

## Roundtable 3 – Assessments (Pogge version)

*Key words: sustainable basis for action; leveraging opportunities; innovative practical action.*

- It is easy to be gloomy about progress – to point the finger at other parties and say they should have done more.
- But <sup>climate change</sup> ~~this~~ is the most complex environmental issue the global community has faced, and in many senses the progress is demonstrable, surprising and heartening.
- We have a much firmer grip on the science, although we all recognize that more needs to be done to reduce uncertainties. Developed and developing countries have constructed greenhouse gas inventories, reported on actions, built human understanding and institutional capacity – we know much more about the special vulnerabilities and adaptation needs <sup>of different countries</sup>.
- And we are making some progress <sup>on greenhouse gases</sup> – just two weeks ago the Australian atmospheric baseline station at Cape Grim reported that methane levels in the atmosphere had stabilized – probably as a result of improvements in the natural gas sector in the Northern hemisphere. Methane is one of the most powerful greenhouse gases, so this is unalloyed good news.
- That said, it is clear that we do not yet have the basis for the sustained action by all the major emitters that will be necessary in the long run.
- Confidence building is the key. Confidence that there are ways to limit emissions growth without costs that shatter aspirations for sustainable development. Confidence that we are making mutually consistent efforts given our different circumstances.
- Confidence comes from transparency and understanding. It comes from sharing practical experience and working together. It comes from the big being sensitive to the interests of the small. It comes from recognition that our circumstances and capacities are, and our contributions will be different.
  - Effective domestic actions that are publicised for global scrutiny and transparency of greenhouse accounts are an important contribution to confidence.
  - Working together in voluntary partnerships on climate science, technology, mitigation and adaptation actions can nurture understanding and confidence.

**This is why Australia has announced its intention to strive to meet its target agreed at Kyoto. We are already within striking distance of doing so and we expect to bridge the remaining gap.**

- That is why we have ensured a transparent approach to domestic policy making and our National Greenhouse Gas Inventory.

- And that is why we have also entered into a range of very practical partnerships and programs on emissions reductions, adaptation actions, technology and research with key Asia-Pacific partners – including the US, China, New Zealand and Japan – as well as participating in broader initiatives on technology and science.

Returning to my opening theme. We must build on our achievements and learn from the difficulties that we have encountered.

**We must continue to take up the challenge we face at meetings like these. They are of huge importance <sup>and</sup> that is why we all commit such passion and resources to them.**

**But if we are to make progress in building a genuinely global approach what we do in the other 11 months of the year is just as critical.**

**This is the time when we need to be taking practical domestic actions and building the bridges that will bring us together through actions at all levels, individually as nations, in partnerships and within the broader international framework.**

**We must build the foundation of our efforts on the best science available, and rigorous assessment of the outcomes of our actions.**

**We must have the courage to share our experience.**

**We believe that actions <sup>are needed to</sup> like ~~these~~ at all levels – multilateral, regional and bilateral – ~~will help~~ work toward full global participation.**

*effort*