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Contents

01. Student Research on Sustainable Development and the EU

- Soo Jin Kim "Towards the "Most Responsible and Sustainable" Paris Olympics: Efforts and Challenges"
 - Do Hee Kim "Main Points of CBAM and Korea's Measures to Mitigate Its Negative Influence"
 - Young Ju Cho "The Path Korea Should Take for Sustainable Development"
 - Eun Seo Cho "Discussion on the Concept of Sustainable Development"
 - Pu Reum Kang "Green Growth and the Sustainable Development"
-

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D2.2 | Collections of students' projects and presentations production

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Description: Students will understand the EU business environment and market policies and find possible strategies for Korean firms to deal with the EU market by conducting research on EU businesses and ESG environment on their own, as well as by taking this course. Students' researches on related issues of EU industries including ESG policies will be extended to research papers. Among those research papers, professors will select several papers and produce a brochure. This brochure will be distributed to Yonsei University students which will automatically increase the interests on EU and the accessibility to both students and scholars.

Assessment

These research papers address various issues related to EU industries, with a particular focus on ESG policies. Among approximately 150 students who participated, the top five outstanding results were selected and developed into research papers. These papers were compiled into a brochure and widely distributed through the official EU Center website to faculty and students of Yonsei University, as well as to citizens interested in these issues.

Outline

01. Student Research on Sustainable Development and the EU

- Soo Jin Kim "Towards the 'Most Responsible and Sustainable' Paris Olympics: Efforts and Challenges"
- Do Hee Kim "Main Points of CBAM and Korea's Measures to Mitigate Its Negative Influence"
- Young Ju Cho "The Path Korea Should Take for Sustainable Development"
- Eun Seo Cho "Discussion on the Concept of Sustainable Development"
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Towards the 'Most Responsible and Sustainable' Paris Olympics: Efforts and Challenges

By Soo Jin Kim (School of Business, Yonsei University)

Seven years since the first lobbying of the Olympics in 2016 by President Hollande, the 2024 Paris Olympics are coming to a very different era with various threats and opportunities. Most notably, the Olympics, originally meant to represent peace and truce from war, are taking place this year in a Europe embroiled in the horrendous war in Ukraine. Furthermore, “historic disruptions are upending the system of international relations that has been in place since the second World War,” according to International Olympic Committee’s President Thomas Bach. Alongside the continued threats from terrorism, the negative trends have been clear: “decoupling of economies, beggar-thy-neighbor, narrow self-interests trumping the rule of law, ‘Global South’ vs. ‘Global North.’”[1] Despite the challenges, however, this year’s Olympics also provide opportunities in the field of sustainable development, as it strives for the greenest-ever games in Olympic history, pledging to halve the average carbon footprint compared to that of previous Summer Games.[2] As the global event pushes closer to the date, it is upon international attention whether it could overcome various security hurdles and serve as a new opportunity to foster inclusivity and build resilience for future games.

Promoting Sustainability

The Paris 2024 Olympics are described as the greenest and “the most sustainable” in history, aiming to limit carbon emissions to around 1.75 million tons and run on 100% renewable energy. This is significantly lower than the average of 3.5 million tons of carbon from previous summer Olympics like the Tokyo 2020, Rio 2016, and London 2012.[3] In addition to avoiding and reducing emissions, the Paris 2024 sustainability strategy will incorporate offsets, investing in numerous other environmental and social projects meant to last. Instead of tailor-made venues and apartments, 95% of the games will be held on existing or temporary infrastructures, and the athletes will sleep in the Olympic Village powered by geothermal and solar energy.[2] The village itself will house about 3000 apartments containing a total of 14250 beds, with mattresses manufactured from recycled fishing nets. It will also incorporate rooftops with enclosures and openings, as well as approximately 9,000 trees around the village, to attract and house different species of birds and insects. After the Paralympics are over on September 8, the village that contains 82 buildings will be converted into office space and apartments to house others.[3]



Increased Risks of Political Unrest

Despite efforts for sustainable development, the upcoming Olympics also face unique challenges. For instance, the global visibility of the Olympics confers some groups an incentive to act for their different causes. Indeed, risks of attacks from terrorist groups like ISIS and Al-Qaeda that view France as a symbol of Western values and policies they oppose also exist, since France is involved in military operations against them in the Middle East and Africa.[4] Paris's history with terrorism further elevates these risks during the Olympics: the January 2015 Charlie Hebdo attacks and the November 2015 attacks on a football stadium exposed French security infrastructure's vulnerability whilst highlighting the ease at which terrorists could strike at the heart of French society. Worse, the recent snap elections for parliament that deepen the left vs. far-right battle and conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza that lead to street protests over invitations of certain country's athletes further deteriorate the already dire current global political climate.[5]

Human Rights Issue in the Broader Light

Some have criticized how the Olympics were being used as a medium for eliminating undesirable capital of populations, especially those who are homeless around Paris. While the state pleaded for innocence, organizations working in support of unhoused people have underscored the acceleration of relocating homeless people around Paris to smaller cities across the country. Despite the policy being in the test phase, it is set to run until the end of the year leading to accusations of a "social cleanse" ahead of the Games.[6] France has also experienced domestic unrest recently from the Nanterre riots in June 2023, which highlighted broader social issues such as unemployment, poverty, and exclusion in banlieues, suburban areas where youths may feel marginalized from mainstream society. The sense of alienation felt by these young people in banlieues makes them susceptible to online propaganda by extremist groups that often offer a sense of belonging and purpose in exchange for allegiance to radical causes. They may feel additionally disenfranchised during global events like the Olympics due to the increased potential of such digital indoctrination.[4]



Throughout the century, threats to multilateral cooperation have shaped global affairs. Among them, “narrow self-interest trumping the rule of law” seems to be the most influential today, according to Bach.[1] It is thus imperative for all nations to make collective efforts that go beyond their spheres to alter market dynamics, especially amid the Olympics where potent for significant international changes exists. With sustainable efforts framed around reduction and circulation, the world may be able to “move the dial on climate change mitigation,” says the World Economic Forum in its Global Risks Report 2024.[2] Furthermore, a comprehensive framework on politics and socioeconomics not only during but also after the Olympics may serve as a pivotal factor in making a difference in the decades coming forth.

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Main Points of CBAM and Korea's Measures to Mitigate Its Negative Influence

By Do Hee Kim

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Introduction

In 2018, the whole world was shaken up by a 15-year-old girl who decided to skip school one day and start a rally in front of the Swedish parliament. Something that started as an innocent project by this small girl soon grew into an international movement that brought many people to the streets and shouted for climate justice. This movement is now called 'Fridays for Future', in which a group of people comes together all around the world and march on the streets to remind other people of the urgency of climate problems. (FridaysForFuture)

This story, as you may have already guessed, is of Greta Thunberg, who later went on to attend crucial climate-related conferences at UN and European commissions. Her speech in 2019 at the COP 25 has gained millions of views over the span of 4 years with striking quotes such as "You are failing us" and "How dare you". (Thunberg, Greta) She has inspired a lot of decision-makers in the international political system to revise the climate issues and come up with reasonable measures to tackle them before it's too late. European Union was one of the few policymakers that took Greta's words to heart. They have conducted multiple conferences and policies up until this point such as the Emission Trading System in order to solve the climate issues, but many have failed. Even the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the UN seem ineffective in most of the milestones it has set. In response to the ongoing trend for climate justice and the consistent failures of previous measures, the EU has come up with an ever more stringent alternative this time round. Starting from October 1st of this year, the EU is now imposing serious tariffs on imported items in order to deal with carbon leakage through a policy called the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). (European Commission). This can drastically change the dynamic of international actors in that, having to pay the heightened taxes on every exporting product directed at the EU means a considerable drop in the income from the exports in general, but also potential follow-ups from other countries as well in order to join this initiation. As a student studying political science in South Korea, this matter inspires me to think from the Korean government's perspective and how it can affect Korean society. Thus, in this essay, I'd like to touch upon three points: the main idea of the Carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM), how it can harm the economy of South Korea without the appropriate measures, and what the political decision-makers in Korea can do to tackle the issue first hand.



Main points of CBAM

The main point of CBAM is to meet the carbon emission level from 1990 by 2050 by imposing a stringent carbon tax on both internal and external nations of the European Union. All the partnering countries of the CBAM need to submit a fourth-quarter report by the end of January 2024 and an annual report each year henceforward. The trial period lasts until the end of 2025 in which the exporting countries must submit the reports but not yet pay for their production cost. Since 2026, all countries must abide by a more sustainable production system and increased taxation when exporting to the EU. CBAM also imports taxes starting with the carbon-intensive precursors including cement, iron and steel, aluminum, fertilizers, electricity, and hydrogen.

Potential adverse effects of CBAM on Korean society

This major shift can cause 3 significant challenges to one of the exporters - South Korea. According to the Korea Risk Group, this change in trade conditions can heighten the competition across many industries for the sustainability-driven firm-level performance among the employees, increase the production cost in order to comply with the EU standard, and cause a potential conflict with the WTO. (Lee, S.) Complying with one of the crucial importers of domestic products must be met with more effort than simply abiding by the tax requirement. Korea, in revising their eco-friendly firm policies as well as their production system, must cause a major mind-shift among the employees and prospective employees among the job-seekers. Having sustainability-driven firm-level performance requires a high understanding of the utility of modern technology that can balance out the sustainability and production ratio at work and in the bigger picture of the production process. In Korea, many youngsters are already struggling with striking competition among job-seekers. In a 10-year timeframe, while most OECD countries saw a 4.4% decrease in the youth unemployment rate between 2009 and 2019, Korea experienced a 0.9% increase, causing an immense amount of pressure and stress to 9 in 10 young job-seekers. (Creatrip) It is also disheartening to note that Korea recorded the highest suicide rate among the OECD countries in 2021. (Rashid, Raphael.) It is completely understandable that the government's primary focus is on protecting Korean citizens from suffering further burdens in their day-to-day lives, as they insisted on reducing the suicide rate by 30% in the next five years. Another challenge is that increasing the production cost requires higher investment in capital, labor, or entrepreneurship, to keep South Korea on top of the game among many competitors in the global market.

This triggers a side of the Korean economy since the "industrial crisis zones" were designated in 2018 when the socio-economic protection provided for the firms ultimately led to mass unemployment due to the structural adjustments. (Reuters) This volatile economic condition makes it harder for the firms to keep up with the demanding monetary requirements by the CBAM in that they also face social pressure from the employees and job seekers. While Korea has pride in being able to build up economic wealth in such a historically limited timeline, it can simultaneously be the trigger point; it is a great responsibility to maintain the "developed country" status that Korea has just recently gained in 2021 for as long as possible without throwing the people under the bus for another unemployment crisis or economic recession. (KBS World)The last point indirectly links to the final challenge Korea faces - a potential conflict with the World Trade Organization. WTO has pointed out Korea's inconsistent subsidies to its domestic firms, which goes against the WTO regulations. When subsidies are provided to domestic firms in an effort to protect the vulnerable ecosystem of corporates, it puts foreign firms and their relevant trades at a disadvantage. A domestic government, in acting on the international stage, must always act according to Putnam's 2-level game theory by showing a preferable action towards external actors while meeting the minimum expectation among the domestic voters; in this case, the external actor is the WTO. Previously, Korea and WTO went over multiple disputes over exports and taxes. One such occasion was when the WTO panel discovered that Korea's domestic support for fresh, chilled, and frozen beef was inconsistent with Articles 6, 7.2(a), and 3.2 of the Agreement on Agriculture in 2000. (World Trade Organization; 2000) It may, thus, not be the most ideal thing to go under the radar of WTO again in order to maintain a positive impression, especially given that Korea has such a volatile economic condition.

Measures that can be taken by the Korean government

Looking back at the major challenges at hand, South Korea can come up with certain domestic measures to mitigate the adverse effects of the CBAM before reaching out to the EU. First, societal issues such as high competition rate among job seekers and suicide/ depression rate aren't necessarily the resulting factors of the CBAM implementation, but rather an issue that is very intrinsic due to other causes. Korean government fully acknowledges the severe education issues rooted in the society. Korean society forces young minds to think inside the box and view education as nothing beyond just memorizing information from textbooks. Redefining the notion of education and initiating a necessary renaissance in the education system can be a pivotal point in the history of South Korea as we shift our focus onto raising creativity and critical thinking skills among children and teenagers in Korea. Having such a fundamental change in education will allow students to define their career path early on and catch up on the industry trends voluntarily without having to wait for instructions from their educators or the government on new policy changes every now and then. The truly curious and capable minds should be able to constantly seek what's demanded among them in their estimated path and shift towards such an expectation, whether that would be acquiring sustainability-related skills or technical skills in utilizing innovational infrastructures such as AI and machine learning. Korean government should be rather thankful that the changes imposed by the CBAM are once again highlighting the tip of the iceberg of a problem that must in fact be at the forefront of their priority.

Second, Korea, in fact, can turn the table with the second and third points of economic challenges it's facing. For instance, before discussing the legitimacy of the domestic subsidies to the domestic firms for the heightened production cost in compliance with the CBAM, the country can question the legitimacy of the CBAM itself. If the CBAM is found to be inconsistent with WTO law, it could be challenged by Korea and other countries. One of the arguments that Korea and other countries could make is that the CBAM is a form of domestic support that distorts trade. In particular, Korea could argue that the CBAM is inconsistent with Article 6 of the Agreement on Agriculture because it provides domestic support to EU farmers. EU farmers would be exempted from the CBAM, while non-EU farmers would be subject to the CBAM. This could give EU farmers an unfair advantage in the EU market. Korea could also argue that the CBAM is inconsistent with Article 7.2(a) of the Agreement on Agriculture because it is a form of export subsidy. The CBAM would effectively subsidize EU exports of goods by making imported goods more expensive. This could give EU exporters an unfair advantage in the global market. Finally, Korea could argue that the CBAM is inconsistent with Article 3.2 of the Agreement on Agriculture because it is a form of non-trade-distorting domestic support. (World Trade Organization; n.d.) The CBAM would apply to all imports of goods, regardless of their origin. This would mean that non-EU farmers would be subject to the CBAM, even if their domestic support measures are not distorting trade. It is only a fair game to challenge CBAM at the WTO when the counter-act is plausible. Lastly, the most significant question comes down to whether South Korea is taking the climate problem seriously. Inquiring about the structural problems in Korean society as well as the feasibility of the CBAM's implementation is important only in the short run. If the country actually sought fundamental renovation in the way that we can preserve our only planet for our coming generations, the focal point must be ultimately shifted to how South Korea can share the same tempo in tackling the climate issues together with the EU.

For instance, Korea, as well, has made multiple attempts to meet the international standards of the climate justice movement through the imposition of carbon taxes in 2019 (OECD), or the famous Green New Deal policy in 2009. (Kim, H. & Oh, B.) However, they each failed notable challenges such as the economic crisis wresting away most of the budgets from climate policies in 2009 and the carbon taxes providing wrong incentives and alternatives to the firms by motivating them to commit to the payment rather than endeavoring to decrease the amount of emission in the first place. Although it's an understatement to even second-guess the hard-working nature of Korean individuals, a climate issue is an assignment to the entire mankind; international cooperation is the only way to bring out significant changes in the near future. With all in reflection, South Korea has the potential to address the challenges associated with the CBAM through proactive domestic measures. By redefining education, challenging the CBAM's legitimacy under WTO regulations, and revising the domestic climate justice efforts, South Korea can better position itself to navigate the changing global economic landscape and minimize the negative consequences of the CBAM. Conclusion In summary, the implementation of the CBAM presents South Korea with multifaceted challenges that extend beyond trade policy. These challenges touch on societal, economic, and international legal dimensions. To navigate this transformative shift effectively, South Korea can take proactive measures on domestic fronts. Addressing societal issues through educational



reform can equip the youth with the skills needed to thrive in a dynamic job market. South Korea can explore the legal legitimacy of the CBAM within the framework of the WTO, potentially challenging the mechanism. Simultaneously, facing the underlying problem of climate change can fundamentally allow South Korea to foster better collaboration with not only the EU but other international actors that advocate for climate justice in the long run. By embracing these domestic measures, South Korea can mitigate the negative impacts of the CBAM, fostering a more resilient and adaptive society, while safeguarding its economic interests and international trade relationships in an era of evolving global climate policies. The CBAM, while posing challenges, also provides an opportunity for South Korea to reevaluate and strengthen its domestic foundations, positioning the nation for a more sustainable and prosperous future.

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The Path Korea Should Take for Sustainable Development*

지속가능한 개발을 위해 한국이 나아갈 길

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21세기는 sustainable development(지속가능개발)이 개발협력의 주류 패러다임으로 자리잡고 있다. 이 이론의 등장은 국가 주도적인 경제성장 중심주의에 대한 반성에서 비롯한다. 1987년 WCED에서 발표된 Brundtland report에서 sustainable development라는 개념이 등장하였다. 이는 미래세대가 그들의 필요성을 충족시킬 능력을 저해하지 않으면서, 현 세대의 필요성을 충족하는 것을 가리킨다. 즉 이제는 경제성장, 환경보호, 사회발전이라는 세 가지 축을 동시에 고려해야 한다고 역설하였다. 나아가 환경보호를 위한 가장 효율적 수단은 민주주의라고 보았다. 민주적 통제가 무분별한 경제성장과 환경파괴를 방지할 수 있다는 것이다. 그 후 2000년에 이르러 MDGs(millennium development goals)가 발표되었다. 이는 총 8가지 목표를 제시함으로써 빈곤 퇴치와 더불어, 환경 및 사회까지 고려되어야 함을 시사했다. 하지만 선진국과 개도국간 대립이라는 양상으로 나타날 뿐이었다.

이에 대한 대안으로 SDGs(sustainable development goal)로 전환되었다. MDGS에서 구체화된 17가지 목표를 제시함으로써 개념 및 패러 디임으로만 존재하던 것을 정책적으로 구체화하는 노력이 수행된 것이다. 하지만 sustainable development 또한 문제가 존재한다. 우선 선진국과 개도국간 갈등이다. 개도국의 입장에서 두 가지 비판을 제기한다. 우선 개도국은 환경 기술을 보유하고 있지 않다. 친환경 상품이 아니면 수출입을 규제하는 정책은 무역장벽과 다르 없다는 것이다. 둘째, 개도국의 입장에서 국가 중심적인 정책으로 효율적 경제성장을 이뤄야 한다. 하지만 선진국이 인권, 환경, 사회를 근거로 개도국의 발전을 가로막고 있다고 비판한다. 이에 반해 선진국은 두 가지 근거로써 반박한다. 첫째, 친환경적 기술 개발은 오히려 신기술 및 일자리 창출에 기여한다는 점이다. 둘째, 정부 주도의 경제성장은 불균형과 부패만을 야기할 뿐이다. 이와 더불어 선진국 간의 갈등도 남아있다. 에너지를 중동 및 러시아에 의존하고 있는 유럽과 달리 미국은 셰일가스로 인한 자급자족이 가능하다. 그렇기에 화석 에너지가 필요하다는 점에서 미국은 비교적 덜 협조적이다.

이처럼 SDGS는 개발협력에 있어서 필수적인 개념이지만 한계가 존재하는 상황이다. 자체적으로만 보아도 17가지의 목표 간 우선순위를 나눌 수 없다는 점, 수행 모니터링의 부재, 달성을 위한 자원 부족이라는 치명적 한계가 있다. 따라서 사회, 경제, 환경보호라는 세 가지 축을 균형 있게 발전시키기 위한 리더십이 어느 때보다 요구된다. 이때 대한민국이 긍정적 기여를 할 수 있을 것으로 믿는다. 대한민국은 '녹색성장(Green Growth)' 개념을 부각시키는데 기여한 바가 있다. 이는 경제성장과 환경보호라는 목적 달성을 위해서 기술개발이 시급하다는 현실적 대안을 제시한 개념이다. 대한민국이 선진국과 개도국 간 가교 역할을 수행하여 녹색성장에 대한 공감대를 이끌어낼 수 있었다. 마찬가지로 SGDS의 구체화를 위해 대한민국의 외교적 노력이 필요한 때이다.

*This report has been distributed in both English and Korean versions



[D2.2] Collections of students' projects and presentations production

Discussion on the Concept of Sustainable Development*

지속가능한 발전의 개념에 관한 논의

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굿거버넌스 논의가 신자유주의의 확산에 어떻게 영향을 받아 주류 의제로 떠오르게 되었는지 다룬 것과 같은 맥락으로 지속가능발전이라는 개념 역시 신자유주의 개념의 등장으로 국가중심 발전이라는 고전적 관점이 해체되면서 등장했다. GDP라는 양적 지표의 증대만이 발전이 아니라는 생각이 1980년대 이후 제기되면서, 1965년 ECOSOC에서 스웨덴 및 발트 3국을 중심으로 전개되었던 환경에 대한 논의가 국제 사회 단위에서 구체화되기 시작한다. 첫 번째 단계는 환경과 경제발전을 하나만을 선택해야하는 trade-off 관계로 볼 것이 아니라, 둘의 공동 목표가 빈곤의 타파이며 경제적 효율성과 생태적 효율성이 공생하는 관계가 될 수 있다는 주장으로 독일을 중심으로 전개되었다. 이에 1987년 Brundtland report에서 'Sustainable Development'라는 개념이 미래세대의 필요성을 충족시킬 능력을 저해시키지 않으면서 현세대의 필요성을 충족시키는 개발로 구체화되었다. 두 번째 단계는 환경과 경제를 조화롭게 보호하고 발전시키기 위해서는 민주주의가 필요하다는 것이다. 시민사회의 민주적 역량이 감시를 통하여 시장이 환경파괴적 발전을 하는 것을 막고, 현세대가 미래세대를 사고할 수 있는 능력을 길러주기 때문이다. 이후 전개된 Rio, Rio+10, Rio+20 에서의 MDG 및 SDG논의는 선진국 중심의 지속가능개발과 굿거버넌스 논의와, 이에 맞서 국가중심주의가 발전을 위해서는 필수적이며 환경과 경제를 분리시켜 지원해야한다는 개도국의 갈등양상으로 전개되었다.

환경 보호 의제가 어떻게 경제 발전과 시민사회 발전이라는 의제와 함께 논의되었는지 역사를 코로나가 끝나고 새로운 국제사회의 의제가 정비되어가는 현상황과 비교해 보며 생각할 수 있었다. 환경보호라는 문제의 심각성이 어렵듯이 느껴졌던 20세기에 비해 자연 재해와 생태계 변화로 말미암은 질병적 문제들이 실제로 나타나기 시작한 지금은 지속가능한 발전이라는 개념이 번두리의 의제가 아닌 가장 중심 의제로 충분히 모든 국가가 여기고 있다. 그리고 이를 위해서 가장 중요한 것이 시민 사회의 역량이며 사회 개발이라는 선진국의 주장에 매우 동감한다. 우리나라의 상황에 비추어보아도, 아직 경제 성장을 위해서 환경 파괴는 어쩔 수 없으며, 경제 성장이 우선이고 그 뒤에 부수적인 문제는 해결될 것이라는 시장중심주의적 사고가 만연하다. 이 상황에서 사회적으로 취약한 계층이 환경문제의 폐해를 가장 직접적으로 느낄 것을 고려하면 다양한 의견이 전개될 수 있는 시스템을 갖춘 민주적 사회만이 환경보호를 정책으로 발전시킬 수 있으리라 생각한다. 그렇기 때문에 민주적 시스템이 불완전하고 그런 시민 역량이 아직 갖춰지지 못한 개도국과 선진국의 입장차이는 계속될 것이다.

그러나 고무적인 것은, Collective action problem 때문에 환경보호를 위해 국가들이 경제적 이익을 포기하지 않을 것이라 생각했던 것과 달리, 오히려 탄소 무역세와 같은 제도가 적극적으로 추진되어 경제적 이익을 환경 보호라는 시장에서 찾아내는 형태의 움직임이 전개되고 있다는 것이다. 탄소 절감을 위한 국제사회의 움직임이라는 것이 '강제적'일 수 있다는 것이 놀라웠으며, 이 상황에서 더 이상 경제개발과 환경보호라는 의제가 분리되어야 한다는 개도국의 주장이 힘을 잃지 않을까 생각 한다. 물론 환경 보호를 위한 움직임이 전개된다고 하더라도 국가 간의 불평등을 해소하는 방향은 아니다. 이를 통해 오히려 사회적 역량이 부족한 개도국이 더욱 발전이라는 패러다임에서 멀어지고, 경제 발전 역시 더더지지 않을까 걱정이 된다.

*This report has been distributed in both English and Korean versions



Green Growth and the Sustainable Development*

녹색 성장과 지속가능한 발전

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1. 지속가능한 개발 개념의 시작과 변천사

지속가능한 개발은 1980년대, 인간 자체에 관심을 가져야 한다는 사고가 부상하며 등장하였다. 굿 거버넌스 개념과 함께 논의된 바 있는 신우파/신자유주의의 확산과도 관련이 있는데, 이는 국가차원의 경제성장보다도 그 안에 사는 개인의 개발, 성장, 자유에 주목한다는 점에서 공통점이 있다. 1965년 스웨덴 등 노르딕 국가들이 환경문제를 중요 의제로 제시한 이유에 대해서는 여러 갈래의 주장이 있다. 첫째, 독일, 프랑스 등의 국가들이 산업화 과정에서 배출한 오염물질이 기류를 타고 국경을 넘어와 피해를 많이 봤다. 둘째, 독일과 같은 강대국과 이웃한 노르딕 국가들이 자신의 생존을 위해 '삶의 안보'라는 개념을 이야기하고, 세계 정치에서 자신의 좌표를 찾으려 하는 정치적인 노력이다. 셋째, 북부 유럽 국가들은 자연과 환경의 매서움을 오랜 기간 경험했기 때문에 다른 국가들보다 환경문제에 민감하고 관심이 많다. 이런 환경 관련 agenda를 국제사회에 던져 패러다임을 주도하는 것도 가능하다. 뒤이어 1970년대에는 로마클럽의 성장 한계론이 대두되었다. 이는 산업화로 환경파괴가 일어나고, 경제발전에도 한계가 있으므로 선진국은 경제발전을 중지하고, 개발도상국은 산업발전을 포기해야 한다는 극단적인 주장에 해당한다. 즉, 환경문제와 경제발전은 trade-off 관계라는 것이다. 이러한 견해에 대해 1980년대에 의문이 제기되었다. 생태적 근대화론은 환경과 경제발전은 공존할 수 있다고 보았으며, "빈곤은 환경의 최대 적이다" 라는 모토 하에 생태적 효율성과 경제적 효율성을 동시에 제고해야 한다고 주장하였다. 1987년 WCED의 Brundtland Report에서 지속가능한 개발 개념이 처음으로 등장하였다. 여기에서 지속가능한 개발을 '미래세대가 그들의 필요성을 충족시킬 능력을 저해하지 않으면서 현 세대의 필요를 충족시킬 능력'으로 정의하고 있다. 또한 환경보호의 가장 효율적인 수단은 민주주의라고 보았는데, 이는 민주주의를 통해 무분별한 개발을 막고, 미래 세대를 생각하는 시민중심 사고를 통해 환경보호와 경제발전을 함께 추구할 수 있기 때문이다.

2. 녹색성장 개념과 지속가능한 개발

녹색성장 개념은 지속가능한 개발과 패러다임적으로는 유사하나, 녹색성장 측에는 산업발전에 대한 현실적인 요구가 더욱 반영되어 있다. 개발도상국 입장에서는 국가중심 체제로 산업발전을 도모하고 싶은데, 이런 상황에서 환경보호와 사회개발까지 신경 쓸 여력이 없다. 또한 이미 발전한 국가들도 지속가능한 개발 개념이 너무 이상적이며, trade-off 관계도 일부 현실이 아니냐는 견해를 가지고 있다. 이러한 배경 하에 지속가능한 개발의 '세속적 version'인 녹색성장 개념이 제시됐다. 거시적 차원에서의 지속가능한 개발 논의 대신 미시적, 정책적 접근, 시장친화적 대안이 필요하다고 보며, 이산화탄소 배출 억제에만 집중하는 대신 기술개발의 필요성을 강조한다. 또한 시장에서 인센티브를 통해 자발적으로 환경보호와 경제성장을 달성케 할 수 있다고 본다. 지속가능한 개발에서는 경제성장, 환경보호, 사회개발을 조화시켜야 한다고 보지만, 녹색성장 개념은 사회개발도 물론 중요하나, 그 자리에 기술개발을 포함시킨다는 점에서 차이가 있다.

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