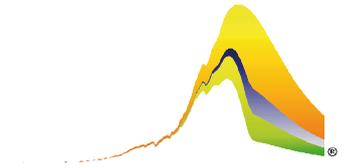


GLOBAL COMMONS INSTITUTE

The Rt Hon Chris Huhne MP
Secretary of State
Department of Energy & Climate Change
3 Whitehall Place
London SW1A 2AW



21st September, 2010

Dear Chris

Thank you for meeting with myself, Terry O'Connell and Colin Challen last Monday the 13th. It was very good to meet you now as Secretary of State at DECC, along with your colleagues Duncan Brack and Chris Dodwell.

As you may have imagined, I was pleased to hear your emphatic opening comment on C&C, "*you know I agree with you, in the long term there is no other way to solve this problem.*" In effect that says, '*UNFCCC-compliance is dependent on C&C.*' I hope you will persist with and remain able to defend that view. Given the stakes, what's the alternative? My perennial point however has been this: - C&C is not really about 'short-term' versus the 'long-term'. **C&C is 'full-term' and that term is shorter than is widely realized.**

As the Liberal Democrat Manifesto and the Group of Small Island States - the remarks of which you quoted in our meeting - said the danger is such that 1.5 degrees [not 2 degrees] is the overall average temperature rise we must not exceed, at least for their survival.

If the odds are with us, this requires at least a full-term contraction-event for global emissions to near net zero by at least 2050. If the odds are not with us, a contraction-event on this path-integral may still take us to and possibly beyond 2 degrees and, as increasing sink-failure and positive feedback imply, the dangers of runaway effects potentially taking over.

There are however, three points I would like to press upon you as you go to the negotiations and to the High Level meetings in Ban Ki Moon's Finance Group.

1. The "*unrealistic rate of recovery of sink-efficiency*" [to more than 100% efficiency after 2050] as calculated by the Hadley Centre and reiterated by the UK Climate Change Committee and so underlying the UK Climate Act;
2. The need to be flexible on, "*the rate of convergence under contraction*" [what Ross Garnaut has called "*the main equity lever*"]; this issue was badly mishandled at COP-15;
3. The extreme alternatives to C&C being projected at the UNFCCC, including divisive ideas such as negative emissions-entitlements for Developed Countries. Some of these it appears are possible candidates for scrutiny in the UNEP study that has been mooted.

I have set these out for you in the memo attached to this letter.

As I'm sure you yourself understand, after twenty years at this particular coal-face, I am no stranger to the substantive aspects of this debate and the faltering process built upon it. Moreover, I feel sure at this stage of the story that you, your colleagues and indeed any serious person in this process, does not under-estimate the difficulty of getting a global agreement in the time remaining that is sufficient to achieve UNFCCC-compliance.

However, the UNFCCC Executive agree with you. In 2004 they said publicly, "*achieving the objective of the UNFCCC inevitably requires Contraction and Convergence.*" So you can be confident that any continuation at the COP process of seeking one-sided arrangements based on 'half-truths', 'blame' and 'retribution' that cannot even be sensibly quantified, let-alone politically negotiated, will fail and that the US will continue to veto such ideas every time.

So I hope you will persist with the view that, '*UNFCCC-compliance is dependent on C&C*' and rely on the argument "*what's the alternative?*" to defend it.

GCI is always here to help.

With kind regards,

cc Chris Dowell, Duncan Brack,
Terry O'Connell, Colin Challen

Aubrey Meyer