INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE FOR CLIMATE RESPONSIBILITY

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Moral and ethical challenge

Mitigation of climate change poses real financial, technological and political challenges. But it also asks profound moral and ethical questions of our generation. In the face of clear evidence that inaction will hurt millions of people and consign them to lives of poverty and vulnerability, can we justify inaction? No civilized community adhering to even the most rudimentary ethical standards would answer that question in the affirmative, especially one that lacked neither the technology nor the financial resources to act decisively.

UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008, p. 68

Climate Responsibility

- Climate change is a global problem requiring the collaboration of all states
- The poor are more vulnerable and will suffer the most
- The only real solution is to stop extracting fossil carbon and releasing it into the atmosphere
- Our civilization is addicted to cheap fossil fuels and energy-driven growth
- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is intended to achieve intergovernmental agreement on reductions of greenhouse gas emissions necessary to avoid damaging climate change

Failure in Copenhagen 2009

- Kyoto Protocol was intended to demonstrate that the countries that caused the problem would respect their commitments to take action first (not solve climate change)
- They proved they were not trustworthy
- Without confidence, the FCCC COP negotiations in Copenhagen were very difficult
- Ethical issues were raised but then ignored
- Some countries intentionally blocked progress
- In the end, the most powerful made a deal among themselves, but failed to agree on binding reductions in CO_2 emissions
- Failure of intergovernmental machinery; failure to consider common interest
- A system founded on national sovereignty cannot address urgent global problems effectively
- Cancun (2010) limited progress; Durban (2011) ?

Requirements for Mitigation

- Use science (IPCC) to determine acceptable limits for global warming (2°C)
- Determine the limit for CO_2 in the atmosphere (350 ppm) to stay below this level
- Decide on ceilings for GHG emissions
- Allocate emission limits equitably between countries
- Establish incentives and penalties
- Monitoring and enforcement

Requirements for Adaptation

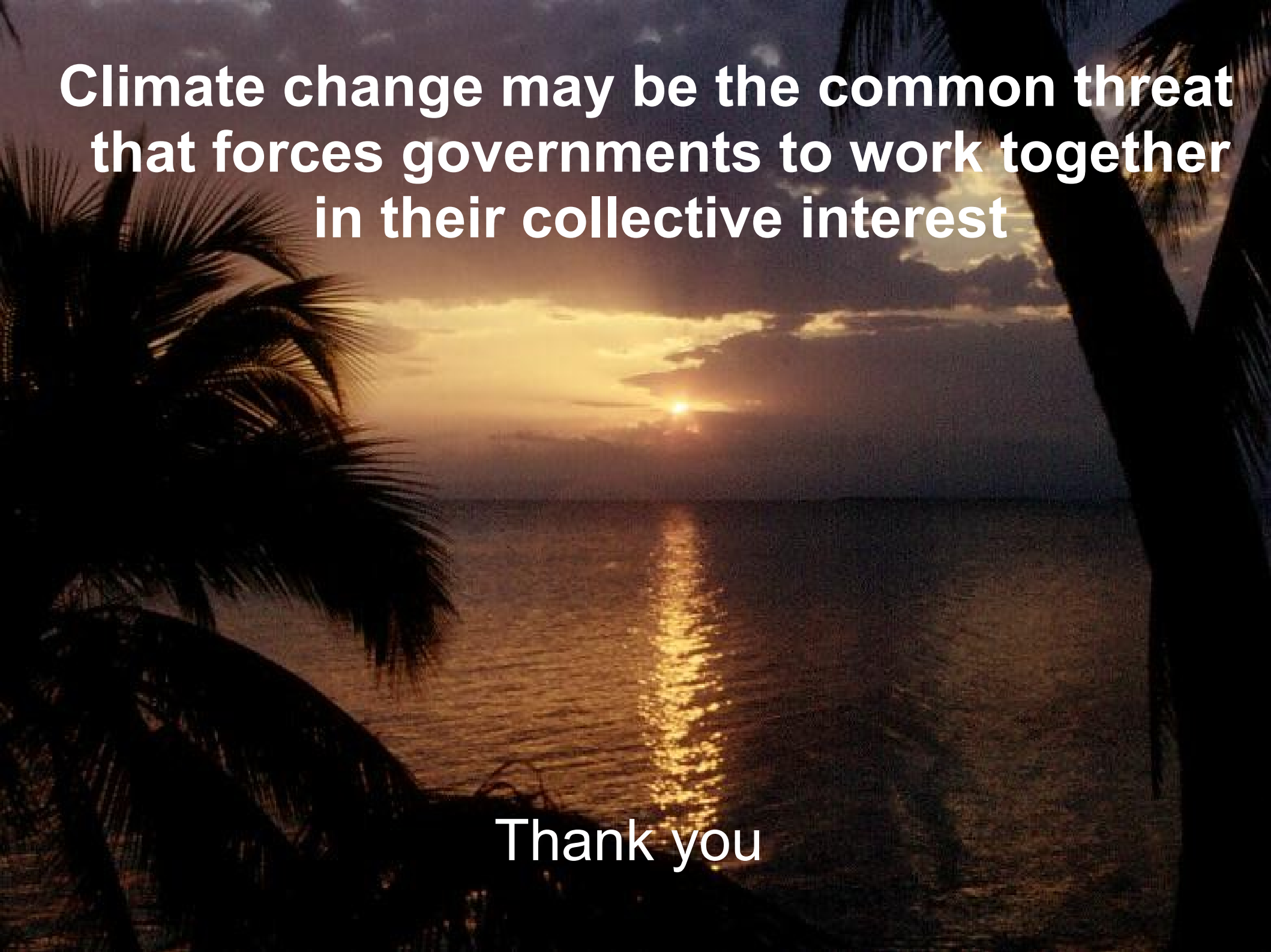
- Identify projected impacts (storms, floods, drought, agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity, polar, acidification, sea-level rise, etc.)
- Determine vulnerable groups (the poor)
- Mechanisms for insurance, liability and compensation with adequate funding
- Anticipate and organize massive migrations, reducing immigration barriers, equitable allocation, aid for resettlement

Restoration

- Global research and monitoring to raise planetary carrying capacity
- Investment fund for restoration
- Dynamic nature conservation
- Restoration of damaged natural systems, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, soil, oceans
- Engineering of new ecosystems to restore basic ecosystem services

Governance Mechanisms

- Strengthen UNFCCC with review and enforcement, dispute settlement, liability and compensation mechanisms
- Scientific assessment of carrying capacity for displaced populations
- International Organization for Migration powers to lower immigration barriers, allocate migrants equitably, assist resettlement
- Ultimately world federal government


Climate change may be the common threat that forces governments to work together in their collective interest
Thank you