

NET ZERO

How We Stop Causing Climate Change



Dieter Helm

DIETER HELM is Professor of Economic Policy at the University of Oxford and Official Fellow in Economics at New College, Oxford. He specialises in the environment, notably in climate change, biodiversity, water, energy and agriculture. In December 2015, Dieter was reappointed as Independent Chair of the Natural Capital Committee.

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WHAT CAN WE REALLY DO ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE?

NET ZERO addresses the actions we all need to take to tackle the climate emergency - personal, local, national and global – in order to reduce carbon emissions and increase carbon absorption to achieve a net carbon output.

Thirty years ago, world leaders vowed to reduce carbon emissions. Thirty years later, the concentration of carbon in the atmosphere continues to grow. At the same time, the Earth's ability to absorb carbon continues to be degraded. Today, the Paris Agreement target of 1.5 degrees has become unattainable and 3 degrees is now a demanding aspiration. As Extinction Rebellion and climate protestors call for action, the inconvenient truth is that we are the ones causing the climate crisis with our carbon intensive lifestyles.

The goal of net zero carbon emissions needs a rethink. Helm argues that we, the ultimate polluters, should pay based on how much carbon the products we buy produce. We need a carbon price, and one that applies to everything and everywhere, from flights, to food and farming. This book sets out how to do it in a plan that could and would work. Do all this and we make no further contribution to global warming, in a way that embraces sustainable economic growth and does not harm other aspects of the environment in the process. There is a solution and we cannot waste the next thirty years.

NET ZERO is a vital book for anyone who hears the clamour of Extinction Rebellion and other ecological activists, but wonders what they can actually do.

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