



E3G

The Delphic Oracle on Europe

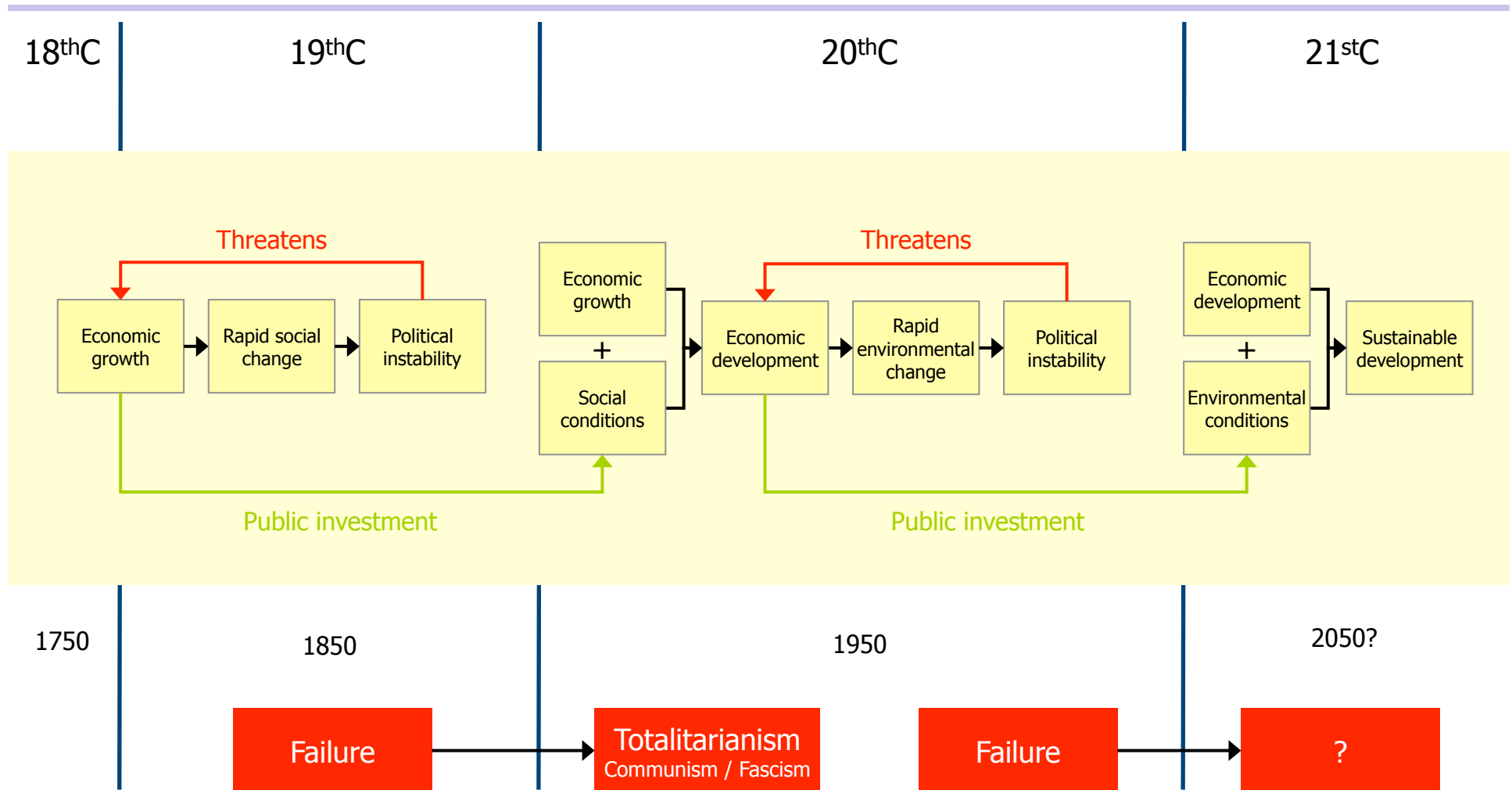
How effective has the EU has been in preparing the ground for the UN climate conference in Copenhagen and what are the prospects for its success?

Jesse Scott

Sustainable development is the preservation of the environmental and social conditions for prosperity. History shows that failure to manage these forces leads to political instability and conflict.



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1. Europe's climate change leadership so far. Is it enough?
2. Can Copenhagen succeed?
3. What could success at Copenhagen look like?
4. How can Europe lead?
5. Green recovery. The European political agenda beyond Copenhagen.



The EU is the global leader on climate change, but not commensurate with its commitment to a 2°C “real world” target.

The gap between the action needed to avoid dangerous climate change impacts and political action is actually widening.

IPCC advises an 80% reduction of total GHG emissions by 2050:

- Rapid retreat of mountain glaciers, threatening the water supply of billions of people;
- More rapid than projected melting of Arctic sea-ice in summer, opening new flashpoints for resource conflict;
- Accelerated melting of the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets increasing the rate of sea-level rise;
- Increased acidification of the ocean, threatening to reduce the oceans' capacity to absorb carbon and to undermine the productivity of marine ecosystems;
- Pole-ward expansion of the sub-tropical zone, bringing droughts and fires to heavily populated areas;
- Increased intensity of hydrologic extremes increasing heavy rains, storms and floods, and drought and fires.



Kyoto Protocol policy regime and negotiation mode: largely driven by environment ministers who have neither the political muscle nor the intellectual and financial resources to address a core prosperity and security issue.

Six scenarios for the outcome:

- (a) Optimal: provides a complete, long-term framework for a low carbon transition of sufficient speed to provide a reasonable probability of achieving 2°C;
- (b) Imperfect but transformational: sufficient elements of a long-term framework to begin the transformation towards a low carbon economy, even if later reinforcement will be needed;
- (c) Weak: interim deal with no lock-in, leading to some short-term change and accompanied by a realization that work should continue to develop a long-term deal;
- (d) Weak with lock-in: will lead to some short-term change, but which makes a more ambitious and long-term deal less likely;
- (e) Business-as-usual: will deliver minimal emissions reductions, no new finance, no technology programs and little commitment to adaptation;
- (f) No deal: a stalemate, with or without a commitment to continue negotiations.



GDP per capita difference between the richest and poorest EU Member States is greater than between the US and China: if Europe can reach agreement, a fair global agreement is equally possible.

5 elements:

- Emissions cuts by developed countries: 25-40% by 2020, with a roadmap for 2050 which aligns timetables so the US can successfully rejoin the global regime;
- Emerging economies' commitment to significant deviation from business-as-usual;
- Robust monitoring, reporting, verification and sanctions, to ensure trust in these commitments;
- New finance: \$100 billion for mitigation (including forests) and \$50-100 billion for adaptation to 2020;
- Agreement on quadrupling public funding for climate technology innovation and agreement on a framework for technology transfer.



European climate leadership is vulnerable and needs investment

International leadership

- Finance and technology positions need to be put forward early: in summer, not autumn.
- Copenhagen is not a tactical trade negotiation where everything can be agreed last minute. On the contrary, it is arguably the most complex international negotiation ever attempted – tackling new phenomena which require cooperative solutions, with no well-tested basis for agreement.
- Instead of politics-as-usual, to be deliverable, new forms of cooperation need time to mature within national debates and decision processes.
- The EU's approach needs to be strategic, allowing time for developing countries to respond to positive signals and to win domestic political support for more ambitious negotiating positions.



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Domestic clarity

- Copenhagen is not about charity, but squarely in our own self-interest.
- Costs of unabated climate change are likely to be at least x5 the costs of prevention.
- How global climate threats are addressed will have fundamental consequences for Europe's status and values.
 - Failure to solve energy security is likely to lead to a world dominated by "Great Power" competition, in which a Europe based on international law would undoubtedly fair badly.
 - A climate insecure world (rising food and water scarcity, regional conflict, mass migration) raises the spectre of "Fortress Europe" and would sorely test Europe's ability to live by its values of democracy, human rights, and multilateralism – both at home and abroad.
- Europe is already committed to internal processes which require the Commission and Member States to work through positions on finance and technology. An ambitious stance internationally can help drive the domestic politics of coordinated fiscal stimulus, implementation of the Strategic Energy Technology Plan, and EU Budget reform.



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Europe has traditionally paid with financial aid to create the space for its global soft power approach.

As the politics of climate change action begin to bite at home this will change: minus 30% is four times harder than minus 20%.

Will Europe become more serious and more hard-nosed in driving a global bargain – and walking away if need be?

Obama's Waxman-Markey speech this week:

"we've seen that others countries realize a critical truth: the nation that leads in the creation of a clean energy economy will be the nation that leads the 21st century global economy [...] make no mistake—this is a jobs bill".