

HM Ambassador Jonathan Knott's speech at the New Climate Economy conference

As joint host and first speaker, let me welcome you to this event. And thank the Institut Francais for welcoming us here today

2015 is a key year in our fight against climate change. And the COP in Paris in Nov/December 2015 is the deadline to reach a new global deal that keeps alive the prospects for limiting global warming to within 2°C. Failure will increase the risk of dangerous impacts.

After the Lima Call for Climate Action, UK government feels that we are on track for an agreement. But we have to use this year to make that secure. And in doing that we need to bust some myths. Others in the room today are more expert than me. But for me the big myth that needs exposing is that action on climate change will impact negatively on growth.

That is not true. On the contrary, ambitious climate action, if done well, can support economic growth. This is the main finding of the report by the international project called New Climate Economy.

You will hear about the report findings from our experts who are more competent than I am to give their views on the details. I'd rather draw your attention to a new, freely available online tool, the Global Calculator. This tool allows people to explore the physical actions and behaviours that could reduce emissions. <http://tool.globalcalculator.org/>

It is the first climate modelling tool that was designed for a non-expert audience. This approach is very different from the one taken in the New Climate Economy project. It looks at the various levers we can use in developing the world economy by 2050 and makes it possible to compare the rival visions of the future. The main finding is that that we can prosper while tackling climate change. The New Climate Economy report has also arrived at the same conclusion: good climate policy can reinforce economic growth.

So far the UK has helped over 20 countries to develop national level modelling tools building on the success of its own calculator in 2010. Now, with this global tool available, we can also examine how national measures add up to the global target or what risks we face as a result of not taking action.

With the Global Calculator you can explore the interdependencies between energy, food, land and climate systems. And what a lack of action will mean for you. These complex relationships are usually not widely understood outside the technical expert community. But we hope that this calculator, just like the New Climate Economy project, will explode the myth that fighting climate change is bad for growth.

Ambitious climate action, if done well, supports economic growth.