



# Climate Change | Climate Change

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In the Summary of Conclusions to his review 'The Economics of Climate Change?', published in 2006, Lord Stern wrote 'The scientific evidence is now overwhelming: climate change is a serious global threat, and it demands an urgent global response.' The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fourth Assessment Report of 2007 is more discursive but hardly more lenient.

These firm opinions are not well-served by either of the books here reviewed. The Watts book gives almost half a page to the sceptical environmentalist Bjorn Lomborg, heavily criticised by scientists for his arguments disparaging carbon emissions projects (a reader who googles 'Lomborg?' will be offered inter alia 33,000 'Lomborg errors?' results); the Wayland book excuses the United States, which sabotaged the Kyoto Protocol by refusing to ratify it, by saying 'However, like many other countries, the United States has its own emissions targets.' (Obama is already under attack for his intentions to repair the damage done by Bush.)

The Wayland book is unique, in my experience, in its discussions of energy production, by never mentioning nuclear power. Nuclear power has negligible carbon emissions compared to fossil fuels; it has its problems, as the Watts book points out, but if these problems can be resolved, as is technically not unlikely, it could contribute substantially to global warming mitigation.

Both books outline the history and causes of climate change and discuss means of mitigation and motives of the people and companies involved. In my view, the Watts book presents more clearly the need for change of lifestyle which will certainly constrain the reader's grandchildren, if not the reader herself. It also gives a reasonable page of websites; the Wayland list is very limited.

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