Middle powers and climate change: the role of KIA

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Abstract

The paper assesses the role and impact of the middle-power alliance of South Korea–Indonesia–Australia (KIA) in the region. KIA is a middle power and informal grouping. Its three constituents play a key role in the South Korean-based Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI). The paper identifies and discusses how KIA states, within the GGGI, and as a result of their intentions and middle-power strategies, represent a shift away from previous asset or attribute-based middle-power leverage. Instead, a strategic emphasis on issue-specific network positioning is emerging. These strategic and behavioral developments are impacting upon and reflect certain challenges to traditional understandings and expectations of middle-power activity and alliance building in the Asia-Pacific region, and, in the context of their specific responses to climate change impact and governance in the region.

1 Introduction

Jonas Parello-Plesner (2009) identified Korea–Indonesia–Australia (KIA) as an emerging middle-power caucus of South (K)orea, (I)ndonesia, and (A)ustralia, Asia's forth, fifth, and sixth largest economies. Parello-Plesner suggested that KIA states represent a middle-power ascendance. South Korea and Indonesia have recently taken up the theme of 'Enhancing the Korea-Indonesia Middle Power Partnership,' and a Roundtable on Trilateral Cooperation between South Korea, Indonesia, and Australia was organized by the Korean Institute of Foreign Affairs and Security in Canberra on 20 December 2011. Such 'acronym' groupings have come under much controversy often dismissed as media fad or bloggers' hubris. Nonetheless, the use of such acronyms 'to make sense of the world' is perhaps symptomatic of a wider recognition of emerging regional and global multi-polarity (Haass, 2008). This is engendering debates on the possibilities of regional institution building and identifications of balancing and hedging strategies by states responding to the uncertainty of wider regional power shifts, as well as potential shifts in the nature of power itself in a region of complex interdependence (Jackson, 2014).

The paper focuses on KIA's relationships through the prism of the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI). The GGGI (2013) was originally founded in South Korea as an NGO in 2010. It became an international organization in 2012 following final ratification by Denmark, Guyana, and 'Millennium Island' Kiribati. The GGGI consists of mostly middle power states and small states vulnerable to climate change impact. The GGGI has observer status at the United Nations (UN). Its aim is to promote the adaptation and implementation of endogenous green growth strategies. Green growth is a strategy to secure states from environmental threats and to generate resilient societies against any future risks of climate change impact. This is to be achieved through 'low-carbon' and market-based economic growth.

The GGGI Assembly consists of 20 member countries, while the Council consists, in principle, of 17 main actors (including both state and non-state). At the 2014 UN Climate Summit, former Indonesian President Yudhoyono was voted 2015 Chair of the Council. UN Climate Change Chief Negotiator Yvo De Boer has been, since April 2014, GGGI Director General, taking over from Australian diplomat Howard Barmsey. The GGGI has no objective for establishing formal climate treaties or 'binding' climate agreements. This is to avoid traditional state concerns with 'first mover disadvantage' in mitigation commitments and to assuage member concerns with introducing advantageous new technologies that have

traditionally tempted other states to 'free ride'. The GGGI aims to avoid member defections and grandstanding or 'spoiling'. The GGGI is using the different development stages and rates of members (traditionally understood to generate institutional 'deadlock') to, instead, generate 'win-win' partnerships between 'like-minded' states with a 'peer' emphasis on 'who' states know and consort with, rather than on 'what' states have. This enables national interests by aiding (rather than constraining) other states.

The paper is, therefore, positioned in an academic debate concerning the impact of the changing role and effectiveness of middle powers for international institutions and cooperation in an era of multi-polarity. The paper argues that identifying middle-power roles and behaviors within and between KIA and the GGGI might provide an indication of the changing nature of contemporary middle-power activity in the region. KIA states, in the GGGI, represent an exclusive 'minilateral' forum within a growing network of exported green growth projects. These projects are being provided to priority Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) partners often within the GGGI. All KIA states are in the major regional groupings such as Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the East Asia Summit and either ASEAN +3/6, and the ASEAN Regional Forum. KIA states are engendering network leverage within (and between) regional and multilateral organizations. Beeson and Higgott (2014) have noted that middle-power roles and behavior may be interpreted as representing (or correlating with) the expectations of realism but are, in fact, a result of different, unintended, or unexpected causes. Beeson and Higgott (2014) also note, however, that middle powers, such as South Korea, are historically constrained by their geopolitical and cultural 'baggage'. Yet, it is these very constraints that enables, through network positioning, middle-power strategic opportunities and agency, but with acknowledged provisos. First, networks can encourage their own exclusionary practices (although an increase in networks can result in overlapping inclusivity). Second, networks can obscure the skewed structures of power. Third, networks are a limited way to bypass the 'inevitability' of regional power distribution. Yet, networking middle powers are locating strategic opportunities on 'chosen' niche issues in ways that are not necessarily determined by (or which might be interpreted as) traditional zero-sum alliance building through practices of constraining and exclusions in the following ways.

First, 'network' enmeshments and positionings are not 'defensive' strategies of hedging or bandwagoning but indicating and allowing middle-power

states to reframe issue agendas by attracting 'peer' partners. Second, middle powers are perhaps shifting from traditional 'pro-action' strategies of 'autonomy' (based on 'bridging' or effective resource usage) to a strategy based on network positioning and network brokerage. Third, networking is allowing for substitute or 'minilateral' institution building as a response to the effectiveness of existing international regimes. However, this can lead to strategic tensions. As Stephens (2014, p. 913) recently noted, these are a result of 'an increased dependence of the rising powers on existing global governance institutions, forcing them to collaborate with established powers' but 'the prominence of statist modes of capitalist development gives rising powers less liberal preferences regarding the rules of global governance institutions'. This, however, is not necessarily a resistance to, or a counter to, the dominant liberal or market capitalist international order, but can reinforce structures (and their values/expectations) through 'fostering a hybrid order, characterized by a deepening of transnational integration' but with an 'erosion of global governance's most liberal principles' (Stephens, 2014, p. 913). Fourth, networks that might 'bind' states can paradoxically create strategic flexibility, which means that there is now potential difficulty in determining whether a middle power is a 'conservative' state, a socializer/mediator state, or a 'radical' state. Fifth, new middle powers that do not necessarily fit into the traditional parameters of developed or developing 'camps' may find themselves in contradictory positions of regarding the fulfilling of global mitigation commitments as key for national status while often preferring non-mitigation as crucial for 'catch-up' or even 'leapfrog' development.

Indeed, the 'trade off' relationship between development and the environment has often been a cause of strategic stalemates at major global climate change Conferences of the Parties. First, developing nations regard mitigation as multilaterally imposed from developed nations as a form of 'green colonialism/dependency' by, in effect, stopping their 'breakout development'. Yet, many smaller and developing nations that are more vulnerable to the impact of climate change may want to pursue global agreements for 'results' as well as for leverage over the bigger states. Second, the 'level playing fields' and 'collective we' narrative used by the West (as upholding the 'equality of sovereignty') is often seen by developing countries as a way of abrogating Western responsibility and obscuring Western national interests. The Western narrative of 'leveling out' is seen as being spun as a way of breaking the institutional deadlock created by the so-called firewall between the developed and developing nations. However, from the global South, this particular narrative obscures

ongoing structural inequalities existing between developed and developing countries. Third, the 'South's' narrative is that an alternative 'level playing fields' approach should, at the very least, begin with financial compensation for those developing nations whose economies and growth opportunities are negatively affected by climate change (and mitigation law). So here the objective is to push the developed nations into providing financing for 'catch-up' in those countries 'not being allowed' to develop as a result of directives from bodies such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Yet, the inclusion of middle income countries into organizations such as the Group of Twenty (G20) and the Organization for Cooperation and Development (OECD) may be altering this trajectory. Many developed states complain that binding agreements based on 'the latest science' are unfair to them as many developing nations do not possess data gathering/collecting mechanisms and not subject to similar restrictions (Harvey, 2014; IPCC, 2014). Yet, the distinguishing between developed and developing states is more problematic given different development levels and rates within the sovereign territory of emerging middle income states (Victor, 2006; Lee, 2012).

Thus, the former South Korean ambassador to Australia (and former South Korean Prime Minister) Han, Seung-soo (2012) stated that 'green growth calls for a conceptual shift to recognize that both economic growth and environmental protection can be achieved in parallel'. The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP, 2012) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have both linked green growth to inclusive development/poverty reduction (ADB 2012, 2013, 2014). The UNEP (2012) has pointed out that Green Growth seeks to fuse economic and environmental issues into a single intellectual and policy planning process. The GGGI (2012) is described as follows:

An international organization dedicated to supporting and promoting strong, inclusive and sustainable economic growth in developing countries and emerging economies. Established in 2012 at the Rio+ 12 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, GGGI is accelerating the transition toward a new model of economic growth-green growth-founded on principles of social inclusivity and environmental sustainability. In contrast to conventional development models that rely on the unsustainable depletion and destruction of natural resources, green growth is a coordinated advancement of economic growth, environmental sustainability, poverty reduction and social inclusion driven by the sustainable development and use of global resources.

The institute is designed to be a global platform for developing countries aiming to leapfrog the resource intensive and environmentally unsustainable model of industrial development.[1]

The paper argues that a focus on middle powers in KIA and the GGGI might be used as a way to explain changing middle-power roles and behaviors in the Asia-Pacific. The paper is organized as follows. First, I discuss the wider and traditional expectations of liberal institutionalism regime and cooperation, and the traditionally expected intentions, behaviors, and roles of middle powers within these organizations. I discuss the limits of these perspectives in explaining contemporary middle-power roles and strategies as network forums of 'minilateralism' (Naim, 2009). I will highlight KIA states relations in the GGGI and with ASEAN assessing why and how middle-power behavior is reflecting network power shifts and brokerage opportunities for middle powers whose very success has often been seen as a cause of domestic and international middle-power strategic vulnerabilities.

2 Liberal institutionalism

Liberal institutionalists maintain that national self-interest provides incentives and conditions for inter-state cooperation in an age of complex interdependence (Keohane, 1982, 1988; Grieco, 1988). Multilateralism is an institutional form which coordinates such relations among states on the basis of generalized principles of conduct. Multilateralism rests on recognized principles of sovereign equality, indivisibility, and reciprocity to provide mutual benefits, over time. While binding agreements can be seen as evidence of cooperation 'success,' state intentions for this cooperation can be used to constrain actors.

Liberal institutionalism responds to a number of 'puzzles' which emerge from what might be considered rather self-imposed assumptions but, which, nonetheless, open questions as to explaining how and why states are

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1   The Council is the executive organ of the GGGI and consists of no more than seventeen members. Members of the Council serve for two year terms. The Assembly is the supreme organ of the GGGI and is composed of Members, meeting once every two years in ordinary sessions. The Assembly is also responsible for electing Members to the Council, appointing the Director-General, considering and adopting amendments to the Establishment Agreement, advising on the overall direction of the GGGI's work. The Secretariat acts as the chief operational organ of the Institute and is headed by the Director-General, who, under the guidance of the Council and Assembly, represents GGGI externally and provides strategic leadership for the organization to carry out its objectives.

interested in creating regimes that enable 'stable mutual expectations about others' patterns of behavior' (Keohane, 1982, p. 331) rather than relying on stand-alone agreements. First, big powers weigh up the opportunity costs of creating or joining institutions while smaller powers might see advantages of having 'seats at the table' as well as institutionally constraining the bigger powers. Second, Keohane (1982, pp. 340–342) emphasizes the significance of the big powers as the risk taking entrepreneur states although this can lead to big power anxieties with first mover disadvantage and 'free riding'. However, catalyst, facilitator, or entrepreneur states are now often smaller or middle-power states who are promoting the 'norm of generalized commitment' or reciprocity. In this respect, middle powers may focus on more low-cost/low-risk entrepreneurship suitable to new forms of power diffusion, which can also provide more leverage over the more inflexible larger powers with the bigger commitments.

Third, there are questions as to what now counts as the site and meaning of choice and the meaning of 'acting voluntarily'. Thus, several governments have tried to create smaller clubs so as to engage with the costs of increased multilateral commitments and institutional deadlock. However, this approach has tended to require bigger powers to incur greater transmission costs as first movers if the strategy is to actually create new institutions. Yet, even within current institutions, bigger powers may be concerned with undermining the legitimacy of the very existing institutions, which give them credibility. At the same time, big powers may consider a lack of institutional responsiveness may undermine their credibility with resultant perceptions of big power 'spoiling', delaying or inability to 'solve problems'. Fourth, more proactive smaller or middle-power states tend to not be so concerned with the 'higher' stakes of the bigger powers and may want to socialize into existing institutions. This offers the advantage of lower transaction costs for states with smaller resources (and encourages more resource effectiveness) but also means that membership and expectations are already formed and restricting if a middle power is able to identify a particular niche (Keohane and Victor, 2010). Thus, the existence of comprehensive rules or 'formed expectations' does not necessarily mean that these states are 'conservative' nor does it unpack the issue of how expectations are 'formed'.

Consequently, Keohane (1982) places emphasis on the institutional creation of multiple channels of communication and the lower transaction costs that can allow for increasing interaction among big and smaller state actors and with non-state actors (Keohane, 1988). For Keohane (1988),

inter-state cooperation is indicated by patterns of conformity and coordination and contingent on changes (and the recognition of changes) in others behavior. Yet, zero-sum bargaining may hinder a final realization of state and institutional goals. Moreover, constant deadlock can lead to states rethinking their position and assessing the benefits of remaining in institutions, particularly if an increasing diffusion of power is making transmission and exchange of information increasingly less expensive in any case, and, therefore, potentially increasing the costs of maintaining and being involved these institutions. On the other hand, institutions may generate a structure and culture of reciprocal trust that can help lower costs and provide information flows, which can also make any present and future commitments more credible (Keohane and Martin, 1995). As Victor (2006, p. 92) put it 'Since the willingness to pay is often low when negotiations begin and failure to reach agreement yields symbolic costs, the negotiation process usually discovers a way to frame the issue at hand so that the agreement is marked by harmony or simple coordination'.

2.1 Institutional limits to overcome

First, liberal institutionalism focuses on 'issue density' areas in which states have and recognize mutual interests and would (and want to) cooperate anyway (Hoffman, 1999). Second, the constraining of others on one issue may result in greater difficulty for generating cooperation based on other zero-sum tradeoffs. Third, 'zero-sum' bargaining and constraining can ultimately lead to watered down agreements (for credibility) yet coupled with 'ambition inflation' and empty promises. Fourth, institutions may, through an 'insurance of collectivity' directly (or indirectly) encourage free riding and delaying, which paradoxically gives greater costs of being a member to those states who are, or want to be, 'first movers'. For bigger states, a strategy of 'a getting stuck over the details' can be excuses for deferring and 'delaying'. This can mean that previous outcome failure can result in just a readjusting of the baseline so 'anything' (such as increasing financial commitments) is deemed a success. There can often be a deferral of decisions justified, by either, the conscious mutual respecting of national sovereignty, or, alternatively, that those deferrals made by democratic states are promoted as being due to the will of the people/public' and deemed too sensitive for incumbent parties at election time. Fifth, states who originally created the institution can often become impediments to much needed institutional reform, of which a lack of, might counter-productively reduce the leverage of such states. There

is also the issue of institutional gridlock (rather than deadlock) as being a paradoxical result of institutional success (Hale *et al.*, 2013). Finally, there may be concerns that current members (established and newly invited) might regard institutional reform as a 'dilution' of their hard-earned achievements, while new members with 'seats at the high table' can often become more 'conservative' in wanting to socialize and embed more for national status. They may also be adverse to any further inclusion of other states if further institutional expansion/accession might then represent a 'tipping point' and the need to begin to reform the institution. Yet, a reform of the institution may also be seen to advance the current members leverage if they are willing to act as proactive actors in the reform process.

2.2 Middle powers: traditional expectations and limitations in and out of institutions

Stephen Krasner once argued:

> the present international system is characterized by an unprecedented differentiation in underlying power capabilities between large and small states. Never have states with such wildly variant national power resources coexisted as formal equals. Very weak states can rarely hope to influence international behavior solely through the utilization of their national power capabilities (Krasner, 1981, p. 120).

The issue of determining the criteria of large and small states and the site of 'capability' is changing. Yet, this approach also has its own dangers of overlooking the very real leverage differences (and responsibilities) that Krasner regarded as being potentially obscured by appeals to sovereign equality. Yet, the issue (and narrative) of determining 'what kind of difference' is, itself, being conceptually and strategically recast by the emerging powers. The realist/liberal approaches have specific expectations of middle-power role, status, and behavior.

First, traditionally, middle-power activity and positioning reflect a distribution of power in the international system with particular resultant patterns of middle-power behavior. Middle powers have a reputation for being effective managers based on their own (shared or shareable) experience. Second, Jordaan (2003) has argued that middle powers display a behavior that stabilizes (and legitimizes) the existing global order. Middle powers potentially have the resources to be able to generate alternatives to, against (or through) the existing order, or, to challenge the order (from which they have benefitted)

through accelerating a more 'genuine' liberal order. However 'liberal trans-nationalism' can diverge from domestic development strategy. Third, according to Cooper and Mo (2011a, b), middle powers face the reality that their voices may be paradoxically excluded as the international organizations enlarge their membership. For Cooper (2010), middle powers have issues of credibility if they lack the resources to see through these international commitments.

As a result, middle powers are often understood to be constrained by big power relations. Middle powers have traditionally been seen as 'protecting' themselves by hedging, bandwagoning, or enmeshing themselves in regional or multilateral groupings to 'soft balance' the bigger powers. Middle powers are traditionally understood to be constrained by finite assets or resources yet may be tempted to overreach which may lead to a gap between the trans-nationalized elites promoting national middle-power status and the need for domestic economic and institutional reform. This has the potential for undercutting the domestic legitimacy of the elites and very factors that have led to the elite-led new middle-power status. As 'friends to all', middle powers may become less trusted and constrained by the 'choices' within the regional–global relationships. As a result, a middle power may be an active state multilaterally (in institutions where the larger regional powers are 'enmeshed') and yet be simultaneously more isolated within its own region. Finally, middle powers may be shown by the regional hegemons as being 'too ambitious' and may lose their 'non-threatening' image and their support from the smaller states if middle powers are seen to be increasingly proactive in their 'near abroad'. Paradoxically, a regional power has the 'luxury' and cushion of defining itself as 'still developing' and therefore as non-threatening, thus distancing itself from what it projects to smaller states as middle power 'sell out' through middle-power aspirations for 'seats at the high table'.

3 New middle-power opportunities and networks for institutions

First, network positioning represents and can potentially be used by middle powers to produce and take advantage of increasingly decentralizing power in a multipolar age that is enabling more channels for the transmission of information and which can allow states to reframe and reshape issues. Emphasis on leverage is therefore not placed on a states' resources to constrain others *per se* but more with the associations among actor nodes in a

network rather than on the attributes of particular nodes. Hafner-Burton *et al.* (2009) have proposed that those actors with a higher network centrality and transmission flow in the network can withhold (rather than constrain) social benefits to others. Central network positions with high levels of issue credibility/prestige can themselves become state objectives in their own right. This is because allowing the gaining of more visibility and marketing can prove an attraction to and for 'like-minded peers'. This means that states, irrespective of their different resources, can potentially control a centrality in a network. Thus, a state may constantly change its positioning as a network connector state to a transformer state (which provides a compatibility in information) or as a messenger state (that provides information) or a translator state provides a brokerage (rather than a fixed bridge) compatibility.

Second, traditional concerns with free riding and zero-sum bargaining are reduced as the more integrated the network becomes then the more network density is involved. This means an actors' agency impact increases as a result of these increasing enmeshments with priority partners rather than asset-based leverage. This means it also becomes more difficult to free ride as power now flows through these multi-networks and enmeshments. Yet, while an increase in enmeshments may of course be a strategy that allows for traditional autonomy, networks also open out opportunity to take advantage of, rather than constrain, others' resources. This is because there are more nodes and more information passing through these nodes (density) which can give a state or actor a new leverage as positioned in a network where the number of transmissions increase through it. These social capital middle-power brokers are able to make more connections between other actors who would otherwise remain disconnected.

Third, generating first mover advantage that connects can exercise a positional power from their forums. Free riding becomes less attractive as network enmeshments increase and states realize the advantages of 'win-win' rather than zero-sum bargaining. Here, first mover disadvantage is also often assumed to be brought about by different national development levels and rates in each country. Instead, a particular narrative of 'differentiation' in a network can now, in effect, create a more effective binding of diverse interests and allow for issue specific and yet flexible priority partnering through and within forums as states connect and disconnect but 'pass' each other continuously within the network corridors. Yet, while certain networks are dense and therefore potentially stable, this does not necessarily mean they are (or want to be) necessarily 'conservative' (Kim, 2014). On the contrary, this stability

now means the potential and cushion for connecting up more network partners as enmeshments, which does not restrict middle-power states but can allow for a present and future 'me first' first mover advantage.

3.1 Minilateralism and responses

Middle powers are creating their own specific forums as networks. On the one hand, this may be regarded as a result of real or perceived exclusion from multilateral institutions still dominated by bigger powers, or, as a result of big power 'exclusive minilateralism' within these institutions. Big power exclusive minilateralism is usually seen as being the 'model' conduit for minilateralism and may occur within or as a 'break away' from existing institutions. As Eckersley (2012, 26) has noted, exclusive minilateralism is 'elitist, procedurally unjust, self-serving' and likely to undermine or avoid any 'green' justice principles in climate change institutions. Thus, he argues, if minilateralism is to become more inclusive and 'fit for purpose' then it should be based on 'common but differentiated representation' represented by the 'most capable, the most responsible and the most vulnerable.' Big power exclusive minilateralism can also help break institutional inertia through 'smaller numbers' of states deemed more responsible for causing and responding to the global issue and thus a process more likely to 'fix' the problem or make a difference. In this sense, bigger powers may achieve a soft power credibility for accepting responsibility and from tangible results, while potentially losing soft power credibility for bypassing legitimate multilateral institutions. There is some debate, therefore, as to determining whether minilateralism represents traditional power politics or an alternative approach to liberal institutionalism where big powers are more minilateral while small and middle powers remain more multilateral. At the same time, exclusive middle-power minilateralism in the form of middle-power forums such as KIA and the GGGI is also taking advantage of network positioning which might begin an exclusion of the bigger powers while simultaneously making such institutions more effective. Yet, while a specific middle-power forum might represent exclusive 'middle-power elitism', such groupings are based on 'win-win' inclusivity for their members.

As a generic concept, exclusive minilateralism has been criticized by Eckersley (2012). This is because an exclusive minilateralism, in effect, 'splices' off states from potential global agreements and, as a result, giving them an excuse to ignore multilateral institutions justified by 'getting the job done'. However, these states are still unable to break through the same

negotiating obstacles of free rider fears and first mover mistrust. This leaves other states in multilateral institutions to save and finalize potentially any watered down multilateral agreements. This argument is based on the premise that big powers both have responsibility for causing certain global issues and therefore the most likelihood of solving these issues. However, an exclusive minilateralism of the bigger powers may unintentionally allow the middle and smaller powers to generate their own partnerships and be less excluded within global forums (although more inclusion does not necessarily translate as more leverage or results based). Yet, the exclusive minilateralism position appears to be in a direct contestation with the cosmopolitan democratic version of liberal institutionalism given that issues of domestic democracy are not necessarily pre-requisites for successful multilateral or minilateral cooperation. At the same time, leaving middle powers to reinforce multilateral agreements without bigger powers can cause more inclusion but also means middle powers are more open to be able to forge their own result-based minilateral partnerships within these institutions and more result-based networking 'outside' without the influence of bigger powers on specific niche issues. The exclusive minilateralism is vulnerable to attack on the basis of its failure to adhere to the cosmopolitan ideal of 'all inclusiveness'. However, at the same time, an exclusive minilateralism does not necessarily preclude the possibility of issue 'spillover'. As Naim (2009) pointed out:

> The pattern is clear: Since the early 1990s, the need for effective multi-country collaboration has soared, but at the same time multilateral talks have inevitably failed; deadlines have been missed; financial commitments and promises have not been honored; execution has stalled; and international collective action has fallen far short of what was offered and, more importantly, needed. These failures represent not only the perpetual lack of international consensus, but also a flawed obsession with multilateralism as the panacea for all the world's ills. So what is to be done? To start, let's forget about trying to get the planet's nearly 200 countries to agree. We need to abandon that fool's errand in favor of a new idea: minilateralism (Naim, 2009).

Naim (2009) argues that 'By minilateralism, I mean a smarter, more targeted approach' and that 'we should bring to the table the smallest possible number of countries needed to have the largest possible impact on solving a particular problem'. This is 'minilateralism's magic number' but:

countries not invited to the table will denounce this approach as undemocratic and exclusionary. But the magic number will break the world's untenable gridlock, and agreements reached by the small number of countries whose actions are needed to generate real solutions can provide the foundation on which more-inclusive deals can be subsequently built. Minilateral deals can and should be open to any other country willing to play by the rules agreed upon by the original group … It has become far too dangerous to continue to rely on large-scale multilateral negotiations that stopped yielding results almost two decades ago. The minilateralism of magic numbers is not a magic solution. But it's a far better bet at this point than the multilateralism of wishful thinking (Naim, 2009).

Thus agreements (and the process to agreements) reached by the small number of affected countries (and whose actions are needed) might provide the foundation on which inclusive deals can be built (Naim, 2009).

4 KIA: from traditional middle powers to network middle powers

South Korea's new middle-power imagining of itself as a 'bridge' nation or hub nation is caught between the maritime Cold War US/Japan security alliance and a rising China, as well as representing a bridge between the developed and the emerging worlds in both the region and within the G20 (Grieco, 2014). This strategic choice between the maritime or the transcontinental choices (China and Russia) was already underway by the late 1990s (Rozman, 2007). A debate now ensues as to whether a stronger regional presence would reinforce or undermine global aspirations. Scott Snyder (2013) argues that middle-power rhetoric has now caught up with middle-power reality with South Korea's role as catalyst, facilitator, and effective and trusted manager. The Global Korea strategy of the Lee, Myeung-bak (2008–2013) administration, which had also been pursuing 'green growth,' aimed to signify a country that now cooperates more maturely and less narrowly (moving beyond North Korea issues) (Kim, 2012). The South Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Yun, Byung-se, in August 2013 further noted 'as a responsible middle power in the international community' and 'as a trustworthy friend, it wishes to make meaningful contributions to maintain the peace and stability of the international community' (Byung-se, 2014). South Korea has also signed a deal with Indonesia over sharing and supplying fighter jet technology (Jun, 2014). South Korea regards an economically

strong middle income Indonesia as potentially increasing the economic leverage and opportunities for South Korean ODA and business (ASEAN, 2014: Yulisman, 2014). The recent South Korea–Australia 2+2 indicated 'that Korea and Australia, as middle powers with regional and global interests and leverage, would jointly seek to enhance regional and global stability and prosperity, in partnership with other key middle-power countries' (Lee, 2013). The current Park, Geun-hye government in South Korea is beginning to pursue a 'One Creative Eurasia' approach to regional geopolitics and a 'Trustpolitik' approach on the Korean Peninsula, potentially substituting South Korea's traditional maritime 'Cold War' approach or later 'bridge' aspirational approach between China and Japan.

Indonesia's rising middle-power status/image as an emerging democratic and stable nation ('Remarkable Indonesia') has paralleled a deepening of its regional security ties and role (Santikajaya, 2013). Indonesia, like South Korea, also sees itself as a regional bridge and a bridge between states and civilizations (Yuhoyono, 2009). There is also a strategic dilemma for Jakarta as to determining Indonesia's ability to match ambitious intentions with outcomes, which has implications for its credibility as a rising regional power. That is, to determine whether reinforcing its regional pivot role within ASEAN means Indonesia can now use this role for a more proactive multilateral approach, or, whether to 'leapfrog' or bypass this regional strategy given the new opportunities in a more multipolar context and, then, to use this multilateralism to reinforce its regional leverage (Rattanasevee, 2014). This debate itself is determined by as to how the concept of 'region' is to be defined and approached (as institution, bloc, alliance, or network). For Parello-Plesner, Indonesia's role in ASEAN is potentially becoming less grounded because Jakarta as a G20 member now wants to be 'less held back' by traditional ASEAN commitments. Indonesia has assumed a prominent position in the international diplomatic arena by becoming a member of the G20 and by co-chairing the UN High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, an area of which South Korea has also recognized with its 2011 Busan Aid Effectiveness agenda.

Australia has recently upgraded its ties with the US rebalance. North Australia (Darwin) is increasingly becoming a part of the United States' Pacific island 'outpost' strategy. The Australian labor governments of the 1990s aimed to 'relocate' Australia in Asia as a 'bridge' nation with the West (Capling, 2008). According to Australian Conservatives, this strategy was

counter-productive because, they argued that a strong and traditional Western identity could mean Australia being able to confidently *engage with* rather than *be in* Asia. However, Conservative Tony Abbott's recent criticism of the United States for being too negative toward China is clearly no proof of a major shift in domestic party political alignments, but it is a potential sign that even Conservative governments have to, at least, 'be seen to show' a willingness to engage with China and with emerging powers regionally such as Indonesia (Kenny, 2014). While Australia has historically aimed to expand the regional boundaries, China's rise is also potentially making the perceptions of the regional neighborhood increasingly smaller and more Sinocentric defined at a time when the region is opening up to various competing maritime and continental visions (Asia-Pacific, Pacific Asia, Trans-Pacific, Indo-Pacific, or Indo-Asia) emerging from China, Russia, and the United States. The 2013 Australian White Paper stated that this is an era of an 'ongoing strategic shift to our region, the Asia-Pacific and the Indian Ocean Rim, particularly the shift of economic weight to our region' (Australian Government, 2013, pp. 7–9). Australia is placed within a strategic arc connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans with Canberra's leverage seen by some as being used to restrain the 'rise of Indonesia' (White, 2013). According to William Paterson (2013) 'Australia seeks to hold regular, informal meetings on the sidelines of major international meetings, such as the G20, that build cooperation between ministers in an incremental and free-ranging manner'.

These strategic relationships are potentially both directly and indirectly representing, reinforcing, weakening, and impacted upon by specific middle-power minilateralism and through a specific niche 'green growth' issue. KIA represents an exclusive 'minilateral' middle-power forum that is cultivating a myriad of network alignments. First, this is through a shift away from a traditional middle-power bridging role/behavior defined by 'autonomy' from the bigger powers previously based on assets or resources. Second, there is an emphasis on 'win-win' positioning (rather than on systemic role) and a challenging of the 'zero-sum' bargaining based on the traditional constraining of others. For Parello-Plesner (2009):

> KIA is not yet a united force. But they might want to be. All three want to brand themselves individually with their proposals and initiatives. Yet on their own, as middle powers, they might not be relevant enough with their individual proposals to secure the acceptance and interest of Asia's great powers. And all three still have their individual particularities and handicaps. Australia as a Pacific power continuously has to

show its relevance in an Asian context. Indonesia even with new-found independent ambitions will continue to be anchored in ASEAN. Korea still gets bogged down in its immediate surroundings in the complicated relationship with its difficult twin brother, North Korea.

First, Australia and South Korea are aiming to build KIA around the concept of democracy and by expanding the democratizing of the traditional regional organizations such as ASEAN. Indonesia promotes a more 'nonintervention' approach on this specific issue, perhaps to gain more leverage with China and with ASEAN's Chinese partners. Second, South Korea sees Indonesia, both economically and strategically, as a 'way into' ASEAN and as a market for its ODA and trade. Indonesia sees South Korea as a way to access new technology and human resource expertise through South Korean ODA and green growth policy. Third, given shifts in regional geopolitics and 'the rise of the rest', then Australia potentially regards any increased economic and geopolitical ASEAN commitments for Jakarta, as a way to restrict Indonesian leverage. However, Canberra also recognizes growing trade and economic opportunities from the new Indonesian middle classes. There is less interest to create a formal secretariat for KIA. Instead, KIA states prefer priority partnering on niche issues in which the states can share common interests. There are still different interests and emphases. As Parello-Plesner (2009) puts it:

> KIA is still a small car by all measurements. There will be limited space for KIA to influence the direction of Asian multilateral integration and great power relations. It should be coordinated to be effective and in order to influence China, Japan, India and the USA. Only in that case can KIA hope to also push the accelerator for rising Asia's power structure.

5 Climate change in the Asia-Pacific

Keohane and Victor (2010, p. 14) argued that environmental cooperation is often difficult to create and gain momentum as it is 'diversity all the way down'. The United States and China recently signed a bi-lateral agreement to reduce climate change emissions before the 2014 Lima Climate Summit. As Kishore Mahbubani (2015) put it at Davos 2015, China is currently deciding on whether to 'play the same game' as of the United States to keep regional/multilateral institutions weak (or choose the weakest candidates for leading such institutions), or whether to strengthen these organizations (either in the same of different form) in order to constrain both big power competitors and to gain soft power. One liberal institutional view is that issue-specific

environmental regimes, as with other forms of cooperation, still need a power hegemon in order to maintain cooperation momentum (Falkner, 2005). One further view is that in a multipolar era such global agreements are beginning to exist without the major powers who now do their own bi-lateral cooperation. On the other hand, major powers may still need to be more institutionally involved for fear of losing credibility on other linkage issues. The ADB (2014) recently pointed out that the region has seen economic expansion but at a high cost to the environment and, as a consequence, to both traditional and human centered development.

There are specific institutional difficulties as the different development rates in each country are assumed to hinder any global agreements (Kellow, 2006). Single standing agreements are in turn often criticized for getting 'bogged down' until the 'science has a consensus' promoting first mover disadvantage and a possibility of defection. However, non-binding commitments can mean the need for states to be more proactive and more cooperative or politically engaged (Victor, 2006). Many developed countries have declined to ratify a second Kyoto commitment period. Second, there remains the potential that any voluntary commitments are a way for states to 'free ride' and gain 'soft power' credibility to use this for delaying during any future 'commitment' phase. Third, it is often the least developed countries (LDCs) (or those most impacted by climate change) that aim to preserve the future integrity of commitments. So, for instance:

> a key event that defined the position of the United States and the Global South as a 'prisoner's dilemma', where the United States could hardly be expected to act, given the indeterminacy of India's and China's positions on global climate change. For policy-makers or entrepreneurs who truly want to find a way out of global gridlock, who take scientists' warnings at their words, these histories create imperative lists of the cognitive pollutants with which generations of bad policy have befouled public discourse (Guldi and Armitage, 2014, p. 33).

I focus on the relationship between KIA and the GGGI for two reasons. First, to indicate that the GGGI does not necessarily fit into the traditional expectations of liberal institutions or the expectations of middle powers within international organizations. Second, that KIA states role within the GGGI may provide an understanding of 'minilateral' middle-power forums, as well as nation-to-international/regional organizations relationships in the Asia-Pacific.

6 The GGGI as minilateralism

The GGGI became an international organization in 2012. The GGGI Council oversees strategy and budget. This includes a range of contributing and participating member countries, along with non-state actors. The GGGI's financing has come primarily from voluntary contributions from members, with additional funding from nonmember countries and international financial institutions (Park, 2012). The GGGI is no longer wholly South Korean managed and, as a result, there are concerns as to whether this is an indication of South Korea's rising global standing to 'pass on' successful initiatives or that the GGGI represents the peculiarities of South Korean Presidential politics and fixed 5-year terms, or a sign of South Korean resource weakness/overstretch and domestic apathy. The GGGI aims to combine government accountability and the resources of the private sector to open market bottlenecks and 'take risks'. South Korean company Samsung is increasingly involved, along with Barclays, Deutsche Bank, OECD, Morgan Stanley, the World Trade Organization, Merrill Lynch, and HSBC. The aim is to facilitate the so-called green financing from the private sector and post financial crisis to 'unlock' investor confidence which would enable bankable, scaled, and replicable deals. There is a concern, however, that private investors still lack the detail and information that is needed for taking risks in green investment, and in understanding how 'green' risks might begin to aggregate in portfolios. Samsung is also involved in the Green Financing Energy Efficiency Working Group and emphasizes multi-sectoral free-trade agreements for sustainable energy products and services that are traded among country participants without tariff and non-tariff barriers.

The GGGI's current 20 members are domestically, regionally, and politically diverse mainly middle powers (UK), Arctic Council members and South Korean allies (Denmark and Norway), as well as strategic East and Central African nations where South Korean ODA is distributed (Ethiopia and Rwanda), the island of Kiribati, the United Arab Emirates (a South Korean ally in the middle East where South Korean investment is focused on oil and nuclear reactor construction), trans-Pacific nations (Mexico) and European (non-EU) nations (Switzerland) and where South Korea-Mexico-Switzerland make up the Environmental Integrity Group which monitors agreement enforcing. The GGGI has an open architecture to facilitate the exchange of experience and knowledge (whether or not such plans have been directly supported by the GGGI.) This is to create a virtuous cycle of experimentation and evidence-based learning. New GGGI Director

General De Boer has stated: 'The GGGI's work can add value to creating prosperity at a time when humans are experiencing challenges such as climate change, energy, water, population growth, and an increase in urbanization. Multiple challenges faced by humanity can only be effectively addressed through the shift toward economic growth in a more sustainable manner' (cited in Harvey, 2014).

The GGGI (2013, 2014a) is responding to what it terms a difficulty in getting any genuine cooperation as a result of 'herding cats' fears of free riding (GGGI, 2014b). Consequently, the GGGI (2012) mission states that green growth simultaneously targets economic performance, such as poverty reduction, job creation, and social inclusion, and those of environmental sustainability, such as mitigation of climate change and biodiversity loss and security of access to clean energy and water. The GGGI (2012) is facilitating cooperation by strengthening an already existing enabling environment through both green investment and through a diffusion of more resource efficient corporate and administration practices included in National Green Growth Strategies.

First, through a spate of 'on the ground' projects, the GGGI is seeking to leapfrog the resource intensive and environmentally unsustainable development model previously pioneered by the advanced countries. Indeed, these countries are now seen to reside in, and represent, an earlier and outdated era and, in this respect, the GGGI is also aiming to redefine what is meant by being 'advanced'. Second, there is an issue as to whether green growth strategies are being used as a 'catch-up' for 'business as usual' development strategy or as a 'fill the gap' or traditional development/environment tradeoff strategy. Third, the GGGI (2013) is promoting more small-scale priority partnering of states, which are in turn being connected through 'green' assistance programs. However, while the GGGI is open to all sovereign states (including donors and recipients of 'green' aid) that are recognized by the UN as partners, this, of course, raises the issue of Taiwan. GGGI members are, however, also avoiding the niche 'green growth' being subsumed by wider UN issues of sustainable development while simultaneously recognizing the connections implied in green growth while rejecting the so-called institutional 'law of the least ambitious program'. Fourth, the GGGI pursues projects only in those recipient countries from which it has received a high-level government request and therefore represents the 'elitist' narratives on 'south-south' cooperation. However, the GGGI (2014a, b) has also seen the benefits of attracting emerging power public and private financing.

Finally, the GGGI addresses the different development issues from the beginning of its interest by integrating a national strategy in recipient countries to strengthen domestic institutional and technical capacity. The GGGI has accepted 'green' project requests from 31 countries and is conducting feasibility studies, which consists of stages including evaluating the country's vulnerability to climate change, an economic valuation of the priority measures, and a strengthening of the strategic capacity for adaptation of green growth by consolidating the existing institutional capacity effectiveness to be able to use environmental assets 'efficiently' (GGGI, 2012). These on-the-ground experiences are then fed into the GGGI's research, including two multilateral initiatives for which it is acting as the secretariat for the Green Growth Knowledge Platform and the Green Growth Best Practice GGBP (2014).

7 KIA's minilateral 'commonality with differentiation'

Each KIA state as a member of the GGGI has different development levels, rates, and strategies. Each KIA state recognizes that these strategies of 'differentiation' are being used and connected through green growth policies by generating an ability for the states to avoid the traditional institutional limits of inertia, free–riding, or middle-power limits of already specified roles as mentioned previously. In this respect, KIA as a minilateral caucus is a node in a network providing a 'bind' through which states interests, agendas, and technologies in the GGGI are being transmitted and a myriad of deeper enmeshments are created. These are enacting and reframing ideas, development strategies, green technologies, and human resources capacities and expertise on green growth. These issues are responding to the impact of climate change in the region from outside the traditional institutions and their limits. In 2012, the APEC Leaders Declaration stated:

> We reaffirm our commitment to promote green growth and to seeking practical, trade-enhancing solutions to address global environmental challenges. In 2012, we made considerable progress in this regard …While supporting sustainable growth, we agree that promoting green growth should not be used as an excuse to introduce protectionist measures (APEC, 2012).

The green growth approach is not the only approach for re-articulating this relationship. For instance, ecological modernization approaches have long claimed that there is a need for a reorganization of both modern capitalism and the centralized state (Mol and Spargaaren, 2000). However, ecological

modernization approaches are based on managing environment regulation and regulating development in the South while, in contrast, green growth is being specifically designed for promoting a different paradigm of 'growth' from, for and in emerging markets.

The Brundlandt's (1987) report on sustainable development had focused on the planetary and local impact of environmental destruction by identifying a variety of 'limits' and the need for more trans-generational and responsible 'sustainability'. From this, the objective was a reduction in growth (and more sustainable and inclusive development), which would also perhaps represent greater social and moral advancement. Green growth, however, is being specifically designed to reorganize the economy by, in effect, *speeding up* economic growth (and resilience) through the market via a more effective use of environment resources (and therefore ownership responsibility). Yet, green growth emphasizes 'urgency' and the resilience of the market to generate environmental resilience (rather than sustainability). Green growth aims to further break the tradeoff between economic growth and sustainable development. Green growth sees the environment as, in effect, an asset to conserve and instrumentally use as an economic asset to create economic and social resilience (rather than risk-free security). This issue is reminiscent of the previous 'redgreen' concerns from critiques of the market system, of a conserving and protecting of the environment (through government or market forces), which benefits the local economy by inflating real estate prices. This also opens questions such as conservation for who and for what (Forsyth, 2004). Yet, green growth openly celebrates this link. Actors involved in the GGGI are defined as 'multi-stakeholder', but this term potentially obscures power leverages between the different stakeholders.

8 KIA states and green growth

South Korea as a high middle income country sees green growth as a causal and strategic opportunity for unlocking its 'creative economy' (Park, 2014). In July 2009, South Korea announced its National Strategy for Green Growth as a blueprint to shift South Korea's economic structure away from traditional energy-intensive industries (business as usual) that have driven the majority of the developmental paths in Asia. South Korea's government has also announced plans to continue making investments in innovative, low-carbon technologies for renewable energy, waste management, public transportation, and construction and to create enough new jobs in these sectors to offset the loss of employment in current carbon-intensive

industries (Brown, 2009: Woo, 2011). There are implications here for South Korea as a middle power.

First, South Korea is in the world's top-ten carbon emitters. This allows South Korea to promote its potential for switching its development paradigm and by not being, in effect, 'locked in' to traditional BAU and as 'shared experience' with developing nations. Yet, South Korea finds itself in a myriad of potentially contradictory positions with implications for its middle-power credibility. First, that 'brown' development has allowed South Korea its entry to 'first world' status, but this would indicate that for other states to want to have their own 'miracle on the Han' then they must also follow a similar BAU model. South Korea responds that that age (and 'industrializing' way of thinking about stages of growth) is now over but at the same time, South Korea's development (and foreign aid) credibility relies on a constant referral to the 1970s 'miracle on the Han' industrialization. Second, South Korea promotes its experience of industrialization as being an indication of its understanding of environmental 'externalities'. Yet, this experience is 'being sold' with promoting green growth of which South Korea has a much shorter experience.

Indonesia as a middle income country regards green growth as providing a strategy for either an acceleration of BAU development and by making BAU more resilient, or as a leapfrogging or bypassing of 'brown' development strategies given high GDP growth. Indonesia also faces increasing economic competition and pressure from next generation ASEAN states (GGGI, 2013: GGGI Indonesia, 2013). As the GGGI states, Indonesia is an emerging middle income country which has come at a high cost in terms of loss and degradation of natural capital and disparities in the benefits of economic growth enjoyed by different segments of society. In this respect, green growth is promoted as 'equal' distribution of benefits through the market and to build resilient local economies. Yet, green growth can also be seen to be creating territorial green silos and a using of this initiative as a way of 'balancing' an accelerating BAU model but a model which Morgan Stanley (2014) recently called that pursued by the 'fragile five' (including Indonesia) (Darmosumarto, 2009, 2013; Abdul-Latif, 2014). There is a concern from critics that, as in South Korea, green growth is an attempt to avoid having to substantively redistribute wealth or restructure the economy away from the export-led 'low hanging fruit' strategy and its domestic and transnational vested interests.

Australia under the conservatives sees any 'greenism' as mitigation and as a potential threat to its economic development, added to concerns with

'first mover disadvantage' with specific regard to initiating climate change. Australia is now emphasizing the concept of so-called clean coal, by, as Canberra sees it, helping Asia's rise out of poverty and by capitalizing on the rising Asian middle class market (Hockey, 2014). Australia's geopolitics is impacted upon by historical 'hegemonic' claims in the South Pacific while aware of being isolated if not engaged with Asia and incorporated as a 'junior' partner with regard to the US–China relationship. Australia also recognizes its responsibility with regard to responding to climate impacted emergencies on South Pacific islands (Oxfam Australia, 2015). Australia's position as the OECD's worst carbon emitter was put down largely due to its 'fossil fuel' energy sector and its relatively small population. Yet, there are growing concerns that the Australian economy is too reliant on China's demand for its resources. In this respect, green growth may provide Australia with a future-orientated development alternative as China's economy starts to slow (Powell, 2014).

8.1 From KIA to ASEAN green growth

KIA is emerging as a network pivot within the GGGI that might allow for the increased flow of network connections and enmeshments based on 'win-win' rather than on middle-power autonomy, asset-based bridging or the constraining or balancing of others. Many ASEAN recipient states of green growth assistance from the GGGI's KIA members are at different levels of development. Such development differences would, within traditional expectations, cause potential conflict when narratives of 'leapfrog', 'catch-up', or 'level playing fields' are engendered and regarded as being fetters on leverage. Thus, ASEAN states such as Indonesia also recognize that they need to, at some point, generate their own endogenous green technology for long term resilient security and development (as opposed to 'snapshot' GDP indicators) (The Huffington Post, 2014). Indonesia and Cambodia have the worst rates of energy productivity in the region, as well as the highest rates of pollution, and are using South Korean climate 'data' gathering networks to forecast more effectively (Kim and Thurborn, 2014). For South Korean ODA policymakers, Cambodia's National Council on Green Growth is heralded as the institutional Cambodian equivalent of South Korea's PCGG. Indeed through KIA, South Korea's relationships with its priority ASEAN members are beginning to resemble Seoul's emphasis on 'triangular' pivoting as the hub in a 'South-South-South' network. Cambodia is focusing on improving water resources management (South Korea is hosting in 2015 a number of

UN sponsored Water Conferences), managing food security, forest conservation, promoting renewable energy, as well as diffusing education on green growth (Cambodia Government, 2009).

South Korea is also transferring value-added carbon capture technology and carbon-neutral technologies (Park, 2012). Australia also sees South Korea's role as a means of further monitoring Indonesian development and yet 'surveillance' became a major diplomatic issue in 2013 (The Guardian, 2013). In Cambodia, green growth is defined as 'a policy focus for Asia and the Pacific that emphasizes ecologically sustainable economic progress to foster low-carbon, socially inclusive development. In efforts to design a coordinated, regional response, government policymakers convened at the 5th Ministerial Conference in Seoul, Republic of Korea, in 2005. At that time, green growth was adopted by 52 Member States of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) as a common path for achieving environmentally sustainable economic growth' (Cambodia Government, 2009, p. 11). Thus, the:

> Adopting a holistic approach to development will help the country improve resilience and decrease vulnerability to climate change. Based largely on ESCAP's holistic Green Growth Approach, the Roadmap is drafted with the conviction that the economy, the environment and society are not mutually exclusive but rather interdependent, deeply intertwined and integral components of each other (Cambodia Government, 2009, p, 11).

South Korea's emphasis on providing 'green technology' networks of priority partnering and thus as acting as a positioning network pivot was exemplified by the words of Kim Sang-hyup, Senior Secretary to the President for Green Growth and Environment who stated, 'As a board member of GGGI, I am pleased to see the participation of Indonesia, one of the biggest emerging countries, which is dedicated to environmental protection and greenhouse gas reduction. When we 'like-minded' countries move together, we can change the world and create the future' (Indonesia Embassy, 2013).

South Korea is using green ODA as an experimental test-case so as to enable regional 'connectivity'. An integrated ASEAN with Indonesia as an ASEAN hub (and partner within KIA) also links to South Korea's increasing interest in forging 'green' trade ties with low-middle-income countries in the ASEAN bloc. In 2013, the Indonesian government published a synthesis report on National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation.

Since 2012, Indonesia (Indonesia Embassy, 2013) and the GGGI (GGGI Indonesia, 2013) as a based Knowledge Platform have also been networking to develop a comprehensive program which is pro-growth, pro-jobs, pro-poor, and pro-environment. Indonesia's own national green growth strategy states that:

> There are multiple definitions and uncertainty in building the best framework of green growth planning and assessment, including identifying green growth priorities, the right sources for data capture and analysis, appropriate selection of performance indicators, and adoption of the best available economic modelling tools … (the) Government of Indonesia and Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) have developed a program of activity that is aligned and wholly supportive of achieving Indonesia's existing vision for economic development planning (Indonesia Government, 2013, pp. 5–6).

As South Korean Vice Minister of MOFA, Kim Sung-han (2012) has put it, 'One means of promoting middle-power diplomacy within the G20 is to create an issue-driven, informal, and flexible dialogue mechanism among members who are interested in such middle-power initiatives'. These groups are often created at the informal 'side meetings' of the major conferences but instead of representing a regime instance of nested 'spillovers' as in liberal institutionalism, side meetings are engendering specific middle powers networks while aware of multilateral exclusion. South Korea has emphasized 'green connectivity corridors' across and within strategically selected ASEAN countries. But, there are concerns. First, that this approach is potentially creating green exclusions and community and ethnic divisions in low-middle-income recipient countries. Second, that green growth is an elite-led corporate strategy. Third, that 'green rights' to live in a clean environment is an 'authoritarian' approach that marginalizes 'human rights' and encourages new neoliberal state strategies of 'green surveillance'. Yet, according to the GGGI (2013), low-carbon green growth is now becoming an effective and profitable use of natural capital that can help improve state and societal resilience 'on the ground' as a self-reflexive and endogenous 'work in progress'.

9 Conclusion

I have approached the climate change issue in the Asia-Pacific region through the emergence of middle powers forums and new organizations.

First, I outlined the traditionally expected intentions and behavior of middle powers between each other and within regional and multilateral liberal institutions. Second, I argued that emerging network positioning for middle powers in specific minilateral organizations is allowing middle power leverage to reframing specific niche issues but not necessarily based on 'contextual intelligence or a 'smart power' ability to match resources, intentions, and outcomes. Third, greater central positioning and networking which paradoxically not only becomes a bind for greater 'win-win' cooperation but allow for a greater institutional flexibility. Fourth, this networking potentially creates an opportunity to engender a 'me first' approach and bypass the concerns with institutional 'free riding' and institutional inertia that is traditionally understood as caused by interest and development level differentiation among potential signatories. This network approach to middle powers and the emergence of specific middle-power forums of minilateralism may also provide an indication of how middle-power states can simultaneously advance each others' leverage while being able to avoid traditional 'zero-sum' constraints experienced by middle powers in the region.

Acknowledgements

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