

UN climate panel chair calls for 'enlightenment'

April 7 2014, by Frank Jordans



In this picture taken Thursday, April 3, 2014, giant machines dig for brown coal at the open-cast mining Garzweiler near the city of Grevenbroich, western Germany. After concluding that global warming is almost certainly man-made and poses a grave threat to humanity, the U.N.-sponsored expert panel on climate change is moving on to the next phase: what to do about it. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or IPCC, startet a meeting in Berlin Monday, April 7, 2014, to chart ways for the world to rein in the greenhouse gas emissions that scientists say are overheating the planet. (AP Photo/Martin Meissner)

The head of the United Nations scientific panel on climate change urged diplomats and scientists to show "enlightenment" Monday, as they began a weeklong meeting aimed at spelling out in plain terms what options the world has if it wants to prevent catastrophic global warming.

Delegates at the closed-doors meeting in Berlin need to tackle a number of sensitive issues, including how best to cut carbon emissions and how to share the cost of shifting away from the fossil fuels that are largely blamed for producing the gases that are heating the planet. Their conclusions will feed into a landmark assessment report that will form the basis of negotiations for future climate treaties.

"I would urge the distinguished delegates to exercise a high level of enlightenment," said Rajendra Pachauri, the chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. "The world needs a robust, policy-relevant and informative document."

Experts say that in order to keep global temperature increases below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 F) by the end of the century, [greenhouse gas emissions](#) will have to be cut by 40 percent to 70 percent by 2050. But there are sharp differences between nations over how to achieve this and who will pay for it.

Even the language used to describe the billions of dollars that need to be pumped into climate mitigation efforts has become political, with environmental campaigners favoring the term 'investment' to reflect the long-term return they say can be achieved by switching to clean energy sources.



In this Nov. 19, 2008 file photo Roberto Chudzinski checks solar modules on the roof of the Soemtron AG in Soemmerda, Germany. After concluding that global warming is almost certainly man-made and poses a grave threat to humanity, the U.N.-sponsored expert panel on climate change is moving on to the next phase: what to do about it. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or IPCC, will meet next week in Berlin to chart ways in which the world can curb the greenhouse gas emissions that scientists say are overheating the planet. (AP Photo/Jens Meyer, File)

"Talking about costs is toxic because you don't look at the benefits," said Jan Kowalzig, a [climate policy](#) expert at the campaign group, Oxfam.

A new report released Monday showed that renewable energy, excluding large hydropower plants, increased its share of overall power generation worldwide from 7.8 percent in 2012 to 8.5 percent last year. Since 2006, some \$1.5 trillion has been invested in [renewable energy](#).

But uncertainty about future global energy policy—as well as declining cost of solar power systems—meant the total amount invested in renewables fell by \$35.1 billion to \$214.4 billion, according to the

Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment report released by the U.N. Environment Program.

More information: IPCC website: www.ipcc.ch

© 2014 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: UN climate panel chair calls for 'enlightenment' (2014, April 7) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-04-climate-panel-chair-enlightenment.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.