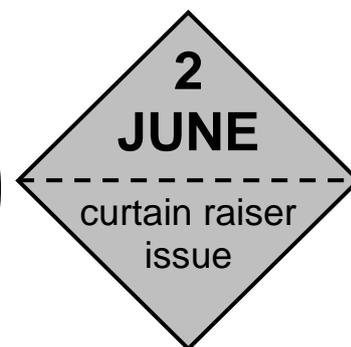


eco



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Mind the (reality) gap!

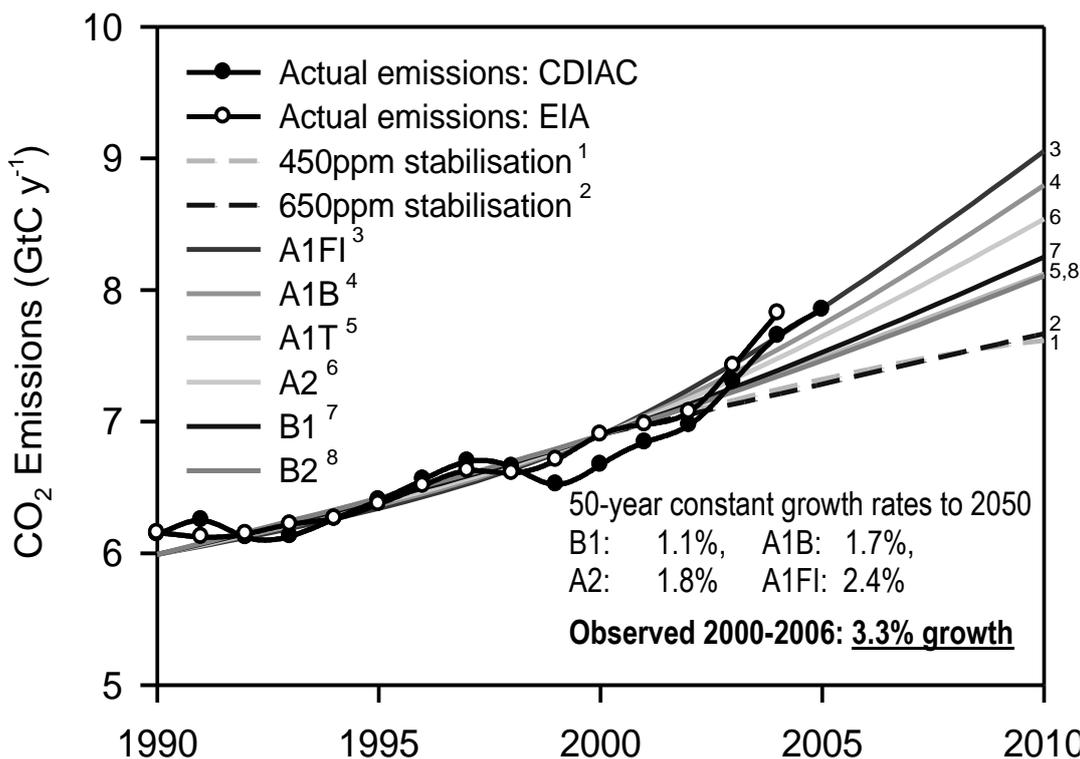
Recent data on global emissions show a clear, and dangerous, gap between the reality of the climate science and action to reduce emissions. Bridging this reality gap is the challenge for all governments in the next 18 months of negotiations and in their actions.

The observed growth on emissions between 2000 and 2006 is an average of 3.3%. That's right, recent growth in emissions is far faster than even the worst-case scenario

modeled by the IPCC, which implies temperature increases in the range of 3-7°C above preindustrial (2.4-6.4°C above 1980-1999 levels by 2100).

So what would a global average temperature increase of 7°C mean? Hard to tell, as the IPCC reports look at impacts to 'only' 5°C above 1980-1999 levels. It seems the IPCC could not credit that progress would be so poor that even worse case scenarios

would need to be considered. Still, above 3-4°C impacts include a biodiversity extinction catastrophe, massive threats to food and water security and health that make current development challenges look like a breeze. The face of the planet would change irreversibly and many low lying deltaic regions and small islands would disappear because of sea level rise – the outlines of the Tuvaluan atolls may become featureless sea.



As the poet TS Eliot put it, "humankind cannot bear much reality"; however, unless we face the scientific reality and the reality of our lack of progress, and act with the imperative urgency to bridge this gap, the reality to which we sentence ourselves, and our children, will really be unbearable.



Adaptation – reduce the massive cost through prompt effective mitigation

As delegates are gathering for today's workshop on advancing adaptation through finance and technology, ECO takes the liberty of highlighting some of the key issues at stake – and we start with one that sometimes seems to slip past some delegations' minds: Adaptation becomes a mission impossible if you fail to limit global warming to as far below 2°C as possible – and that means global cuts of, at the very least, 50% by 2050, with emissions peaking by 2015.

Even then, adapting to climate change will be a huge challenge for many of the least developed countries, requiring large sums of money. Developing countries will face costs for adaptation in the order of \$50bn to \$86bn per year. ECO feels that these costs must be paid by developed countries, because they have caused most of the problem. If indeed those most responsible and with greatest capacity to pay, (based on objective criteria and indicators) are to provide the necessary finance, the EU, for example, would be expected to raise, (hold tight), between one quarter and one third of the adaptation costs in developing countries – and the US over 40%.

So ECO advises developing country delegates, especially from the

most vulnerable countries, to listen carefully to what the developed countries offer to raise the tens of billions of \$ needed annually to cover the costs of adaptation – because the current UNFCCC funds targeted at adaptation are going to generate less than 1% of the estimated annual need. This is not even enough to cover the most urgent needs of developing countries as spelt out in their NAPAs. ECO wonders if developed country parties are planning, at the very least, to announce their intention to plug that gap now, and, while so doing, propose accelerated and simplified procedures to access funding for full NAPA implementation.

ECO believes that funds for adaptation should be under the governance of UNFCCC, whatever mechanism is actually used to raise the necessary finance. Funds that are to be established outside the UNFCCC should not be used by rich countries to bypass the newly established Adaptation Fund and its democratic governance structure. Instead such funds should be folded into the Adaptation Fund once it is fully operational.

Raising the funds however is not the only issue. It is extremely important that adaptation funding

targets the most vulnerable communities, protecting their rights and livelihoods. A comprehensive, system-wide risk-reducing approach to climate change adaptation must be developed, based on the Hyogo Framework adopted by 168 countries in 2005. Adaptation action should prioritise sustainable development benefits for vulnerable people over large-scale infrastructure investments.

Technology – and the skills and knowledge for its application – will play a key role in enabling vulnerable communities to adapt to climate change. The post-2012 regime will have to facilitate and accelerate deployment and diffusion of existing and new technologies for adaptation. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) should not form a barrier to the use of adaptation technology; developing countries should have flexible and affordable access to patented technologies.