

## THE COLLAPSE OF CLIMATE ALARMISM

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### Part 1: The failure of the Bali Conference

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This is the first of a series of memos that describe the inevitable collapse of climate alarmism from various perspectives. This memo deals with the interlinked legal, political and practical aspects.

Bali failed. Its failure was predictable because it was attempting the impossible. The target was a drastic reduction in global undesirable greenhouse gas emissions, GGEs, (principally carbon dioxide) **in an equitable manner**. The interpretation of 'equitable' is political, not scientific.

There was wide acceptance of a global GGE reduction target of 20-40% by 2020. Twelve years from now. This is an impossible planning objective even if the means to achieve it are readily implementable and available.

Surely it must have been obvious to the participating nations at the conference, that voluntary reductions by all nations to achieve this target were also an unachievable objective from a political and economic perspective. A good example is the failure of the World Trade Organisation's attempts to level the playing fields of world trade. If the WTO failed after years of sustained effort, what is the possibility of reaching international agreement on the far more complex climate change issues where there are no benefits to any countries?

I share the view of those who fear that a situation is developing where some nations or groupings of nations may resort to threats of punitive measures to persuade other nations to adopt these damaging measures. This could easily escalate into an irreversible runaway situation. This possibility must have been in the minds of those who negotiated the wording of the final document produced by the conference – the Bali Action Plan. It was called a roadmap. A roadmap needs a destination as well as the route that has to be travelled to reach it. As will be shown below, the action plan fails to provide either the destination or the route to be followed in an implementable form. The task of providing this information was delegated to an ad hoc working group that only has powers to recommend and report within the nebulous legal and political constraints described in the action plan.

**This is an impossible task as will be shown below.**

#### Interpretation of the Bali Action Plan

I have attached the Bali Action Plan ([http://www.ilovemycarbondioxide.com/pdf/Bali\\_action.pdf](http://www.ilovemycarbondioxide.com/pdf/Bali_action.pdf)) downloaded from the UNFCCC website. This is a legal document in that it contains enforceable clauses. How should it be interpreted?

On a number of occasions I have served as an arbitrator or expert witness in legal disputes. These involved the interpretation of legal agreements and practices within the scientific context.

Given this experience, assume that I was appointed by a small African country to advise it on the legally enforceable aspects of the Bali Action Plan. This would be my opinion. Direct quotes from the plan are italicised. I suggest that you have the document next to you when you read the comments. A highlighter would be useful.

Although not part of the action plan, in his closing address at the Bali Conference (also on the website) the President of the UN Climate Change Conference made it clear that the conference was an unqualified success. He also used the words '*... we have launched a new negotiating process ...*' This is confirmation that the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol will lapse after 2012.

I suggest that you highlight the italicised passages below as we go through the document.

1. The most important paragraph in the whole document is the second paragraph '*Reaffirming that economic and social development and poverty eradication are global priorities.*' Its position at the start of the document gives it an umbrella status. All statements later in the document are subservient to it in the event that there are any uncertainties. It is very clear that nations of the world have the basic right to refuse to undertake GGE control measures that would adversely affect the welfare of their citizens. In my opinion this single clause signals the demise of climate alarmism. This view is reinforced by the content of the clauses that follow. This is the first serious obstacle in the implementation of the action plan.
2. The next paragraph of the document contains the phrase '*... warming of the climate system is unequivocal...*' This is a foolish statement in a legal document that rests on scientific interpretations. Climatology is the study of complex, interacting processes. The use of an absolute in the description of any component of these processes is a serious scientific error. In a legal document the opposing side will immediately latch on to this error. Also and more importantly, if global cooling sets in while global GGEs continue to rise, this will completely undermine the action plan and the whole climate change issue with it.

There are many of us who believe that this reversal of global temperature increases is at hand. This is the second fundamental shortcoming in the action plan.

3. The next paragraph in the document begins '*Recognizing that deep cuts in global emissions will be required to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention ...*'. The quantification of these deep cuts was the major contentious issue during the negotiations. The statement is meaningless without a numerical description. We know that a specific immediate target of a 20-40 % reduction by 2020 was on the negotiating table. The deliberate removal of this target from the roadmap means that the road has no defined destination. This is the third major failure of the action plan.
4. The remaining paragraphs of the document detail the means to achieve the objectives set out in the introductory section of the plan.
5. In the paragraph beginning '*Decides*', highlight the linked phrases '*Decides to launch a comprehensive process ... in order to reach an agreed outcome...*' Herein lies the rub. The outcome has to be unanimous. This can only be achieved by simultaneously appeasing the developed and developing nations. The action plan envisages the following.
6. In paragraph 1(a) highlight '*... the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and taking into account social and economic conditions and other relevant factors.*' This can only work if all nations agree to commit hara-kiri simultaneously on a differentiated basis. This is the fourth major weakness in the action plan. We can expect this differentiation to be a major stumbling block in the implementation of the action plan.
7. Section 1(b) of the document refers to the mitigation (prevention) of climate change while section 1(c) places equal emphasis on adaptation to climate change. This is a major change of direction in the approach to controlling climate change. It is an acknowledgement that the efforts of the Stern Review and other sources in the UK to install fear into the hearts of nations, such as the aim of the Nairobi conference a year ago, have failed. This change of emphasis is a face-saving retreat from the impossible.
8. Paragraph 1 (b) refers to '*... action on the mitigation of climate change...*', which differentiates between developed countries (i) and developing countries (ii). Note the use of the phrase '*...measurable, reportable and verifiable nationally appropriate mitigation commitments or actions...*' These requirements are compulsory in the case of developed nations but within the context of sustainable development in the case of developing countries. This vague requirement is a recipe for conflict between the developed and developing nations. It is little wonder that the USA and other developed nations fought tooth and nail against this differentiation. Developing nations will have no difficulty in quoting this clause to escape their responsibilities.
9. We can expect this differentiation to be another major obstacle (unbridgeable chasm?) in the negotiations that lie ahead. It is the fifth major shortcoming of the action plan.
10. Now move on to section 1 (c) '*Enhanced action on adaptation...*' which contains a reference to '*the needs of countries in Africa affected by drought, desertification and floods.*' While the action plan refers specifically to climate change, few attempts were made in the IPCC reports to differentiate between natural and anthropogenic causes of these climate-related extremes. Despite a diligent search I was unable to detect the influence of human-caused global warming on these climate-related processes. There was simply no discernible evidence of unnatural variations.
11. Nevertheless, I will advise my client to accept this part of the action plan. It allows the movement away from uncomfortable mitigation measures to profitable financial assistance to combat the effects of natural variability. Adaptation to climate-related variability in the hydrological processes has been the essence of civil engineering practices ever since the beginning of civilisation. If the African nations quote the action plan as a means of obtaining financial and technological assistance from the wealthy nations then I am sure that my professional colleagues will provide them with our full support even if we have serious doubts regarding the role of human-caused global warming.
12. Section 2 of the action plan refers to the procedure to be followed by a specially established Ad Hoc Working Group, while the subsequent sections 3 to 10 refer to its activities. Clearly, these activities may not go beyond the agreed Bali Action Plan. For example the reinstatement of the target GGE reduction measures of 20-40 % by 2020, or abandoning the differentiation between developed and developing countries.
13. Section 11 of the document refers to the process to be followed by the ad hoc working group. It is very interesting in that it contains the phrase '*the process shall be informed by, inter alia the best available scientific information... and insights from the business and research communities.*' This opens the door for information that has become available since the self-imposed deadline used in IPCC's fourth assessment report. Equally important is that the whole issue is no longer the sole domain of scientists in the natural sciences but involves inputs from scientists in other professions as well as from other groups that are affected by the actions.

14. In my opinion, this section of the Bali Action Plan, if implemented by open-minded, knowledgeable scientists and administrators in other scientific disciplines, is the most important, positive outcome of the whole Bali conference. Participants are no longer bound by the IPCC studies.
15. The annex to the action plan provides a timetable for meetings of the ad hoc working group during 2008. There are four sessions with the final session being in conjunction with the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties in December 2008.

### **Is the Bali Action Plan achievable?**

The simple answer to this question must be NO for the following reasons.

1. Nebulous targets for the extent and deadlines for global GGE reductions.
2. Nebulous classification of the differences between developed and developing nations.
3. In practice, few nations of the world will have the political will to adopt economically damaging measures while their neighbours and trade competitors refuse to implement these measures claiming poverty reduction and other priorities.
4. And finally, the science that is the very foundation of the whole climate change issue. Gross exaggerations were made to attract media and political attention. The use of the word '*unequivocal*' above is one of many examples. Increasingly, scientists in the affected disciplines are showing that these exaggerated claims have no scientific foundation.
5. If clause 11 of the action plan is taken seriously by the ad hoc working group and submissions by research and business communities are invited, the responses are likely to be constructive and pragmatic. Will the composition of the working groups include members from these disciplines? If they are then something may still be rescued from the morass.

### **Finally**

The whole climate change issue was initiated by a genuine concern that rising global GGEs would have serious effects on the global environment. The control and eventual reduction of these emissions on a global scale was a logical objective.

Unfortunately, the technology to control these undesirable emissions at their sources on the required scale does not exist. Alternative, non-polluting sources of energy such as nuclear power and the substitution of biofuels for transport vehicles are feasible but not yet implementable on the required scale.

Consequently, the solution sought at Bali was simply a drastic, global scale reduction of these emissions. However, this is not achievable for all the reasons described above.

Given these fundamental difficulties and the very high costs and consequences of these mitigation measures, there is an obligation on all scientists to review the whole issue starting all over again. The first step in the review is to address the fundamental assumption that increasing GGEs are the dominant cause of the observed global temperature increases in recent years. Several scientists have already done this. I address this assumption from a different perspective in my next memo.

[http://www.ilovemycarbon dioxide.com/pdf/Memo\\_0208.pdf](http://www.ilovemycarbon dioxide.com/pdf/Memo_0208.pdf)