

Responding to Global Warming

Ch. 13 (p. 444-449)



How Do You Slow Global Warming?



- According to the majority of climatologists, global warming is caused by the Greenhouse Effect
- The Greenhouse Effect is caused by too much greenhouse gas
- Therefore, reducing greenhouse gas emissions will help to slow global warming
 - Especially carbon dioxide (CO₂)
- Individually, you can reduce your “carbon footprint”
 - Carbon footprint = how much greenhouse gas your lifestyle is responsible for producing in a year
 - Measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide

The Kyoto Protocol



- An international agreement negotiated in 1997
 - In Kyoto, Japan
 - Sometimes called the “Kyoto Accord”
- By signing the Kyoto Protocol, countries promised to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions to 6% less than their 1990 levels by 2012
 - Is a legally binding agreement
 - 175 countries signed (or “ratified”) it
 - Notable Exception: USA

The Kyoto Protocol



Canada and the Kyoto Protocol



- Canada signed it in 2002
 - Liberal Party in power
 - 70% public support for Kyoto Protocol
 - Some businesses and Conservative Party against it
 - Felt that cutting emissions would be too expensive, slow economic growth
 - Would make Canadian businesses unable to compete with American businesses (US not part of Kyoto)
 - Alberta oil and gas industry most vocal in opposition
 - Liberal government unable to come up with workable plan to cut emissions
 - One Tonne Challenge
 - GHG emissions increased to 22% above 1990 levels by 2006

Canada and the Kyoto Protocol



- 2006: Conservative Party elected
 - Announces that Canada unable to meet Kyoto requirements, will no longer be governed by its goals
 - Government sets own emission goals and requirements
 - Reduce GHG emissions to 20% less than 2006 levels by 2020
 - Greenhouse gas emissions are now 27% above 1990 levels

Canada and the Kyoto Protocol



BC and Greenhouse Gas Emissions



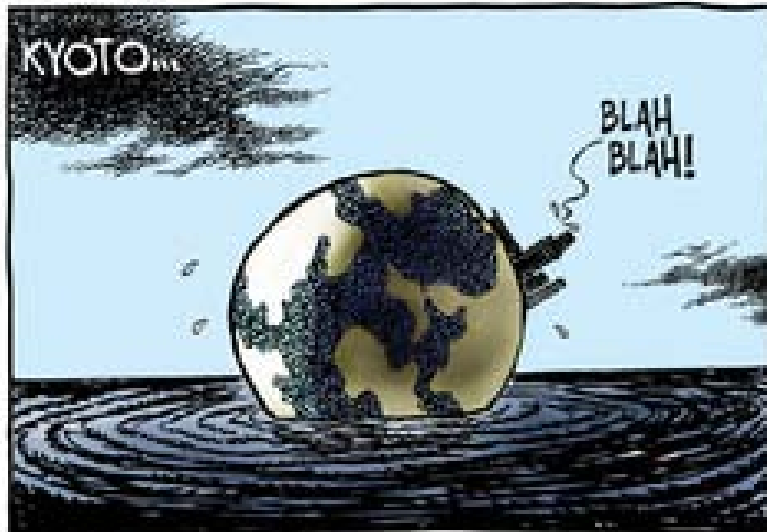
- 2008: BC institutes a carbon tax
 - Tax put on fossil fuels to discourage use
 - Includes a 3.6¢ per litre tax on gasoline
 - Goals: cut GHG emissions to 33% below 2007 levels by 2020, and 80% by 2050
 - Government is “carbon-neutral”
 - GHG emissions produced by the BC government that can not be reduced are “offset” by buying “carbon-offsets”
 - Carbon-offsets are usually investments in companies or organizations that are working to reduce GHG emissions (planting trees, developing sources of renewable energy, etc.)
 - <http://www.offsetters.ca/>

Copenhagen Climate Change Conference



- Held in Copenhagen, Denmark - Dec 2009
- Was a UN conference held to come up with a plan to combat climate change after 2012 (Kyoto)
- Resulted in the Copenhagen Accord
 - Says that global warming should be kept below 2 C
 - Kyoto Protocol should continue to be followed
 - Developed countries to create a fund to help developing countries reduce GHG emissions
 - Does not include emission goals
 - Is not legally binding
 - Considered a “good start” or a “failure”, depending on whom you ask

Copenhagen Climate Change Conference



Copenhagen Climate Change Conference



Copenhagen Climate Change Conference

