On international Climate Regimes and Beyond

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Abstract

The construction of agreements to mitigate climate change is based on the elaboration of principles, standards, rules and procedures for decision-making around which the expectations of negotiating agents are expected to converge. Around this construction is articulated the concept of International Regime, on which, far from having a consensus, a debate in the field of International Political Economy is reserved. In this debate, different and often conflicting perspectives are confronted not only on the concept of regimes, but also on the understanding of the phenomena that can originate them, going as far as political, geopolitical and ideological tensions, as well as factors linked to the traditions of thought on which approaches are built. The solution to the problem of cost-benefit sharing within international climate regimes has been incorporated in the United Nations process by incorporating principles such as the Common But Differentiated Principle of Responsibility (CBDR) and the Principle of Historical Responsibilities (PHR). They are principles that are at stake within the reconfiguration of forces in the transition to the new post-Kyoto climate regime. The aim of this article is to evaluate the limitations of the concept of regimes, in order to overcome these limits, listed by Strange (1982) and retrieved by Gale (1998): i) the ephemeral, momentary, transitory character, since the approach of regimes would be a passing fad; ii) the imprecision of terminology; iii) the value bias, taking as stability relation a subject to different logics; iv) the static view and v) State-centered reductionism incorporating a dynamic vision, where it is possible to observe the position of the countries in this structure, as well as the economic, technological and geopolitical powers of the actors that go beyond the states in the climatic debate. The hypothesis behind the research is that climate negotiations in the form of regimes provide an opportunity for countries to legitimize their national policies in the search for a favorable domestic position within the international division of labor, seeking new alliances, in new relations of strength and power. Based on Strange text (1982) will be presented the criticisms to the concept of international regimes from the perspective of the International Political Economy as well as actions to overcome such limitations, called by the author of "dragons". It will be analyzed the context of the debate in which the effectiveness of the regimes is questioned, if it can cover all the problematic and the actors involved in causes that cross the climatic changes also debating how climate governance takes place in the 21st century in international regimes. In addition, will be presented paths proposed by authors such as Okereke, Bulkeley and Schroeder (2009), Gale (1998) and Newell et al. (2015) who understand that in international regimes it is necessary to analyze the interactions between the actors, as well as the bargaining power among actors in climate negotiations. Thus, this article offers an alignment of contributions intended to put into perspective the need to move beyond the approach to regimes for the treatment of global climate governance.
Keywords: Climate Regimes, Regimes Theory, Climate Change, Global Climate Governance