



IEAGHG Information Paper 2014-21: NGO and Media response to IPCC AR5 Summary Report

I was interested to gauge what the Environmental NGO community have been saying about the recent release of the IPCC AR5 Exec Summary and in particular the fact that it promotes CCS quite strongly.

Most Environmental NGO's welcome the report's findings as could be expected and equally expected they want to see some positive action as a result. Typical of these are blogs by;

- WWF whose headline is: *"How the IPCC quieted climate sceptics with its new report"*. A second headline was that the *"IPCC Synthesis report should be a must read for all world leaders"*.
- NDRC in the USA ran with *"This report should galvanise the world to take urgent action to curb climate change"*
- ClimateGroups lead was: *"only an unprecedented global effort to cut GHG's will curb irreversible climate change"*
- EDF runs with *"an urgent call for action on climate change in the IPCC synthesis report"*
- WRI's headline *"IPCC scientists emphasise immorality of inaction by focusing on irreversible impacts"*

Several NGO's shortened what the IPCC said which was *"Fossil fuels without CCS should be phased out by 2100"* and replaced it with *"Fossil fuels should be phased out by 2100"*. This headline was used by Greenpeace, CO2solutions amongst others and more surprisingly Bellona see: <http://bellona.org/news/climate-change/2014-11-ipcc-synthesis-report-calls-fossil-fuel-phase-2100>. However in the text on the Bellona web site they do stress the need for CCS.

These were the only positive comments on CCS I could find, most ignored it altogether and most NGO's promote energy efficiency and renewable's but don't comment on other options.

Unsurprisingly, Greenpeace are the most vocal against CCS and to be fair nuclear as well. Coal gets the most venom on their web site with remarks like: *"Getting rid of coal is key to tackling climate change. For this reason, it is a great relief to note that, recently, coal seems to be on its way out"*

According to their web site:

<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/news/Blogs/makingwaves/understanding-climate-science/blog/51104/> we can do without CCS and nuclear.

"In principle, nuclear power and carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies could help to reduce emissions. In practise, it doesn't look like this is going to happen, not on a big scale anyway.

Nuclear power, which currently provides just 10.8% of the world's electricity supply, is on its way out. The reactors across the planet are getting old and the development of new plants is expensive and includes hidden costs. They're also very slow to get up and running. And, we still haven't figured out how to get rid of nuclear waste.

Anyway, according to the IPCC, leaving out nuclear won't make much difference to the emission reduction costs.



As for CCS, it's also expensive and hasn't shown many results. In fact, CCS is so expensive to install and so energy- and water-intensive that the technology just doesn't make sense economically.

As it stands, the only CCS projects that have been able to go ahead are the one's connected to getting more oil out of the ground! The first and only operational coal plant with CCS (the Boundary Dam project in Canada) is based on this idea: CO₂, which has been scrubbed from the coal, is used to extract otherwise inaccessible oil from depleted oil fields. As a result, oil that would otherwise have stayed in the ground is being burned. Hardly the "solution" we need.

(CCS is included in many of the emission reduction models assessed by the IPCC. Yet, it's not necessary: there are also ways to achieve the required emissions reductions without prolonging the use of fossil fuels with CCS. So there's no need to wait for anything, but to act here and now with technologies that work and bring the biggest benefits and smallest risks.)

Their answer to all ills is of course is renewables which they say are cheap and readily available now.

What can we take from Greenpeace's stance; well at least they appear to have moved on from denial to grudging acceptance that there are CCS projects, to admit there is only one is real progress. Of course this refers to Boundary Dam 3 but of course that ignores all the industrial projects there are around the world like Sleipner, Snohvit, Weyburn, Air Products etc Etc.,

One different item I found was a blog by Carbon Finance on Nov. 4th that quoted the International Business' Times as *UN Climate Report 2014: the End of the IPCC?* The main focus of this article is the time and effort it takes to produce these report and there is a suggestion that the IPCC should consider shorter, more focused reports on issues that are advancing rapidly. This line of thought has been suggested by others as I discussed in an IP that was drafted in June 2014 called Communicating Science (2014/IP-20).

Overall, I don't think the ENGO's have changed their stance much those that were opposed to fossil fuels are still opposed, some are open to the idea of CCS but most advocate more energy efficiency and more renewables. The one thing they universally agree on is the need for urgent action.

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