



THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

Global warming is becoming irreversible. Are countries developing the right strategies and taking immediate action to address the decarbonization of their energy systems? New report from The School of Public Policy

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Calgary, AB, Canada – The landmark Paris Agreement to address climate change in November 2016, has now been ratified by 185 of 197 parties to the convention. The agreement sets a course for all countries to limit global temperature rise to below 2°C and preferably to below 1.5°C. The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that global warming is becoming irreversible and that the societal impacts of climate change are calamitous. The IPCC report also carries a positive message that it is still possible to limit global warming to a 1.5°C increase and describes various mitigation pathways that countries could use to reduce their emissions.

Today, The School of Public Policy with author Eddy Isaacs released a report that reviews the history of climate change agreements and examines the IPCC's illustrative strategies to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C. The report also looks at emerging technologies for displacing fossil fuels and provides strategic policy direction that all countries can adopt.

According to Isaacs "Governments around the world are under considerable pressure from their citizens to undertake urgent and bolder actions to get the world on the right track to achieve the Paris Agreement's climate change goals and reduce the risks of global warming. These governments are making multibillion-dollar bets to fund technology and adopt regulations that have broad implications for industrial strategy and development. Industries – from the processing of raw materials to the manufacturing of goods – are also making multibillion-dollar choices on how best to position themselves in a low carbon economy. It is therefore critical that the decisions being made are effective at the scale required and that the selected technological options have as great a chance as possible to reduce global warming's impact."

The report recommends several policy avenues including: Direct the IPCC to provide a more credible assessment to policy-makers on how fast and by how much emissions can be reduced and the degree of confidence in the solutions to global warming. 2. Take a more pro-active approach to adaptation and significantly increase investments in infrastructure to protect communities from the threat of sea-level rise and also those at risk from extreme weather events. 3. Increase afforestation, reforestation and soil carbon enhancement while restricting land clearance to reduce heat-trapping emissions that cause global warming.

Policies need to consider that global GHG emissions continue to accumulate in the atmosphere and no significant reversal of this trend is indicated for the near future. The implication is that temperatures will continue to increase, if not accelerate, during this century.

The paper can be downloaded at <https://www.policyschool.ca/publications/>

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Media contact:

Morten Paulsen

morten.paulsen2@ucalgary.ca

403.220.2540