

Carbonisation and you

These are confusing times for anyone interested in global warming and climate change. Only two years ago it seemed that the debate was over. The science was said to be agreed. The Stern report was a world-leading model for action. The British Government was the trail-blazer. Campaigners were on a roll and had made transport, especially by air, a high priority sector for carbon reduction. Certainly there has never been more political activity on the subject – the vast moveable feast of the UN multilateral process heading towards the Copenhagen Conference this autumn; the more stringent EU Emissions Trading Scheme legislated last December; the UK Climate Act that became national law last November.

But all the real world indicators move stubbornly in the opposite direction. In fact, the world is re-carbonising, not de-carbonising: rather faster in the first Kyoto Commitment period than in the previous five years. There is no evidence that the Kyoto Protocol methodology has had or is having any effect whatsoever. And since the beginning of the year, as the Recession has deepened, the consensus on all aspects of the question has been rapidly unravelling. There is evidence of a growing public back-lash in democracies to efforts to reduce energy use by raising

costs. A winter of superb skiing and the news that global warming actually stopped a decade ago has only added to public puzzlement and scepticism. Environmental NGOs are reacting to these developments with horror and anger. But climate policy performs many roles as Mike Hulme explains in his new book (*Why we disagree about climate change*, Cambridge University Press, April 2009); so not least because of successful NGO pressure and bureaucratic inertia, the policy community is now firmly locked into a drive towards de-carbonisation which has political momentum.

Whatever their views may be, industry leaders are confronted with policies and taxes which demand de-carbonisation. Transport, being largely carbon-fuel dependent and also highly visible in daily life, continues as a prime target of policy-makers. So what should industry leaders do? This debate will focus on the politics and the practicalities of de-carbonisation – a sub-set of the larger, vaguer issues of global warming and climate change, but the one where the rubber hits the road.

Our special guest speaker for this business breakfast will be Professor Gwyn Prins of the London School of Economics. Gwyn has been involved in the climate issue since 1986, for a period as security consultant to the Hadley Centre at the Met Office. Neither “sceptic” nor “believer” – he finds the use of religious terminology revealing and pervasive – he belongs to the small but increasingly influential group of “heretics” who advocate de-carbonisation but have always argued that present policy is doomed to fail. He is the author with Professor Steve Rayner of *The Wrong Trousers: Radically re-thinking Climate Policy*. (2007).



Professor Gwyn Prins on Mount Fiji

Our guest Chair will be Dr David Quarmby CBE. David has had a long and varied career in transport, retailing and tourism, having been MD Buses for London Transport, Joint MD at Sainsbury's, and chairman of the British Tourist Authority, Docklands Light Railway and the Strategic Rail Authority. For the last three years he has been a director at Colin Buchanan, as well as chairman of the Transport Research Institute at Napier, a director of NedRailways and chairman of the Independent Transport Commission (ITC).

This breakfast event is organised by London Transport Museum, the Independent Transport Commission and Eversheds.



The breakfast will take place in London Transport Museum's Cubic foyer from 8.00–10.00 on 30 June 2009.

Eversheds LLP is an international law firm, with specialist groups of lawyers from every discipline, experienced in advising across the transport sector – dealing with passenger and freight modes and including rail, road, aviation, airports, ports and shipping. Eversheds is delighted to be working in partnership with the London Transport Museum to establish the Thought Leadership Programme as part of the firm's engagement with and commitment to the sector and its future.

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