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1) Summary of Some Recent News (4 items)

a) Stern Report!

You've all heard about it by now! Green taxes, quantified large-scale economic damage, world to invest £184bn now or face a bill up to 20 times that if it delays. Environment Secretary, David Miliband, said: "Climate change is no longer just an environmental concern; it is an economic, security and political one".

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/6096594.stm>

b) Seven EU countries set to break emission limits

The European commission has said that, based on current measures and policies, the emissions of the EU's original 15 members will be just 0.6% below 1990 levels by 2010. The EU-15 countries are committed under the Kyoto protocol to a combined 8% cut on 1990 levels. Spain, Portugal and Ireland are especially way off target. (28/Oct/06) <http://www.guardian.co.uk/frontpage/story/0,,1933889,00.html>

c) 2006 UK climate records

The Met Office has announced that the period May to September 2006 has been the warmest on the long standing Central England Temperature record, dating back to 1659. The previous record was set in 1947. The 2006 period included the warmest month ever, July, and a record temperature for September. (16/Oct/06)

<http://www.met-office.gov.uk/corporate/pressoffice/2006/pr20061016.html>

d) Branson call for greener airlines

Sir Richard has pledged Virgin profits worth \$3bn (£1.6bn) towards renewable energy, as well as making proposals to the aviation industry for reducing emissions. (27/Sept/06)

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/5383908.stm>

2) Speaker Network now active

Our Climate Change Speaker Network is now on line (www.climate-speakers.org.uk) with approx 70 speakers around the UK to give talks and invite discussion.

Check for a local speaker, note their contact details; then:

- If you are connected with a **school**, advise an appropriate teacher or head of year - talks are best given under the "PSHE" or "Citizenship" subjects. If possible, book the talk for them. Schools DO invite speakers!
- If you belong to any sort of **group** or **society** which invites speakers to their meetings, advise your Speaker Finder or secretary.

In any case, if you have a little time to spare, you can help obtain local talks bookings - it's easy! (another way to "do your bit") - details on request.

3) Climate March and Mass Gathering, London, *this Saturday, 4th November*

You may well have received notification several times already, but just to make sure!:

To take place on the eve of the annual Kyoto Agreement talks, Nairobi (6th-17th November).

10am: Cycle protest assemblies at Lincoln's Inn Fields.

12 noon: Main rally starts at the US Embassy, Grosvenor Square, with well-known speakers.

1pm: March to Trafalgar Square.

1.45 - 2pm: March joins "I-count" Mass Gathering.

Organised by the Campaign Against Climate Change: www.campaignccc.org. The march last year (at time of Montreal talks) is said to have been 10,000-strong.

Also:

I-Count (Stop Climate Chaos) Mass Gathering in Trafalgar Square.

1-3 pm. Entertainment, film, performance, music, and speakers. www.icount.org.uk

4) Not the ozone hole!

It is striking how many people think that global warming is caused by the hole in the ozone layer! These are two separate issues!

(There are, however, links between ozone and GW - ozone has both a warming and cooling effect, depending on its height in the atmosphere. Also, the cooler the temperature in the upper atmosphere where the "hole" is, the larger the hole; - global warming keeps the upper atmosphere cooler by trapping rising heat in the greenhouse gas layer beneath it).

5) A Few Statistics

- **China:** plans to build 48 new airports over the next five years, making a total of 200.
- **China:** is targeting 15% of all power to come from renewable sources by 2020.
- **China:** accounts for 80% of world solar panels for water heating with 65m square metres of panels on roofs. China's high volumes and low costs mean a system costs only £200. UK prices typically £2500 to £6000.
- Half of all the energy used since the Industrial Revolution has been consumed in the last 20 years. (David Miliband)
- The environmental goods and services sector in the UK is already worth more than £25bn, and employs a total of 400,000 people in 17,000 companies.
- A Virgin Pendolino train (as Euston-Manchester), has regenerative braking like a hybrid car, producing 17% of its power. A full train of 5 coaches/439 seats emits 28gm/passenger km (small diesel car 120gm/km).
- An American is born every 11 seconds!
- There are 440 nuclear reactors in the world generating electricity, with almost 30 new plants in progress.
- Europe would need to convert more than 70 per cent of arable land in order to raise the proportion of biofuel used in road transport to 10 per cent. (OECD)

6) Energy to pump our water

In a recent TV program, it was stated that 4% of the UK's energy (probably meaning of electricity) is used to pump our water supply. This makes it approx 2000MW - not far off the actual output of Drax, our largest power station. How much of this is used to pump the 5 billion litres said to be lost every day from leaking pipes?!

7) "The Sun" does a U-turn!?

"The Sun" tabloid seems to have accepted climate change as a problem, after years of scepticism. In

September, they printed articles summarising the problem and ideas for "doing our bit". As the newspaper with by far the greatest circulation - over 3 million - this is indeed good news.

8) Sceptics still kicking in the media

During the items on the Stern Report on Monday, the Radio 4 PM program interviewed sceptic scientist Fred Singer and BBC2 Newsnight included ex-Tory chancellor Nigel Lawson on a panel. As usual, they went on about natural climate change and that it has been warmer in the Middle Ages than now.

Nobody denies natural climate change! And so what if it has been warmer before in the UK? (controversial) - due to the sun, volcanic activity or whatever. The problem is the predicted effects of the greatly increased amount of greenhouse gas in the atmosphere due to our emissions!

Sceptics always avoid referring to the main risks - the effective irreversibility of greenhouse gas in the atmosphere and the feedbacks that could lead to runaway warming. Singer again avoided answering the interviewer's question in this respect.

Lawson made a point I hadn't heard before - that the "precautionary principle" could also apply to preventing the next ice age. Except the earliest current estimate for the start of the ice age is 18,000 years away, whereas the drastic effects of carbon emissions could be imminent - if not with us already!

9) The Bad List - Plasma TVs

How guzzling are they?

According to the Hitachi products web site, the power ratings for their large TVs are:

Plasma 106cm (40"): 380W

Plasma 141cm (42"): 530W

Largest LCD: 94cm (38"): 178W

This appears to confirm how very much more energy plasma models consume. However, Panasonic state that the power consumption of plasma TVs varies with the brightness at any moment, whereas an LCD type always operates at full power. If anyone happens to have both a plug-in power meter (£13.49 from Maplin: <http://www.maplin.co.uk/Search.aspx?criteria=L61AQ&doy=1m11&source=15>) and access to a plasma TV, they might measure the kilowatt-hours of energy consumed (from which the average power in Watts is calculated by multiplying by 60,000 and dividing by the duration in minutes) - and let us know!

Hitachi might deserve credit for current models having very low standby power consumption - "less than 3W" or latest model "less than 1.1W"

My old 20" tube TV consumes 70W; standby 13W.

(Incidentally, I keep seeing mention of "watts per hour" in articles - I did school physics and there is no such thing. A Watt is a unit of *power* - you don't buy a "60W per hour" light bulb! "Watt-hours" and "kilowatt-hours" are correct as units of *energy* - although rather convoluted, as a watt is already defined as one joule of energy acting per second!).

10) CFL bulbs now under 50p!

A frequent objection to buying low energy CFL light bulbs has been their cost. This was always false economics but is no longer even valid - supermarkets now sell Philips bulbs (Chinese-made, of course) for just under 50p - both 18W (100W equiv) and 11W (60W equiv).

And various shapes are now available: candle bulbs, spotlights, etc.

11) Two very good recent web sites

a) WHATYOUcando:

A very well researched site on wide-ranging steps/products/services to reduce our footprint:

<http://www.whatyoucando.co.uk/home>

b) PLANETARY VOICES RADIO:

Listen to various speakers from the web (not *really*

radio!): <http://www.planetaryvoices.org.uk/environment.html>

12) Later Will Do

To paraphrase a quotation from comedian Dylan Moran on the intention to give up smoking:

"We all know carbon emissions are bad. I know I'm going to reduce mine someday. If I thought I wasn't, I'd do it now".

13) Do Your Bit with Raw Food!?

Not to everyone's liking, but a raw-food revolution is said to be coming to Britain from the US, e.g. at the "Little Earth Cafe", Erskine Road, London NW3 (re. The Independent). Well, a cooker is, after all, the most power-hungry domestic appliance. And how much nourishment do we miss cutting down on cooked food? Just a

thought.

14) Famous writer helped cut emissions

A biography of Daphne du Maurier, describing her later life during the early 1960s, states: "Daphne had never even thought of installing central heating, which seemed to her positively decadent as well as prohibitively expensive; far better to put on another jumper" !

Keep feeling good about your reduced-energy lifestyle! - and keep spreading the word.

Regards
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