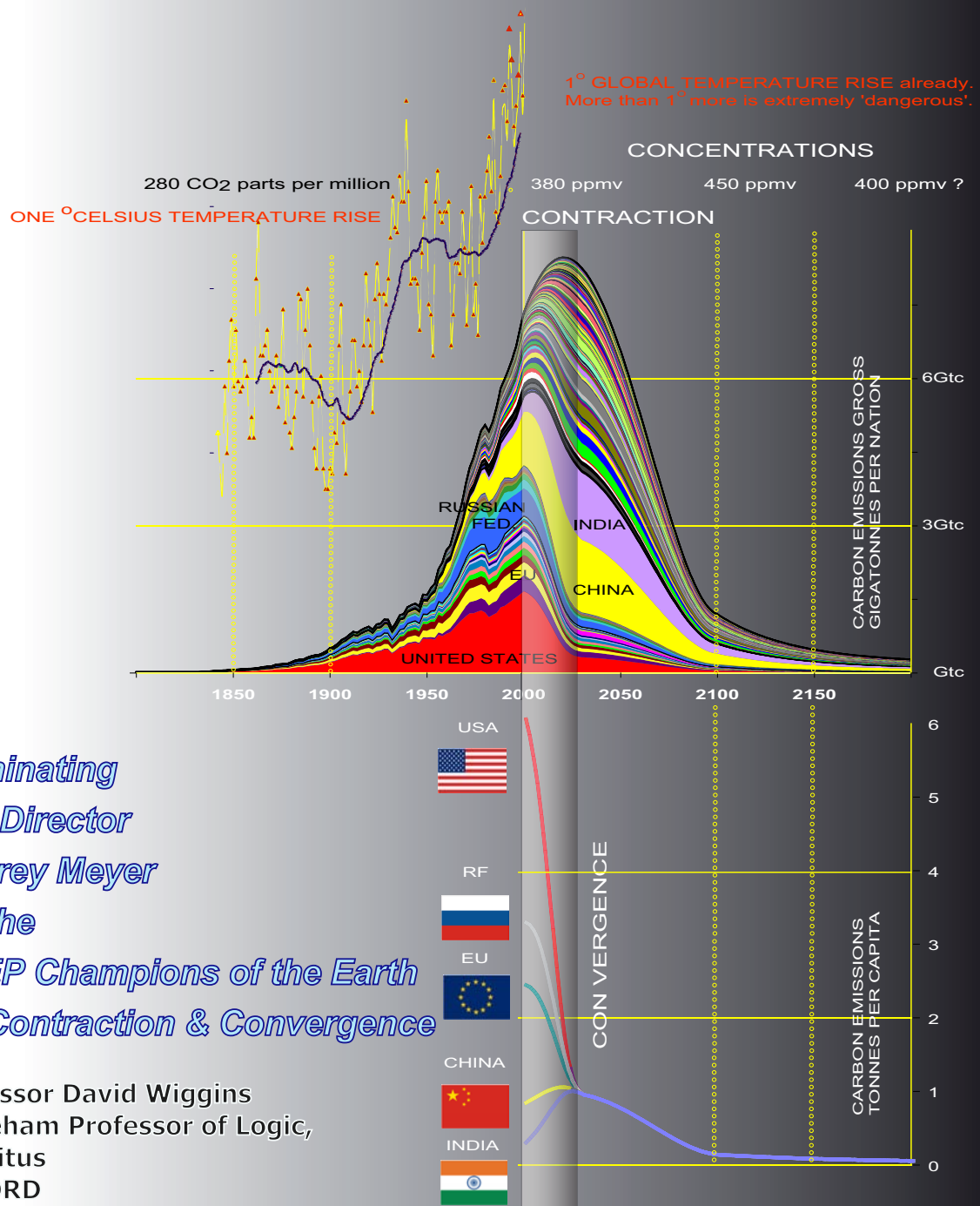


# C & C “... the Ultimate Sustainability Initiative”

## A cutting edge global conceptual framework for negotiating UNFCCC-compliance



*Nominating  
GCI Director  
Aubrey Meyer  
for the  
UNEP Champions of the Earth  
for Contraction & Convergence*

Professor David Wiggins  
Wykeham Professor of Logic,  
Emeritus  
OXFORD

**Nomination of Aubrey Meyer and 'Contraction & Convergence' for UNEP  
Champion of the Earth by David Wiggins, Wykeham Professor of Logic, OXFORD**

'Contraction & Convergence' [C&C] is an ambitious and widely supported plan for negotiating compliance with the objective of the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change [UNFCCC]. C&C is a cutting-edge conceptual framework and has been described by the UK Institution of Civil Engineers as "*the ultimate sustainability initiative*." It calculates future global greenhouse gas emissions to any concentration level in the atmosphere judged to be safe and stable but it integrates this emissions 'contraction-event' with 'convergence' by a year agreed by Parties to the UNFCCC to equal entitlements per person globally. I nominate this plan for the Zayed Prize.

For the UNEP Award I nominate Aubrey Meyer of the Global Commons Institute [GCI] who conceived C&C as an antidote to the climate-changing nature of asymmetric global economic development. In 1989 aged 42, he'd been a professional violinist and composer for 20 years. He abandoned this career after his four-year old daughter came home from nursery school one day asking, "*is the planet really dying Daddy?*" He told her he would do something about it if it was. He went to the UN climate talks where he witnessed a 'politics of blame' starting to unfold, and so in response, he conceived C&C as a climate-model of truth and reconciliation. Now, after his tireless 21 year championship of the approach, C&C is globally the most widely cited and increasingly the most widely supported model for the 'Climate Justice without Vengeance' needed for the reconciliation and the UNFCCC-compliance on which all sustainability in the years ahead depends. See [www.gci.org.uk/briefings.html](http://www.gci.org.uk/briefings.html)

Aubrey's analytical skills became legendary early. As the IPCC prepared its Second Assessment Report [SAR], at their request in 1993, he contributed a report entitled, "*The Unequal Use of the Global Commons*". This challenged the Global Cost/Benefit Analysis [GCBA] of climate change done for the SAR by UK and US economists. Aubrey noted that in GCBA, the 'global numeraire' [unit of measurement] was the monetary unit and the overall result costed adaptation to climate change as being cheaper than preventing it. Combined with the valuation of climate mortality as proportional to the income of the victims - few rich and many poor - of climate change, Aubrey argued this was "*The Economics of Genocide*". Some economists quibbled saying if GCI didn't like the dollar as the numeraire, they could have it in 'spotted-owl-equivalents', to which he retorted, "*why, if a spotted-owl equalled a spotted owl, didn't a human equal a human?*" After a global political row, GCBA was discredited and rejected in the IPCC SAR [1995] - [www.gci.org.uk/Documents/ssss\\_\\_\\_\\_+.pdf](http://www.gci.org.uk/Documents/ssss____+.pdf)

The main outcome was supporting Aubrey's contention with the C&C model that the first numeraire of relevance to the economics of UNFCCC-compliance was not the monetary unit, but carbon per person per unit time, subject to the limit identified in the UNFCCC objective. Gradually this realization came to be more widely shared. By 1997 at COP-3 in Kyoto the Africa Group of Nations, supported by India and China, called for C&C. The US responded by saying that "*C&C contains elements for the next agreement that we may ultimately all seek to engage in;*" see [www.gci.org.uk/COP3\\_Transcript.pdf](http://www.gci.org.uk/COP3_Transcript.pdf) The US had in fact asked Aubrey to canvass in these countries for C&C saying, "*it was the only game in town.*" At COP-9 in Milan [2004] the Executive of the UNFCCC effectively made the Convention the UNFCCC&C by taking the position that achieving the objective of the Convention, "*inevitably requires Contraction and Convergence*" [www.gci.org.uk/images/Pasztor.png](http://www.gci.org.uk/images/Pasztor.png)

Aubrey's effort to keep the C&C approach visible at the centre-ground of UN climate politics has substantially paid off. Raul Estrada, Chairman Kyoto Protocol Negotiations, wrote in 2000, *"Long before the end of the Framework Convention negotiation, the GCI presented a proposal on contraction and convergence, aimed to reach equality in emissions per capita."* [www.ipcc.ch/pdf/supporting-material/des-2nd-ipcc-expert-meeting.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/supporting-material/des-2nd-ipcc-expert-meeting.pdf) The UN's Ban Ki-moon and IPCC Chair Rajendra Pachauri [with 28 other eminent signatories] issued a statement in 2009 that said, *"The framework of contraction and convergence provides a flexible methodology to address the problem of allocation of emission rights. The contraction of overall world emissions pursued along with the convergence of countries' average per capita emissions, allows developing countries to partake of the carbon budget. The per capita entitlements approach is effective in that it takes into account historical responsibility and is based on the egalitarian distribution of the commons, within which international justice positions of causal responsibility such as the 'polluter pays principle' come in."* [www.gci.org.uk/Documents/Hi-Level-Climate-Change.pdf](http://www.gci.org.uk/Documents/Hi-Level-Climate-Change.pdf) A previous UK Climate Minister said, *"C&C is a very powerful idea and we are moving remorselessly towards it,"* the present one, *"there is no other way to solve this problem"* and the Deputy Prime Minister, *"I fully agree that the GCI's Contraction and Convergence framework provides a realistic and equitable plan for global action."* [www.gci.org.uk/endorsements.html](http://www.gci.org.uk/endorsements.html)

Aubrey's work resulted in the adoption and advocacy of C&C by the UK Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution [RCEP] in 2000. After that he published a body of evidence on C&C for the UK Parliamentary Select Committees. They in turn have repeatedly published reports strongly advocating C&C to successive UK Governments. In the light of all these recommendations, this has resulted in the UK Climate Act [2008] being clearly based on C&C. See [www.gci.org.uk/publications.html](http://www.gci.org.uk/publications.html)

Indeed Aubrey's work over the last twenty years globally, but particularly in the UK Parliament, has been so influential that the All-Party Parliamentary Group of MPs on Climate Change [APPGCC] commissioned a DVD about C&C which they called *"An Incontestable Truth: - Contraction and Convergence, the Irreducible Response to Climate Change"* which included C&C animations, extensive support and interviews with numerous high profile figures all arguing the case for C&C. It was distributed to all serving MPs many of whom went on to co-sign a series of Parliamentary Motions backing C&C and GCI's advocacy. In 2008 MPs nominated Aubrey for a Nobel Prize; [www.gci.org.uk/Documents/Nobel\\_Nomination\\_APPGCC.pdf](http://www.gci.org.uk/Documents/Nobel_Nomination_APPGCC.pdf)

*"Aubrey Meyer may not yet be a household name, here in Britain, or indeed, in many other parts of the world. Yet his work is absolutely central to the global fight against climate change. We believe that it would, now, be right to recognise the man who has done most to provide an international solution to averting the disaster of global warming. Aubrey Meyer realised that we need a comprehensive climate change framework if we are to protect our planet. He founded the Global Commons Institute in 1990 that developed just such a framework known as 'contraction and convergence'. This is the logical way forward. The human race reduces its carbon footprint towards zero at the same time as greenhouse gas emissions on a per capita basis in developed and developing nations converge. If his initiative was recognised now then it would send exactly the right message to world leaders as we consider what comes after the end of the Kyoto round in 2012."* Nominators were: - M Caton (Lab), C Challen (Lab), P Ainsworth (Con), Chris Huhne (LibDem), M Meacher (Lab), J Walley (Lab) and T Yeo (Con).

Amongst the numerous endorsements of Aubrey and C&C from many distinguished persons in 2008 the Australian economist Professor Ross Garnaut wrote: -

*“Over the last twenty years, Aubrey Meyer’s sustained work through the Global Commons Institute [GCI] with the “Contraction and Convergence” - or C&C - concept and campaign, has created a global standard that is now widely recognized as an outstanding and essential contribution to the global debate on what to do avoid dangerous rates of climate change. This is remarkable and reflects the integrity of the argument where C&C is mathematically rooted in the science of climate change and marries the limit to future human emissions that avoids dangerous rates of climate change to the politically compelling requirement of equal shares in the use of the atmosphere subject to that limit. It embodies the economic political reality, that adjustment to equal per capita emissions entitlements will take time. It is a rational, flexible and transparent concept that holds out the best hope of all urgent proposals that might form a basis of an environmentally and economically rational global agreement on climate change mitigation. The contraction and convergence idea was at the core of the proposals for international agreement that are part of the Garnaut Climate Change Review, commissioned by and presented to the Australian Prime Minister and all State Premiers (R. Garnaut, 2008, The Garnaut Climate Change Review, Cambridge University Press; [www.garnautreview.org.au](http://www.garnautreview.org.au)). Aubrey’s success has been achieved with very little funding. So I am asking that financial support is given to this campaign particularly at this time as this year - 2009 - leads to a UN event in Copenhagen in December at which it is intended that the global plan to avoid dangerous rates of climate change is agreed and established for the long-term.”*

[www.gci.org.uk/2009\\_Funding\\_Appeal.pdf](http://www.gci.org.uk/2009_Funding_Appeal.pdf)

COP-15 Copenhagen in 2009 was the ‘nearest miss yet’ for C&C; GCI assessment: - [www.gci.org.uk/public/COP\\_15\\_C&C.swf](http://www.gci.org.uk/public/COP_15_C&C.swf)

During all this time, Aubrey’s communication skills became something of a legend as well. The cover of this submission is a ‘still’ image generated from the C&C model. C&C images such as these are widely used in 3rd party publications and are now referred to as being ‘iconic’. He has also generated sophisticated C&C animations for Ministers, leaders of Business and Industry. See [www.gci.org.uk/animations.html](http://www.gci.org.uk/animations.html) The GCI website now averages 6,000 hits a day.

Also, during this whole period, Aubrey travelled extensively taking volumes of C&C literature to conferences around the world, which resulted in 3rd party publications, more advocacy and awards.

In 2005, the City of London made a Life Time’s Achievement Award to him saying: -

*“From the worlds of business, academia, politics and activism, Aubrey Meyer has made the greatest contribution to the understanding and combating of climate change having led strategic debate or policy formation. In recognition of an outstanding personal contribution to combating climate change at an international level through his efforts to enhance the understanding and adoption of the principle of Contraction and Convergence.”*

[www.gci.org.uk/Documents/City\\_of\\_London\\_Award\\_Booklet\\_Single\\_Sides\\_.pdf](http://www.gci.org.uk/Documents/City_of_London_Award_Booklet_Single_Sides_.pdf)



In 2007 the Royal Institute of British Architects made him Honorary Fellow saying: -

*“For his challenging and inspirational promotion of environmental issues, in particular his development of the concept of Contraction and Convergence. Architects adopted C&C at RIBA Council in 2006 and asked Aubrey to present C&C at their annual conference in October.*

*There, RIBA’s Chairman declared climate change as the dominant agenda for the 21st Century, called for C&C targets and committed RIBA to campaigning for C&C.” He was an inspirational speaker at the RIBA’s 2006 Annual Conference in Venice and reported the event as follows; “Meyer, formerly a professional musician, started with a virtuoso performance that was simultaneously moving, terrifying and informative. He played the violin theme to Schindler’s List to images of the environmental holocaust he went on to argue that we face.”*

In 2007 the UNEP FI awarded him their Financial Leadership Award saying: -

*“UNEP FI for the first time recognized executives within the financial services who have contributed in a significant manner to the development of financial ideas, innovative products, institutional change and or the carbon markets themselves through the UNEP FI Carbon Leadership Award. Four executive awards were given for each category of financial services: Banking, Insurance/Reinsurance, Asset Management/Private Banking and Pension Funds. In addition, an award was given for a representative from civil society who had worked towards the same end. Award winners were selected from a large number of entries by a small group of UNEP FI’s long term climate change advisors. The civil society category award for the most impressive commitment and innovative thinking around climate change and the financial sector with the UNEP FI Carbon Leadership Award went to Aubrey Meyer of the Global Commons Institute.”*

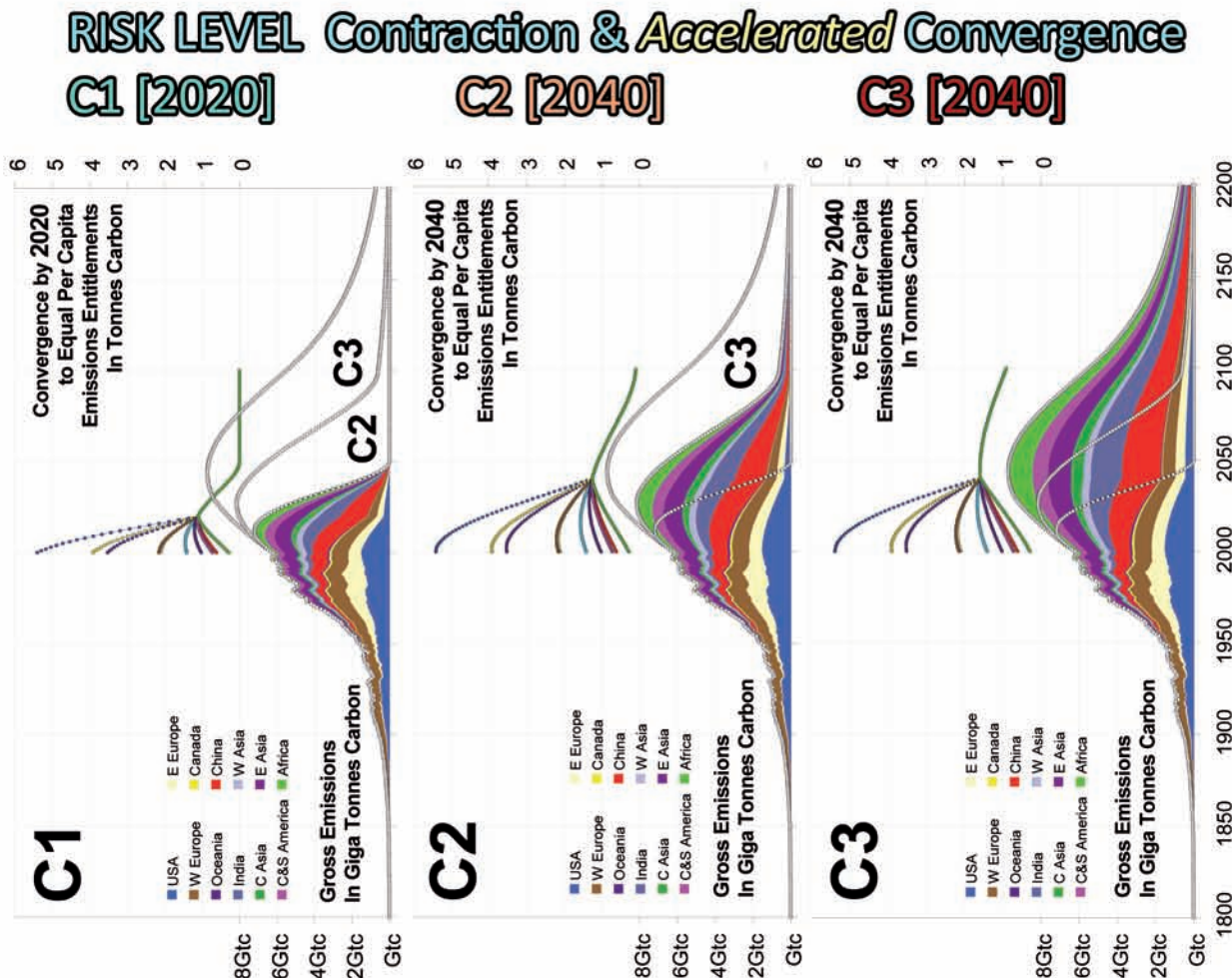
Since then Aubrey has also participated in a growing number of movies dedicated to telling the story of C&C, why it exists, illuminating it through music [in-time and in-tune] and arguing why, in the words of Lord Adair Turner, Chairman of the UK Government’s Climate Change Committee, the body behind the UK Climate Act: -

*“The only sound strategy is that of ‘contraction and convergence’, cutting greenhouse emissions to the point where they are shared equally, worldwide, on a per capita basis.”*

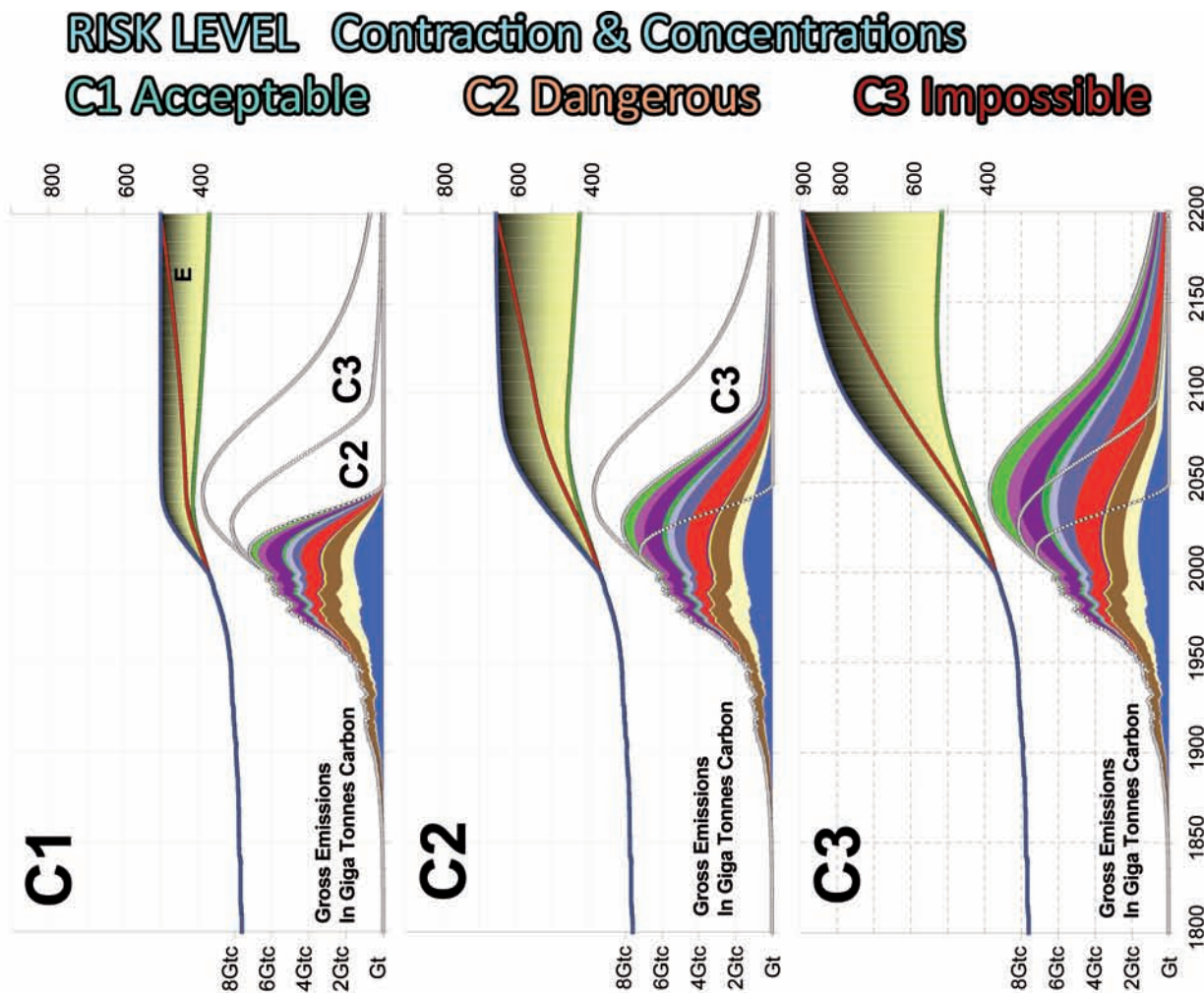
By the end of 2011 the global community needs to have created the arrangements beyond the first phase of the Kyoto Protocol that constitute the global deal required by the UNFCCC to achieve compliance with its objective. The sustained stalemate in the global climate politics at the UN increases the danger that we may just fail to create these arrangements in time to avoid becoming the victims of runaway climate change. So over the next 12 months, there is an urgent need to consolidate and advance the cause of C&C - this ‘ultimate sustainability initiative’ - to deal with the greatest challenge to its survival humanity has ever faced.

Making Aubrey Meyer a UNEP Champion of the Earth Contraction & Convergence, could be invaluable in helping consensus on the deal needed for success at the UNFCCC. It would not just be a recognition of his effort, it would send a strong signal to the UN saying that to survive, we must finally transcend the politics of blame and join together globally in this constitution for Climate Justice without Vengeance.

## Contraction & Accelerated Convergence



## Contraction & Accelerated Concentrations



A detailed animation of this analysis is on-line at [http://www.gci.org.uk/Animations/BENN\\_C&C\\_Animation.exe](http://www.gci.org.uk/Animations/BENN_C&C_Animation.exe)