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Between Money and the Planet? The Interests of Post-colonial Countries in Climate Negotiations

Elbinsar Purba[1]
[1] School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University, China

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Correspondence
Email:
22110170063@m.fudan.edu.cn

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the interests of post-colonial countries in climate negotiations. It does so by analysing what they need and demand as a consequence of injustice and damages caused by colonialism, which have not been extensively discussed in the current literature. Using content analysis as a methodological approach, the author collected and examined country statements delivered at the Conferences of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The analysis reveals that there are three needs and three demands that commonly lie in the interest of formerly colonised countries. Among them, securing financial resources stands high in their priority. However, this does not mean that provision of funding lessens their perception of historical injustice. They still demand for substantive actions from developed countries to correct the past wrongdoings. While some experts suggest transfer of more resources from the Global North to the Global South to ease the climate decision making process, this paper highlights that although such measure might help build trust, it does not necessarily break the deadlock in climate negotiations.

INTRODUCTION

In February 2022, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report regarding the impacts of climate change on the planet and its inhabitants together with the analysis of human adaptive capacities and limits, as part of its sixth assessment report (Pörtner et al, 2022). The report specifically acknowledges that in part colonialism serves as the cause of the climate crisis and further exacerbates the risks faced by the vulnerable societies. This is the first time the IPCC incorporates colonialism into climate discourse, thirty years after the scientific body published its first report in 1990. Before the report came out, the nexus between colonialism and climate change was rarely explored in formal intergovernmental platforms. Such neglect persisted despite the extensive studies pointing out the detrimental consequences of colonialism, leading to repeated calls for the international community to take serious actions to factor historical causes in climate debate (Ford et al, 2016; Whyte, 2018; Dhillon, 2022). Incorporating the impacts of colonialism was deemed crucial given that imperial oppression not only enabled appropriation of resources that led to excessive release of historical emissions but also impaired the capacity of the formerly colonized countries to tackle the adverse impacts of climate change. For some observers, therefore, the IPCC report marks a significant milestone in understanding the actual roots of climate injustice as the negative consequences of colonial history are now formally recognized (Funes, 2022).

Despite this important breakthrough, however, academic discussion on how to address climate injustice arising from colonialism and imperialism is still lacking. In the current literature, such issue is mainly discussed in the context of historical responsibility, particularly allocation of

responsibility. One of the proposed approaches to assign responsibility is based on conceptual understanding of responsibility which focuses on the obligation of developed countries to take lead in climate action (Rajamani, 2000). Colonial injustice is used as the basis for such allocation, however, this approach does not specifically assign responsibility to developed countries according to their past wrongdoings (Caney, 2006; Halme, 2007; Friman and Strandberg, 2014). This is different from the other approach based on proportional understanding of responsibility, which allocates responsibility to developed countries relative to their contributions to the global emissions (Friman and Hjerpe, 2014, p. 5).

It remains unclear as to what kind of reparation the injured parties want to correct the past wrongdoings. What kind of remedies do former colonies expect the global climate governance to promote? More specifically, in the context of climate cooperation, what exactly do they want from the Global North to remedy the historical injustice? There is no comprehensive explanation to these questions in the current scholarship. Some scholars have analysed the interests of developing countries, but they do not take into account the impacts of colonial experience (Williams, 2005; Sforna, 2019). Instead, it is often assumed that Southern countries are mainly interested in securing financial aid from international climate cooperation. Although such assumption might have some relevance, it does not offer a comprehensive picture and even contains a puzzle. If money is their main interest, why do climate negotiations increasingly face conflicts between developed and developing countries in time when the amount of money provided by developed nations increases quite significantly? For example, in 2022, development assistance provided by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) rose to USD 211 billion, marking an increase of 17% in real terms from previous year and 0.37% of total gross income of DAC members (OECD, n.a.). In the specific context of climate change, during the Copenhagen conference in 2009, developed countries offered financial support to developing countries amounting to 30 billion dollars for 2010-2012 in addition to 100 billion dollars per year by 2020, but since this very conference, climate conferences increasingly face stalemates.

This paper aims to fill this gap by exploring the interests of post-colonial countries in climate negotiations. The author believes that this discussion carries both academic and practical importance. Academically, it will advance the current theories on the interests of different groups in climate negotiations as well as academic discourse on climate justice. In addition, it will complement the literature on historical responsibility, which currently focuses on the existence and allocation of responsibilities, by introducing the perception of the parties who were negatively affected by the past wrongdoings. Practically, the analysis offered by this paper is expected to offer useful insights for climate negotiators, particularly in better understanding the concerns and interests of developing countries as one of the leading groups in international climate negotiations. Although formerly colonised countries and developing countries are not exactly the same, the two consist of substantially the same actors.

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper aims to explore the interests of post-colonial countries in climate negotiations. The paper limits the scope by examining what they need and what they demand from developed countries in light of the damages caused by colonial oppression. The object of observation is focused on former colonies of Europe, based on Bastian Becker's Colonial Dates Dataset (COLDAT) as compiled by Our World in Data (Our World in Data, 2023). Europe's colonial record was selected for two reasons. First, former colonial powers that controlled the Global South were mainly European countries e.g. Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain.

Second, in light of the North-South divide in climate governance, Europe serves as appropriate representation of the Northern block.

Relaying on content analysis, the author studied their needs and demands by examining the country statements that they delivered at the High-level Segment of the UNFCCC COP. Individual country statements were used instead of joint statements given that joint statements delivered by a group of countries such as the G77/China do not reflect the differences held by the group members (Williams, 2005, pp. 60–61; Vihma, Mulugetta and Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, 2011). The UNFCCC COP serves as the main platform for global climate negotiations and demonstrates the dynamics among different countries. Its High-level Segment is a shortened session in which head of state or relevant minister from each country delivers a national statement and outlines the country's desires and concerns (Bagozzi, 2014). The author limited the research to the last two COPs namely COP 27 held in 2022 and COP 28 in 2023, which shall demonstrate the latest perception of UNFCCC's member countries, and retrieved statements from the two COPs that were available on the UNFCCC's website. In addition to former colonies, statements delivered by non-European countries that were not colonised by Europe were collected for comparison. In total, 145 statements were analysed. The author analysed the needs and demands mentioned in the statements using thematic coding, measured their weight based on frequency, and interpreted the findings with the help of experts' views available in the literature.

As an analytical framework, this paper situates the discussion in the climate justice framework and makes use of existing literature with regard to state interests in climate negotiation. Climate justice framework theorises that climate change is not merely about environmental issues as it involves asymmetrical power dynamics and requires fair distribution of costs and benefits that embody social, political, and ethical issues (Lanneau, 2021; Singh, 2023). Central to the climate justice framework is equity and historical responsibility, which in essence promote that industrial states are historically responsible for the current climate crisis and thus shall bear special responsibility. This has been formally acknowledged by the international community through the adoption of common but differentiated responsibilities in the international climate agreement (Roberts and Parks, 2006). In fact, the preamble of the UNFCCC admits that "the largest share of historical and current global emissions of greenhouse gases has originated in developed countries". In line with the notion of equity and historical responsibility is the concept of distributive justice, which further advocates for fair distribution of burden among nations (Sachs, 2015). Those who are not the main contributor of emissions often disproportionately suffer from the adverse impacts of global warming and shall not be given higher responsibility to stabilise the atmosphere. All these concepts are crucial in understanding the narratives and discourse in climate negotiations such as UNFCCC COP. Less-developed countries often invoke these concepts in climate negotiating platforms when presenting their interests and requesting for support from the international communities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Needs and Demands of Post-colonial Countries

It is often suggested that the Global North has special responsibilities to preserve the planet and help the Southern countries in the fight against climate change since the former owes reparation to the latter for the historical injustice and damages caused by imperialism and colonialism. There are several reasons for this argument. First, the beginning of industrialisation in the North led to excessive release of emission, far beyond the emission of the rest of the world. An estimate shows that Northern

countries were responsible for three times the emissions of developing countries (Baumert, Herzog and Pershing, 2005, p. 32). The shares in total energy-related cumulative contributions to CO2 emissions are 48% for the United States (US) alone and 24% for Western Europe from 1900 to 2008 (Botzen, Gowdy and Bergh, 2008, pp. 571–572). Moreover, the contributions that many industrialised countries of the Global North made to emissions in times past are often much larger (Mason-Case and Dehm, 2021, p. 172). It is also important to note that giant corporations usually serve as the direct actor behind the excessive emission, which are mostly headquartered in the Global North. Data show that 100 large multinational corporations contribute to around 71% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of the global industry (Honduras, 2023).

Second, rapid industrialisation in the North was possible because of resources from Southern countries. Natural resources such as petroleum and mining were extracted from the South to spur Northern industrialisation, which often occurred with conquest, slavery, and servitude during the period of colonialism. Third, this pattern left poor countries with damaged environment. Researchers discovered that a significant portion of environmental degradation in the Global South stems from production aimed at exports to meet the demands of Northern consumers, rather than serving local needs (Rees and Westra, 2003, pp. 110–112). As an example, the Amazon rainforest has undergone notable devastation which, according to the former minister of energy and mining of Ecuador, was primarily driven by the need to grow soybeans and export protein to the wealthiest countries in the world (Feffer, 2023, p. 24). Fourth, colonialism brings devastating impacts on the local communities and economy of former colonies. Drought, storm, floods, and rising sea level are among the negative impacts of climate change that often harm the local communities disproportionately. Indeed, the legacy of colonialism has undermined economic development of many developing countries. For example, an author concluded that the recent economic stagnation and national crisis in Nauru are consequences of previous colonial deprivations, along with the inability of successive postcolonial governments to break free from the dependency imposed by former colonial powers (Wardhani, 2023). Furthermore, the irresponsible actions of the Northern countries in the past leave the Southern countries with limited options for future economic development. Due to the disproportionate amount of past emission from the former, atmospheric space has been taken up, hindering the latter from contributing their fair part. Consequently, Southern countries have less options for their development pathways within the planetary boundary, leading to inter-generational inequalities (Shue, 2014, p. 62).

The nexus between climate change and colonialism is well illustrated by president of Sri Lanka during COP 27:

> "It is a known fact that the practice of colonialism transferred the rich resources of Asia and Africa to Europe and were used to industrialize their countries. We became poor from this plunder. The unbridled industrialization of the developed economy is also the root cause of climate change, the consequences of which, we the poor countries are forced to suffer". (Sri Lanka, 2022)

In light of the historical injustice, Southern countries often voice their concerns and interests in climate negotiation platforms. Researchers have tried to study these concerns and interests. In the context of developing countries, it is suggested that there are three large categories of concerns (Najam, Huq and Sokona, 2003, pp. 223–226). First, the principles of inter- and intra-generational equity and responsibility have been largely downplayed. Initially, these principles significantly shaped the discussions on global climate change especially before the UNFCCC was adopted, but then gradually lost their importance notably after the adoption of the Kyoto agreement in 1997.

Second, rather than prioritising the risks and negative consequences faced by the vulnerable communities and countries, the global climate cooperation has demonstrated a move towards minimising responsibilities of emitting countries. Third, the global cooperation has also moved to become a platform for managing global carbon trade and focused on achieving short-term targets. For developing nations, the international community should focus instead on stabilising greenhouse gas accumulation in the atmosphere.

In addition, it is suggested that there are at least five common interests that bind developing countries together (Rajão and Duarte, 2018, p. 3). First of all, developing economies have interest in tying environmental protection with development and contend that the global environmental cooperation shall not undermine their right to pursue economic development. They often emphasise that developed countries did not meaningfully internalise environmental costs during the emergence of their industry and, therefore, it is unfair if economic development in developing countries has to be restricted by the global climate cooperation (Williams, 2005, p. 62). They want the international community to respect their right to development and to give them space to release emissions that are needed for their development as acknowledged by the UNFCCC. Secondly, developing countries have interest in ensuring that developed countries provide dedicated financial support for environmental projects in the Global South, separate from official development assistance committed outside the specific context of climate action. Thirdly, they need other support from developed countries in the form of technology transfer. This is equally crucial since it is challenging for Southern countries to avoid using environmentally damaging technologies in the absence of adequate support from the North. Fourthly, they need support to enhance their capacity not only in climate action but also in negotiating climate agenda in international platforms. Lastly, as they have less capacity and resources, they want the international community to give them more time than developed countries in promoting green transition and climate-friendly development.

Despite these commonalities, it is important to note that there are different interests among developing countries. Some studies have explored how different groups of developing countries based on their specific circumstances put different priorities to climate cooperation (Costantini, Sforna and Zoli, 2016; Nieto, Carpintero and Miguel, 2018; Sforna, 2019). For example, some countries are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change than others, making them more interested in climate mitigation (Sforna, 2019).

The above discusses negotiation positions mainly in the context of developing countries in general. What about formerly colonised countries? The author analysed the statements delivered by former colonies of European countries at the High-level Session of the last two COPs and examined their interests based on two dimensions, namely their needs and demands. The analysis reveals that there are three needs that are frequently raised by these countries.

The first need is available and accessible financial support. This is understandable given their limited fiscal capacity, while tackling GHG emissions is costly. The UNFCCC Secretariat estimates that nearly USD 6 trillion of funding will be necessary for developing countries to execute their climate action initiatives by 2030 (UNFCCC Secretariat, 2024a). Globally, the IPCC indicated that keeping global temperatures below 2°C and 1.5°C by the year 2100 will necessitate investments of USD 1.7 trillion and USD 2.4 trillion, respectively, just in the energy sector (Kreibiehl et al, 2022, pp. 1554–1555). Fulfilling this financial need is challenging for many formerly colonised countries. For them, the increasing costs associated with climate mitigation and adaptation are straining their finances and deteriorating credit ratings, which were already under pressure in many countries, coupled with economic vulnerability and high level of debt. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic

has intensified these financial strains, further constricting public budgets (Kreibiehl et al, 2022, p. 1549). Expression of the need for available and accessible financial support is also motivated by the fact that accessing international climate funds is often challenging for many countries who need them. As the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) shared during COP 28, access to affordable, sustainable, predictable, and scalable finance is currently limited, slow and sometimes precluded due to anachronistic eligibility criteria and overburdensome bureaucratic procedures (CARICOM, 2023).

The second need is technology transfer, knowledge sharing, capacity building and technical support. Indeed, these are crucial for emission reduction. As one of former colonies emphasised, efforts to combat climate change cannot succeed without strengthened international cooperation on sharing knowledge and transfer of technology from industrialised nations (Angola, 2022). There has been international cooperation in these areas, but progress is uneven and challenges remain. For example, the IPCC report noted that the absence of a comprehensive and holistic approach in the Clean Development Mechanism, which has been in place since the mid-2000s, has resulted in only a partial transfer of technology, primarily benefiting more powerful developing nations, while offering little in terms of capacity building and actual advancements in clean technology (Pathak et al, 2022, p. 138). In addition, the UNFCCC COP also noted that gaps and needs remain in addressing the priority issues related to capacity building that were previously identified by this body (UNFCCC COP, 2019). For this reason, the UNFCCC COP suggested further development of capacity of individual, institution, as well as the system including through training activities, and encouraged its member states to strengthen cooperation with research as well as academic institutions.

There are various obstacles that make it challenging to identify and fulfil capacity building needs of Southern countries. Apart from generic obstacles to capacity development, specific features of climate change often make planning for capacity development more challenging: the uncertainty of impacts, technology-related uncertainties, and the scale and urgency of the challenge (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier and Sedemund, 2022, p. 10). Moreover, it is important to note that climate change is an evolving issue, which requires new and updated technologies and capacities. A report from the UNFCCC Secretariat highlights several emerging tasks to ensure that technologies and capacities are aligned with the challenges (UNFCCC Secretariat, 2024b, p. 5). These include advancing initiatives in information and communication technology and pioneering technologies, exploring the potential of solar-powered electricity with a view to reducing fossil fuels, creating tools for preparing short-term energy outlook, reforming education sector, fostering entrepreneurship that is green and inclusive, promoting climate-smart agricultural practices and market platforms, improving disaster risk management including through information and capacity building, and examining how climate change shapes demographic trends.

The third need that is frequently cited is sustainable economic development. As the history of industrialisation in Western countries illustrated, economic development often involves release of emissions. There is concern among former colonies that the global climate agenda might jeopardise the trajectory of their economic development, therefore, demand that climate cooperation shall go hand in hand with development in the Southern countries and shall not prevent them from accessing natural resources needed to spur their economy. This was emphasised by the president of Angola during COP 28 who believed that when establishing a set of new targets for climate financing, the international community should consider various factors to ensure that they would not hinder or impede the economies of developing countries, which "are not capable of giving up from one moment to the next on natural resources, namely oil, as the main source of income on which they considerably rely, to ensure their survival, their economic and social development" (Angola, 2023). This appeal illustrates the centrality of climate justice framework in the narratives developed by Southern

countries, in this case invoking the principle of equity. As noted earlier, this is not merely a theoretical concept. The UNFCCC itself acknowledges that developing countries will release more emission in light of their economic development.

While they support global fight against climate change, at the same time formerly colonised countries often stress that they have a legitimate task of eradicating poverty, providing social care, and ensuring dynamic economy at home. This indicates that they have a lot of priorities at home, which might affect the amount of attention, energy and resources that they can allocate to the global climate cooperation.

Moving on to the demands, formerly colonised countries raise the following demands to the Global North. Firstly, they want developed countries to shoulder more responsibilities for the overall climate agenda. This is not a request for a specific measure, but general responsibilities of developed countries to do and provide whatever is needed for global climate agenda. To strengthen their argument, former colonies often cite terms such as "climate justice" and "historical responsibility" in their speeches. In addition, unequal capacity is another reason for them to push overall responsibilities towards the Global North, in line with the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDRRC).

It is important to note that, beyond requesting developed countries to shoulder more responsibilities, some former colonies went further by promoting legal means to seek accountability. The Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law (COSIS), which was established on the sideline of COP 26, was active in pioneering this move (Antigua and Barbuda, 2022). COSIS is specifically tasked with exploring and promoting international law on climate change. Notably, the Commission aims to advance legal discourse on the responsibilities of states to protect and preserve the marine environment as well as their accountability for harm resulting from violation of these obligations (Antigua and Barbuda, 2021, art. 1 (3)). Interestingly, this initiative has gained support. Last year, the United Nations General Assembly issued a resolution requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the obligations of states with regard to climate change and the court has responded to the request.

Secondly, formerly colonised countries ask for practical assistances from developed countries especially in the form of finance, technologies, and capacity development. This is different from mentioning of these issues as a need as discussed above, as the category of demand only counts sentences that specifically contain a request for support from developed countries. This means that mentioning of finance, technologies and capacity as a need is often followed separately by a request to supply them. Moreover, these practical assistances are different from the overall or general responsibilities under the first demand above.

This request is motivated by the slow progress made by many developed countries in fulfilling the commitment that they previously made, especially financial commitment. In 2009, developed countries pledged to provide USD 100 billion of annual funding by 2020 with a view to helping developing countries in their efforts to tackle climate change. This target was extended out to 2025 in 2015 under the Paris Agreement. However, more contribution is needed to meet the target, while achievement of this target is important to maintain trust. As Viet Nam highlighted, "We must turn our prior words into concrete actions, and make good on our promises. Such is the key to bolster trust among countries…" (Viet Nam, 2023). Some countries even indicate that they will take more climate actions at home only after they receive the financial support as promised by developed countries (Malaysia, 2023). In addition to the commitment problem, colonised countries repeat this

request as they feel that some developed countries try to reduce their commitment by proposing certain methodologies for counting their financial contribution.

Thirdly, former colonies demand that developed countries take more emission reduction. As one of the countries stressed, "developed countries parties must show the lead in reducing their greenhouse gas emissions… in order to achieve net-zero emission by 2050" (Timor-Leste, 2023). The rationales for this demand include the fact that developed countries are the major contributor of the GHG emissions which was enabled by colonialism, therefore they shall be responsible for restoring the temperature. For them, fairness can only be maintained in this way, in line with the CBDRRC principle. Again, mentioning of this demand is measured differently from the overall responsibilities of developed countries.

In addition to the three demands addressed to developed countries, there is another demand that formerly colonised countries often raise but not specifically addressed to developed countries, namely a request to transform international financial institutions. This demand is addressed to the international community as a whole. Previously colonised countries view that the current global financial regime is unfit and involves burdensome procedures. At COP 27, president of Ghana explicitly mentioned that restructuring the current architecture of the global finance is an urgent need and requested lenders to swap debt of African countries to climate finance (Ghana, 2022). For others, the reform is needed to promote more grant-based and concessional finance for the most vulnerable nations (Belize, 2023). Another delegate even expressed the preference for a reformed global financial architecture rather than receiving development aid from donor countries (São Tomé and Príncipe, 2023).

Understanding the Needs and Demands: Colonial Experience as a Driving Force

To what extent are the statements influenced by the history of colonialism? An analysis based on frequency of mentioning shows that colonial experience serves as an important factor behind the interests of former colonies in climate negotiations. The duration of colonial experience generally has a positive correlation with the frequency of their needs and demands mentioned in the statements. Countries that have colonial experience raise their needs for accessible finance as well as economic development more frequently than countries that were never colonised do. Moreover, they are more frequent in demanding developed countries to shoulder more overall responsibilities, assist less developed nations, and take higher emission reduction.

The effect of colonialism is even more obvious within former colonies themselves. Generally, the longer the colonial experience, the more frequent the needs and demands are raised, as can be seen in Figure 1. For example, statements delivered by countries with 1-100 years of colonial experience mention the need for financial assistance 1,20 times on average, while this average stands at 1,40 for countries with 101-200 years of colonial experience, and 1,42 for countries with more than 200 years of colonial experience.

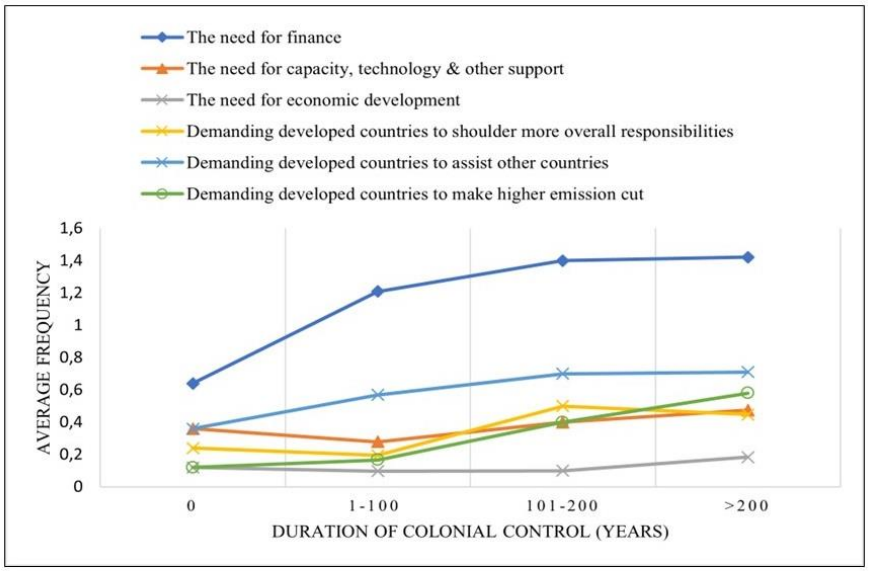

Figure 1. Needs and demands based on colonial experience
Source: Author's own assessment

Likewise, statements delivered by countries with 1-100 years of colonial experience urge developed countries to make higher emission reduction 0,17 times on average, while the figure stands at 0,40 for those with 101-200 years of colonial experience, and goes higher to 0,58 for countries with more than 200 years of colonial experience. These findings indicate that the more colonial experience, the higher the demands for remedies as well as the impulse to utilise global climate cooperation as a means to obtain the remedies.

Understanding the Order of Priorities

This above section explores the needs and demands of formerly colonised countries in climate negotiations and shows how they are driven by colonial experience. As indicated in Figure 1, the needs and demands raised by former colonies demonstrate different level of frequency, indicating an order of priorities. The order is better reflected in Figure 2, which shows that the need for accessible finance captures the largest portion with the average frequency of 1,29 per statement, followed by demand for developed countries to assist less-developed countries as the second largest with the average frequency of 0,62. The high proportion of demand for financial resources is in line with other studies which found that financial assistance is the most common demand of developing countries, regardless of their characteristics (Sforna, 2019). In fact, low-income countries associate more than 87% of all their financing need to implement their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) with external resources (Nieto, Carpintero and Miguel, 2018, p. 73).

It is important to highlight that demand for developed countries to take higher emission reduction ranks fourth and, on average, is raised only 0,32 times per statement. There is a significant gap compared to the issue of finance. Does this mean that formerly colonised countries are mainly interested in money as reparation for the historical damages? For some countries, there might be instances where funding from donor countries is needed more than other measures. This might be true, for instance, if a country has low income, counting on international support to finance development programmes, but is less vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change.

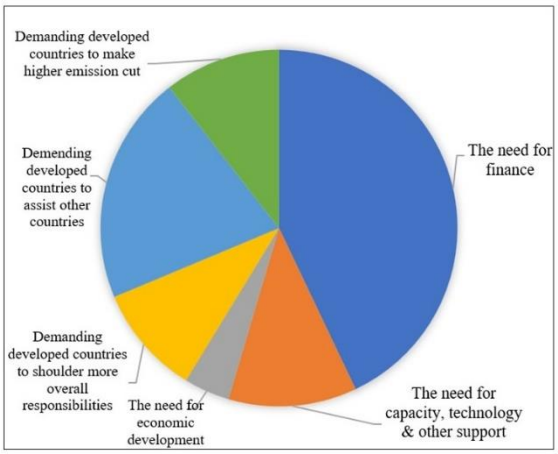

Figure 2. Proportion of needs and demands of post-colonial countries
Source: Author's own assessment

However, this shall not be used to interpret that post-colonial countries are willing to trade development aid with lower responsibility of developed countries to restore the atmosphere. There have been multiple occasions where the Southern countries demonstrated that development assistance could not replace the responsibility of developed countries to significantly reduce emission. Negotiation of the Copenhagen Accord serves as a notable example. The Copenhagen Conference was initially expected to produce a binding agreement to save the planet. However, the negotiating parties failed to reach consensus particularly due to the divergent positions between developed and developing countries. To save their face, delegates adopted a non-binding accord, which was opposed by many Southern countries. Developed countries then tried to persuade the opposing countries by offering financial support to developing countries amounting to USD 30 billion for the period of 2010-2012 alone in addition to long-term commitment of USD 100 billion annually by 2020. This record-breaking money, however, could not change the position of the opposing countries (Dimitrov, 2010). They continued to express their preference for ambitious emission reduction. This was well reflected by the objection expressed by Venezuela, a country that was colonised by Europe for more than 260 years, which underscored that its dignity did not have "price tag" and added "We will not sell our principles, we won't sell the principles of the Convention even for 30 billion dollars" (Dimitrov, 2010, p. 812). More detailed response was conveyed by Sudan:

> "[The Copenhagen Accord] is murderous. It condemns and turns Africa into a furnace because 2 degrees Celsius results in 3.5 degrees [temperature rise in Africa] according to IPCC ... [The document] asks Africa to sign a suicide pact, an incineration pact in order to maintain the economic dominance of a few countries. It is devoid of any sense of responsibility, morality and it is a solution based on values, the same very values, in our opinion, that tunneled 6 million people in Europe into furnaces. Mr Prime Minister, no one, no one or yourself can force Africa to destroy herself, its future generations and its current generations ...The promise of 100 billion US dollars would not bribe us to destroy the continent". (Dimitrov, 2010, p. 811)

These indicate that climate finance alone cannot do justice for the damages caused by the Global North in the past. At the same time, the North-South divide in climate negotiations and its possible solutions seem more complex than usually imagined. There is a sense of injustice that is difficult, if not impossible, to remove. As Gurminder Bhambra and Peter Newell pointed out,

addressing climate injustice goes beyond simply compensating for losses and damages experienced today as a result of accumulated emissions. In order to fully comprehend climate change in the context of colonialism, one must acknowledge how unequal distribution of wealth across social groups, countries, and regions, which has led to climate-changing emissions, was initially created (Bhambra and Newell, 2023, p. 184).

One might ask, if so, why do former colonies express the need for finance much more frequently than the demand for developed countries to take higher emission reduction? The author views that the main reason for this is feasibility. Transferring money from the North to the South is much more doable than, for instance, making notable emission cut from fusil fuel. At the same time, financial support is practical and can lead to immediate impacts for the government of the receiving countries, compared to emission reduction whose impacts are visible in the long run. In other words, post-colonial countries ask for something doable and impactful and at the same time demand for substantive reparation for the historical injustice.

CONCLUSION

The above discussion explores the interests of post-colonial countries in terms of needs and demands from the global climate cooperation. There are three needs and three demands addressed to developed countries that are frequently raised by formerly colonised countries. Among the needs and demands, financial resources stand the highest in the priority of formerly colonised countries, while emission reduction receives less prevalence in terms of pushing developed countries to take actions. Nevertheless, this does not mean that post-colonial countries prefer development finance to emission reduction. Nor does this mean that provision of financial resources satisfies their expectation for the injustice and injuries caused by colonialism. They urge for provision of financial assistance mainly due to its feasibility and visibility.

An important implication on climate negotiation needs to be highlighted. In academic discourse, there is suggestion for the transfer of more money from the Global North to the Global South to minimise deadlock in climate negotiations (Sforna, 2019). Although such measure might help promote trust between the two blocks, the findings of this paper indicate that there is no guarantee that it will remove the North-South divide as long as substantive measures are not in place to correct the historical injustice.

Future research might improve our understanding of the behaviour of former colonies by exploring broader interests of these actors in climate cooperation beyond needs and demands. In addition, it might be useful to analyse the perception of different groups of formerly colonised countries. In any case, more studies supported by empirical data will enrich academic debate on the interests of these countries.

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APPENDIX

Appendix: List of UNFCCC COP country statements analysed (by country)

European former colonies as per Our World in Data colonial database		Non-European colonies as per Our World in Data colonial database	
COP27	COP28	COP27	COP28
Angola	Angola	Armenia	Azerbaijan
Antigua and Barbuda	Antigua and Barbuda	Azerbaijan	Japan
Australia	Bahamas	Ethiopia	Kazakhstan
Bahamas	Bahrain	Japan	Kyrgyzstan
Bahrain	Barbados	Kazakhstan	Liberia
Barbados	Belize	Mongolia	Mongolia
Belize	Bhutan	Nepal	Nepal
Brunei Darussalam	Brunei Darussalam	North Korea	Oman
Cabo Verde	Burkina Faso	Oman	Saudi Arabia
Cambodia	Burundi	South Sudan	South Korea
Canada	Cabo Verde	Thailand	Tajikistan
Central African Republic	Cambodia	Uzbekistan	Thailand
Congo	Canada		Turkmenistan
Côte d'Ivoire	Congo		
Eritrea	Costa Rica		
Eswatini	Côte d'Ivoire		
Gabon	Cyprus		
Gambia	Democratic Republic of the Congo		
Ghana	Djibouti		
Guinea-Bissau	Ecuador		
Haiti	Equatorial Guinea		
India	Eritrea		
Indonesia	Gambia		
Kenya	Guatemala		
Kiribati	Guinea-Bissau		
Laos	Guyana		
Lebanon	Haiti		
Madagascar	Honduras		
Malaysia	India		
Micronesia	Jamaica		

Mozambique Namibia New Zealand Nigeria Palau Peru Qatar Saint Kitts and Nevis Saint Lucia Singapore Solomon Islands Somalia Sri Lanka Sudan Suriname Tonga Tuvalu Vanuatu Yemen Zambia Zimbabwe	Jordan Kenya Kiribati Kuwait Laos Libya Madagascar Malawi Malaysia Maldives Mali Micronesia Morocco Namibia New Zealand Nicaragua Palau Paraguay Peru Philippines Qatar Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Samoa Sao Tome and Principe Seychelles Sierra Leone Singapore Solomon Islands Suriname Timor-Leste Togo Tonga Tunisia Tuvalu Uganda Viet Nam Zambia Zimbabwe		