

REPORT BY DAVID MCCLARTY
CPA CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The above conference took place in London from 26th November 2007 until 30th November 2007 at Portcullis House, Westminster.

I found the subject of this conference fascinating, though I have to admit that before I arrived for it, I was sceptical that Climate Change was happening; I firmly believed that what we were experiencing was cyclical.

However, my scepticism quickly changed when a number of presentations were given by excellent speakers about the causes, effects and the scale of the problem of climate change.

The scientific world is fairly well agreed that the levels of CO₂ emissions and other greenhouse gasses is greater than it has ever been. Scientists have looked at information they have about past climate variations including the Ice Ages and have found that our present CO₂ levels far exceed those at that time.

The very real danger is that if the earth's temperature rises more than just over 2 degrees then it will have a devastating effect on our ice caps. Trapped underneath these ice caps are huge volumes of methane gas, which would subsequently be released into our atmosphere.- methane is perhaps the most potent of greenhouse gasses. Global warming is perhaps a misnomer because although hot areas of the world will get hotter, wet areas of our planet will get wetter. With rising sea levels small islands and low lying areas will be under threat. The recent floods in Bangladesh, which destroyed many settlements and killed hundreds of people are an example of that threat. One statistic which was given to us was that if all CO₂ emissions stopped today it would take the earth 40 years to return to a safe level.

These statistics are depressing, however, the good news is that we already have the technology to change all this – the question is :- have the industrialised countries the will to implement that technology. The American Administration is reluctant, but I am delighted to say that the UK Government is at the forefront in introducing Climate Change legislation.

I trust I have given you a flavour of this week-long conference. Although the issue itself was extremely depressing there were many, many positives about tackling the issue.

David McClarty

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