THE COPENHAGEN CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT

Introduction

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Focus

The 2009 Copenhagen climate change summit has once again focused the world's attention on global warming. This *News in Review* story looks at the problem of climate change, some of the progress and failures to date, and a number of proposed solutions for Copenhagen. We also examine Canada's record on controlling greenhouse gas emissions and try to discern Canada's future plans.

Quote

"As for Canada, its record on reducing emissions is recognized internationally to have disgraced the country's good name. It broke all its promises at Kyoto. Domestic emissions continue to rise. What is known about the Harper government's intentions has the world believing that, once again, Canada will talk a much better game than it delivers." — Jeffrey Simpson (*The Globe and Mail,* October 27, 2009)

It seems that, depending on whom one asks, the December 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference is either a futile diplomatic exercise or the best hope for finally getting the world's greenhouse gas problem under control. Commonly referred to as the Copenhagen summit because of its location in Copenhagen, Denmark, the conference is expected to result in a new environmental agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol. Due to expire in 2012, Kyoto was the first real attempt to scale back some of the toxic emissions being produced by developed countries like Canada.

Kyoto—an international agreement designed to reduce emissions around the globe—has been a mixed success. Some countries, especially in Europe, have exceeded expectations in cutting emissions. Others, including Canada, promised much and delivered nothing. In fact, Canada's overall emissions have risen significantly during the period the protocol has been in effect.

Even more disappointing was the failure of the United States—the biggest polluter among developed countries—to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. During negotiations it had pledged a significant reduction in emissions, but it failed to sign the agreement, and emissions in the U.S. continued to rise. Its levels are currently exceeded only by China's.

Copenhagen is an opportunity to change all this. Hopes for success at Copenhagen were high after the G8 summit in Italy in the summer of 2009. At the G8 meeting, the world's most developed nations promised significant reductions in their emissions levels. As well, the news that U.S. President Barack Obama would attend the conference was encouraging.

Major obstacles and questions do remain. Most troubling is an ongoing dispute between the developed and developing countries of the world. Developed countries want to see binding levels of permitted emissions for all countries. Developing nations argue that since they are not the source of the current problem they should be allowed the flexibility to increase emissions in the short term to eliminate poverty and achieve a standard of living that matches that of the developed world. Further, they argue that the developed world needs to provide considerable financial assistance to help them develop new, low-carbon technologies.

Most observers agree that a detailed, final agreement on climate change is unlikely at Copenhagen. But they also feel that there is a great deal of good will between the countries that will be attending and that more and more nations are recognizing that the time has come to act.

For Reflection

It is developed nations that have contributed most of the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. And they continue to do so: about 75 per cent of emissions currently come from developed nations. Should developing nations have the same opportunity to industrialize and modernize that developed nations enjoyed? Or now that we clearly know the dangers of greenhouse gas emissions, should all countries be held to the same pollution standards?

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Video Review

Further Research
Good sources of information on climate change include the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php, and a CBC News In Depth Backgrounder at www.cbc.ca/news/background/kyoto/.

Pre-viewing Activity

For many years Canada has been considered a leader in international efforts to preserve the environment. Before watching the video, make a brief list of some of these efforts. As well, record the ways in which Canada might be expected to demonstrate leadership at climate change discussions in Copenhagen.

Canada's efforts to preserve the environment:

Expectations about Canada's leadership role in Copenhagen:

Viewing Questions

While watching this *News in Review* story, answer the following questions in the spaces provided.

1. How many countries are attending the Copenhagen summit? _____
2. When does the Kyoto Protocol expire? _____
3. When did Canada announce that it would not meet its Kyoto targets? _____
4. Why didn't Canada meet its Kyoto targets?
5. What do critics of the Canadian government say about this?
6. By when does the Catlin Arctic Survey expect Canada's Arctic waters to be navigable during the summer?
7. What are some of the problems that will result from melting Arctic ice?

8. What pledge did the leaders of the developed countries make at the July 2009 G8 summit?

9. What do developing countries say they need to help them take action against climate change?

10. What did the government of the Maldive Islands do to highlight the effects of global warming?

11. What is the Canadian government waiting for before announcing its plans to reduce greenhouse gas production?

12. How far above 1990 levels are Canada's current greenhouse gas emissions? _____
13. What is the latest environmental warning from climate scientists?

Post-viewing Discussion

1. Revisit the points you listed in the pre-viewing activity. Were your assumptions and beliefs supported by the information in the video? Why or why not?

2. During the video, Prime Minister Harper makes the following statement: "The environmental reason is in the future as we move forward, we're already close to half of global emissions coming from emerging economies and in the future that's going to be two-thirds. If we don't control those, whatever we do in the developed world will have no impact on climate change. So it's important to include everyone."

   If Copenhagen fails to include both developed and developing countries in a treaty, what action, if any, should developed countries be willing to take on their own? Is there any value to "leading by example" when it comes to global warming?

3. In the video, Dave Martin of Greenpeace states: "I think Copenhagen will be the focus of a storm of public concern such as we haven't seen on environmental issues in a long, long time." Do you think that the summit will generate "a storm of public concern" in Canada? What will happen to the momentum for dealing with climate change if this "storm" fails to occur?

4. During the video, Prime Minister Harper is very clear on one matter: "I've been saying for a decade it is essential for Canada to have realistic participation from the United States. We have an integrated economy. If we have regulations that are not similar in the United States, we will simply have a loss of business and production to the United States."

   Do you think our economic ties with the United States justify delaying the announcement of Canada's policy on dealing with global warming? Should we wait for the United States before we commit to an international program involving over 190 countries?

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Failure of Kyoto?

Definitions

Hydrofluorocarbons are emitted as a by-product of industrial manufacturing and are used most commonly in refrigerators and aerosols.

Perfluorocarbons are made up of atoms of carbon, fluorine, and/or sulphur and are used in surgical procedures such as ultrasounds.

The Kyoto Protocol is part of a multinational treaty called the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The protocol was negotiated and adopted in 1997 and came into force in 2005. As of November 2009, 187 countries had signed and ratified the Kyoto Protocol. The most notable holdout was the United States.

Kyoto's Requirements

Under the protocol, 37 industrialized countries (including Canada) agreed to reduce their production of four greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and sulphur hexafluoride. They also agreed to the reduction of two groups of gases: hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons.

Countries agreed to reduce their emissions levels collectively by 5.2 per cent somewhere between 2008 and 2012. Because the target is a collective one, not all industrialized countries have the same goal. Canada, for example, pledged a six per cent reduction. The United States, before it repudiated the protocol, had agreed to a seven per cent reduction. Some countries, like Iceland, were actually allowed an increase.

Under the terms of the protocol, underdeveloped and developing nations are not required to control their emissions in any way. It is expected that developing nations will have their own targets after negotiations at Copenhagen.

A Kyoto Report Card

Every industrialized country that signed and ratified the Kyoto Protocol is required to complete an annual inventory of its greenhouse gas emissions and issue a report. As one might expect, the results have not all been positive.

By the time the treaty came into force in 2005, some countries had already met or exceeded their objectives. Denmark and Germany, for example, had reductions of 19 and 17 per cent. On the other hand, New Zealand and Ireland's emissions were 21 and 23 per cent higher than they had been in 1990.

By early 2009, about half of the industrialized countries had met their goals under Kyoto. Among the leaders were the countries of the European Union, who had made cuts of 12.3 per cent below 1990 levels. Many Eastern Europe countries were also in compliance, although this may largely be attributed to the closing of factories after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Overall, however, emission levels have not decreased. By 1997, worldwide emissions had increased 38 per cent over 1990 levels. A significant portion of this increase was due to rapid industrialization in developing countries. The two giants, China and India, saw their levels grow by 150 and 103 per cent respectively. But a good part of this increase came from industrialized countries that had ratified the protocol.

Canada

One of the countries that will not meet its Kyoto target is Canada. As early as 2006 the government was clearly signalling that the required reductions were unobtainable. This was hardly surprising. In 2004, emissions were already 27 per cent above 1990 levels. They have continued to increase since then.

A good part of this increase is from the development of the Alberta oil sands. And as the economy begins to expand

Quote

"Every action has its consequences, and right or wrong, Canada will pay for its Kyoto default. In international politics, as among individuals, reputations are our most important asset, and before Kyoto Canada had one of the finest international reputations in the world. One only need think of the Montreal Protocol, where the world agreed to phase out CFCs and other materials that damage the Earth's ozone layer, or the great work done by Canada in international peacekeeping, to get a sense of how outsiders saw Canada prior to its Kyoto debacle." — Tim Flannery, *Toronto Star*, November 22, 2009 (www.thestar.com/news/insight/article/729155--why-canada-failed-on-kyoto-and-how-to-make-amends)

following the 2008-2009 recession, oil sands projects are expected to increase. The environmental organization Greenpeace has studied all of the new oil sands projects and it predicts that, if all of them are undertaken, total emissions from the oil sands will triple by 2020.

Canada is not the only country not to have met its requirements under Kyoto, but it is one of the worst offenders. The current Canadian government policy is to halt the overall growth in emissions by 2010-2012, then reduce them below 2006 levels by 20 per cent by 2020. Its ultimate goal is to further reduce emissions by 60 to 70 per cent by 2050.

But why isn't the Canadian government taking more action? A recent Pew Global Attitudes Survey report points to one reason why the government feels no pressure to act on its Kyoto pledge: fewer than 50 per cent of Canadians—just 47 per cent—describe global warming as "a very serious problem" (*Toronto Star*, August 30, 2009).

Mixed Results

Kyoto has had both successes and failures. Some countries have reduced emissions and met or exceeded their targets. Others, like Canada, have seen emissions increase. And, discouragingly, emissions continue to increase worldwide. In fact, greenhouse gas levels rose four times more quickly between 2000 and 2007 than they did between 1990 and 1999.

On a positive note, Kyoto has focused attention on the necessity for responding to climate change and created a legal framework for international efforts to reverse global warming. Kyoto was never intended as a final solution—just a first step in dealing with a serious problem.

For Discussion

Australian climate change expert Tim Flannery feels that Canada has sacrificed a lot of international respect by not living up to its obligations under the Kyoto Protocol (see sidebar on this page). Is this a real worry for Canada? Are there steps it might take to restore its international reputation, perhaps at the Copenhagen conference?

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YV *Hopes for Copenhagen*

Further Research
Follow the work of the United Nations Climate Change Conference at its official Web site: http://en.cop15.dk.

From December 7 to 18, 2009, the world met in Copenhagen, Denmark. Over 190 countries joined together in an attempt to work out the ultimate international agreement on how to cope with the problem of climate change.

Copenhagen was the culmination of several years of meetings and negotiations to plan the next step after the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012. What many countries hoped to see was a legal accord that would bind countries to live up to their responsibilities to decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

Goals

For most countries, a clear target has been set. Most climate scientists agree that the world needs to hold temperature increases to two degrees Celsius or less. To do this, we need to reach an atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide (CO_2) of no more than 350 parts per million (ppm). The current concentration is about 387 ppm. (It is predicted to reach 866 ppm by 2100 if growth is unchecked.)

To meet this challenge, by 2050 world-wide emissions will have to be less than half what they were in 1990. Emissions in developing countries are already lower than those in the developed world, but they will need to rise somewhat in the short-term to ensure economic growth. Many observers, therefore, have suggested that it is up to the developed countries to take serious action. They should pledge to cut emissions by at least 80 per cent of their 1990 levels by 2050; and the first steps, from 2010 to 2020, should be major ones.

Developing countries also have a part to play. They will have to slow down growth in the short-term and eventually peak their emissions growth in the long-term.

For both developing and developed countries, this means a major change in policies.

High Hopes

At a Major Economies Forum in July 2009, negotiations seemed to be on track for a great success in Copenhagen. The 17 countries responsible for about 75 per cent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions agreed on several points. These included:

- Further global warming must be held at no more than two degrees Celsius.
- Developing countries will reduce their emissions in absolute terms—no final figure was agreed upon—and will negotiate concrete goals to be met by 2050.
- Industrialized countries will financially assist poorer countries in meeting their emission targets.
- The G8 countries—the world's leading industrialized economies—agreed that they would reduce their emissions by 80 per cent by 2050, although they were unable to agree on a base year.

Moderated Expectations

By September, positive results at Copenhagen were looking more uncertain. The two biggest stumbling blocks were the developing nations' unwillingness to commit to legally binding emissions targets, which the industrialized nations insist are necessary, and the industrialized nations' inability to reach a consensus on the amount of assistance funds that should be made available to developing countries.

Most of the major players seemed to feel that it would be impossible to

complete a treaty by the December conference. Part of any treaty would have to include detailed target numbers for all emitters, and it seemed highly unlikely that these could be negotiated and set by December.

Another problem was the role that the United States would play at the conference. The world's biggest economy, and second largest source of greenhouse gases, still had no official policy to reduce emissions for 2020. Many other countries—Canada included—were reluctant to commit themselves to firm targets until the United States did. President Obama was expected to announce at Copenhagen that the U.S. would aim to reduce emissions by 17 per cent below 2005 levels by 2020.

Expectations for Copenhagen no longer include much hope that a final treaty will be struck there. According to the *The Globe and Mail*'s Jeffrey Simpson (October 27, 2009), what we really should now be hoping for is the framework for a treaty that can be negotiated in 2010. We need to hope that the process for completing a replacement for the Kyoto accord continues to move forward.

The Final Treaty

What will that final treaty look like? That is a question that is very difficult to answer. It may end up as an international agreement unlike any other. Australia, for example, has suggested an approach whereby all countries would develop and abide by their own domestic programs to reduce emissions. But only the developed countries would specify an exact amount by which they would reduce emissions.

One world leader who will be visiting the summit is Barack Obama, who will be stopping in Copenhagen on his way to Norway to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. It is hoped his visit—and his pledge that the U.S. will be reducing emissions—will help the work of the conference.

Perhaps the last word should go to Tim Flannery, one of the leading experts on climate change. He was asked in a *Toronto Star* interview (November 1, 2009) what result he'd like to see from the Copenhagen summit. Flannery replied: "What I would be happy with and what will happen are two different things. What we all want is a treaty that will keep the temperatures from rising more than two degrees. But to do that we would have to have a really steep emission reduction path by 2020. I don't think Copenhagen will do that. It will get us part way there if the developed countries agree on reduction targets of 20 to 25 per cent below 1990 levels. That will be a very important step forward.

"Let's hope we get something of that nature. For the developing countries like China and India we want to see them and other developing countries develop national schedules of action (such as fuel efficiency standards for coal plants, motor vehicles and mandated renewable energy targets) to reduce greenhouse emissions."

Follow-up Activity

By the time you read this, the Copenhagen summit will have concluded. By visiting its Web site at http://en.cop15.dk you will be able to make a list of some of its major accomplishments. After reviewing this list consider whether or not the summit met some of the expectations expressed in this section. Would you describe it as a success or as a disappointment? What steps are likely to follow as a result of the summit?

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An Ongoing Debate

Further Research
The United Nations maintains a Web site covering its work on climate change at www.un.org/wcm/content/site/climatechange/lang/en/pages/gateway. It is an excellent source of background information on the science and diplomacy leading up to the 2009 Copenhagen summit.

Further Research
Interested in learning more about Piers Corbyn and his theories? Visit BBC environment correspondent Richard Black's blog at www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/richardblack/2009/10/climates_magnetic_attraction.html.

It seemed that the time for debate was over and the time for decisive action was here.

In 2007, the United Nations issued the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Fourth Report. Its findings included:

- During the 20th century, the Earth's surface warmed by about 0.74 degrees Celsius.
- Most of this increase is "very likely" due to human activity.
- Between 1970 and 2004, greenhouse gas emissions rose by 70 per cent.
- Carbon dioxide, the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, grew by 80 per cent.
- Projections indicate that if nothing is done to control emissions (that is, if they are allowed to continue to rise), the Earth will warm by between two and 4.5 degrees Celsius by 2100.

According to the United Nations, the future consequences of inaction will be very significant. The following quotes, from www.un.org/wcm/content/site/climatechange/lang/en/pages/gateway/the-science/consequences-for-the-future, highlight some of these consequences:

- "The poorest communities are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change."
- "The average global sea level is projected to rise by 28-58 cm due to ocean expansion and glacier melt by the end of the 21st century (compared to 1989-1999 levels)."
- "20-30 per cent of species are likely to face an increased risk of extinction."
- "There will be greater heat waves, new wind patterns, worsening drought in some regions, heavier precipitation in others."

The vast majority of the world's scientists accept this assessment. But there are some who continue to question both the science behind the assessment and its conclusions.

"What Happened to Global Warming?"

In October 2009, Paul Hudson, the British Broadcasting Corporation's climate correspondent, surprised many people by publishing an article with the above title (news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8299079.stm). In it, he noted that the warmest year ever recorded globally was in 1998—11 years ago—and that the global warming predictions of climatologists were apparently not being fulfilled.

Skeptics were quick to embrace this observation. They have consistently argued that the Earth goes through regular cycles of warming and cooling and that this has nothing to do with greenhouse gas emissions produced by humans. Hudson went on to outline some of the explanations that have been proposed by these skeptics to explain the warming trend noted in the last half of the 20th century.

One popular theory is that warming has been due to an increase in energy coming from the sun. A leading advocate of this idea is Piers Corbyn, a British climatologist. He claims that solar particles are almost totally responsible for fluctuations in global temperatures.

Other scientists have pointed to the suspected relationship between ocean temperatures and atmospheric temperatures. U.S. scientist Don Easterbrook has studied the warming and cooling cycles of ocean temperatures, especially the most important one in the

Further Research
Bjørn Lomborg is quite famous, even notorious, and very popular with the media. His Web site can be found at www.lomborg.com.

Pacific Ocean. Easterbrook notes that the cycles last about 30 years, and that the last cycle—a warming cycle—took place during a period of global warming and that a cooling cycle has now begun. He believes that this will result in a period of global cooling for some time to come.

Some climate models have incorporated cycles of cooling and warming, and these continue to indicate an overall upward trend in global temperatures. At least one of them predicts that, between 2010 and 2015, we should see two or three years even hotter than 1998. Skeptics argue that we will not see a year that hot until at least 2030.

Other Issues

Even those who accept the predictions of the IPCC do not always agree on how we should be responding to them. For example, Bjørn Lomborg, a well-known Danish social scientist, believes the world is wasting its time trying to cut down on greenhouse gas production. He—along with some physical scientists—believe that there is not the political will to take the drastic measures that would be necessary to reduce carbon dioxide levels.

These critics argue that a better solution might come via geoengineering. One example of geoengineering involves the use of automated boats to spray seawater into the air to make clouds whiter and therefore more reflective. He believes that "bouncing just one or two per cent of the total sunlight that strikes the Earth back into space could cancel out as much warming as that caused by doubling pre-industrial levels of greenhouse gases. Spending about $9-billion researching and developing this technology could head off $2-trillion of climate damage" (*Newsweek*, September 7, 2009). Others have suggested solutions such as giant space mirrors to reflect sunlight away from the Earth or filling the stratosphere with dust particles to mimic the cooling that happens after a massive volcano eruption.

For Discussion

1. No matter the evidence on the role of greenhouse gases in global warming, the world seems a long way from being able to agree on the steps necessary to reach an atmospheric concentration of 350 parts per million (ppm). Should that goal be abandoned and scientists be asked to find other ways in which to control global warming? Explain your answer.

2. Consider the following statement from R.K. Pachauri, the chairman of the IPCC (*Newsweek*, October 26, 2009): "The reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions, meanwhile, would have numerous benefits beyond avoiding global chaos. It would help lower air pollution, thus reducing health problems. It would increase energy security in countries dependent on foreign oil while creating new jobs in alternative-energy industries. And it would help stabilize agricultural production, all at surprisingly low cost."

   Does this statement in any way alter your views on whether or not the emphasis in the battle against global warming should continue to be placed on reducing greenhouse gases? Why?

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Klimaforum09: The Peoples' Summit

Further Research
The Klimaforum Web site is at www.Klimaforum09.org/?lang=en.

As the representatives of 192 governments came together for the 2009 Copenhagen climate change summit, another meeting of people concerned about the environment took place in Copenhagen. Called Klimaforum09, that meeting was a grassroots gathering of individuals and organizations seeking fundamental change in the way the world views global warming.

Klimaforum's official name is Civil Society's Climate Forum. Its basis is the belief that there is no easy technological fix to the current climate crisis. Before one can register to participate in the various forums, one must accept the ideas proposed in the official Klimaforum09 platform.

The belief expressed by those involved in Klimaforum09 is that global sustainability requires much more than simply reducing greenhouse gases. "Civil Society's Climate Forum believes that what is needed is building a finely balanced relation to nature, thus reducing consumption and production, rather than uncritically exploiting nature and believing in economic growth as is the case in global society today. To attain such change we need new ways of thinking, new cultural values, and new means of organising society" (www.Klimaforum09.org/forum/register.php).

Finding Solutions

The platform goes on to state: "With this starting point, Civil Society's Climate Forum wishes to promote and debate true, renewable, and environmentally sustainable solutions to the climatic changes we are facing. In other words, solutions that:

1. Prioritise energy saving and energy effectiveness,
2. Promote the use of safe, clean, renewable energy,
3. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and as such do not promote or cement the use of fossil fuels,
4. Are built on agricultural methods that fix carbon in the soil and reduce the use of fertilisers and which do not create a threat towards ecosystems, the climate and biodiversity,
5. Secure sustainable use of as well as equal and just access to Earth's resources, and
6. Remain critical to the blind focus on consumption which dominates the global society today."

Pause for Discussion

The platform of Klimaforum09, while acknowledging the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, has a strong social component and relies heavily on social and attitudinal change to achieve success in controlling climate change. How do you personally react to this approach? Can the Copenhagen summit be successful in dealing with climate change without incorporating at least some of these ideas?

Expected Outcomes

One of the central outcomes of Klimaforum09 will be a formal climate declaration intended to express "the hopes, ideas, and visions of citizens groups and social movements from all corners of the planet" (www.klimaforum09.org/Declaration). The declaration—tentatively titled System Change – Not Climate Change—is being shaped and debated on the Internet prior to the Klimaforum. The process is

quite transparent. Interested observers can follow the development of the declaration, and they can participate in the debate by accepting the Klimaforum platform and registering on the site.

The final declaration will be created in the first four days of Klimaforum09 in December. "When finished, the declaration will be handed over to the political leaders at the COP15 [Copenhagen climate change summit] supplying them with inspiration as to how a fair and just climate deal can be put together. Above all the declaration will be another stepping stone in building a planetary movement for climate justice" (www.klimaforum09.org/Declaration).

Included in the Klimaforum09 program are a series of workshops and lectures for participants, arts events, and opportunities for groups and individuals from all around the world to come together and discuss methods to promote the solutions envisioned in the platform. It is expected that participants will take home these ideas, and that they will serve to help create a global movement for sustainable transition.

For Discussion

The following is a statement from the first draft of the Klimaforum09 declaration System Change – Not Climate Change (www.klimaforum09.org/Draft-from-declaration-process-and)." The words are central to what Klimaforum09 hopes to achieve:

A global movement for sustainable transition

"Irrespective of the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change there is a strong need to build a global movement of movements dedicated to the long-term task of promoting a sustainable transition of our societies. Contrary to the prevailing power structures this movement must grow from the bottom and up—which means that it must be founded locally and be of importance to the daily life of people. Such a movement entails at the same time the creation of a new mindset and of a new type of social activism. This movement must be capable not only of reacting to unsustainable practices, but also by example show how a new locally based and sustainable economy can indeed function.

"A movement of this sort cannot be based on environmental NGOs [non-governmental organizations] of the classical type. What is needed is instead a broad alliance of environmental movements, social movements, trade unions, farmers, teachers, etc., that can work together in the everyday political struggle on the local as well as the national and international level.

"At Klimaforum09 many contacts of this kind have already been formed, and we are all committed to build on the results achieved at this event in the further development of a global movement of movements that includes all spheres of society on all levels. It is our hope that this Declaration will inspire the further development of such a movement by spelling out the direction in which to move."

Analysis

These are indeed high expectations. How successful do you think the Klimaforum participants are likely to be in organizing a "movement of movements"? Which Canadians or Canadian organizations would be most likely to participate in such a movement? Would it be possible to organize a group in your school to consider participating in the Klimaforum09 vision?

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Activity: Considering Multiple Perspectives

A total of 192 countries are expected to attend the climate change summit in Copenhagen. Some of these will be the world's leading industrial nations. Others will be rapidly developing countries like India and China. Still others will be poor nations like Bangladesh from parts of the world that are already suffering the effects of global warming. All of these will have aims and expectations they hope the climate summit will address.

In this activity, groups of four students will represent each of the following countries and prepare a brief presentation for the Copenhagen summit:

Bangladesh: already suffering from extreme weather and flooding attributed to climate change

Benin: an African nation subject to alternating drought and flooding

Canada: a Kyoto signatory whose emissions have risen dramatically, rather than declining as promised

China: the world's fastest-growing developing economy, and the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases

Denmark: host to the summit, a developed nation and a leader in alternative energy technology (wind power)

India: another developing nation with a fast-growing, energy-hungry economy

United States: the world's largest economy and second-largest emitter of greenhouse gases

Information in the video and this guide, as well as a small amount of Internet research, will help your group to prepare a presentation detailing:

- How their country is suffering from/responding to climate change
- What results their country would like to see from the Copenhagen summit
- What responsibility they think rich, poor, and developing countries have in the fight against climate change

As part of the presentation, your group should clearly state what steps your country is prepared to take—as part of an international community—to deal with global warming.

Each presentation to the full group should take only a few minutes. It may be followed by a discussion in which the participants determine how much agreement there is among the various participants on the issues that are raised.