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**Abstract:** The aim of this paper is to examine South-South on environmental agenda, specially the cooperation provided by the so-called emerging countries to other southern countries. Our point of departure is the assumption that environmental cooperation may be understood from the logic of public goods and that emerging countries form what Olson calls “privileged group”. Based on this, we designed four hypotheses we seek to explore in this paper: i) this privileged group provides environmental public goods by transferring its resources to other countries, shouldering the costs of these goods, ii) this kind of cooperation is somehow asymmetric since the donors (emerging countries) own more resources than the recipients, iii) donor countries’ focus their actions on specific activities of the environmental agenda and iv) the availability of cooperation depends on economic conditions, specially GDP growth and reserves in foreign currency. Our goal was to observe international cooperation from these hypotheses, but since our object is a working paper we do not intend to take definitive conclusions. Our hypotheses proved to be partially correct but we managed to raise some interesting questions for future researches, especially those regarding geographical distribution of this cooperation and its correlation with economic factors.

**Keywords:** International Cooperation, South-South Cooperation, Environment, Public Goods

## **Introduction**

This research project aims to identify some important elements that characterize cooperation between southern countries, especially on environmental agenda. It is important to note that despite this form of states interaction is not necessarily new, it has been intensified, setting, thus, an important research agenda in international relations.

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Our contribution is divided into two axes. Firstly, we establish a set of assumptions about the states and the agendas that are the subject of cooperation agreements between the southern states. These assumptions underlie a set of four hypotheses about how this kind of cooperation is structured, in view of environment agenda specificities. In the second part of this article, we present these hypotheses, which were defined with reference to the basic dimensions of exploratory research, i.e., in each section, we seek to answer the following questions: 1. which characteristics may define donors and recipients of cooperation resources; 2. there are asymmetries in economic capacity between donors and recipients; . 3 how are cooperation resources distributed, taking as reference environmental themes and agenda; finally, 4. we investigate the existence of seasonality in agreements' conclusion and implementation.

Our database consists of 20 donor countries of the so called Global South, namely: Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Morocco, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey<sup>2</sup>. This sample was defined from the "emerging countries" classification methodology developed by the World Bank – specifically by the International Finance Corporation – agency of that bank. We search at the government agencies for cooperation promotion websites of each these countries, the established agreements in the period 2000-2010. This choice was based on the intensification of the cooperation projects operated by countries of our sample in the period.

Our analysis is based on 551 projects undertaken by the 20 (twenty) countries in the environmental area. However, the small number (less than 1% of total) of projects performed by Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Russia, South Africa and Turkey in this period eventually exclude them from our sample that passes the count 11 countries.

**Table 1: South-South cooperation structure on environmental agenda**

Donor	South-South Cooperation Activities	South-South Cooperation On Environmental Agenda				
		Total	Non-reciprocal Activities	Reciprocal Activities	% Regarding the Country's Activities	% Regarding Environmental Agenda
<b>Brazil</b>	1719	207	204	3	12,04	37,57
<b>Chile</b>	591	30	30	0	5,08	5,44
<b>China</b>	2633	47	46	1	1,79	8,53
<b>Colombia</b>	213	25	22	3	11,74	4,54
<b>Czech Republic</b>	394	95	95	0	24,11	17,24
<b>Egypt</b>	217	3	3	0	1,38	0,54
<b>Hungary</b>	328	8	8	0	2,44	1,45

<sup>2</sup> <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/114958-what-are-emerging-markets>

<b>India</b>	452	33	33	0	7,30	5,99
<b>Indonesia</b>	10	0	0	0	0,00	0,00
<b>Malaysia</b>	6	0	0	0	0,00	0,00
<b>Marocco</b>	12	1	1	0	8,33	0,18
<b>Mexico</b>	105	19	17	2	18,10	3,45
<b>Peru</b>	49	4	0	4	8,16	0,73
<b>Philippines</b>	2	1	1	0	50,00	0,18
<b>Poland</b>	498	23	23	0	4,62	4,17
<b>Russia</b>	5	1	1	0	20,00	0,18
<b>South Africa</b>	53	1	0	1	1,89	0,18
<b>Taiwan</b>	248	8	8	0	3,23	1,45
<b>Thailand</b>	607	48	48	0	7,91	8,71
<b>Turkey</b>	432	4	4	0	0,93	0,73
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.574</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6,43</b>	<b>100,00</b>

Source: prepared by authors from research database<sup>3</sup>

As shown in Table 1, from 8,574 of cooperation activities established by 20 countries in the 2000-2010 period, 551 are related to environmental issue, i.e., 6.43% of the total, which demonstrates that the environmental agenda is not a priority on South-South cooperation. We also observed that the vast majority of activities (98%) are structured from a donor and a receiver, i.e., there is no reciprocity. Finally, Brazil is the country with the highest proportion of projects in the environmental agenda, being the promoter of 37.57% of all environmental projects, followed in a long distance by the Czech Republic with 17.24% and Thailand with 8.71%.

### **Assumptions about the actors and the environmental agenda in South-South cooperation**

Traditionally, the literature shows a wide range of donor countries motivations to implement the South-South cooperation. Puente (2010) acknowledges the difficulty of the task, because it means that one must take into account the diversity of countries that have cooperation agreements, the relations among them and the economic, political and even strategic dimensions that can permeate these actions.

However, on a more pragmatic analysis, we must identify the motivations that countries, mostly developing, would have to spend their scarce material and human resources with other Southern countries. We understand that these motivations depend, above all, on

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<sup>3</sup> All data presented in this document is part of our research database (see footnote no. 1). Our sources are: AidData.org, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination agency (TIKA), Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional (AMEXCID), Agência Brasileira de Cooperação (ABC), Western Balkans Investment Framework, Russian International Relations Council, Secretaria Geral Iberoamericana (SEGIB), Polish Department of Cooperation on Development, Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, GSDRC Applied Knowledge Services, The Asia Foundation, Agence Marocaine de Coopération Internationale (AMCI), Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Relations.

the characteristics of each negotiating agenda. Southern countries promote technical cooperation agreements in areas as diverse as energy, environment, health, education, among others. In each of them there are different motivations and different degrees of interdependence between donors and recipients, as well as the conditionalities set for compliance with the agreements.

The question of the state interests' definition in international system is perhaps one of the major challenges in this research field. Much of the literature, concentrated mostly in trade and security agendas, considers actors' interests and preferences previously defined and only discusses possible strategies to maximize them. This focus on the strategies, represented by game theory, is criticized by Jervis (1988), which considers "the most important issue may not be what happens after these preferences have been established, but the preferences themselves" (p.322). Snidel (1985) agrees that inter-state relations analysis must take into account actors' interests and preferences and purposes. In the absence of better criteria, these should be established from "consecrated" theories, from the International Relations field such as realism, as other Social Sciences and/or Humanities areas. We use this resource and seek in Economic Theory, specifically on the issue of market failures, as a possible explanation of the states' interests in the South-South cooperation in the environmental agenda.

For economists, one of the situations where a market fails, i.e., does not efficiently allocate the resources, is when the good being offered and/or demanded is a public good. This type of good is characterized by having no rival consumption – the consumption by one individual does not restrict or limit its consumption by others – and non-excludable – it is not possible to prevent an individual from consuming it. With these characteristics, public goods are not offered by the companies, since these do not have mechanisms to earn revenue from its offer. Thus, such goods shall be offered by governments and/or organizations that receive some kind of subsidy to do so. This is due to the fact that individuals can enjoy public goods without shouldering its costs, i.e., the rational behavior of individuals in such situations is to free-ride (Pindyck and Rubinfeld, 2010).

The environment agenda is essentially defined from public goods. The actions of air and water depollution, of environmental preservation, as well as the knowledge developed for improvements in productive activities that use natural resources benefit a large number of individuals / states even if they do not contribute to provide these goods.

In the international environment, the absence of government implies that states should create mechanisms for the provision of these goods, since also in this sphere, the dominant strategy is free-ride. These mechanisms may vary from multilateral, bilateral or even one or a few states bear the costs of providing the good. The lack of multilateral institutions

responsible for organizing cooperation leads us to believe that Southern States cooperate mainly bilaterally and, since we have seen, in non-reciprocal activities. Taking this into account, we can presume that some states are providing environmental public goods. These facts can be explained by the theory of hegemonic stability, which postulates that hegemonic states assume the function of providing public goods (such as security and free trade).

The premise underlying this research is that the donor of the cooperative relationship between the Southern countries would assume the status of hegemon in relation to the provision of the public good agenda. We would have the situation described by Olson (1999) in which the public good would be provided because one or more states would have an interest and ability to provide the good, setting up what the author calls "privileged group".

Considering that South-South cooperation on environmental agenda conforms Olson's "privileged group", we can also have, as assumption, that established relations between donors -leader of the group- and the receivers do not require any monitoring or enforcement mechanisms. The donor takes all (or nearly all) the costs of the agenda. However, donors, as rational actors, seek to maximize the returns of resources spent, whether in the form of increasing the production of the public good itself, or generating economic, political and strategic gains in other agendas.

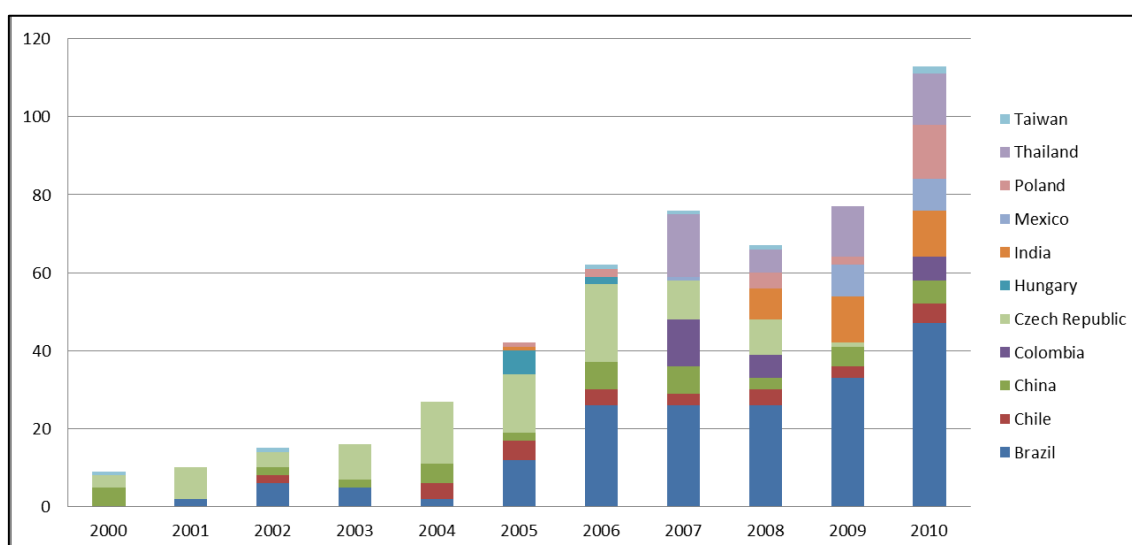
With these assumptions, we define our hypothesis about South-South cooperation.

#### **1. Characteristics relating to donors and receivers countries of South-South cooperation**

Our first hypothesis is that South-South cooperation actions occur from the formation of "privileged groups", where there is a leader, the donor country in this case, and receptors that potentially benefit from the provision of public good.

We define the group leaders as those Southern countries that promote most of cooperation actions on environmental agenda, the 20 countries previously explicit. These "group leaders" acting rationally seek to establish cooperation agreements with countries that benefit from the public good, even without contributing to its provision. This rationality is determined by the ability of the receivers to behave as free-riders and of the donors to maximize economic, political and security potential gains, i.e., in other agendas.

**Graph 1: Cooperation Activities on Environmental Agenda by Country**



Source: prepared by authors from research database

These participants of "privileged group", under Olson terms, i.e., recipient countries, would qualify themselves, according to our hypothesis, from: 1. Geographic / regional closeness to the donor, as they would be the beneficiaries of environmental protection policies and; 2. Those with geographical similarities (geological, hydrological, among others), whether located in other regions/continents would benefit from research and other strategic resources of donor's agenda.

The data indicate that 56.9% of all environmental activities of South-South cooperation developed by the countries of our sample are between regional neighbors, i.e., almost two thirds of environmental cooperation occurs in this form.

**Table 2: Environmental cooperation activities among neighbors**

Donor	Total Environmental Cooperation Activities	Activities with Neighbors Countries	% Activities with Neighbors Countries
Brazil	207	131	63,29
Chile	30	30	100,00
China	47	1	2,13
Colombia	25	25	100,00
Czech Republic	95	40	42,11
Hungary	8	6	75,00
India	33	23	69,70
Mexico	19	15	78,95
Poland	23	11	47,83
Taiwan	8	0	0,00
Thailand	48	27	56,25
<b>Total</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>56,91</b>

Source: prepared by authors from research database

The Latin American countries excel in environmental cooperation activities, while Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico account for 51.7% of all environmental cooperation actions. These countries sign agreements mostly with Latin American countries. Chile cooperates exclusively with Latin American countries, especially 10 activities with Colombia, 2 with Peru and 2 with Bolivia. Colombia also has this logic of performance, since all 22 projects are to receiving countries of the continent. Mexico focus is also the continent, donating to 6 of its neighbors (including Central America) and have some mutual projects, especially to Guatemala (5) and Belize and Nicaragua (2 for each). Finally, on the continent, the highlight is to Brazil which also focuses its projects on the continent (131 or 63.29%), but also acts in Sub-Saharan Africa (57 or 27%). It is important to note that many African countries receiving cooperation from Brazil are located on the West Coast and have similar latitudes do the donor, which means we are talking about countries that share the same kind of natural conditions (savannas and *cerrados*). This means that when Brazil cooperate with African countries on environmental agenda, it is transferring its own knowledge on the matter, what suggests the existence of economies of scale in cooperative action.

The second most important protagonist of South-South cooperation on environmental agenda is the Czech Republic, which focuses mainly on the former Soviet republics (9 countries and 20 activities in total) and countries of the former Yugoslavia (3 countries and 23 activities in total), especially Serbia (13). The rest are Asian (9), European (1) or African (8), highlighting the Vietnam (12). Thus, we can state that there is a significant degree of geographic concentration in Czech Republic cooperation activities. Thailand also follows the cooperation with its regional neighbors pattern, from its 48 projects, 27 are with their neighboring border.

China operates mainly in Africa, both North and Sub-Saharan regions, with 45 projects from 47 environmental projects undertaken during the period analyzed. China has 54 environmental partnerships, as it develops the same project in more than one country. With this configuration, China operates in 20 African countries, i.e., 37% of that continent's countries. Chinese projects in Africa are numerous and similar to one another (mostly involve energy production), suggesting that China hopes to have the economies of scale arising from environmental cooperation. Their interests should be from other nature, probably strategic, due to the partners' number and its increasing demand for Africa's natural resources.

Finally, India has projects with 2 Asian countries (Tajikistan and Maldives) and 2 African countries in the Indian Ocean (Mauritius and Comoros), and Afghanistan (4 activities) and Tajikistan (3). However, it also concentrates its activities with its regional neighbors, from 33

Indian projects, 23 are with its neighbors, especially Nepal and Bhutan (9 activities). Asian receptors are mainly the SAARC (5 countries), except Tajikistan.

### South-South cooperation asymmetries

Our second hypothesis also refers to recipients' and donors' characteristics of cooperation. We consider that even though the Southern countries, i.e., developing or underdeveloped countries, there is great disparity of economic power between donors and recipients of cooperation. If we start from the premise that the donors are the "privileged group" leaders and they assume the costs of the agenda, it is expected they have significant difference in terms of resources comparing to receivers of their cooperation projects.

For analyzing the asymmetries between recipients and donors, we work with three levels of developing countries: emerging countries, defined by the World Bank methodology, as already pointed out; least developed countries, UNCTAD's classification to "a category of States that are deemed highly disadvantaged in their development process, for structural, historical and also geographical reasons"<sup>4</sup>; other South-South cooperation receivers. With this classification, we expect that the 11 countries in our sample give priority the least developed and "others", since there is no significant evidence of asymmetries between the countries classified as "emerging".

**Table 3: The development level of the receiver countries on environmental cooperation**

Donor Countries	Total Recipients	Recipient Countries*					
		Emerging Countries	% Emerging Countries	Least Developed Countries	% Least Developed Countries	Other countries	% Other Countries
Brazil	264	49	18,56	69	26,14	146	55,30
Chile	30	12	40,00	3	10,00	15	50,00
China	52	2	3,85	28	53,85	22	42,31
Colombia	20	8	40,00	1	5,00	11	55,00
Czech Republic	89	11	12,36	10	11,24	68	76,40
Hungary	8	0	0,00	0	0,00	8	100,00
India	33	0	0,00	28	84,85	5	15,15
Mexico	32	3	9,38	1	3,13	28	87,50
Poland	20	0	0,00	5	25,00	15	75,00
Taiwan	8	0	0,00	5	62,50	3	37,50
Thailand	26	3	11,54	21	80,77	2	7,69
<b>Total</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>15,12</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>29,38</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>55,50</b>

<sup>4</sup> <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/ALDC/Least%20Developed%20Countries/LDCs.aspx>



The table above excludes reciprocal projects. In our sample, we located 5 reciprocal projects, 4 of which are carried out between neighbors and all among emerging countries.

The data indicate that Asian countries (China, India, Taiwan and Thailand) cooperate mostly with Least Developed. This is due to the fact that their actions are geared towards its neighbors, which largely fall into this category. With this same logic, Latin American has cooperation agreements with countries classified as "other", since only Haiti is considered a Least Developed on the continent, under the United Nations classification.

A wide range of countries classified as "others" and their significant participation in the agreements as receivers, do not allows us to measure accurately the degree of asymmetry between these and their donors. However, the lower relative proportion (15.12%) of so-called "emerging countries" in cooperation agreements indicates the possibility of some degree of asymmetry between donors and recipients of these agreements, since this category would be those countries with closer economic resources of our sample's donors.

### **The distribution of cooperation resources: donors' logic**

On environmental agenda, as explained above, the final product is the public goods provision. Even if a state assumes the costs of the good, it is possible that it seeks to increase the efficiency of scarce resources' allocation in cooperation activities focusing on fewer topics within the larger scope of environmental activities. This concentration would not only broaden the expertise and knowledge of the donor, but also increase economies of scale relating to resources transfers to recipient countries.

Our hypothesis is, then, that donor countries' focus their actions on specific activities of the environmental agenda. Therefore, we use the stratification proposed by Mitchell (2014) and adapted by Versieux and Haddad (2014) for the environment. As stated in the table, the projects were classified into 5 categories.

**Table 4: Environment agenda areas' stratification**

Nature	Agreements on conservation, preservation and sustainable management of natural resources and systems.
Species	Agreements on protection and control of human interactions with plants and animals, including fish, livestock and agriculture.
Pollution	Agreements on any atmospheric, terrestrial, oceanic or freshwater resources pollution, and agreements on climate change.
Habitat e Oceans	Acordos sobre a preservação dos ecossistemas frágeis e áreas de proteção ambiental, terrestres e marinhos, e acordos sobre secas e desertificação.
Freshwater resources	Agreements on conservation and preservation of lakes or rivers.
Energy	Agreements on any type of energy production and agreements on the prevention of accidents.
Weapons and Environment	Agreements on the control of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and agreements on the prevention of accidents.

Source: Mitchell (2014), adapted by Versieux and Haddad (2014)

The government agencies use different criteria to "frame" their cooperation activities in environmental agenda. In many cases, the same project classified in more than one category, which implies that the total project does not match those made effective. However, our interest is solely to identify whether there is concentration on specific activities.

The data indicate a significant concentration on nature, energy, water resources and species activities, in that order. The most important aspect of this analysis is the concentration of activities by some donor countries.

**Table 4: Distribution of environmental cooperation actions by category**

Donor	Weapons and Environment	Energy	Species	Habitat and Oceans	Nature	Pollution	Freshwater Resources	Total Environmental Cooperation
Brazil	0	38	44	12	65	12	36	207
Chile	0	0	14	1	9	5	1	30
China	0	29	3	0	4	3	8	47
Colombia	0	2	6	1	4	3	9	25
Czech Republic	6	9	10	2	24	17	27	95
Hugary	0	0	0	2	5	0	1	8
India	0	27	0	0	0	0	6	33
Mexico	0	0	2	0	10	3	4	19
Poland	0	7	2	1	10	1	2	23

<b>Taiwan</b>	0	0	4	0	3	0	1	8
<b>Thailand</b>	0	11	10	2	13	10	2	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>543</b>
<b>Total % (Agenda)</b>	<b>1,10</b>	<b>22,65</b>	<b>17,50</b>	<b>3,87</b>	<b>27,07</b>	<b>9,94</b>	<b>17,86</b>	<b>100,00</b>

Source: prepared by authors from research database

China allocates about 60% of its resources in energy activities. This is also India's strategy, which has developed 27 energy actions among its 33 projects. Activities related to "nature" were the subject of most of the projects, including participating over 40% of the actions in the case of Hungary, Mexico and Poland.

However, the most interesting aspect of this analysis is that the variety of activities is somehow related to the number of activities performed. Brazil and Czech Republic, for example, cooperate in all categories of activities (except Weapons and Environment) and at the same time are the countries with more activities performed (Brazil 207 and Czech Republic 95). On the other hand, countries such as Hungary, India and Taiwan perform fewer activities and they are highly concentrated. The data do not confirm our hypothesis that donor countries concentrate the allocation of resources in activities that holds greater expertise and knowledge. The concentration in some specific activities occurs predominantly when the countries have few stocks of cooperation, as in the cases of Hungary and Thailand.

### **The (ir)regularity in achieving cooperation agreements by Southern countries**

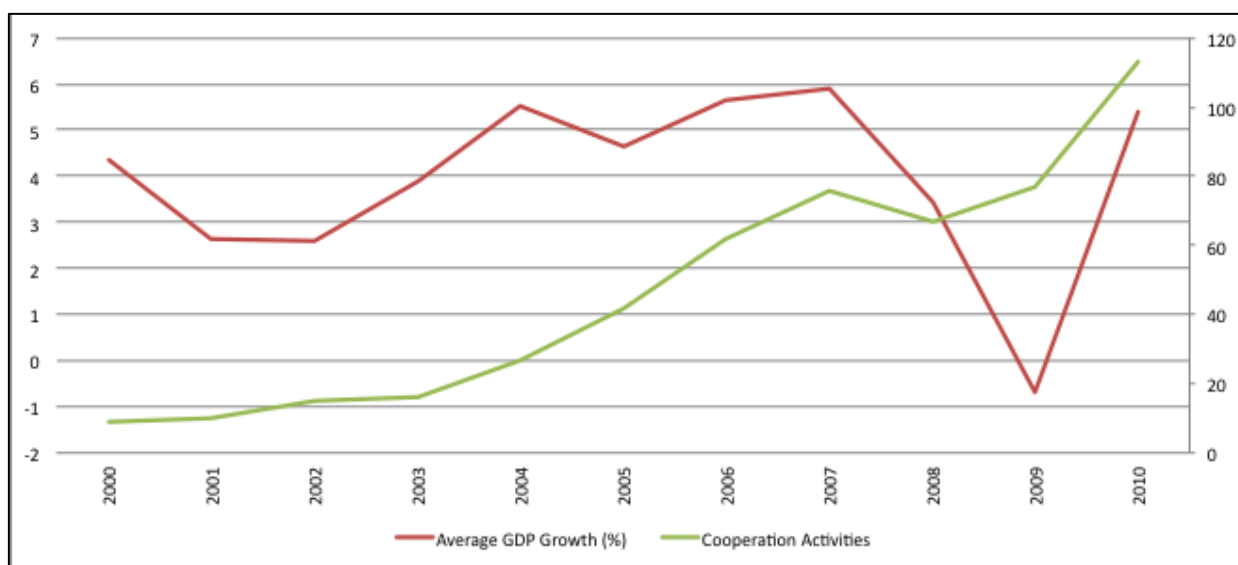
The South-South cooperation, even in its most technical side, consists of transferring human and materials resources originated/produced in the domestic sphere from one State to another. In this sphere, we can assume that these resources have more scarcity dimension than North-South cooperation. Thus, we can consider that there is a positive correlation between the offer of resources for cooperation and periods of economic growth in the donor countries. Periods of low economic growth of the donor, in addition to limiting the available resources also reduce opportunities for policymakers to convince its domestic audience to transfers resources to other countries.

In addition to economic growth, seasonality in the offer of cooperation can be determined by the fact that, as in other forms of economic interaction between states, is permeated by financial flows, i.e., demands the use of foreign currency, often in dollars. These dollars are obtained by surpluses of the current account (trade and services) and capital account of the balance of payments from donor countries. These sources of foreign exchange

are, especially for the southern countries, very conditioned to the international conjuncture, especially trade flows.

With these formulations, we can define our hypothesis about the frequency of south-south cooperation agreements as a result of the combination of two elements: 1. the growth rates of the gross domestic product of countries and 2. the trade surpluses and/or levels international reserves of the donor countries.

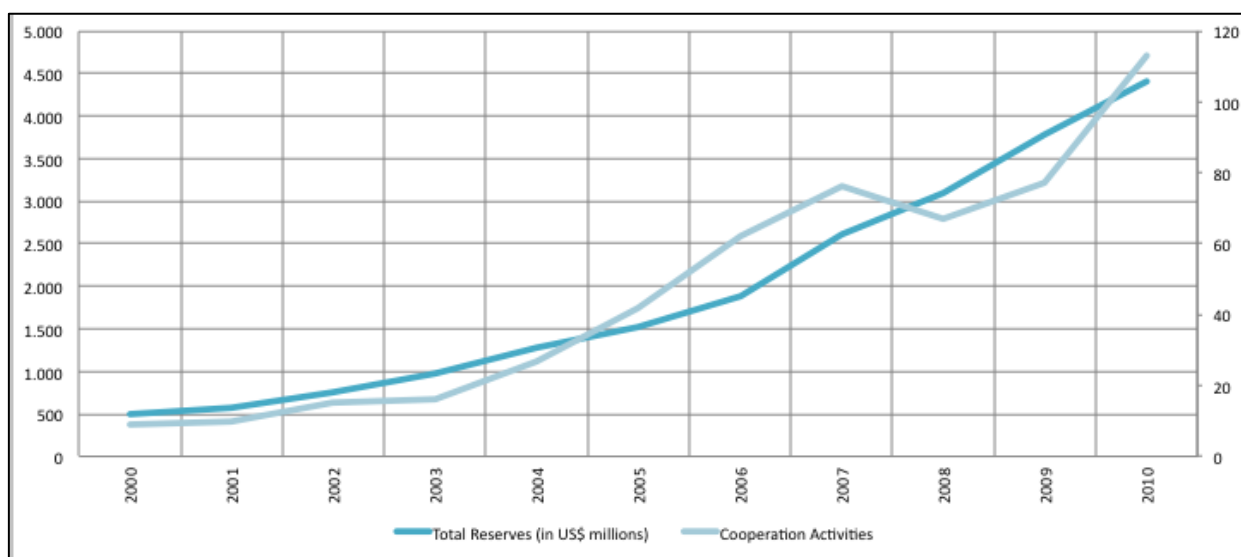
**Graph 2: Average GDP from emerging countries and Cooperation Activities (2000-2010)**



Source: prepared by authors from research database

As shown, the 2008/2009 crisis had significant impacts on GDP of the countries in our sample. However, until the advent of the crisis we were able to identify a positive correlation between output growth and the increase in cooperative activities. We can also consider that the crisis did not bring significant results to cooperative activities and this is due, in some measure, the small impact of the crisis on the Chinese GDP and the Brazilian rapid recovery. As the Czech Republic, second country with more projects on environmental cooperation, the fall in GDP in 2008/2009 was very expressive, but also with a fast recovery. We can also assume that there is a lag between the effects of a crisis and the cooperative relations, these can be impacted with regard to new contracts and does not impact those already being executed.

**Graph 3: Total Reserves from emerging countries and Cooperation Activities (2000-2010)**



Source: prepared by authors from research database

However, it is very interesting the strong correlation observed between the donor countries' dollar reserves of and the cooperation agreements volume. The 2000s saw major U.S. monetary expansion, which enabled a significant flow of the international currency for the Global South, which may indicate that cooperation has grown due to this increasing availability of financial resources.

## Conclusions

Cooperation between the Southern countries have imposed to international relations analysts the challenge of structuring theoretical elements, as well as empirical research that are able to explain this phenomenon, in view of the large number of actors and the wide range of actions in very distinct agendas.

We started, in this research project, from the assumption that the behavior of actors in international system is guided by interests and that these interests are established in each of the agendas of international relations. Thus, when states sign agreements on environmental agenda, they face the fact that the final product of the cooperation is the provision of a public good and, therefore, their interests and strategies take this fact into account.

With the environmental agenda characterized by providing a public good, it is rational for some actors behave as free riders, while others bear the costs of the provision of these goods. Thus, the premise of this research have the condition that there is the formation of

what Olson (1999) calls "privileged group", where a country sees itself as leader of the group – cooperation donor – and the others are beneficiaries, i.e., the receivers.

We search in the cooperation agencies websites of 20 countries considered "emerging" by the World Bank the cooperation actions in the environmental agenda. We identify the occurrence of 551 environmental projects promoted by these countries. However, we consider the existence of 543 projects developed by 11 of these countries, since the remaining 9 accounted for less than 1% of total environmental projects.

We observe that among these 543 projects 309, i.e., 57% are with regional neighbors. This result confirms our hypothesis that the privileged group consists of countries located in the same region, which in this condition can take advantage of the public good inherent to environmental agenda.

The privileged group also consists of countries with limited financial resources related to the donor. Our second hypothesis is that there is asymmetry of resources between these two groups of countries. Essentially, we noted that agreements between donors and other southern countries are considered emerging are fewer (15.12%) than those concluded with the poorest countries in the world (29.38%). We cannot forcefully say that there are great disparities, in economic terms, between donors and receivers on the basis of the wide range of countries classified as "other". However, with all of them being Southern countries, it becomes emblematic identify the possibility of cooperation between them and that this can be an important instrument for the development of so-called "least developed countries".

The condition of the donor countries as leaders of the privileged group led us to define the third of our assumptions as being that these countries seek to extend their expertise and economies of scale of their donation actions concentrating their resources on a limited set of environmental activities. The resources distribution of the issues in environmental agenda seems to be more conditioned to the volume of projects than to the strategy to maximize resources' allocation, given by the economies of scale. Thus, countries such as Brazil and the Czech Republic have greater dispersion in the topics covered, and yet are the two countries with the largest number of projects.

Finally, among our hypotheses, one concerning to the correlation between economic growth and accumulation of reserves of the donor country and the cooperation activities seems to be the most compelling. The offer of cooperation actions is positively related to the donor country's better economic performance, which can be an important indicator over the future of South-South cooperation.

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