

**Report for DDRN on the seminar:
Development strategies in the millenium**

November 25, 2008

Organizer: Anne Mette Kjaer, with DDRN and The Department of Political Science, Aarhus University.

The seminar had four key-note speakers. **Laurids Laurdsen** from RUC talked about key features of the developmental state, and whether it was possible to universalize these. He also discussed the nature of government business relations in these states and about the policies that could promote development. **Jørgen Dige Pedersen** expanded upon this by giving examples from two late developers, India and Brazil. **Linda Weiss** argued that the debate on whether or not the Developmental State era is over (and with it, an alternative to neoliberal capitalism) has now become stale, bogged down in conflicting evidence, partial insights and conceptual confusion. A practical way forward is to focus instead on the development policies of particular countries. What it takes for states to be effective has evolved: states can pursue developmental strategies without being big-profile developmental states by building into their projects the public-private linkages and performance requirements associated with strategic industry policy. Finally, **John Mathews'** point of departure was that traditional industrial development pathways, that did not take into explicit consideration the issue of energy technologies to be utilized, now imperil development prospects around the world. As oil supplies approach their peak globally, and energy security becomes a major issue, so developing countries have everything to lose by simply following fossil-fuel based industrialization, and everything to gain by recasting their development strategies around the prospects for renewable energies and biofuels. This is now a feasible prospect, as shown by the Brazilian experience, now being replicated in many developing countries, including most notably in India and China. The time is therefore ripe for developing countries, and development agencies such as the World Bank, to re-evaluate their stance on biofuels, bioenergy and renewable energies. There is no necessity, John Mathews argued, for developing countries therefore to create 'carbon copies' of the energy systems of the developed world.

The four key-note presentations were then followed by a lengthy discussion with many questions from the audience. There were about 20 people attending. No list of attendants was done. DDRN was presented and brochures were handed out. In all, it was an interesting afternoon with a good and fruitful debate about feasible and environmentally sustainable development strategies.