

Kyoto treaty is ‘failing the world’s poor’, say scientists

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Researchers call for a climate justice development fund.

Initiatives aimed at cutting emissions while encouraging economic development are failing the world’s poorest countries, leading scientists from Oxford University are warning.

They say that payments from rich countries to fund development schemes in poor nations are unequally distributed because investors choose stronger, more stable states like China, India and Brazil instead of much poorer nations such as Chad, Nigeria and Sudan.

In their new paper published in the first issue of the journal *Climate and Development*, Dr Chuks Okereke and Dr Heike Schroeder analyse the links between carbon cuts, economic development and justice for [developing countries](#).

The paper ‘How can justice, development and climate change mitigation be reconciled for developing countries in a post-Kyoto settlement?’ assesses the existing initiatives for [greenhouse gas](#) reductions, such as the ‘Clean Development Mechanism’ (CDM). The CDM is part of the Kyoto climate change treaty and allows industrialised nations with emissions reduction commitments to invest in projects that reduce emissions in developing countries as an alternative to their own countries. These certified emission reduction (CER) credits, are traded and sold, and used by industrialised countries to meet a part of their emission reduction targets.

The paper calls into question the effectiveness of these initiatives and is calling for a ‘climate justice development’ fund to be established to pay for climate change adaptation and low carbon development in poor countries, and provide insurance for investors. The scientists add that the post-Kyoto climate change agreement should be more closely tied to world trade and other international treaties.

Dr Okereke, from the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment, said: ‘The current system isn’t working because it lumps too many countries together and ignores the socio-economic gulfs between them. Measures that were intended for all developing countries have ended up helping only a few. Investors only invest where they know they’ll get a return and in many cases, rich governments and private investors have been put off by political turbulence in the countries that most need help.

‘This new fund would help solve that problem. It would target the poorest and most vulnerable nations and provide insurance against

political turbulence and misuse. The post-Kyoto treaty must emphasise low carbon development without neglecting adaptation; at the moment, the reverse is the case,' said Dr Schroeder, from the Environmental Change Institute.

‘Developed countries have failed the developing world on [climate change](#) . We are now looking to key developing countries like China, Mexico and Brazil to demonstrate leadership on this important issue. And they are.’

Provided by Oxford University ([news](#) : [web](#))

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