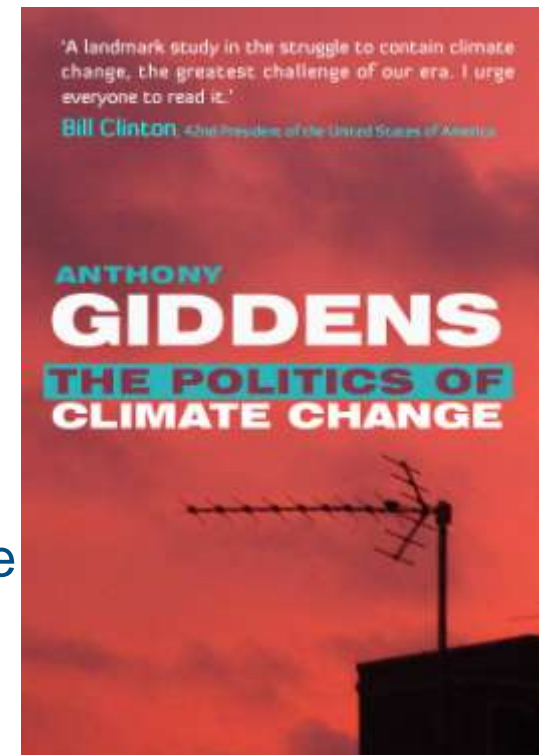


Perspectives on: “*The Politics of Climate Change*”

1. **Alan Petersen**
School of Political and Social Inquiry
2. **Bob Birrell**
Centre for Population and Urban Research
3. **Ray Ison**
School of Geography and Environmental Science



1. ALAN PETERSEN

THE POLITICS OF GIDDENS

- From abstract theorist to public intellectual/politician
- Enduring concerns with modernity, structure/agency, risk ('risk society'), and identity
- Architect of politics of the 'third way'
- Published in the midst of Global Financial Crisis and before Copenhagen Summit and challenges to some IPCC findings



Strengths

- Puts *politics* of climate change on the agenda
- Identifies some of the key issues needing attention: the need for a multi-sectoral, multilateral approach, the issue of energy security
- Highlights concrete ways in which the state may intervene in this field
- Provides an informative overview of global and geopolitical issues and policies (e.g. tax) bearing on carbon markets, emissions control, and adaptation

Weaknesses/gaps

- Over-reliance on 'the market' to solve problems
- No challenge to 'growth', models of development, capitalist mode of production
- Too much faith in 'the state' as planner/mitigator
- No discussion of how to develop civil society and citizen engagement in political decision-making (civil society equated with NGO activism)
- Too much faith in science and technology; no discussion about how to engender public involvement in technological decision making
- Says little about the significance of the car and the role of public transport and urban planning in reducing carbon emissions
- The role of the media in agenda setting and public communication efforts ignored

CLAIMS EXAGGERATED, SAYS UK CHIEF

Be truthful on climate: science boss

BEN WEBSTER
MATTHEW FRANKLIN

THE impact of global warming has been exaggerated by some scientists and there is an urgent need for more honest disclosure about the rate of climate change, according to the British government's chief scientific adviser.

John Beddington said climate scientists should be less hostile to sceptics who questioned man-made global warming. He condemned scientists who refused to publish the data underpinning their reports.

Australia's chief scientist, Penny Sackett, told *The Australian* last night she shared Professor Beddington's concerns.

Professor Sackett said climate change was a scientific reality but there was a need for absolute openness and rigour in the presentation of evidence, including recognition of which aspects of climate change science were imprecise and required further research.

Professor Beddington said public confidence in climate science would be improved if there were more openness about its uncertainties, even if that meant admitting that sceptics had been right on some hotly disputed issues.

He said: "I don't think it's healthy to dismiss proper scepti-



cism. Science grows and improves in the light of criticism. There is a fundamental uncertainty about climate change prediction that can't be changed."

He said the false claim in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 2007 report that the glaciers would disappear by 2035 had exposed a wider problem with the way some evidence was presented.

"Certain unqualified statements have been unfortunate. We have a problem in communicating uncertainty. There's definitely an issue there. If there wasn't, there wouldn't be the level of scepticism."

"All of these predictions have to be caveated by saying, 'There's a level of uncertainty about that.'"

Professor Beddington said particular caution was needed when communicating predictions about climate change made with the help of computer models. "It's unchallengeable that CO₂ traps heat and warms the Earth and

that burning fossil fuels shoves billions of tonnes of CO₂ into the atmosphere. But where you can get challenges is on the speed of change.

"When you get into large-scale climate modelling, there are quite substantial uncertainties. On the rate of change and the local effects, there are uncertainties both in terms of empirical evidence and the climate models themselves."

He said it was wrong for scientists to refuse to disclose their data to their critics. "I think, wherever possible, we should try to ensure there is openness and that source material is available for the whole scientific community."

He added: "There is a danger that people can manipulate the data, but the benefits from being open far outweigh that danger."

Professor Sackett said there was no real dispute within the scientific community about the reality of climate change but she wanted non-scientists to have greater access to the evidence to help inform the necessary public debate about crafting policy responses to the problem.

"The public must be provided with the best possible advice," Professor Sackett said.

"It must have available to it some understanding or the ability to develop an understanding

Continued on Page 4

COMMENTARY P12
EDITORIAL P13

Power from the ground

Around the country, small groups of ordinary but passionate people are banding together, lest they succumb to despair, to force action on global warming.

By MICHAEL GREEN

A few weeks ago, a small group of parents and young children — in average T-shirts and sensible shoes — sat in the park at the corner of Spring and Lonsdale streets. The parents signed petitions and grouped, and their kids negotiated and looked around the grass. Placards leaned against the fence: “It’s time for Christmas to be banned,” and “My future is precious.”

The Walk Against Warming protest had just finished. This group was Families Facing Climate Change, a collection of 18 Adelaide residents and their families. They live in Peter Cosgrove’s electorate, Stirling, and formed their group in 2006 in the aftermath of their late primary school.

“We just were really worried about our children and their future,” Anna Moxoni said. She’s a 37-year-old mother of three. “These past families were just ordinary people, but it’s about being empowered to go and talk to the local MP and so. This issue is really important to us.”

Her co-founder, Henry Williams, added: “We read the science. When you read that, you can understand why something’s happening — you’re still frustrated. We thought rather than just complaining about it and getting depressed or worried about it, try and do something.”

They’re not alone. Grassroots climate action groups are appearing like white blood cells at a wound. Over the past two years, an unprecedented, unexpected and largely unorchestrated climate movement has sprung up throughout our cities and regions. Many of the members have dedicated decades to being simply and sustainably. The great mystery though, are why.

Groups start up in rapidly it is difficult to know their numbers, but according to Melbourne’s Climate Action Centre, Victoria probably has about 60, and more are less than two years old. Melbourne, there are well over 300, and Australia is not unique in this regard.

Before long we will see whether each group can make a real difference in the wider world — one of fixing temperatures and reducing emissions on the one hand, and the better of water, gas and income redistribution on the other.

The worldwide climate movement is comprised of small groups with different goals. It has no single agenda or set of policy proposals, but collectively its mass comes undoubtedly, it is working in multi-scale negotiations at the Copenhagen Climate Summit in December 2009, where all countries will establish the agreement to cut down emissions. These are leaders that

“In the history of social movements in Australia, you can’t find a parallel. There’s nothing like it for its diversity, for its rate of growth, and for its inclusiveness. It includes coal miners. It’s rural. It’s urban. And it’s a mistake for anybody to think the climate change movement is part of the environmental movement. The climate movement is a much bigger issue.”

“You can hold a public meeting in any urban centre in Australia now, and initiate one or more climate action groups,” he says. “This is a moment where the grassroots element is taking the lead and the NGOs are following, some of them faster than others.”

At Melbourne’s Trades Hall, the Climate Action Centre has just opened. It will be run by, and for, their local groups. It aims to connect them, encourage developing, supporting and keeping links between groups. It will hold forums on climate issues, and share resources and research.

Recently, there are two types of climate groups, though often they overlap political action groups, such as Families Facing Climate Change, and political action groups. The latter may be voter block-busting collection such as the Dandenong Burgeon Renewable Energy Association, or personal carbon footprint matters such as the Stenside Carbon Reducing Action Group.

Their diverse membership base reflects a willingness of citizens rising from deep within the national psyche. But they face a HUGE task.

Recently, I saw climate scientist Professor David Karoly speak to a rare-thatch talk audience at the State Library. He is professor of meteorology at Melbourne University and was a lead author on last year’s report by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Rarely said scary news of change are already at the upper limit or outside the range of the IPCC climate change predictions — including increases in sea levels, sea level rise and Arctic sea ice melt, and decreases in rainfall in southern Australia. The climate is changing faster than the IPCC predicted.

Even under the most ambitious targets spelled out by the Federal Government’s National Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, there is a 30 per cent risk of global warming exceeding 2 degrees, a rise that would cause extraordinary human suffering. Worse news: that are many people would take a 50 per cent risk of global warming exceeding 2 degrees, a rise that would cause extraordinary human suffering.

In this light, the Federal Government’s National Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme will be another issue enough. Labor’s pre-election commitment to a 50 per cent emissions reduction by 2050



ILLUSTRATION: SIMON WOODS

What we do now will determine by how much.

If you don’t know about the globally accepted scientific research, but odds are, you’re not alone. My new knowledge left me with a sense of awe, and nowhere else was I so confident in what I was reading. The climate crisis is not widely understood. The climate action groups may be multiplying, but among the public at large, there’s still a climate change has fallen from the sky.

In November last year, just before the federal election, 50,000 people crowded Melbourne Square for the Walk Against Warming. They wanted forward not back, shortly after they got it. At the year’s end, however, numbers were very down. The organizers, Environment Victoria, estimated 15,000. The Sunday Age reported 3000. It was a disappointing turnout.

Has an opportunity been lost?

Local councillor Hugh Mackay believes the public was ready for enough evidence earlier this year. “The willingness of the community to act in the last six months of this year was palpable. They were waiting to be asked to do something.” That attitude could only last so long. “People’s attention

and interest is coming from politics. If only the Government is leading rather than following. In the future over rising petrol prices, nearly all voters agreed that more should be done. So Mackay notes, when my leaders say we can be joined in front of you, many people assume there isn’t a carbon emission catastrophe after all. The odds look against when the public sees that the biggest problems are likely to require comprehensive action. Labor’s proposed emissions trading scheme.”

And in the history of social movements in Australia, you can’t find a parallel.

There’s one caveat to all this gloom. Despite the community’s waning interest, Mackay says he has observed a

turn about six months ago in his electorate office, following a visit from concerned constituents. Some then, so climate groups have been involved in its drafting.

The bill would bind the Government to develop emissions cuts by 2015, 30 per cent below 1990 levels, and by 2050, 80 per cent. Among other things, it also sets deeper renewable energy targets and strengthens greenhouse impact statements on new legislation. According to Mackay, over these targets are not met enough.

The bill was heavily based on UN legislation, originally drafted by scientists, organisations and just passed by their parliament. However, says his bill’s success depends on the public will.

“The people can actually drive this, if they activate themselves. But if they just sit around and wait for the Parliament to do something, my guess is they’ll end up with a watered-down arrangement probably not worth pursuing. ... I think people will catch the pressure up to their MPs. I hope they do.”

They might. Community organising is back in vogue — done locally in Parliament about Barack Obama’s grassroots campaign, which has inspired and inspired

neighbourhood associations to inter-organised activities, that is causing profound social change, step by step.

Mackay notes that when asked for his view of the future, he always replies the same way. “If you look at the science that describes what is happening on earth today and aren’t pessimistic, you don’t have the correct idea. If you trust the people in this movement, you don’t have the correct idea. You have to get a better idea.”

Dr James Lovelock has long researched social activist movements. He is a senior lecturer at the school of social and political change at the University of Technology, Sydney. He and his team have researched climate activists in Britain and in Australia. “One of the things you explain is what motivates people, gives the scale of the problem and gives the government that sense of its urgency,” he says.

“It’s a very intense personal responsibility. It’s almost like an emotional equation. It’s the issue that we’ve got working time to lose.”

SIMON WOODS, the UK activist who generally pessimistic about the future, and the Australians are more hopeful, believing their actions can bring about the changes they want. In February, action groups from all over the country will meet in Canberra for the Climate Action Summit. Over four days, they will hold workshops, process and exchange thoughts. They will discuss how to encourage one another to keep keeping their representatives, all year.

“That’s what Families Facing Climate Change plans to do. It’s not candidates before the last state and federal elections, and has met state Labor MP Bob Stenhouse and Peter Costello. “When we met with Peter Costello, he didn’t know what good power was,” said Henry Williams in the afternoon session.

“We explained to him what that was and how he could get 100 per cent more power for his house. I met with Tim Hinchey and took the Weather Watchers, which he hadn’t read even though Hinchey was the Australian of the Year. I think we’re doing him a favour. The public’s love him from us.”

But at this year’s Walk Against Warming for a while at all, we saw had not to find people. Afterwards, I sat in the park for a while, happy and tired, at first content (finding the women and their, the opportunity and complexity of the response required).

I thought about what nature individuals from grassroots groups, about why some feel challenged to know how to change nature and make out against the gate, while the whole world is so far away.

Anna Moxoni explained her group’s motivation. “If you don’t try and do something, then you just despair. It’s better when you band together with other people, when you’re doing it, worrying. It’s actually like applying when we discovered each other.”

Henry Williams went on: “It’s better and better to connect people, but I don’t want my children to have to live in 15 years’ time and only worry about what’s going

It's power to the people as self-help groups fight climate change

PETER MURDO

THE cracked roof of Ballarat's Lake Wendouree is a sorry place for the hosts of one of Victoria's leading climate change groups. There have been lead down in drizzle, dirt, wind and staggly winds sweeping through a few stagnant puddles.

Years of drought and water restrictions have reduced the size of the Melbourne Olympics rowing and canoeing to a dismal pool pit.

On these dry banks in late 2006, the climate change group Ballarat Renewable Energy and Zero Emissions, or Breeze, was formed with 40 members.

Two years later, its membership has passed 1100.

It has been given \$102,000 by the State Government, to assist Victoria's many budding climate change groups how to grow and prosper.

Community action has been crucial in revolutionising climate change along this stretch of central Victoria.

Breeze's strength is in its members, which help it buy renewable-energy systems in bulk, at significant discounts.

Members have already received solar hot water systems at 50 per cent, plus \$200 for the price of insulation. Now, the group has installed more than 100 solar roof panel systems under a bulk discount.

Meredith Alexander had solar roof panels installed on her 1960s home this month, saving more than \$2000 on the estimated cost of about \$22,500.

Ms Alexander, who hopes to have solar hot water installed next year, said her one-kilowatt system powered about one-third of her electricity needs. "I want my children to have a world to live in, and they won't if we keep squandering resources at this rate," she said.

"If you do it on your own, it can be difficult to afford, but when you've got this collective buying power, it is possible."

A similar bulk-buy model is Confemaster, run by the Mount Alexander Sustainability Group, has helped install more than 200 discounted solar roof panel



Meredith Alexander, a member of the Breeze renewable energy group, recently had solar energy panels installed on the roof of her Ballarat home.

PICTURE: SHANE O'NEILL

systems in Bendigo — where the office of Federal Labor MP Steve Lithgow was this month planned with posters protesting against the size of the Government's 5 per cent carbon emissions reductions target — the Sustainability & Districts Community Enterprise group has orders for almost 200 systems.

Breeze acting executive officer Lisa Kendall, said there was a wave of local interest in helping combat global climate change. "People are desperate to do something, and this is a very tangible thing they can do," she said.

The group is already coaching other climate-change groups in projects such as installing beds, buy solar hot panels at local

schools. Breeze is also developing a project for buying locally produced food in bulk, to help reduce prices and packaging, as well as carbon emissions created by shipping food long distances.

Ms Kendall criticised the Federal Government's recent decision to scrap the \$6000 solar roof panel rebate, saying it persuaded her and trans-

"People are desperate to do something, and this is a very tangible thing they can do." LISA KENDALL, Breeze chief

actioner. Under the new "solar credits" scheme, households installing solar panels will receive five megawatt energy

credits, instead of one, for each megawatt hour of electricity they create. But in Victoria, where solar roof panels produce less energy than in northern Australia, the scheme on a 1.5-kilowatt system could drop to about \$5500.

"The Government's sending a message that it's not prepared to make that leap into the future of

renewable energy in a big way. It's punishing people who are most committed to making a difference," Ms Kendall said.

"We have quite a big untapped market in Ballarat, but this will largely slow what we're doing."

"We're going to struggle to promote the benefits broadly to people."

What the blazers — no beige Benaud?

JOHN ELDER

SOME things at Channel Nine are quieter than others. Like Mike Mars, for example — retired in October without a disappointing run-in of the sort Matty Henry's won't forgive for.

All that a few years had the celebrity "how do you feel?" interview with Mars — and now there's talk of him coming back to life on Seven.

But less celebrated and no less mourned is an even more beloved New Zealand cricket legend's career-colored blazer. The man who makes music from sometimes has been wearing a navy-blue jacket while doing his cricket commentary for two seasons now — and not one has the fate of his old cream jacket been mentioned.

By the way, "cream" was how the pundits described the jacket. Some might have judged it more as a beige color, which leads to the obvious question: how have there been winners that the old blazer was "beige"?

Not at all, protests Benaud. "There were no whiteprints and, if I needed to, I could have a beige jacket made," he says, insisting only that he prefers the darker shade. "I am very pleased with the current style of navy jackets with pastel-colored shirts and light blue... I haven't worn a cream jacket ever the last couple of years since Channel Nine stopped using them. Mike Bird of Seven's been on the jacket pockets."

Even so, our query got the legendary commentator rethinking — in a way that he might have done if Channel Nine had even felt to give the cream jacket a farewell special with Ray Martin — sorry, Lucy Greenwood.

"The first light-colored jacket was grey. It happened during the first year of World Series Cricket in 1977 when we were covering a match at Kookaburra Park in Adelaide."

"My (Kerry Packer) friend David Hill, the producer, and said he would prefer the powder blue for the launch, for the blue and yellow highlights to be in a jacket color different from the other commentators. Grey it was, and then later it became beige."

**Presentation to Monash
Sustainability Institute**

Wednesday March 24, 2010

**Bob Birrell
Centre for Population and Urban Research
Monash University**

Table 1 Treasury assumptions for the calculation of the <u>reference case</u> level of greenhouse gasses in 2020		
	2000	2020
Population (million)	19.1	25.2 (1)
GDP per capita (\$)	44,532 (2)	61,403 (3)
GDP (\$billion)	853 (4)	1,547 (5)
Greenhouse emissions per \$GDP (Kg)	0.64 (6)	0.5 (7)
Emissions (tons CO2e)	551 (8)	774 (9)
Per capita emissions (tons CO2e)	28.8	30.7
(1) CPUR projection based on Treasury's assumption that Australia's population reaches 33 million by 2050		
(2) ABS, Australian National Accounts: National income, expenditures and product, 5206.0, June 2009, Table 1		
(3) CPUR calculation based on Treasury assumption that GDP grows at 1.4% per annum		
(4) GDP per capita by population		
(5) GDP per capita by population		
(6) Greenhouse emissions divided by GDP		
(7) Treasury		
(8) Australian Greenhouse Office, National Greenhouse Gas Inventory, 2005		
(9) CPUR calculation		

Table 2 Estimated CO2e emissions growth under Federal Treasury reference case scenario

2006 to 2051						
	2006	2011	2021	2031	2041	2051
Population (1)	20,697,880	22,051,039	25,156,012	28,327,749	31,313,852	34,166,490
GDP \$million (2)	970,635	1,138,077	1,508,613	1,956,219	2,529,899	3,233,368
Kg CO2e emissions per \$ GDP (3)	0.61	0.57	0.49	0.43	0.37	0.32
National emissions (tonnes) (4)	592,087,133	646,972,830	744,837,218	838,822,920	942,160,935	1,045,793,971
Emissions per capita (tonnes) (5)	28.6	29.3	29.6	29.6	30.1	30.6
GDP per capita (\$000) (6)	46.90	51.61	59.97	69.06	80.79	95
Sources:						
(1) Approximation of population growth assumptions in reference scenario, Australia's Low Pollution Future, the Economics of Climate Change Mitigation (ALPF), Dept of Treasury and Dept of Climate Change, 2008						
(2) Approximation of GDP growth assumptions in reference scenario, ALPF, Dept of Treasury and Dept of Climate Change, 2008						
(3) These rates are derived from Chart 3.24 ALPF, 2008						
(4) Product of GDP and emissions per capita						
(5) National CO2e emissions divided by population						
(6) GDP divided by population						

How much of the national greenhouse gas emissions growth under the Treasury reference case scenario is due to immigration?

Estimated Population, Gross Domestic Product and National Carbon dioxide Equivalent emissions growth 2006 to 2051, with zero net overseas migration										
	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	2051
Population	20,697,880	21,430,507	21,978,764	22,483,325	22,936,344	23,317,619	23,606,642	23,798,010	23,898,381	23,922,198
GDP \$million @ 2006-07 prices	970,635	1,099,122	1,209,392	1,321,168	1,433,894	1,551,375	1,676,316	1,813,668	1,963,190	2,125,099
Kg CO2e emissions per \$ GDP	0.61	0.57	0.53	0.49	0.46	0.43	0.40	0.37	0.35	0.32
National emissions (tonnes)	592,087,133	624,827,603	640,716,607	652,291,284	659,758,597	665,226,414	669,873,956	675,428,845	681,347,729	687,337,601
Emissions per capita (tonnes)	28.6	29.2	29.2	29.0	28.8	28.5	28.4	28.4	28.5	28.7
GDP per capita (\$000)	46.895	51,288	55,025	58,762	62,516	66,532	71,010	76,211	82,147	88,834
Sources: As in Table 7, but with zero net overseas migration assumption applied and GDP calculation adjusted accordingly										

Of the 13.5 million population growth under the Treasury reference case assumptions, 10.2 million (76%) is due to immigration over that period.

With zero net migration, other things being equal, national emissions by 2051 reach 687.3 million tonnes of CO2e, rather than 1045.8 million tonnes.

3. Ray Ison

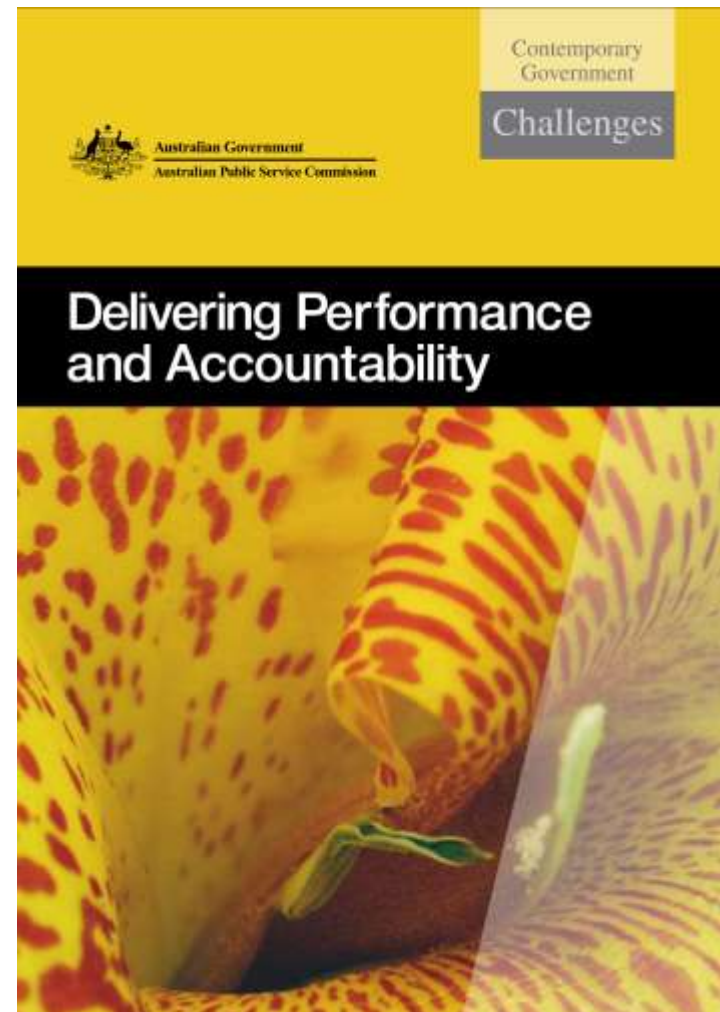
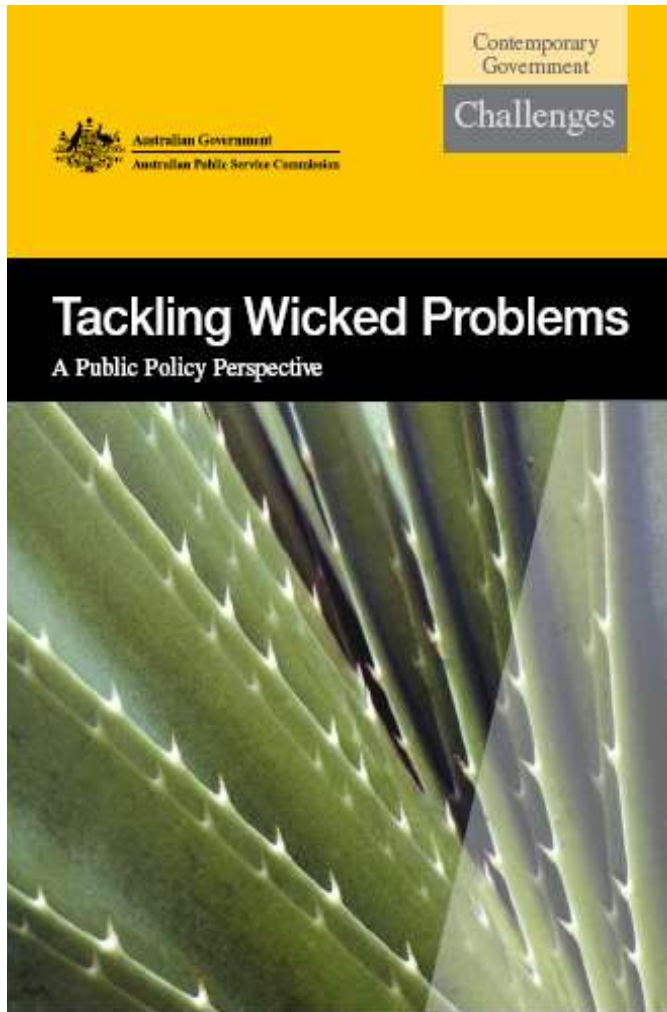
- **‘Framing’ my remarks**
 - My preference for understanding Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) as a co-evolutionary dynamic
- **Reactions to Giddens**
- **We are in the wrong conversation?**

Metaphors for ‘adaptation’

- **There are three different understandings :**
 - adaptation as ‘fitting into’ as when doing a jigsaw
 - *adaptation to...*
 - adaptation as comfortable shoes
 - *adaptation with ...*
 - i.e. adaptation as co-evolution
 - questions of purpose
 - *adaptation for*

Reactions to Giddens

- **‘We have no politics of climate change’ (p.4)**
 - equally we have no praxis (particularly systemic praxis) of climate change
 - his limited focus on praxis and his rejection of the precautionary principle have consequences
- **The long-term thinking needed to counter CC has to operate against a backdrop of uncertainty...(p. 7)**
 - Yes...but like many others he seeks to reduce uncertainty to risk



Reactions to Giddens

- **‘To develop a politics of climate change new concepts are needed’ (p. 8)**
 - Yes – but are we even in the right conversation?
 - The ‘state as facilitator or enabler’ is a desirable way to go but is the state structured’ to do this?
- **‘Economic growth elevates emissions; what is the point of making a fetish of growth if ..it diminishes rather than promotes welfare?’**
 - The GFC opened up a conversational space for moving to something different – but nothing appears to be happening

Reactions to Giddens

- **‘Governments should have more ambitious aims alongside targets’ (p.11)**
 - Yes – targets distort. Cap and trade seems dead in the water (China and India)
 - ‘Carbon taxes are the way to go’ (p.12)
- **‘We must ..disavow any remaining forms of mystical reverence for nature, including the more limited versions which shift the centre of values away from human beings to the earth itself – tackling global arming has nothing to do with saving the earth, which will survive whatever we do. Living in harmony with the earth, respecting the earth, respecting nature – these ideas all fall into the same category’ (p. 56)**
 - reveals a particular worldview – utilitarianism?
 - we need to have conversations at the level of worldview

EARTH



-GOT A
PIECE WITH
'HUMANS'
ON IT?

... NOT
NECESSARILY...

Ison, R.L. (2010) Systems practice. How to act in a climate-change world. London: Springer.

We are in the wrong conversation(s)?

- **Giddens's arguments support the need for a new conversation about systemic and adaptive governance**
 - Long-term thinking; holistic approaches
 - Ringen, S. 2009. The Economic Consequences of Mr. Brown. How a Strong Government Was Defeated by a Weak System of Governance. Oxford, Bardwell Press.
- **CCA and CCM are fostering an emotion of fear. We need to change the conversation to foster an emotion of hope. I suggest 'transformation to a post carbon-society'.**
 - My claims are based on the concepts of 'structural determinism' and emotional dynamics