

The BRICS countries, the Rio+20 and the Peoples' Summit

A few weeks before the Rio+20, there seems to be no significant settlements neither between governments, neither between the stakeholders engaged in the People's Summit and states' delegations.

Negotiation amongst governments downfalls when it comes to sharing understandings of what "green economy" means. The dispute also involves the criteria for defining "common but differentiated responsibilities". Finally, states differ on the multilateral institutional architecture that may be responsible for the transition to a "green economy".

The European Union, taking a liberal position, understands "green economy" as a technological modernization that seeks to strengthen the environmental foundations of a market-based economic model. It proposes that the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) monitors such changeover.

In turn, the BRICS countries have a divergent position, albeit variations among its members. Brazil wants to bring forward the debate on the eradication of poverty and focus discussions on development models rather than environmental sustainability. South Africa withstands by a proposal that acknowledges the fiscal and economic value of natural resources, linking the theme of poverty eradication to the generation of green jobs. India and China do not accept that industrialized and developing countries should equally share the costs of altering the production model. Russia, finally, calls "green economy" the achievement of stability when attaining sustainable production and consumption. However, they all require transferring of sustainable technologies and taking over differentiated responsibilities – and costs.

As seen, concords are relative, but all BRICS countries seem to oppose to proposals coming from the bloc of dominant countries. This is clearly expressed in the disagreement on which ought to be the international regulatory locus of the transition process. The BRICS countries reject UNEP as the regulator of such process and advocate for a reform of the Economic and Social Council - ECOSOC that enables it to be "the natural place to think about reforms in governance towards sustainable development". ECOSOC would allow and intensify participation of NGOs and social movements in the discussion about the transition amid development models. Currently this organization has approximately 3,200 registered NGOs in consultative status.

All governments accept the present model of production and consumption, and want to create innovative green solutions to the social and environmental consequences of its functioning. That means they avoid the discussion about social inequality and greater social and environmental justice. This shall be the task of the People's Summit during Rio+20, in Brazil, this June 2012.