications of these changes like deadly droughts, severe heat waves, astronomical floods, fierce storms, and unpredictable hurricanes among others. The economic consequences of climate change have also been worrying, as well as the evaluation of how the economic factors affect the interventions embraced for the mitigation. While climate change is profoundly a global issue, scholars and scientists have been torn between global and local interventions, with each position amassing substantial support. In the face of this predicament, the central question is: What are the most befitting interventions to climate change?

One conceivable answer is that international equality can pave the way for effective climate policies. For example, scholars such as Ackerman, Stanton, and Bueno claim that the maximization of global utility through international equity is one of the most effective ways of combating climate change. They introduce a model known as CRED, which helps in the maximization of global utility through the optimization of the different levels of savings and investment for different regions (Ackerman, Stanton, and Bueno 171). The resultant international equity leads to the adoption of plausible climate policies. Impliedly, Ackerman, Stanton, and Bueno believe that a global approach would be the best solution to this scourge.

Another reasonable answer is that **impact evaluation** can also significantly be an eye-opener in the global domain regarding the most effective mitigation approaches. However, they warn that before the implementations of the interventions, impact evaluation procedures should be utilized to identify the best approaches for climate change mitigation. After evaluating their impact, Prowse and Snilstveit believe that some of the workable global interventions include clean development **mechanism**, green growth strategies, and forest carbon among others. On the green growth strategies, they hold that “it is vital to ensure that these approaches do not undermine economic growth, but stimulate it through improved energy efficiency and productivity” (Prowse and Snilstveit 240). All these are global approaches that the respective scholars believe would solve climate issues.

While these answers have some weight and truth, they suffer from various weaknesses. One, the maximization of global utility proposed by Ackerman, Stanton, and Bueno is evidently a tall order. The scholars assume a streamlined global economic system whereby all theories work as modeled. However, it is quite impractical to effectively use a model to achieve international equity that maximizes global utility. Two, Prowse and Snilstveit’s impact evaluation approach might not yield any reliable results in the fight against climate change because they profoundly assume that the different regions of the world will strictly adhere to the policies established.

The more feasible answer- my thesis- is that local approaches are the best interventions to climate change. Grimmond asserts that global warming can be controlled by looking at the mitigations that mostly target the urban populations because most emissions come from the cities. With most global warming stemming from the rapidly increasing urban warming, some localized mitigation strategies like the establishment of neighborhoods, redevelopment of

properties, and changing material properties of buildings among others can be very effective (Grimmond 87). Most of these interventions directly affect the individuals at a personal level, and their **embracement** can yield substantial results.

Since equity has proven to be infeasible in the modern world, the **embracement** of alternative strategies without having to consider income redistribution is what Stanton recommends after the analysis of the Negishi welfare weights (Stanton 429). The local interventions do not have to focus on establishing a global balance because such an initiative has always proven to be a pipe dream, whose realization would take centuries. Rather, the local perspective might include an approach whereby members of the society are informed about the ways in which global climate change affect them at the personal level. According to Schoenefeld and McCauley, perceptions and behaviors significantly change after locals receive personal threats about climate change (725). Thus, this might be an effective approach to trigger local interventions.

Another reason why the local approach is preferable is that the international equity necessary for global mitigation might never be achieved. Since the theory of tragedy of commons holds that public goods are subject to massive abuse, international equity as a public good is no different and is also subject to the same tragedy. Thus, it will be very difficult for the nations to embrace the global policies on equity and utility maximization. Rather, some local interventions like reforestation, afforestation, and minimization of energy use would be overwhelmingly useful because they directly affect the societies at the local level (Stanton 399).

The current topic is significant because it widens the scope of thinking about climate change mitigation and offers a rather provocative critique to the existing approaches, particularly by challenging the overreliance on global interventions, most of which might not be as effective

as expected. My thesis is important because it provokes the local societies to take action and stop waiting for the global manna of climate change mitigation to come to their rescue. It further arouses scholars and researchers to delve deeper into the issue and advance the knowledge and developments in the area.

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