



The G20 at the Leader's Level

## **The L-20 Project and its Successors Report to Project Participants March 2008**

Over the past five years, the Centre for Global Studies at the University of Victoria, in partnership with the Centre for International Governance Innovation at the University of Waterloo, has led an extended, multinational effort to explore the practical prospects for significant reform to the institutions through which government leaders decide key international issues.

During that time, we have been fortunate to be able to involve hundreds of experts and practitioners from around the world. This report is intended to update those project participants. Although the project now has a finite endpoint (notionally 2010, see below), the issues it has examined will continue to have relevance in the subsequent years. In addition to the substantive findings it has generated, the project has developed a community of interested parties we hope will continue to work together to tackle the foreign policy challenges of the new century.

### **Project Stages**

1. The initial L-20 project investigated the hypothesis that the resolution of many multi-sector global challenges required action by leaders of the G-8 in conjunction with leaders of the major emerging countries.<sup>1</sup> This phase ended in May 2006, and reached the overall conclusion that an expanded version of the G-8 was essential to break a number of key global deadlocks.
2. The subsequent Breaking Global Deadlocks (BGD) project (September 2006 to May 2007) applied the L-20 hypothesis (that modernization of global institutional architecture through a more inclusive and well-prepared summit process would lead to progress on resolving specific issues) to climate change and energy security. In this regard, an illustrative consensus package ("grand bargain") was produced, aggregating many proposals, at an enlarged summit table, that could indeed gain commitments and initiate action. The package included a list of actions, including the mobilization of the efforts of a broad range of international organizations to contribute in their area of competence.
3. The Widening/Deepening project (September to November 2007) successfully tested the BGD results with representatives of "think tanks" and organizations working on climate change, with senior political personalities attending the Clinton Global Initiative, and with media opinion leaders from the G8+5 countries. From this discussion emerged the terms of a more refined climate change/energy "deal".
4. In the current phase of the project, begun in 2008, we will pay particular attention to applying project findings to encouraging operational progress in the area of climate change, energy security, and development

### **Project Findings**

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<sup>1</sup> The L-20 Project was preceded by the "2020" scenario exercise which explored the international institutional architecture required in the year 2020, and by the publication of "Rethinking Governance" Handbook, a description of best practice examples in international organization for provisions of participation, transparency, and accountability.

The impact of the first three phases is difficult to quantify but undeniable. The interest in further work by our informal network of international think tanks and individuals remains high, and is focused both on the specific challenge of promoting a grand bargain “deal” in the climate change area and on the more general objective of developing a new forum for breaking global deadlocks. The results of the previous phases have generated two independent invitations for our extensive global network of policy researchers, serving and retired government officials, officers of international organizations and media opinion leaders, to meet informally with decision-makers. We have been invited by the OECD Secretary General to convene representatives of the network in March 2008 to present ideas on climate change policy.

## Result Dissemination

- Peter Heap, Senior Associate at the Centre for Global Studies, has chronicled the L-20 project in a book based on the papers, proceedings and insights generated at the various events over the years. This book, co-published by Springer and IDRC, has gone to press. It contains fresh insights from direct interviews conducted with many key experts. The book is being translated into French (co-published by IDRC and les Presses de l’Université Laval), and Spanish (co-published by IDRC and Ediciones Mayol, Colombia).
- The journal “Global Governance” published a symposium in September 2007, including an article by Paul Martin on innovation in the summit process with an argument for an L20. Commentaries on his article were provided by Marcos Azambuja (Centro Brasileiro do Relacoes Internacionais), Pratap Mehta (Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi), Elizabeth Sidiropoulos (South African Institute of International Affairs), and Xue Lan (Tsinghua University).
- A multifaceted and multimedia web site was launched in September 2006. All conference materials, including background papers, participant lists, meeting programs and meeting reports can be found on the IGLOO web site at [www.igloo.org/L20project](http://www.igloo.org/L20project) . Also at this address, of specific interest to university teachers, is an L-20 course syllabus (Introduction plus 10 lessons).
- Between September 2006 and September 2007, the average hits per day on the project web site ([www.L20.org](http://www.L20.org)) were recorded at 802. Over 33,000 sessions (complete navigation within the site) from unique IP addresses have been recorded, indicating substantial return visits to the site. Since September 2006, visitors from 117 different countries have viewed the site (up from 98 in the previous year). These numbers indicate the scope of and audience for our project is increasing.
- G-8 enlargement has been the subject of a number of recent newspaper articles – see for example, Timothy Garton Ash, “One practical way to improve the state of the world: turn G8 into G14”, The Guardian, January 24, 2008, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/story/0,,2245808,00.html> .

## Future Work

Building on our research findings over the past five years, from 2008 to 2010 we propose to investigate four particular global challenges – climate change and energy security, global infectious diseases, internationalization of the nuclear fuel cycle, and official development assistance.

The basic questions to be addressed in each of the four sectors are:

- What are the main problems in this sector and how do they relate to other sectors?
- Are the current international institutions up to the task?
- What have been the main impediments to change in those organizations?
- What changes are recommended?
- If the G8+5 became a genuine G-13, would reforming institutions in this sector become easier?

The general objectives are:

- To expand the G-8 Summit to include, on an equal basis, five important emerging economies (Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and South Africa);
- As an essential element of expansion, to establish an influential network of research institutions and international associations to dialogue with officials preparing the expanded Summits;
- To contribute to the debates on modernization of the mandates of international organizations;
- To promote the capacity of Southern institutions to generate potential global policy proposals and to provide them access to influential decision-makers.

The specific objectives are:

- To solidify the international network of research institutions and organizations;
- To establish an ongoing tradition of Chatham House Rule conferences inviting members of the G8+5 Sherpa teams to discuss policy ideas with the researcher network;
- To establish a continuing process for the network to contribute to the OECD policy deliberations involving outreach to the non-member major emerging economies.

Prior to CIGI 09, a book will be produced aimed at calling attention to what Canada can and should do with respect to institutional reform the following year as host of the 2010 G-8 meeting.

### **Schedule of Meetings 2008-2010**

#### Preparatory Meeting co-hosted by the Japanese Institute of International Affairs

February 12-13, 2008 -- Tokyo

Co-organized with the Special Advisor to the Japanese Prime Minister on Climate Change.

#### Conference hosted by the Mexican Foreign Ministry

March 10-11, 2008 – Mexico City

A dialogue with G8+5 network participants to discuss ideas on international institutional architecture in a variety of sectors

#### Conference hosted by the OECD Secretary General

March 31- April 1 - Paris

A dialogue on policy initiatives on climate change, energy and economics between research organizations from G8+5 countries and OECD officials (part of the

Heiligendamm dialogue process); input to the OECD 2008 Ministerial (the theme of which is “Economics of Climate Change”).

**Planned**

Conference at White Oak Plantation

Fall 2008 – White Oak Florida<sup>2</sup>

This would bring together a group that would be about half American – people involved directly in the future direction of US foreign policy.

Conference in Bellagio

Fall 2008 – Bellagio, Italy<sup>3</sup>

Symposium in Rio de Janeiro, hosted by the Brazilian Center for International Relations

November 2008

Symposium in India

Spring 2009– New Delhi or Mumbai

Symposium in Beijing

Spring 2009

Concluding Conference: CIGI 09

October 2009

Dr. Gordon Smith  
Executive Director  
Centre for Global Studies

Dr. Barry Carin  
Associate Director  
Centre for Global Studies

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<sup>2</sup> In the last phase, our American partners, the Leaders Project and the Gilman Foundation had invited us to use their facility at White Oak Plantation, for a conference to promote our network’s ideas with the next generation of influential American political advisers. This meeting has been postponed to later in 2008 and is now part of “Modernizing the G8 Summit Process”. We are also considering meetings in Washington in late Spring with the principal advisors to the remaining US Presidential candidates.

<sup>3</sup> We have been asked by the Italian G8 Sherpa team to arrange a Chatham House Rule event in Italy in the fall of 2008. This could take place on the margin of Bellagio or in Rome.