

Dear Sir Nick Stern,

This is a very strange way to examine Global Warming. I understand that it is in your terms of reference which you may not have set but it is nevertheless a strange way to look at the problem.

The global temperature figures can be seen at;

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/hadleycentre/obsdata/index.html> and the carbon dioxide concentrations at;
<http://cdiac.esd.ornl.gov/trends/co2/contents.htm>.

Global Warming is caused by the rising greenhouse gas concentration of the air. Carbon Dioxide is the most prolific of these gases and causes the most warming. The concentration of water vapour in the air is largely a function of the carbon dioxide concentration and this is also increasing.

All the greenhouse gases, apart from water vapour are trace gases in the air and it is for that reason alone that human activities can change their concentration in the atmosphere.

Since about 1960 just over half the emissions of carbon dioxide have ended up in the atmosphere. The same proportion is ending up in the atmosphere despite emissions increasing by at least 150% in that period.

Since 1976 global temperatures have been rising at about 0.20 degrees Celsius per decade and the increase has been at a roughly standard rate over this time period. This may be about to change.

The Arctic is warming roughly five times faster than the rest of the world. This is what affects your report. The Arctic sea ice is retreating very fast in summer and the water is absorbing the sun's rays whilst the ice reflected them. Thus the Arctic Ocean is going to go on warming unless drastic action is taken. Partly as a result of the Arctic Ocean warming the land around it and partly because the Arctic is warming the frozen land's permafrost is melting. This permafrost contains billions of tons of frozen carbon dioxide and methane, much more than there is in the atmosphere, and melting this will set off a runaway greenhouse event.

The Carbon dioxide and Methane from the Arctic permafrost will warm the earth and the seas. There is 50 times as much carbon in the oceans as in the air and warm oceans can hold much less carbon than cooler oceans. Thus this is released and the earth warms much faster. Also Methane hydrates are released from the bottom of the ocean. The earth then warms by about six degrees Celsius. Vast changes take place in climate patterns and most plants die. Humanity is also wiped out probably by 2040.

None of this needs to happen if humanity makes drastic cuts in emissions of greenhouse gases now - over 70%. Then the Arctic permafrost will not melt nor the Arctic Ocean's ice melt completely in summer. Thus we will survive.

It is very difficult to measure this in monetary terms. If humanity does not take immediate action but goes on expanding fossil fuel energy use the chances are that world community will be better off in ten years than at present but the global economy will start collapsing from this point onwards. Everybody will be dead and there be no global economy in 2040. How does one measure this in financial terms?

My reaction is to make huge cuts in global emissions of greenhouse gases now so that humanity can survive in future. Economically this is bound to cause enormous damage to all the economies in the world, but as Margaret Thatcher used to say 'There Is No Alternative', TINA.

Should you wish that I support any of these assertions please contact me, I can prove it if you wish to your satisfaction.

All the Best,

John B Davies, Islington Friends of the Earth

John B Davies

Man-made climate change is the biggest environmental threat our planet faces. Tony Blair says climate change is the world's greatest environmental challenge - yet the Government has sanctioned massive growth in air travel that will make it impossible to meet our carbon dioxide reduction targets.

Take our Climate Challenge and make a real difference.

http://www.foe.co.uk/climate_challenge/

Make your personal stand against airport expansion - sign the airport pledge

<http://www.airportpledge.org.uk>

Find out the real cost of cheap flights

http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/transport/issues/air_travel/index.html

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk>

