

Секция «Глобалистика и геополитика»

Copenhagen as a tipping point in international climate regime

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Copenhagen Summit in 2009 became a critical moment in the development of international climate change cooperation. It showed evidently that countries are not keen to consider global common interests in the case of their contradictiveness to their national ones. After Copenhagen international climate change regime must change. And it does already. The main trends connected with this change are the transition of climate policy to regional and national level and switch to the priority of adaptation measures over mitigation ones.

Why did the conventional climate cooperation fail? Theoretical reasons are well explained by the theory of global public goods. The management of these goods is complicated because of agents' incentives to free-ridership, as well as unoptimality caused by situation of prisoner's dilemma and impossibility to impose sanctions on the opportunistic countries (Westphalian dilemma).

More profound reason lays in the sphere of conflict of national interests in the conditions of huge stakes. Global climate change is in the centre of great number of diverse problems including poverty, water scarcity, food crisis, energy transition, industrial technical transformation, migration, even financial volatility. In the game of such a scale compromise among multiple players is unlikely to be achieved.

At the same time climate policy is impossible to be stopped, as it is pursued now on the base of win-win technologies – not the climate itself is important for countries but the external positive effects of climate policy. It assists economic recovery, creates new jobs, induces technical change, provides energy security and so on. In the conditions of global climate change governance crisis climate policy passes to regional, national and even local levels.

Conventional economic paradigm “global problems must be solved by global efforts” is no longer relevant, and it is very logical Nobel prize in economics 2009 to be won by E. Ostrom who argued the efficiency of local solutions of “the tragedy of commons” problem.

Though lower governance levels are able to manage public goods, they are however more efficient to provide adaptation to climate change which is private good, than to take mitigation measures, that's why the switch to adaptation priority over mitigation appears in the global climate policy of last years.

These shifts have a crucial meaning for the future international climate change regime. If they continue, the central issue of the future global sustainability will become the technical and financial assistance to poor countries (especially for the purpose of institutions improvement) which are totally environmentally incompetent in the conditions of fragmentation of global climate policy. It is this issue that should become central in the future climate change conferences agendas, but not the issues of quota distribution or total amount of GHG emissions reductions.

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