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## **Reframing the Problem of Climate Change. From Zero Sum Game to Win-Win Solutions**

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Reframing the problem of climate change? The very first sentence of the book explains what is meant by this: “We have a crisis. We don’t mean the danger that human modifications of the earth atmosphere will modify the earth’s climate with grave consequences for people and the planet. Rather we see as the crisis the inadequacy of society’s response to the threat” (p.1).

Society’s response - that is what we normally call climate policy. No doubt, climate policy has largely failed. Put short, the authors think this failure to be the result of a mindset that treats climate change as a zero sum game. “We are behaving as if it were a game with winners and losers, in which one actor’s gain is dependent on the losses of other actors” (p. 2). How to change such a mindset? The authors want to identify the causes and ways to overcome the current difficulties that have been blocking progress in climate policy. Basically, they attribute the present deadlock to a lack of understanding of the opportunities offered by the transformation of the present fossil-based economy to a green economy, based on renewable energy and sustainable consumption.

Seventeen authors with a wide range of academic backgrounds provide interesting information and new insights into many constructive approaches pursued to overcome the widespread misperception of the sustainability transformation as a heavy burden. Instead, their investigations demonstrate that this transformation should be recognised as a unique opportunity to enhance human welfare worldwide. The respective contributions span climate science and climate change impacts (chapters 1 and 2), the public views of climate change (chapter 3), the contributions from economic and financial theory (chapters 4, 5, 7 and 10), the role of civil society and

the business community (chapters 6, 8 and 9), and the impacts of specific investment policies, exemplified by reforestation (chapter 11).

The credibility of science should be strengthened, the regional and local impacts of climate change should be given more attention, mitigation and adaptation need to be integrated in order to protect against future events. Public opinion is a strong driver of climate policy. To generate and maintain public support for climate policy it is thought to be important to frame climate change as a win-win-opportunity, as an insurance policy against future harm, and at the same time, as a problem that is being experienced already now and therefore requires immediate action.

Regarding the economics of climate change, the authors deplore that general equilibrium models create the false impression that climate action is a cost rather than a profitable investment. This has to do with the still dominant role of the gross domestic product (GDP), as a more general measure of human welfare has not been established. A positive benefits view is thought to enhance climate action. Climate change has already caused many humanitarian, development and human rights organisations to rethink their mandate. At the same time, environmental organisations have learned how to address the nexus between environment and development. A plea is made for more concerted efforts of all civil society organisations for the transformation process. Bill Clinton's "It's the economy, stupid!" is said to apply to climate change as well. Therefore thought is given to the greening of the economy, to investments in low-carbon infrastructure, and to renewable energy in particular, as it has the unique advantage that it can be decentralised and installed very quickly. Micro electricity with micro finance could offer an especially attractive dual development and environment proposition, while at the macro level the combination of climate action and other environmental protection activities is said to offer real win-win-opportunities.

The book thus illustrates the many aspects that must be addressed in responding to the climate change challenge. The great transformation that is required may not mainly be driven by fear and dread but by positive mindsets, the more widespread awareness of the opportunities and benefits that go along with it. And it shows in particular that the

greening of the economy provides a unique opportunity for reaping benefits worldwide.

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