

"Geopolitics of Regionalism and Climate Change Soft Law Legitimacy: Some Australian Views of Mitigation and Adaptation"

R.A. Herr, Law Faculty and School of Government, University of Tasmania

President Ólafur Grímsson used his opening address to underscore the point that climate change is a common global challenge that requires the world to unite in a common purpose to meet. However, there are clearly significant problems even where his framing of the issue is accepted. The present Government of Australia has accepted the commonality of the threat of climate change and the need for a common purpose in confronting it. Nevertheless, Canberra continues to encounter criticism regarding its efforts to make its contribution internationally to a soft law regime to address the problem. Much of this criticism has come from its nearest neighbours who do not regard the Australian efforts as supportive of their interpretation of the necessary common purpose.

Professor Lonnie Thompson identified the crux of Australia's regional dilemma when he noted that there is a third option for dealing with climate change beyond adaptation and mitigation. This is suffering. These options are not mutually exclusive and elements of all three could be in the policy mix of many states. Mitigating the threat will involve some suffering as, indeed, will adapting to the effects of climate change. Unhappily, however, some countries may find suffering to be their principal option with little chance of enjoying the benefits of a mitigated threat or of having the resources to be able to adapt to change.

Many of Australia's neighbours are too small and too vulnerable to the effects of even modest climate change to view their climate change policy options in the same way that Australia can. They do not really have a choice between mitigation and adaptation. There is only the hope of mitigation against the certainty of suffering possibly even to the point of national extinction. In reality, they cannot afford to adopt a completely open and flexible negotiating stance internationally. Finding a "common purpose" through international compromise can only go so far for the smallest and lowest lying states of the Pacific Islands. As a consequence of this national threat assessment, the Pacific Islands' leadership collectively has identified climate change as "the greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific."¹

Australia is one of the original architects of the Pacific Islands regional system and has been accepted as a member of the post-colonial regional family by the Pacific Islands. Nevertheless, it has found it very difficult to carve out an acceptable leadership role within the region. This has impacted not only on its regional relations but also on Australia's influence as a significant middle power on the development of soft law on climate change. Rather than operating as a leading state within the Pacific Islands' regional system, Australia has been the focus for harsh criticism across the region for protecting its economic interests at the expense of the security of small islands. Why?

¹ AusAID, "Australia's response to climate change in the Pacific", 12 October 2010. See: <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/pacific/pacific-climatechange.cfm>

The answer is very complicated and far too complex to assess in its entirety in a brief presentation. Climate change is especially fraught for Australia, in part, because it is a middle power defined in large measure by its regional influence. However, Australia is almost unique as a middle power in the range of regional “constituencies” within which it operates. Its international interests in climate change are not limited to the South Pacific but stretch from the South Pole to the Equator. Achieving consistency across regional arenas as distinctive as Antarctica and the Pacific Islands has been a challenge to its foreign policy vision. Arguably, Australia has not sought to look at its foreign policy objectives in both regions through a single foreign policy lens. Instead, it has attempted to pursue separate aims in each arena by adopting a common optical solution: bifocalism.

This creates something of a problem for Australia in clearly seeing its national objectives in contributing to shaping an acceptable international regime (soft law) for regulating climate change. Australia confronts the usual problems that all states face in resolving internal domestic policy differences as well as reconciling domestic interests with international pressures. This is as true for Australia as it is for Iceland, of course. Where Australia is unusual is that it must balance a very diverse set of regional commitments in framing its international posture. Juggling conflicted internal pressures with a range of antagonistic and, at times apparently, incompatible external interests has weakened its regional leadership role in developing a climate change regime more than is commonly appreciated.

Australian Domestic Constraints

Domestically, Australia has been hugely and spectacularly conflicted on the issue of climate change. This issue has contributed significantly to the political demise of at least three party leaders in recent years.² Community support for the importance of climate change as a political issue was a factor in the results of the 2007 national elections that brought Labor to power for the first time in 11 years. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd honoured the newly elected Government’s promise to accede to the Kyoto Protocol but he failed subsequently to pass legislation for a carbon emissions trading system when the tax on carbon was defeated in the Senate.

Public enthusiasm for climate change mitigation later diminished to the point that the new Labor leader, Julia Gillard, campaigned on a promise not to introduce a carbon tax.³ Controversially, she was obliged to recant on the pledge when the 2010 election resulted in a minority Government with Labor dependent in part on the Greens Party. Thus, under pressure from the Greens, the Gillard minority Government, again introduced a price on carbon to take effect from 2012 despite substantial industry and public opposition. The

² Despite their different stances on climate change mitigation, Prime Minister John Howard (2007), Opposition Leader Malcolm Turnbull (2009) and Prime Minister Kelvin Rudd (2010) were all severely damaged by the issue and lost office and/or the leadership of their parties in consequence.

³ Emma Wannell, *The Australian Climate Debate: Positioning Australia Within An International Climate Change Context*, <http://www.law.anu.edu.au/COAST/events/APSA/papers/139.pdf>

legislation to impose a price on carbon emissions was certain to pass both houses after the Greens assumed sole control of the balance of power in the Senate from July 2011.⁴

Despite the impending policy win for proponents of an emissions trading scheme, it does seem clear that public support in Australia for addressing climate change mitigation as a high priority has dropped since 2007. The critical factor in this shift in attitudes was the 2008 global financial crisis, which juxtaposed the public's desire to mitigate climate change with the heightened sensitivity to the costs of achieving the low carbon economy that mitigation requires. The post-2008 political atmospherics have seen the claimed economic risks elevated in importance while climate change sceptics have enjoyed more space in the policy arena. A snapshot of the contemporary Australian economy helps to explain this apparent shift in the public mood.

Australia accounts for almost one-third of world's black coal exports and it is an increasingly important global supplier of liquefied natural gas.⁵ Being a major global energy producer is not the only economic factor that has made the issue of climate change mitigation highly politically contentious in Australia post-2008. Almost as important is the importance of forest-based industries. These constitute Australia's second largest area of manufacturing.⁶ Naturally, such economic factors have loomed larger in the public mind in the wake of the global financial crisis where employment and job security have assumed a higher policy priority. Consequently, climate change scepticism and various levels of doubt about the value of mitigation measures, including the regulation of carbon emissions, have enjoyed greater domestic political saliency.

The impact of these considerations on Australia's international position had long been to resist committing to global mitigation measures – especially those that would impact on Australia's economy. However, when Prime Minister Rudd acceded to the Kyoto Protocol in 2008, he appeared to take Australia down the path of contributing directly and, from the Pacific Islands' perspective, positively toward international efforts at mitigation of soft law development. Nevertheless, this momentum stalled shortly afterwards when the global financial crisis struck and national economic interests pushed international cooperation on mitigation down the order of the internal public policy agenda. Yet, as already noted, even here, there remained strong pockets of support for emissions control legislation ensuring that a purely economic approach would not be unchallenged. Kevin Rudd was punished politically in 2010 for failing to secure legislative support for his emissions trading scheme and his successor, Julia Gillard had to restate this legislation, successfully, at the insistence of the Greens Party.

⁴ A suite of "Clean Energy" Bills passed the Senate on 11 November 2011.

⁵ For current statistics on Australian energy production, see: Australia, Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, *Energy in Australia 2011*. Accessed at: <http://www.ret.gov.au/energy/Documents/facts-stats-pubs/Energy-in-Australia-2011.pdf>

⁶ Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "Australian agriculture, fisheries and forestry", <http://www.dfat.gov.au/facts/affaoverview.html>

A Middle Power - From the Pole to the Equator

Australia's international posture is substantially framed by its status as a middle power but, equally, it could be said that its capacity for foreign policy consistency is complicated by its status as a middle power. Australia is an active middle power in at least four arenas – the Antarctic, the South Pacific, Southeast Asian and the Indian Ocean regions. Climate change is important to all four regions but, in terms of Australian foreign policy, especially so in the two arenas where Australia has assumed a leading role.

Australia has had a formative influence on regional systems in both the Antarctic and the South Pacific. Indeed, Australia was a founding member of both. By helping to create the Antarctic Treaty system (ATS), Canberra has played a significant role in the system for negotiating soft law to manage a range of interests in the south polar arena. The ATS has a couple of important distinguishing characteristics. Despite its longevity and increasing diversity as a regional system, the ATS is not especially institutionalised and so has a particularly heavy dependence on soft law. Indeed, arguably, this is the principal basis for differentiating polar law in the north from that in the south. South polar law is focused primarily the soft law regulation of the scientific and economic interests of its “non-resident” members where north polar law is substantially black letter, or “hard”, law for people who reside there and the protection of sovereignty and effective social order.

By contrast with the ATS, the South Pacific regional system, which began in 1947 at a meeting co-convened by Australia in Canberra, is highly institutionalised and bureaucratically managed through an array of regional agencies. Its primary focus is on meeting the development needs of its resident Islands member states and their people. Notwithstanding its high level of institutionalisation, or perhaps in consequence of it, the regulation of regional interests is more through the soft law of political agreements and inter-governmental implementation of regional agency management decisions.

Both regional systems share one unusual characteristic in common at least for Australia. Australia has adopted a somewhat schizophrenic approach to regional relations in each arena so that the objectives of the relationship depend on which role Australia adopts in that region. This has been described in foreign policy terms as “bifocalism”. Of course, Antarctica's bifocalism has been long recognised as the regional system's strength by most of its active participants. In the case of the ATS, bifocalism means that, if one looks through the lens of the Antarctic Treaty, its members see the issue of sovereignty as “frozen” or held in abeyance to a large extent. However, sovereignty is very much an issue for if one looks at Antarctica through a lens of claimant states and non-members of the ATS. Through this lens, Australia is the continent's largest landlord with sovereign responsibilities to match.

In the South Pacific, a different and almost uniquely Australian form of bifocalism exists. Viewed through the lens of the geographic parameters of the Pacific Islands, Australia is clearly an “outsider” – it is not included within region. Since 1947, the Pacific Islands region, as formal arena, has been by the ambit of the Pacific Community (originally known as the South Pacific Commission). The boundaries of the SPC have remained virtually unchanged for half a century regardless of decolonisation and varying memberships of the Pacific

headquarters for Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCMLAR). Australia has played a catalytic role at times in developing the ATS as, for example, its leadership in framing the 1998 Madrid Protocol on Environmental Protection.

The AAT



In recent decades, Australia’s engagement with Antarctic environmental protection has included a special emphasis on climate change research. The research into climate change will remain one of four key themes of the Australian Antarctic research program for the next decade with special focus on addressing critical gaps in knowledge identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.¹⁰ Much of this is basic research to establish critical benchmarks needed to make the case for the urgency of mitigation measures without necessarily advocating specific steps to pursue climate change mitigation. However, specific reference is made to adaptation in Australia’s the research aims for the next decade, which include amongst the outcome objectives: “the capability to adapt to the impacts of climate change.”¹¹

¹⁰ Australia, Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population & Communities “Australian Antarctic science strategic plan 2011-12 to 2020-21”, <http://www.antarctica.gov.au/science/australian-antarctic-science-strategic-plan-201112-202021>

¹¹ *Ibid.*

Striking a balance between mitigation and adaptation in Australia's Antarctic research agenda is not an issue in regional terms. Given the global consensus on the need for both aspects of climate change research, Australia's research effort is uncontested and well regarded by all parties to the Antarctic Treaty. Bifocalism has been not a problem in climate change research in the way it has been for Australia with regard to environmental protection. There is also general global support for protecting the Antarctic environment but enforcement mechanisms bring bifocal considerations into play.

Australia has always taken its claims to sovereignty in Antarctica very seriously but this has been accentuated by the leadership role that Australia played in the process leading to the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (the Madrid Protocol).¹² Currently, there are 49 states parties to the Antarctic Treaty in the consequence that approximately 3/4s of the world are not bound by the Treaty or the soft law of the ATS. The absence of any legal obligations through the ATS on so many countries to comply with the environmental protection regime for Antarctica weighed heavily in the decision of the Labor Government to pass domestic legislation against mining in the AAT.¹³ The same concern underpins the current submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf to maintain Australia rights to the outer continental shelf off the AAT.

Not all ATS members understand or accept the conflicting pressures on Australia; indeed, only four other states (France, New Zealand, Norway and the UK) recognise the Australian claims in Antarctica. Non-claimant states occasionally protest domestic measures in support of the administration of the AAT as an unjustified strengthening of sovereignty against the Antarctic Treaty's Article 4 provisions. These are mistaken insofar as these do not appreciate adequately the bifocal implications of the Article 4 provision with regard to claimant states and sovereignty. While one lens looks to diminish sovereignty as an issue amongst the states parties to the Treaty, the other looks to assure claimants that their claims have not been prejudiced by the operation of the Treaty. Australia has been urged recently to reassert a stronger statist position to protect its sovereign interests in Antarctica.¹⁴ A principal catalyst for this has been alleged Chinese interest in exploiting Antarctic minerals, possibly against the Madrid Protocol.¹⁵

The South Pacific Region in a World Without Ice

Premier Kuupik Kleist, leader of the world's largest island, has argued to the Open Assembly that Greenland is looking to the opportunities for adapting to climate change in part because the effects of climate change to date have opened new possibilities for Greenland. There is also, perhaps an underlying expectation that global mitigation efforts will not succeed so

¹² http://www.ats.ag/documents/recatt/Att006_e.pdf

¹³ *Antarctic Mining Prohibition Act 1991* but this was superseded by *the Antarctic (Environment Protection) Legislation Amendment Act 1992*.

¹⁴ Ellie Fogarty, Preserving Australia's claim to Antarctica, *the interpreter*, 8 August 2011. <http://lowyinterpreter.org/post/2011/08/08/Preserving-Australias-claim-to-Antarctica.aspx>

¹⁵ Andrew Darby, China flags its Antarctic intent, *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 11, 2010. <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/politics/china-flags-its-antarctic-intent-20100111-m287.html>

completely as to erase the opportunities for adaptive climate change strategies may offer to benefit his country. The view from the other end of the scale of world islands looks at the mitigation-adaptation debate far less optimistically.

Most of the peoples of the South Pacific's smallest islands do not believe that adaptation to significant climate change, especially expected rapid sea level rise, offers any real opportunities for them. Countries like Kiribati, the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu are so low lying that the largest share of their limited land mass is scarcely two metres above sea level. Sea level rise is far from the only threat to the microstates of the Pacific Islands. Their water supplies are at risk from salinity contamination and changing rainfall patterns. Extreme weather events threaten lives as well their economies. Less usable land undermines their food security.¹⁶

Without mitigation of the causes of climate change, the scientific modeling indicates very strongly that Professor Thompson's alternative of suffering even to the point of loss of statehood may well be the fate of these small island countries. Naturally, no Pacific Island government willingly embraces the "suffering" alternative although it will be inevitable for many to a greater degree than for more resilient states elsewhere. Moreover, none is able to make any direct impact on global mitigation measures. Thus, the 22 states and territories of the region have had to pursue indirect paths to climate change mitigation.

Two thirds of the Pacific Islands polities are independent states – most with representation at the UN. The "common problem" of climate change has united the small island membership of the UN through such consortia as the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), the Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) grouping and the Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS) group. While these associations pursue a range of other issues, the mitigation of climate change impacts remains at the core of their collective interests. Their influence is not a factor in the UN either militarily or economically but collectively in the voting strength of their 39 members in the General Assembly. This alone has not been enough to date.

The Pacific Islands have hoped, without much success until recently, that they could rely on the South Pacific regional system to add diplomatic muscle to their efforts. They have wanted Australia to serve as a link between their regional needs and the construction of soft law at the global level as suggested by President Grimsson. As already noted, however, climate change has been a vexed issue for Australia in both the domestic and global arenas. This has been no less true within the Pacific Islands regional system but it has been further complicated by Australia's regional bifocalism.

Australia is the largest, wealthiest and most powerful member of the Pacific Islands Forum, which recently celebrated its 40th anniversary in New Zealand. These factors give Australia a significant leadership role in the Forum yet not without a very important constraint. The Forum was established as a post-colonial body to unite the efforts of the independent states of the region against French nuclear testing and to promote their development needs. The inclusion of Australia in the Forum from its first meeting in Wellington was both a pragmatic

¹⁶ The Australian Government's Pacific Climate Change Science Program has recently released a comprehensive report on climate change projections for the Pacific Islands. See: <http://www.cawcr.gov.au/projects/PCCSP/publications.html>

diplomatic gesture and an act of faith. At a practical level, the invitation for Australia to join the new regional association recognised the need for international influence beyond the capacity of the Islands. On the other hand, the Islands accepted on faith that Australia would be willing and able to protect their interests in the broader international community – even against its key Western allies in the region, France and the US.

Thus, being a member of the Forum makes Australia a part of a regional family of states where the other members of this family expected explicitly that Australia would support the family's interests extra-regionally. And, this is the point of contention with regard to climate change policy. The nature of Australia's domestic interests and the geopolitics of the international debate on climate change have prevented Australia from being a committed advocate for the Pacific Islands in international conferences such as the 2010 Copenhagen meeting. The separation of the Pacific Small Islands Developing States group's interests from those of Australia was painfully evident to the Pacific Islands.¹⁷ Notwithstanding the change in policy and accession to the Kyoto Protocol, the PSIDS believed Australian support was at best lukewarm. This is in stark contrast to the passion the Pacific Islands' leadership brings to the issue. As previously noted, the Forum leaders identified climate change as their greatest single security threat and they continue hold to this view.¹⁸

Perceptions of the Australian position may change with the successful passage of the carbon emissions trading scheme legislation but some diplomatic damage to its regional standing appears to persist. Some of Australia's neighbours feel that its security ties to the US and dependence on energy sales to China *inter alia* contribute to continuing domestic political pressures that cut across Canberra taking a strong international position completely supportive of the Forum Island countries (FICs). Despite awareness of Australia's conflicted national foreign policy priorities regarding climate change, the FICs have been unable to shake a sense of disappointment that Australia does not feel its obligations more strongly. This is one of the ironic curses of Australia's Pacific Islands bifocalism. The FICs are aware of it yet rarely seem to make allowances for it. Indeed, at times it seems there is a regional industry in "Canberra-bashing" as critics exploit the tensions inherent in Australia's schizophrenic regional status.

Diminished trust in Australia's role as a regional leader on climate change in the Pacific Islands is not just a consequence of differing national views of mitigation or adaptation. There have been occasions when the FICs have believed that Australia has used its leadership in the Forum to advance its own views internationally by giving the appearance of

¹⁷ See: Nic Maclellan, "Climate Conference Fails Vulnerable Nations", *Pacific Islands Business*. http://www.islandsbusiness.com/islands_business/index_dynamic/containerNameToReplace=MiddleMiddle/ocusModuleID=18998/overrideSkinName=issueArticle-full.tpl

¹⁸ This has been reaffirmed by the most recent Forum. See: Forty-Second Pacific Islands Forum, Forum Communiqué, 7–8 September 2011. <http://forum.forumsec.org/pages.cfm/newsroom/press-statements/2011/forum-communique-42nd-pif-auckland-new-zealand.html>

being legitimated by a regional position. This was most notably evident at the 2008 Pacific Islands Forum meeting that Australia's Prime Minister Kevin Rudd chaired as host.¹⁹

There is one aspect of the regional debate on mitigation versus adaptation where adaptation may be the only hope for those FIC for which mitigation is genuinely the only hope they might have of preserving their statehood. The apparent contradiction is resolved by reversing expectations of where the adaptation will take place. Unless climate changes are mitigated sufficiently to preserve the smallest and lowest-lying countries, they cannot benefit from any form of adaptation directly. Nevertheless, they can be the beneficiaries of adaptive strategies by other states. In this case, the adaptive strategy would be to facilitate the relocation of Islanders displaced by climate change. Indeed, Australia once proposed just this solution to Nauru in 1962 when phosphate mining was expected to make the Nauru uninhabitable and the Nauruans homeless.

More recently, Australia has been asked at various times to consider making arrangements for climate change (environmental) refugees as rising sea levels threaten the sovereignty of states such as Kiribati, the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu. Yet, this proposal has not enjoyed wide favour in the Islands or Australia for a number of reasons. The Islands would prefer to save their homelands and so some fear, quite reasonably, that having an escape clause would take the pressure off the rest of the world, including Australia to support climate change mitigation measures whole-heartedly. The resistance to the prospect of national extinction through migration seems to be enjoying somewhat more favour, as the reality of the dangers appears to be looming larger.

For its part, Australia has found migration from the Pacific Islands a somewhat contentious domestic issue. Controlling "kanaka" (Pacific Islander) migration was one of the reasons for federation of Australia more than a century ago. In more recent years, there have been complaints that Islanders have used New Zealand as a loophole to secure easier entry in to Australia. And, unlike New Zealand, Australia makes no special immigration arrangements for Pacific Islands despite the close ties of the Forum and other regional associations. Nevertheless, calls for Canberra to recognise that special environmental refugee status may well have to be considered if mitigation measures come too little and too late to save the Pacific Islands.

A designated immigration strategy for providing a safe haven for Pacific Islanders displaced by ice melting around the world is not yet a reality. Nonetheless, there are some straws in the wind to indicate that Australia's current position may be shifting. The principal strategy remains the offering of substantial aid to the Pacific Islands for climate change adaptation. The International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative, a recent three-year program has been developed to meet high priority adaptation needs in the region. The project is intended to strengthen food security; guarantee access to reliable water; assist coastal zone management; and enhance disaster preparedness. Additionally, Australia has developed a program for providing educational opportunities through such mechanisms as the Australia Pacific Technical College initiative to provide training with qualifications that are recognised

¹⁹ See two reported accounts of this perception in: <http://www.crikey.com.au/2009/09/21/leaked-document-oz-discouraged-pacific-islands-from-tough-emissions-stance/> and <http://www.crikey.com.au/2009/08/13/yes-bwana-how-australia-called-the-shots-at-small-islands-forum/>

in Australia. This is very likely to enhance Pacific Islander migration prospects into Australia in the longer term.

Australia's Regional Place in a World without Ice

Regional relations have made a distinctive contribution to the considerations that inform the bargaining position that Australia brings to the global negotiating table addressing climate change and the prospect of a world without ice. This brief intervention in the Open Forum seeks only to highlight some of the special regional complexities that beset Australia in trying to find a coherent and consistent policy position. These are significant in the broader context of this Open Forum because Australia plays a central role in two regions where the impact of climate change on ice is especially noteworthy – Antarctica and the South Pacific.

The geopolitics of managing Australia's various regional roles while balancing these with powerful domestic economic interests has made policy conflicts and inconsistencies a virtual certainty. Moreover, changing domestic and international political considerations have further complicated steering a straight course in recent years. The current domestic developments to create a national emissions trading scheme, or "carbon tax" has restored some credibility for Australia in the Pacific Islands region regarding international advocacy for the region regarding global mitigation measures but the vicissitudes of the world economy has undercut some of the domestic support for climate change mitigation measures within Australia. Interests outside the polar region will not affect Antarctic research interests unless the anti-mining provisions of the Madrid Protocol were breached. This would very likely compel Australia to take a more strongly "statist" view of its sovereignty claims.

Unhappily, for relations between Australia and the Pacific Islands region, a consensus position on climate change has proved elusive. The FICs have wanted an international champion, a committed regional advocate, but Canberra has not been able to satisfy these desires as fully as many have wanted. Australia cannot promote a position internationally that it could not defend domestically. The Gillard Government seems to have grasped the nettle, reluctantly perhaps, but in a way that supports global mitigation strategies in a way closer to the position of the Pacific Islanders than any previous Government. This will not eliminate all the crosscutting pressures on achieving a consistent international position on climate change but it may reduce some regional tensions on this issue. If the Islands accept the "carbon tax" as a repositioning of Australia on mitigation internationally, it may well be that its adaptation support will enjoy fuller support across the region too.

This brief intervention does not canvas all the complexities of the Australia's efforts to steer a consistent course on climate change across all levels of policy-making. These difficulties are exemplified by just some of the challenges both within and between the two regional arenas review in this paper. Australia's problems are unusual to some extent but are scarcely unique in the round since all states have their own peculiar tests in addressing climate change and finding their way between the Scylla and Charybdis of mitigation and adaptation responses. Hopefully, by understanding the difficulties countries like Australia face, we can better see a way forward to meeting President Grimsson's challenge to find a "common purpose to meet the common problem" of avoiding a world without ice.