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“This was different”: The MAPS programme and southern climate change mitigation practices as ‘southern theory’

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“This was different”: The MAPS programme and southern climate change mitigation practices as ‘southern theory’

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INTRODUCTION

With 'INDCs' (Intended Nationally Determined Contributions) now submitted and occupying centre stage in the global climate negotiations, attention is increasingly drawn to the global south where trajectories of future economic, energy-use and emissions growth are breath-taking or deeply disconcerting, depending upon your perspective. In order to limit the warming of the climate to around 2°C globally, substantial emissions reductions are required over the coming decades. Exceeding the emissions targets is expected to cause numerous climatic impacts, including an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Many commentators fear the implications of this for human well-being, especially in the global south where resilience to hardship is reduced (IPCC, 2014). It is now clear that the global south (or south-east¹) (Sidaway, 2012; Yiftachel, 2006) will be playing an increasingly pivotal role in energy, emissions and climate change debates.

In this paper we consider the work of one programme – Mitigation Action Plans and Scenarios (MAPS) – which from 2010 to 2015 worked in the climate change mitigation policy making space in the south. To do so it created a partnership of five countries – Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru and South Africa – with the intention of generating “credible, legitimate and relevant knowledge in the form of scenarios through a combination of mandating, research and process” (Raubenheimer et al., 2015, p96). This was done in order to achieve “lasting transformational impact, country ownership, long-term understanding with deep stakeholder engagement and world-class modelling” (Kate Hampton quoted in Raubenheimer et al., 2015, p96). The MAPS programme built on the Long Term Mitigation Scenarios (LTMS) project of South Africa, which had combined high quality research with stakeholder led scenario-building to formulate the long term climate policy of the country, which formed the basis for the international climate change negotiating positions for South Africa. The LTMS project was acknowledged by an impressed World Bank review team as “pioneering”, “a major achievement and deserving of support and development” (Wang et al., 2008), although some queried the longer term implications of the stand-alone project (Hallowes, 2008; Tyler & Torres Gunfaus, 2015). Accordingly, the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) allocated money and support for further dissemination and development of the LTMS project. The MAPS programme was the outworking of that intended dissemination. In practice MAPS evolved into something which the participants themselves recognised as quite different from the north-to-south dissemination programmes with which they were familiar (Raubenheimer et al., 2015). It is those differences, and their possible value in conceptualising ‘southern theory’ (Connell 2007, 2014, 2015a) which are the focus of this paper². MAPS is thus presented here as a case of an unusual, perhaps unique, experiment in south-south climate change mitigation policy and planning work but also as a test case for the branch of academic theory referred to as ‘southern’.

We start with some basic description of the MAPS programme’s key intentions and methodological traits. We then give a brief review of the concepts of ‘southern theory’ circulating in the literature, with a particular emphasis on southern theory as understood by planners (Parnell, Pieterse & Watson, 2009; Watson 2009, 2012). Throughout the paper MAPS is argued as a form of planning, as described in broad terms (and without the traditional attachments to urban land planning) by Healey (2011). Most of the multi-disciplinary MAPS participants would not self-identify as ‘planners’ and planning theory is not a commonplace part of their discourse, but the funder certainly saw MAPS as “a species of planning, and [is] a form of ‘super cooperation’ in the political economy...” (Kate Hampton, CIFF, quoted in Raubenheimer et al, 2015: 96). Then follows some consideration of the MAPS programme itself, based on a series of reflective work which took place throughout the project

¹ Yiftachel (2006) contrasts the North-West and the South-East (non-western, non-northern), which is probably more descriptive than ‘north’ and ‘south’ but has less currency at present.

² ‘Theory’ here refers to concepts, methodologies, intellectual framings and agendas (Connell, 2015a).

but especially towards its closure. The focus here is on the methodological aspects of MAPS which were identified by participants as remarkable, unusual or valuable in some way. The paper then asks whether MAPS can be considered a case of southern planning theorising at work and if it can, then what makes it so. The concluding argument is that there are clearly aspects of MAPS which can be described as 'southern': the pro-active working with political instability and conflict; the awareness given to issues of development; the contexts of constraints resources. Other matters are perhaps unique to MAPS and have not been well explored in the southern theory literature to date: the principle of country sovereignty and deference on the part of knowledge holders; the focus placed on highly skilled facilitation; the use of locally driven, credible quantitative evidence as a way of persuading decision-makers and brokering conversation, amongst other things (discussed later).

MAPS: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

The MAPS programme process is focused on achieving scalable change in the production of greenhouse gas emissions and the destruction of carbon sinks. The programme is predicated on the belief that if a critical mass of decision-makers start a process of shifting positions, and maintain that process, then ultimately at-scale change will follow. It is assumed that in order to change, decision-makers need to be persuaded to act against prevailing norms of society or vested interests. This takes both 'internalised knowledge' but also 'value-driven motivators', that is, a belief in the evidence produced, and a feeling of ownership is essential. These decision-makers must also act in a way that institutionalises the shifts that they themselves make, such that once action plans are put in place then they are resilient to subsequent changes (Boulle et al., 2015; Raubenheimer et al, 2015).

Institutionally MAPS is hosted in a series of linked organisations. So-called 'MAPS International' consists of teams of researchers mostly in the hybrid university department and applied research Energy Research Centre at the University of Cape Town and the non-profit organisation SouthSouthNorth, also based in Cape Town. In Latin America MAPS is hosted by:

- *Brazil: Implicacoes Economicas e Sociais Brasil (IES-Brasil)*, an initiative of the Brazilian Forum on Climate Change, mandated by the Brazilian Minister of Environment. It is implemented by Fórum Brasileiro de Mudanças Climáticas in collaboration with the MAPS Programme.
- *Chile: MAPS Chile* is a government driven, participatory analysis of scenarios and options for climate change mitigation in Chile. It is an exploratory and non-binding exercise supported by a stakeholder-driven process.
- *Peru: Planificacion Ante el Cambio Climatico (PlanCC)*, is a process that involves the public sector, the private sector and civil society in analyzing the implications and feasibility of transitioning to a low-carbon economy. The PlanCC Steering Committee is presided over by the Ministry of Environment and involves the Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Center for Strategic Planning.
- *Colombia: Estrategia Colombiana de Desarrollo Bajo en Carbono (ECDBC)*, is a medium and long-term development programme led by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS), the Department of National Planning (DNP), and the sectoral ministries of Colombia long with Universidad de los Andes". (MAPS Projects, 2015)

In MAPS data collection, model building and scenario development which is highly credible, that is, at the forefront of its field and embodying a high degree of confidence, was used to persuade decision makers of the need to change. To achieve credibility the data and modelling work was developed locally by the best available researchers working in partnerships between government, the private sector and civil society of various types, in facilitated processes. Legitimacy for the programmes in the various countries was attained by ensuring the programme was mandated at the highest possible political level.

SOUTHERN THEORY

'Southern theory' is a term coined by Connell (2007) to challenge the orthodoxy of global knowledge production. Within this orthodoxy the knowledge institutions of the global 'north' are at the epicentre (or 'metropole') of knowledge towards which deference is granted by 'peripheral' knowledge producers of the 'south'. Book publishers, journal editors, 'top-rated' universities (according to metrics developed in the north) and academic funding are all orientated towards this knowledge centre. Southern scholars, meanwhile, are fixed in a position of 'extraversion' toward the north, given the need to achieve scholarly output and citations according to the metrics of northern hosted journals. This is not to say that research is not done in the south. Indeed it is. But, argues Connell, the southern academy tends to be simply the source of data, empirical work and case studies which are then theorised about by northern scholars and re-transmitted back to the south (Connell, 2007; Morrel & Epstein, 2012; Connell, 2015a, 2015b).

Southern theory has been described as a challenge, rather than a theory to be picked up off the shelf (Morrell and Epstein, 2012) and it offers alternative ways of thinking about a global economy of knowledge dominated by the north. Hence 'southern theory' is shorthand which refers to the marginalisation of southern states and related power/privilege patternings (Morrell and Epstein, 2012). In a world where theoretical generalisation is assumed to mean universal application, southern theory is a hybrid: a context-sensitive, situated-generalisation (Watson, 2008) or a 'contingent universal' (Healey, 2011). Connell has noted the use of southern theory in education, disability, applied psychology, youth studies, social work, management studies, development studies, criminology, geography and urban studies and planning (Connell, 2014, p128).

Taking up Connell's arguments in planning, Parnell and Robinson (2012) argue that a 'theoretical recalibration' will be required in urban policy planning work given the increasing weight of southern urbanisation concerns being brought to the global arena. Southern theorising may differ quite fundamentally from northern ideas, they argue, and so to use southern empirical work or data is inadequate, rather the generating and seeking out of southern theories is required. With this in mind they argue for the importance of localised empirical case work, localised theorisation, practice based understanding and close attention to policy.

Watson, building on Yiftachel's earlier work, argues that planning thinking requires ideas which are cognisant of the 'stubborn realities' of the south-east. These, Yiftachel argues are places where political liberalism cannot be assumed as firmly entrenched; property systems are not stable; race, ethnicity or caste groups are deeply divided; conflict over territory has to inform practices and economic or social disparities can result in violence. (Watson, 2012; Yiftachel, 2006). Watson argues that co-production is one of the responses to these southern contexts. Co-production is different from participation, lobbying or protesting, rather it is joint production of a service with the state where one or more elements of process are shared. This definition of the south-east fits neatly with the MAPS framework within Latin America and South Africa which built on a state mandate to proceed, and also a state-guided process, and yet which undertook research, data collection, modelling, deliberation and scenario building with various configurations of state, university, consultancy, sector representatives and NGO actors, depending upon the country context. Furthermore, political instability as well as divergent interest groups were acknowledged and accommodated through careful conflict-management practiced using highly skilled facilitator teams.

In later work Connell shifts from thinking about theory to a more explicit focus on practices. Such a shift, she argues, helps us to think less in terms of accumulating a thing called 'knowledge' and more towards considering how we are called to practice, or act, which is a moral question. Instead of the question being: what does southern theory add to what we already know, we are then called to ask: 'what does southern theory ask us to do that we are not doing now, as knowledge workers?' (Connell, 2014, p218). Most recently Connell has called for a move from the model of knowledge production, which places northern knowledge at the apex of a pyramid where knowledge trickles down to the south; to a different understanding which draws on a southern solidarity in knowledge production. This favours mutual learning where difference is respected but kept in conversation. Such a knowledge model would require a fundamental shift from deference to the north towards more south-south relationships (Connell, 2015a, 2015b). "The problem is not a deficit of ideas from the global periphery", argues Connell in reference to feminist thinking in particular, "it is a deficit of recognition and circulation" (2015b, p52).

MAPS: REFLECTIONS BY PARTICIPANTS

As the five year MAPS programme drew to a close in 2015 a series of reflective projects were initiated to draw out the lessons learnt. One of these projects was an internal, strategic assessment which attempted to capture the main features of the programme according to those who had participated in it. Other evaluations also took place according to the funder's criteria but this internal strategic assessment focused on the strengths, weaknesses and tensions of the programme according to those who had participated in its evolution. Our role was to guide this strategic internal assessment project team. The assessment was made possible by the wish for shared learning which had been built between team members and a high level of internal trust which had developed with regard to critique.

Observations of the programme work took place over a period of months. Individuals with some over-arching views of the programme in South Africa and Latin America were identified and workshops and interviews held with many of them. A full review of MAPS programme documentation took place. External reflections from two other parties in comprehensive unpublished reports informed the process. Reflections were developed between a core team in writing and in meetings. Graphic visualisation of the assessment process and feedback on the process took place at the two programme quarterly meeting in 2015 in South Africa and generated much discussion. The draft internal report was circulated widely for comment. The findings, therefore, can be described as having reached a high degree of consensus within the project team. The following sections outline the strengths and weaknesses of the MAPS programme as identified by self-reflection by the MAPS teams.

1. Strengths of a south-south approach to climate change mitigation

Three broad over-lapping themes relevant to this paper emerged as MAPS strengths:

1.1.1. A strong methodological approach ('technical map') was provided and had local value and ownership (country-level)

The technical core of the MAPS programme was the sharing of the methodological approach that developed during the LTMS processes. The Latin American countries appreciated the availability of this 'amazing' roadmap for their technical work, and the associated setting of high quality benchmarks for data collection, modelling and assessment work. Twenty-four international technical meetings were organised at different venues during the course of the programme, focused on various aspects of the process and research undertakings.

The Latin American countries valued the dual focus of MAPS on the sharing of proven modelling practices, whilst remaining open to and encouraging local reflection and innovation. There was considerable pride in the 'open-box' data and modelling approach produced in MAPS, the technical scenarios developed, the mitigation actions and scenarios prepared and the translation of these to inform the international climate change negotiations. Whilst acknowledging that the technical work was not perfect, they also noted its rigour, robustness and its representation of best current country practice at that time. Further, due to the process of continual and critical reflective learning in collective settings which included a broad range of stakeholders, the work had high credibility. The process generated deep, widely shared and held understandings of energy, land-use, emissions and related systems including social and economic implications in the participant countries, enabling development of government capacity and materials valuable to the INDC process.

Participants appreciated the respectful way in which trust was placed in country teams to best research and understand the specifics of their own settings. They appreciated how each country process within the programme was allowed to develop quite uniquely and at its own national pace, but with shared broad principles (based on building legitimacy, trust and credibility). This generated a deep sense of ownership over the outcomes of the work by the country teams. The government mandate and governance structures which worked to keep the state involved in strategic matters generated buy-in (Calfucoy, 2015). The country teams acknowledged the 'country-led' process as key to the success of the project, enabling this buy-in and ownership. MAPS co-ordinating teams guided the sharing of information throughout the duration of the programme, but the country knowledge and judgement was always sovereign. Queries were raised by some LAC participants about whether this was always necessarily the right approach for MAPS to have always taken. Despite the appreciation of the soft touch by the project leaders, there was sometimes yearning for a 'harder' position, and for more direction to be given.

1.1.2. A culture of sharing knowledge was developed, used and instilled (at programme-level):

Many participants mentioned the enriching and vibrant communities of practice which had been gradually developed during MAPS as a strength – within and across countries. They talked about the generous sharing of expertise and the 'truly rare' trusting and safe environments which had been produced within which robust discussions were possible. "The MAPS sharing approach has been a HUGE strength – everyone knows that – it's hugely powerful", said one. Participants remarked on how different it was to develop knowledge capacity with peer southern countries when compared with the more typical transmission of northern expertise to the south. They spoke of a "non-prescriptive", "enabling", "non-colonial" culture of "sharing" knowledge, rather than "telling" how things "should" be done. MAPS Latin American participants noted: "There are very little [sic] South-South programmes that have worked. This is one. North-South works very differently". "[In MAPS] there wasn't a lead saying 'you should do that'. Each one worked at its own pace, with its own circumstances". "We never heard 'no you have to do it this way'...always very open...rather [we heard] the best approach is from your perspective". One project leader noted: "This is REAL capacity building". Participants appreciated the mutual understanding amongst partners of their shared southern context of poverty, inequity and governance capacity constraints. "Knowing developing countries have similar problems, it's liberating. There's plenty to learn from each other."

The southern countries could relate to each other's contexts but more specifically to the problems of planning for climate change within such settings: poor or absent quality of data, restricted capacity of research and planning institutions, resources competing with other political agendas and differing approaches to problem solving. Some of these shared problems were identified during MAPS and processes put in place to attempt to air them and develop intellectual capital in the process. The DevMit Forum (Jan 2014), for example, addressed square on a tension at the heart of climate change debates in the South: how to address development prerogatives and deal with climate change? (Tyler & du Toit, 2014).

Throughout the programme the South African and subsequent leadership teams held firm in their belief that they were not experts, that is, they would never have sufficient country-context to be able to give advice. In return the Latin American teams appreciated the 'soft' approach and reported that they did not feel anything was imposed by the programme. As a co-initiator of MAPS wrote: "It [MAPS] was quintessentially about South-South collaboration and learning around a complex challenge... Here the fact that the approach came from another southern country was powerful – approaches from the North, and from country donors in the developed world, are often seen as giving help rather than learning together. MAPS did not come with any solutions, nor tools or guidelines. It was, simply, an invitation to struggle

together” (Raubenheimer et al, 2015). The generous and flexible funding provided by the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation which allowed substantial autonomy for the MAPS teams and was noted as an important enabler of this innovative working. Parnell et al. (2009) have argued that cities have suffered due to aid given in the context of poorly conceived development assumptions. MAPS highlights what can transpire in the south when a large project is guided for the most part by southern hands.

1.1.3. Facilitated conversations enabled co-design of models and scenarios (and vice versa) (at country level)

Those interviewed noted how innovative and even revelatory the facilitated open dialogues had been in the Latin American countries of MAPS. In Chile the very idea of collaboration and facilitated dialogue was new. The role of professional facilitator was taken very seriously within the MAPS programme and was a core piece of the framing methodology shared by South Africa. The individual skill required to do this “process” work in the south was widely acknowledged. A reviewer of the Chilean, Colombian and Peruvian processes noted how facilitation ensured an exercise of care which safeguarded justice, alleviated conflict and enabled a constructive and creative setting for discussion (Calfucoy, 2015). The use of facilitated open dialogues to discuss climate change scenarios developed from the modelling between many government, business and NGO stakeholder teams was viewed in retrospect as a very powerful concept.

New communities of practice at differing scales and focused on varying interests, were clearly one outcome of MAPS. This has enabled sharing of knowledge and expertise, mutual support and problem sharing. A working community of practice can be a source of inspiration and comfort. Particularly in the field of climate change, communities of practice in the North have dominated discussions. MAPS has been one of the few examples of a community of practice in the global South making strong contributions to the global conversation (Calfucoy, 2015).

2. Weaknesses and tensions in a south-south approach to climate change mitigation

While the sharing culture and facilitated conversations were highlighted as a strength of MAPS, ironically the most commonly described weakness was also on the subject of communication. Communication in-between formal meetings and between so-called ‘second-tier’ or ‘mid-level’ MAPS participants was identified as sometimes lacking. Many reasons were identified for this including: language; time zones; distance - no ‘water cooler’ conversations; country project specificities regarding governance matters and policy development occurring at different times which meant that countries were out of step with one another (thus collaboration became difficult). The programme management responded to communication difficulties in different ways. First ‘country liaisons’ were established, who would bridge thematic groups and expertise with in country teams. These carefully chosen ‘country liaisons’ were based in the region, more available for in-person collaboration, spoke fluent Spanish and improved coordination between the country processes and MAPS International. They were seen very positively as ‘game changers’ and ‘fundamental’ within the MAPS process. Secondly ‘Labs’ were organized thematically with the objective to foster relationships among experts within the same field. Labs were at times organized in Spanish, rather than having English as de-facto. Two-way translation was always arranged. The other weaknesses identified were mostly more generic, less about the MAPS programme per se than about the context in which such work takes place.

Some of the discussion about programme weaknesses during the MAPS observations centred on an assumption from the beginning of the MAPS process that once policy (or laws, or regulations) are in place then these will be enacted. Policy implementation was initially viewed as something ‘downstream’ undertaken by

other specialist actors. Excluding implementation from the early MAPS work was indicative of a step-wise and linear understanding of policy (followed by implementation), which is a concept perhaps more suited to stable and well institutionalised northern settings. Drawing on a northern understanding of a policy-begetting-action, the MAPS programme had an optimistic view of the ability of evidence, decision-makers and the subsequently developed policy to influence, even drive, action. “We assumed that mandated and relevant knowledge will produce action...[Instead] there’s total irrational stuff that pushes against change and vested interests and developmental agendas. We need to think deeper about theories of change...” said one. In hindsight this was an understandable error given the dearth in understanding anywhere about how implementation of climate change mitigation policies are enacted, and particularly in southern contexts. Case knowledge for the south is rare (Parnell & Robinson, 2012; Parnell, Pieterse & Watson, 2009).

As the MAPS processes evolved there was growing recognition that implementation should be considered during all policy work phases. Subsequent research work focused on implementation specifically and debunked the myth of policy ‘stages’ in the South African and Latin America contexts. The final ‘Knowledge to Action’ workshop focused on implementation and the closing conference of the MAPS programme headlined with a session on ‘how change happens’ (Trollip & Torres Gunfaus, 2015).

This research work on implementation also concluded that South African projects which could claim some climate mitigation impact had not been strongly motivated by climate change agendas. Rather climate benefits were coincidental with a series of more routine concerns (Trollip & Torres Gunfaus, 2015). Carmin et al. (2012) argued that implementation of climate change adaptation projects in the south is a form of bricolage, that is a creatively stitched together of existing materials. Thus it is site specific and highly contingent. It would seem that mitigation acts very similarly. MAPS responded to this, and related, matters in multiple ways by:

- As mentioned earlier, creating the DevMit Forum which looked very specifically at the competing agendas of development and climate change mitigation in the south, and related research (Jooste et al., 2014; Tyler, 2014a; Tyler & du Toit, 2014; Winkler, Boyd, Torres Gunfaus & Raubenheimer, 2015)
- Undertaking research on poverty and mitigation (Parikh, Parikh, Gohsh & Khedkar, 2013; Parnell, 2014; Rennkamp & Wlokas 2012; Rennkamp, Moyo, Wills & Grottera 2012; Wlokas et al. 2012)
- Involving those with backgrounds in sociology, politics and psychology in project teams
- Undertaking research with disciplines important to but not often consulted by climate change community e.g. consumption, marketing, poverty, economics (Tyler, 2014b; Kane, 2014)
- Linking sectoral technology-based models and economic ones and undertaking a series of modelling amendments to support cross-sectoral deliberations (Merven et al., 2014; Shukla, 2013; Winkler et al., 2014; and various ‘Briefs’ of the MAPS programme)
- Developing thinking and approaches on co-benefits and multi-criteria decision-making (Cohen et al., 2015; Cohen, Torres Gunfaus & Tyler, 2015; Rennkamp & Boulle, 2015)
- Developing thought around ‘complexity’ thinking and frameworks (Tyler, 2015a, 2015b)
- Researching implementation theory and empirical cases and using a workshop to share these with the broader MAPS community (Tyler, Boyd, Coetzee & Winkler, 2011; Boyd & Coetzee, 2013; Trollip & Torres Gunfaus, 2015; Tyler & Torres Gunfaus, 2015)

As the programme ended there was gathering realisation that the theories of change underpinning not only this programme but also the international climate change community as a whole, are probably too simplistic (founded on beliefs about the ability of evidence and policy alone to drive the scale of

change required). It was understood that rigorous evidence is necessary but by itself an insufficient part of policy change-making processes of the south. The observed realities of evidence-policy-change were far more complex. In one particular case (in Chile) implementation was successfully initiated by a key individual who shifted (with MAPS knowledge) from a climate change role to a role in an implementing ministry (transport). Also, perhaps not coincidentally the individual concerned had a background in the instrumental, implementation-focused engineering. The question was raised whether such sorts of people – champions – could be a key to implementation in the south but also, the research work and experiences of MAPS emphasise that change is not just about champions, nor evidence, coalitions or policy content, rather it seems to happen due to the unpredictable enterprise of a number elements that coincide at a certain moment.

‘MAPS AS SOUTHERN PLANNING PRACTICES’

With all the usual caveats about the danger of drawing generalisations from a single case, this section outlines some thoughts on the relationship of southern theory (and in particular thinking about planning in its broadest sense) to MAPS. We take encouragement from writers on southern theory who urge that southern theorising is necessary despite the limitations of the available materials.

The MAPS programme positioned itself as a ‘policy-informative’ rather than a ‘policy-prescriptive’ process and so its role as ‘planning’ was implied rather than overt. We have argued, though, that MAPS fits within broad definitions of ‘planning’, although it did not fit within conventionally delineated concepts of what planning is. MAPS was a hybridised process, neither entirely working in a rational process view (Tyler, 1998), nor in a broad ‘communicative planning theory’ (CPT) rationality, and always attentive to politics. Some may recognise elements of communicative planning theory or the ‘practice movement’³ in the MAPS work (Watson, 2008). While there are clear similarities there are also distinctive differences. Most importantly MAPS worked for almost all of its programme with experts, delegates and representatives of organisations with a clear vested institutional interest in climate change outcomes. This was not a project which engaged with general citizenry or directly with urban spatiality. Poor understanding about the outworkings of power has been a criticism of CPT processes (Watson 2008) but by contrast the MAPS programme is highly cognisant of the machinations of power and the omnipresent potential of powerful stakeholders derailing the process. The political mandating task was seen as a key precursor to the MAPS programme starting, as well as a key element to maintain throughout. This insistence on clear and high level mandates speaks to the instability of political regimes in the south and the political risks which any project faces.

Modelling was central to the MAPS experience given that MAPS is, at its technical core, an evidence-base building exercise. It was acknowledged from the outset that this would be key in all of the country processes. However the role played by modelling exceeded the technical contribution to the analytical exercise. Modelling seems to have played multiple roles in MAPS and perhaps its ultimate importance was not quite in the way initially anticipated.

Explicitly the data collection, modelling and scenario building created a platform for data gathering and so knowledge development. This was a significant contribution, given that much of this data did not exist before the MAPS country processes started to generate and consolidate it. MAPS also developed new tools for analysis of climate action and its implications, which did not exist previously. It went on to create credible scenarios which raised awareness about emissions and so climate change; allowed mitigation measures to be explored; created doubt about the desirability of ‘business-as-usual’; investigated the socio-economic implications of mitigation scenarios and explored the opportunities of different long term pathways for the countries. Implicitly data collection, modelling and scenario building enabled disparate people to come together, and opened up facilitated spaces for conversations which may not otherwise have happened; it improved the knowledge platform and skills sets of climate change mitigation practitioners, and exposed other communities to this improved knowledge base; it built new communities of practice; forged new relationships and it provided quantified ‘grist for the mill’ of those who would argue in favour of climate change mitigation. Counter to conventional use of modelling in, say, transport planning, the MAPS models were not used by expert hands to dictate what should happen to a receptive

³ The practice movement in planning refers to a body of work which considers in some detail the behaviour of planners at work and their values, character and experiences. The focus is on the planners as practitioners.

governance structure. Instead models were opened up in a collegial setting to explore what could be possible given poorly-resourced, fragmented and under-capacitated governance structures.

The inclusivity of stakeholders on which LTMS and MAPS depended, and the framing of MAPS in Latin America to look for ‘ambitious but realistic’ scenarios generated argument, contest and debate. This was accepted as inevitable and even as vital. “Conflict was seen as important to stress-test assumptions, agree inputs, avoid gaming and fabrication” argued one of the programme initiators. “The role of the facilitator was hence integral to a process in which contestation was central” (Raubenheimer, 2015: 42). Conflict was managed and peer relationships maintained through very carefully orchestrated meetings; highly skilled, well trained facilitators and negotiators supported by an emotionally intelligent management structure. In the strained context of resource limitations and high uncertainty that characterises the south, then highly skilled facilitation was a pre-requisite for group buy-in to an inevitably conflicted process. But facilitation alone is insufficient. The quantitative evidence provided a focus for discussion and also enrolled people into the process once they could see what part ‘their’ piece played (Calfucoy, 2015).

The highly skilled facilitators who played a key role in MAPS in many ways reflected what Umemto (2001, cited in Watson 2008) argued was necessary in mediation between cultural paradigms: confronting ‘otherness’, traversing interpretive frames, articulating values, understanding and alerting language differences, respecting protocols and social cultures, appreciating differing power dynamics. Umemto argues that this requires significant skills. These skilled individuals in MAPS were not planners doing facilitation as part of a broad portfolio of skills, rather, facilitation was their key skill. These were carefully chosen professionals whose only task was to manage interactions and relationships at all times (not only when people were in the room but also, just as importantly before and after they formally engaged with each other). The facilitators also played key roles in conceptualising and shaping the programme.

The practices of respect for individual voices (enabled by facilitators) was paralleled by an overall respect for local country knowledge which was one of the programme’s key over-arching principles. Local, country knowledge was judged as sovereign. For example, the countries lacked data at the start of the project and the defacto position was to ask the ‘local expert’ for their judgement rather than to search for data in the international literature or databases. International benchmarks were used as references but not necessarily as appropriate aspirational values. Time was invested in building data from scratch rather than generally using statistical simplifications. This was a highly-resourced, highly time-intensive processes but one which ensured local credibility for the programme’s results. Accordingly, there was no problem of ‘handing-over’ a project at the end, since the project was from the outset in the stewardship of the country (although working with knowledge of many others).

The MAPS programme highlighted that in the climate change space in particular, thinking ‘south’ is essential. In addition to the north-south contrasts highlighted already, and of particular relevance to climate mitigation, is the understanding that the southern future is not as predictable the northern one. Industrialised economies are relatively stable, and southern states are not. Furthermore, the link between development and climate change mitigation is understood sequentially in the north. ‘Development’, at least for basic needs has, for the most part been achieved. Climate change work can now proceed. In the south a more holistic and development inclusive approach to climate change mitigation is required from the outset, thus complexifying an already complex situation (Tyler, 2015a, 2015b). Additionally, mitigation has been on the agenda of northern countries for 20-years now, but it is a relatively recent concern in the south. This understanding of shared position in a global context created a common basis for collaboration among MAPS countries.

In practice then, MAPS was flexible and responsive to 'problems'. There was high attachment to curiosity, intellectual capital development and new ways of sorting out ideas with an acknowledgement of the uniqueness of country context, although with shared understanding of shared, southern, concerns. MAPS demonstrated that methodologies created in the north for climate change mitigation require further interrogation and work in order to land well in the south. Methodologically within MAPS, little was free from question. This open-mindedness was cultivated in a culture of conciliation and inclusivity wherever possible. All of this demanded a funding mechanism and institutional arrangement which was enabling and progressive about outcomes.

Can, though, the conceptualising and methodological work undertaken in MAPS be considered as cases of southern theory? We think the answer is yes, and no. Yes, theorising took place, but its main theoretical concerns were not with 'the social' or 'the political' or 'planning' as seems often to be the case with southern thinking thus far. MAPS, in line with Parnell and Robinson (2012) focuses on practices, principally the practices of credible data, modelling and scenario building; legitimising via government mandating and careful stakeholder selection and enrolling communities of practice via highly skilled facilitation. With a focus on practices rather than theories, the concern was also with broad ethical perhaps even moral guiding principles (respecting country sovereignty, placing the development of capacity and communities of practice very high, developing relationships, ensuring political and research credibility as far as possible). These fed into further broad methodological principles (political mandating, high quality quantitative scenario building and skilled facilitation) which were held in place through investments in local people, systems and institutions. Beyond that, the call of the programme was towards flexibility, responsiveness, creativity plus a willingness to let go of established theories if necessary and a willingness to respond to the world as it is, in all its messy, noisy, unknowable contingency.

The risk with 'southern theory', or indeed any theory developed in an academic setting in reference to southern climate change planning is that it is insufficiently bound to the materialities and urgency of southern practice. To remain in theorising is to fall into stasis. Instead southern theorising demands action which requires a shift from 'what' to 'how'. Connell has acknowledged this, with a discernible shift in her more recent writing towards thinking in terms of practices rather than theories. This shift shifts the research question from: 'What does this add to what we already know?' to a more activist: 'What does this ask us to do that we are not already doing as knowledge workers?' (Connell, 2014). Such an action-orientated question seems to have driven the insistent curiosity underpinning MAPS.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite its clear successes and recognition, many questions remain about MAPS. A repeated one during this research was whether a different process could have yielded more ambitious INDC targets. One argument is that the reflective MAPS team, staying true to the foundational principle of country sovereignty, have stretched the climate change ambition as far as possible *at this time*. Developing countries face loud demands for basic needs and vocal aspirations of an emergent middle class. Climate change mitigation fights for its place in a noisy local political arena. While more ambitious country climate change rhetoric may have been possible, the risk of this not being met would be high. The current INDC commitments emerging from the MAPS process are politically realistic for this moment, given the in-country work across a broad spectrum of stakeholders. The country processes have shown that more ambitious pathways are technically feasible – but there are currently inadequate political appetites for the perceived risks of transitioning to such pathways.

This question of the MAPS programme climate effects and impacts is pressing. Climate change practitioners in MAPS often expressed a personal sense of responsibility with respect to MAPS's impact on emissions; a sentiment which parallels the typical spatial planner's concerns for social justice. This question of 'impacts' is also pressing in a very practical sense, as 'what difference was made' is a question which many potential future funders will ask. Perhaps, though, this question itself is a 'northern' construct. Can causal links between programmes and effects be traced in *any* policy contexts, but most especially those in the south? Or is this a fantasy with which funders reassure themselves that their money is well directed? Should other metrics, more relevant to southern realities be driving long term planning for climate change mitigation and associated developmental goals?

Despite the uncertainties some MAPS outcomes are clear and almost certainly of future benefit. Even if MAPS simply provides robust primary data for future work then this is a substantial achievement. In a detailed review of work in the Latin American countries, Calucoy argues much further - that the capacitated people of MAPS are beneficiaries who will undoubtedly impact on the future of their countries (2015). However, the ability of knowledgeable and well-practiced individuals, newly formed communities of practice, new data, robust policy and well-rooted institutional arrangements developed during MAPS to be resilient in the strong tidal flows of southern demographic, economic, political, social and climate contexts remains, like the climate itself, highly unpredictable.

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