

COP15 FAILURE MAY BE BLESSING IN DISGUISE

Lomborg's Copenhagen Consensus Center Launches Information Campaign Around COP15 Summit

COPENHAGEN, November 4 – The failure of the Copenhagen climate summit to produce a meaningful, effective response to global warming could be positive -- if it leads to recognition that the Kyoto approach is going nowhere, Copenhagen Consensus Center director Dr Bjørn Lomborg said today as he launched a public-information campaign on the streets of Copenhagen designed to persuade summit participants to focus on accelerating development of green energy technologies.

"Green energy is what will power the future: it will be cleaner, cheaper, and will actually fix the climate," Lomborg said. "Instead of spending hundreds of billions of dollars a year trying to cut carbon emissions, we should be pumping funds into R&D for green energy. For half of what it would cost to implement the Kyoto Protocol, we could increase spending on green energy R&D by a factor of fifty -- to 0.2% of global GDP, or \$100 billion a year."

The Copenhagen Consensus Center will be getting that word out with metro videos and postcards as well as two giant billboards in central Copenhagen. The billboards will confront summit participants with that the message that there are better ways to fix the climate than trying to cut carbon-dioxide emissions, and they will point viewers to a website (www.FixTheClimate.com) that provides details on practical, effective alternatives to the Kyoto approach.

"Global warming requires a serious response -- not just actions that make us feel good, but actions that do good," said Lomborg. "Even if the governments of the world slapped huge taxes on carbon fuels -- which is not going to happen -- it wouldn't do much to halt climate change any time soon. What it would do is cost us hundreds of billions -- if not trillions -- of dollars, because alternative energy technologies are not yet ready to take up the slack."

In addition to the public-information campaign, other activities of the Copenhagen Consensus Center over the two weeks of COP15 will include:

- Offering advice to policymakers that follows on from the 21 research papers released by the Center during the summer of 2009 (to be published in full by Cambridge University Press in 2010), in which top economists outline different ways to respond to climate change;
- Launching an online interactive game designed with input from climate economists that educates players about different climate policy options by letting them act as climate decision-makers;
- Releasing a series of personal accounts by people who live in global warming hot spots, in which they talk about the social and environmental problems they consider most important (seven of these accounts have already been published by the The Wall Street Journal).

An essay by Dr. Lomborg arguing for a change in how we deal with global warming is being published today in TIME Magazine, in both its U.S. and International editions. Over the weekend, a number of other commentaries by Dr Lomborg will be published in leading newspapers in more than ten countries on three continents.

"For almost 20 years, from Rio to Kyoto to Copenhagen, we've been wasting time, pursuing the failed strategy of cutting carbon-dioxide emissions," Dr Lomborg said. "It's about time we changed course. Do we really want to be remembered as the generation that wasted another decade?"

INTERVIEWS

Dr Lomborg is in Copenhagen and available for interviews during COP15. Please contact:
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Q&A

What is the Copenhagen Consensus Center's position on climate change?

The Copenhagen Consensus Center's starting point is that the careful research of the United Nations panel of climate change scientists, the IPCC, is the best guide to what we can expect from global warming. It is a problem that requires a smart response.

How is the Copenhagen Consensus Center funded?

The Copenhagen Consensus on Climate project was funded by the Danish state. The public information campaign during the COP15 conference - billboards, postcards and metro video advertisements - was made possible by a private donation from Vidar Jorgensen, and did not utilize public funds.