

Introduction

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Participants at the January 2007 World Economic Forum annual meeting voted climate change to be not only the issue that will have the greatest global impact in coming years but also the one for which the world is least prepared. I voted differently, since I am more worried about other threats to humanity, such as nuclear weapons and the persistence of abject poverty in many parts of the world. But I admit that the Davos vote reveals how the issue of climate change has come to capture the attention that not too long ago it failed to have. This shift in public opinion is increasingly putting more pressure on governments to implement policies for mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Of course, I want to think that this enhanced interest in human-induced climate variability is not purely a temporary fad triggered by a cinematic *tour de force*. We should all be hopeful that the general public, and certainly opinion leaders, are really convinced now that they need to be much better informed about the phenomenon of climate change. This circumstance alone would make political leaders more open and accountable to discussing the issue and, of course, its policy implications.

I am convinced that a large proportion of the serious academic analysis and policy discussions on climate change that we have witnessed over recent months were triggered by the publication on October 30th 2006 of *The Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change*.

Fortunately, the Review has reignited the debate and rigorous study of the economics of climate change. Moreover, we have even seen experts from other areas of economic analysis bringing their tools into the discussion of this significant problem.

Indeed, we should all be thankful to Sir Nicholas Stern, who, in 2005, was asked by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the British government to head a group to produce this report. Nicholas Stern very quickly assembled a great team of experts, and undertook to visit a number of universities and institutions to consult about this topic. In a relatively short period of time, Sir Nicholas and his team were able to produce their report, this document, which not only has enormous value by itself -- academic and political value; but it also has value, I insist, because it has motivated other people to

come out with new opinions, new analysis and fresh positions on this fundamental question.

In the spring of 2006, I had the pleasure of meeting with Sir Nicholas and members of his team on a visit they made to Yale University. At that time, he expressed his willingness to present the Review here at Yale, under the auspices of the Center for the Study of Globalization. His interest was in participating in an academic analysis of its findings with scholars of the highest reputation in this field.

This event is the realization of that conversation. We welcome Sir Nicholas and his team with gratitude and recognition for their immensely valuable work.

Our event is divided into two parts. This morning we will have the opportunity to listen to Sir Nicholas and his team making a presentation of the report. For this session, we are also privileged to have Chris Hope from Cambridge University who is the leading author of the PAGE model. This model was used extensively in the preparation of the Review. We sincerely thank Chris for making the journey from Cambridge and for his important contributions in this field. We are also honored to have Dean Gustave Speth of our School of Forestry and Environmental Studies who will have the last word in this morning's session.

For the afternoon, we have assembled an impressive group of scholars who will make a review of the *Review* in the presence of Sir Nicholas himself. The afternoon session will be completed with a discussion between Sir Nicholas and his reviewers.

We thank William Nordhaus, William Cline, Gary Yohe, Robert Mendelsohn, Scott Barrett and Jeffrey Sachs. Needless to say, these authors' contributions are an essential part of this symposium.

I will now call Sir Nicholas Stern to present to us his impressive Review.