

# Ignition Point:

## An introductory bibliography of social science around climate change

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The social sciences are increasingly examining and engaging with the idea of climate change from a diverse range of perspectives. My aim in putting together this annotated bibliography is to provide some examples of the variety of ideas, arguments and resources that are available to understand key issues and concerns relating to climate change. As a result it includes contributions from an eclectic and extensive range of disciplines including sociology, geography, philosophy, history, biophysical science, policy studies, communication studies, economics and religious studies. The bibliography is by no means exhaustive or definitive and is not intended to be. Rather it is envisaged to be a starting point, or in keeping with the theme, ignition point for people attending the [workshop](#)<sup>1</sup> and other interested parties. With this in mind I have highlighted a number of resources that are freely available online<sup>2</sup>.

### Introductory readings

**Futerra Sustainability Communications. *Sizzle: The new climate change message*. London: Futerra Sustainability Communications. [Free]**

The authors of this guide suggest climate change is no longer a scientist's problem but rather a salesman's problem. They assert that we must all create and sell a new vision of a 'low carbon heaven'. A full copy of the report can be downloaded from here:

<http://www.futerra.co.uk/downloads/Sellthesizzle.pdf>

**IPCC. (2007). *Summary for policymakers. A report of Working Group I to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Geneva: IPCC. [Free]**

This report describes "progress in understanding of the human and natural drivers of climate change, observed climate change, climate processes and attribution, and estimates of projected future climate change" (p. 2). A full copy of the report can be downloaded here:

<http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/wg1/ar4-wg1-spm.pdf>

**Prins, G., & Rayner, S. (2007). Time to ditch Kyoto. *Nature*, 449(25), 973-975. [Free]**

In this commentary Prins and Rayner argue that climate policy after 2012 will require a radical rethink as in their view more of the same will not do. They contend continued policy failure spun as a story of success could lead to public withdrawal of trust and consent for action. The full paper can be read online or downloaded from here:

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v449/n7165/full/449973a.html>

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<sup>1</sup> New Zealand Climate Change Centre Workshop: 'Degrees of Possibility: Igniting social knowledge around climate change', James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor, Wellington, 6 December 2010

<sup>2</sup> These resources can be identified throughout the document by this notation: [Free]

**Shove, E. (2010). Beyond the ABC: Climate change policy and theories of social change. *Environment and Planning A*, 42(6), 1273-1285. [Free]**

Shove examines what she considers to be the potential contribution of the social sciences and the generally restricted models and concepts of social change embedded in contemporary environmental policy in the UK. She believes there is a need to go beyond the 'ABC' (attitude, behaviour, and choice) and highlights opportunities to do so. A full version of the paper can be downloaded here:

<http://action-town.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/BEYONDTHEABCrevised1.pdf>

**Urry, J. (2010). Sociology facing climate change. *Sociological Research Online*, 15(3), <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/13/11.html>. [Free]**

Urry's paper is based on a talk given at the British Sociological Association Presidential Event in 2010. He issues "ten commandments" which seek to place sociology within urgent academic and policy debates about climate change. The full paper can be read online or downloaded from:

<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/3/1.html>

## Special issues of Journals

***Building Research & Information* (2008), 36(4): Comfort in a lower carbon society. [Free Editorial Only]**

The focus of this special issue is on the relation between indoor and outdoor climate change. It stems from the recognition that the energy cost of sustaining standardised 'comfort' conditions in buildings and in outdoor environments around the world is ultimately unsustainable. As a result the various papers in the issue examine the relation between people and the environments they inhabit in an effort to establish debate surrounding the definition and provision of comfort in what will in future have to be a lower carbon society. The full volume can be accessed here:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=g794016402~db=all>

***Local Environment* (2007), 12(5): Looking back and thinking ahead: A decade of cities and climate change research. [Free Editorial Only]**

This special issue takes stock of the academic debate on cities and climate change. The various contributions to this special issue focus on three key issues: the multi-level nature of climate governance; the role of knowledge in local climate policy; and the gap between the rhetoric and reality of local climate policy. The full volume can be accessed here:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=g788220602>

***Theory, Culture & Society* (2010), 27(2-3): Social theory and climate change.**

A number of papers from leading social theorists are presented in this issue. Each theorist tackles the notion of 'climate change' from a different perspective. As Szerszynski and Urry suggest in the introduction to the volume, there is an increasing need to open up debate around conditions of possibility for 'post-carbonism'. The various papers in the special issue highlight the role social theory can play in imagining and debating what a low carbon world might look like. The full volume can be accessed here:

<http://tcs.sagepub.com/content/27/2-3.toc>

## Journal articles

**Berkhout, F., Hertin, J., & Jordan, A. (2002). Socio-economic futures in climate change impact assessment: using scenarios as 'learning machines'. *Global Environmental Change, 12*(2), 83-95.**

The authors argue climate impact assessment needs to take account of two interrelated processes: socio-economic change and climate change. They contend that future change in socio-economic systems has not been sufficiently integrated with an analysis of climate change impacts and that participative and synthetic scenario approaches could play a role in redressing this problem. Further details about the paper can be obtained here:

<http://tiny.cc/lhpg5>

**Fleming, J. R. (2006). The pathological history of weather and climate modification: Three cycles of promise and hype. *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences, 37*(1), 3-25. [Free]**

Fleming examines what he describes as "three cycles of promise and hype" in relation to the history of weather and climate modification. In concluding he suggests that the long history of attempts to 'control' nature raise serious questions about the rationality of these options. A full version of the paper can be downloaded here:

[http://www.nonaiswa.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/06\\_fleming\\_pathological-geo-eng-history3.pdf](http://www.nonaiswa.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/06_fleming_pathological-geo-eng-history3.pdf)

**Gardner, S. M. (2006). A perfect moral storm: Climate change, intergenerational ethics and the problem of moral corruption. *Environmental Values, 15*, 397-413. [Free]**

Gardner explores the peculiar features of the climate change problem that ensure it is difficult for us to make hard decisions in response to it. He shows that even if the challenging ethical questions around climate change could be answered it might still be difficult for us to act. A full version of the paper can be downloaded here:

[http://hettingern.people.cofc.edu/Environmental\\_Philosophy\\_Sp\\_09/Gardner\\_Perfect\\_Moral\\_Storm.pdf](http://hettingern.people.cofc.edu/Environmental_Philosophy_Sp_09/Gardner_Perfect_Moral_Storm.pdf)

**Greenaway, A., & Carswell, F. (2009). Climate change policy and practice in regional New Zealand: How are actors negotiating science and policy? *New Zealand Geographer, 65*(2), 107-117.**

Greenway and Carswell examine how regional governance to address climate change in New Zealand is being made through domestic policy measures and international discourses. Focusing on the Marlborough and Waikato regions they show how often conflicting climate change responses are being shaped by a variety of discourses influencing New Zealand including participatory democracy, the knowledge economy and sustainable development. Further details about the paper can be obtained here:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1745-7939.2009.01153.x/abstract>

**King, D. N. T., Skipper, A., & Tawhai, W. (2008). Māori environmental knowledge of local weather and climate change in Aotearoa – New Zealand. *Climatic Change, 90*(4), 385-409.**

Adopting a Kaupapa Māori based research approach the authors of the paper document Māori environmental knowledge of weather and climate in New Zealand. They argue that learning from this knowledge can provide an opportunity to understand the factors that have helped Maori adapt to weather and climate variability in the past. Further details about the paper can be obtained here:

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/u130846565082085/>

**Lorenzoni, I., & Pidgeon, N. (2006). Public views on climate change: European and USA perspectives. *Climatic Change*, 77(1), 73-95.**

In this paper the authors investigate how climate change is conceptualised by publics in Europe and the USA. They highlight that although there is widespread concern about climate change, it is of secondary importance in comparison to other issues in people's daily lives. Further details about the paper can be obtained here:

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/8815h5u433358758/>

**McCright, A. M., & Dunlap, R. E. (2003). Defeating Kyoto: The conservative movement's impact on U.S. Climate Change Policy. *Social Problems*, 50(3), 348-373. [Free]**

The authors contend that the American conservative movement is a key segment of the anti-environmental counter-movement. In the paper they show the significant role it played in the United States failure to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. A full version of the paper can be downloaded here:

[http://ireswb.cc.ku.edu/~crgc/NSFWorkshop/Readings/Defeating\\_Kyoto.pdf](http://ireswb.cc.ku.edu/~crgc/NSFWorkshop/Readings/Defeating_Kyoto.pdf)

**Yearley, S. (2009). Sociology and climate change after Kyoto. *Current Sociology*, 57(3), 389-405.**

Drawing on social constructionism and science and technology studies, Yearley explores the role played by the social sciences and the social institutions of science in making knowledge about the future of humankind in relation to climate change. He argues there is a need for a greater understanding of the social dimensions of the scientific community that studies climate change and more social science reflection on the roles of social science in climate-change models and projections. Further details about the paper can be obtained here:

<http://csi.sagepub.com/content/57/3/389.short?rss=1&ssource=mfc>

## Reports & Discussion documents

**Bedford, R., & Hugo, G. (2008). *International migration in a sea of islands: Challenges and opportunities for insular Pacific spaces*. Population Studies Centre Discussion Paper 69. Hamilton: Population Studies Centre, University of Waikato. [Free]**

Bedford and Hugo's paper examines contemporary mobility of Pacific peoples in a transnational context. Here they examine the variety of processes operating and highlight some of the major challenges for development in the Pacific region including climate change. A full version of the paper can be downloaded here:

<http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/handle/10289/966>

**MfE. (2007). *Consultation with Maori on climate change: Hui report*. Wellington: Ministry for the Environment. [Free]**

This report summarises the results of 13 regional consultation hui with Māori around New Zealand to discuss climate change issues and options that had been proposed in various discussion documents. The full summary report can be downloaded here:

<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/climate/consultation-maori-hui-report-nov07/consultation-maori-hui-report-nov07.pdf>

**Norgaard, K. M. (2009). *Cognitive and behavioral challenges in responding to climate change*. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 4940. Washington, DC: World Bank. [Free]**

Drawing on psychology, social psychology and sociology, Norgaard examines international and national differences in levels of knowledge and concern regarding climate change, and the existing explanations for the worldwide failure of public response to climate change. The full paper can be downloaded here:

[http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1407958](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1407958)

**ShapeNZ. (2009). *New Zealanders' attitudes to climate change*. Auckland: New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development. [Free]**

This report presents findings from an online survey of 28,151 New Zealanders about their attitudes to climate change. It highlights that most people believe climate change is a problem and that effects have already begun to happen. The full report can be downloaded here:

[http://www.nzbcscd.org.nz/ attachments/New Zealanders' Attitudes to Climate Change ShapeNZ Survey Report March, 2009.pdf](http://www.nzbcscd.org.nz/attachments/New_Zealanders'_Attitudes_to_Climate_Change_ShapeNZ_Survey_Report_March_2009.pdf)

**UMR Research. (2001). *Climate change issues: a study of public awareness and levels of concern*. Wellington: New Zealand Climate Change Programme.**

This is an early study of public awareness, knowledge and level of concern about climate change issues in New Zealand. It reports on the findings of focus groups and a quantitative questionnaire survey.

## Books

**Dennis, K., & Urry, J. (2009). *After the car*. Cambridge: Polity Press.**

Dennis and Urry attempt to imagine a world without the car. They identify climate change and peak oil as among a number of powerful forces that will undermine the car system. In developing their argument they explore alternative technologies, organisations and models of the post-car system before highlighting three possible future scenarios: 'local sustainability', 'regional warlordism' and 'digital networks of control'.

**Frame, B., Gordon, R., & Mortimer, C. (Eds.). (2009). *Hatched: The capacity for sustainable development*. Lincoln, Canterbury: Landcare Research New Zealand. [Free]**

This eBook presents research findings, stories and tools exploring five key areas of capacity required to facilitate a new direction for our long-term success: 1) thinking and acting for long term success; 2) businesses as sustainability innovators; 3) individuals as citizen consumers; 4) facing up to wicked problems; and 5) the future as a set of choices. Various formats of the book are available here:

<http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/services/sustainablesoc/hatched/>

**Giddens, A. (2009). *The politics of climate change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.**

Giddens suggests that currently we do not have a systematic politics of climate change. He argues that politics-as-usual will not be enough to deal with the problems we face. To address these issues Giddens outlines a variety of new ideas and proposals, and explores in detail the connections between climate change and energy security.

**Glover, L. (2006). *Postmodern climate change*. London: Routledge.**

Glover offers a new way of understanding the climate change problem by using the theories, tools and language of post-modernity. He offers a wide-ranging survey of the science and politics of climate change and the social discourses and movements that have emerged from these contexts.

**Harre, N., & Atkinson, Q. D. (Eds.). (2007). *Carbon neutral by 2020: How New Zealanders can tackle climate change*. Nelson: Craig Potton Publishing.**

This book presents solutions from a range of New Zealand experts on how to address climate change. In doing so they attempt to demonstrate how we can rethink our current practices, mobilise people and put in place new ways of doing things that will help New Zealand become carbon neutral by 2020.

**Hulme, M. (2009). *Why we disagree about climate change: Understanding controversy, inaction and opportunity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**

Hulme argues climate change is not 'a problem' waiting for 'a solution'. Instead he suggests it is an environmental, cultural and political phenomenon which is re-shaping the way we think about ourselves, our societies and humanity's place on Earth. Drawing on perspectives from science, economics, faith, psychology, communication, sociology, politics and development he seeks to explain why we disagree about climate change.

**Millais, C. (Ed.). (2006). *Common belief: Australia's faith communities on climate change*. Sydney: The Climate Institute. [Free]**

A short guide to statements issued by the Australian leaders of 15 distinct religious faiths or traditions about the nature of climate change and their proposals for personal and social responses. Statements from Aboriginals, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Jews are among those included. A full copy of the book is available here:

[http://www.arcworld.org/downloads/COMMON BELIEF - Australian statements.pdf](http://www.arcworld.org/downloads/COMMON_BELIEF_-_Australian_statements.pdf)

**Moser, S., & Dilling, L. (Eds.). (2007). *Creating a climate for change: Communicating climate change and facilitating social change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**

This edited book looks at communication and social change specifically focusing on climate change. Bringing together contributors from a diverse range of disciplines, backgrounds and experiences, it explores the issues associated with communicating climate change in order to foster societal response.

**Rayner, S., & Malone, E. L. (Eds.). (1998). *Human choice and climate change (4 Volumes)*. Columbus: Battelle Press.**

This four-part work summarises the understanding at the time of the contributions of the social sciences to the interdisciplinary issues of global climate change. It brings together a comprehensive and varied discussion around climate change, from science and impacts of climate change to policy and politics of migration. The original intention was that the volumes would complement the IPCC Second Assessment Report.

**Stern, N. (2006). *Stern review on the economics of climate change*. Cambridge: Her Majesty's Treasury, Cambridge University Press. [Free]**

Stern reviews the evidence on the economic impacts of climate change itself, and examines the economics of stabilising greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Following this he reflects on the complex policy challenges involved in attempting to transition to a low-carbon economy and in ensuring that societies can adapt to the consequences of climate change. A full copy of the review can be downloaded here:

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/stern\\_review\\_report.htm](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/stern_review_report.htm)

**Strauss, S., & Orlove, B. (Eds.). (2003). *Weather, climate, culture*. Oxford: Berg.**

This edited book examines the various ways in which societies in history and around the world have related to aspects of weather and climate. It includes contributions from anthropologists, historians and geographers.