

Lomborg Sees No U-Turn in Renewable Energy, Carbon Tax Support

By Gelu Sulugiuc - Sep 20, 2010

[Bjoern Lomborg](#), the Danish social scientist known for his opposition to efforts to cut emissions, said taxing carbon dioxide and raising investments in renewable energy are the best ways to limit global warming.

The author of the best-seller, “The Skeptical Environmentalist,” in a new book advocated global spending on developing renewable-energy technologies of about \$100 billion a year and new carbon taxes instead of cap-and-trade programs.

“We should be focusing on investing dramatically more in research and development in green-energy technology,” Lomborg, a professor who runs the [Copenhagen Consensus Center](#), said in an interview in the Danish capital. “I’ve always said global warming is real, that it’s man-made and that it’s an important problem. But the current approach is just not working.”

His think tank, which advises on how to spend aid and development money, said in 2008 that fighting malnutrition and lowering trade barriers should be favored over reducing carbon emissions. While the renewable energy spending he calls for is four times greater than what he had earlier recommended, he said his position on global warming is essentially unchanged.

His new book “[Smart Solutions to Climate Change](#),” published by Cambridge University Press, studies the costs and benefits of various options dealing with climate change. Lomborg, who edited the book and wrote the introduction and conclusion, has in the past garnered attention for challenging United Nations-led efforts to curb carbon emissions that are blamed for global warming.

‘Zero Probability’

Fighting climate change through policies such as the European Union’s goal to reduce carbon emissions to 20 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 would only avoid “a couple of cents of climate change for every dollar spent,” he said. Every dollar spent on research and development of renewable energy “will avoid \$11 of climate change,” he said.

“Do we want to go down a path we know has virtually zero probability of working, or do we

want a path that at least in 20 to 40 years can actually dramatically reduce carbon emissions?” Lomborg said. “[Al Gore](#) says the world is going to come to an end, but I’m not going to embrace any other policy solution except the one we know doesn’t work.”

The \$100 billion for renewable research should be financed by a global carbon tax of \$7 per metric ton of CO₂ that should replace cap-and-trade systems such as the European Trading System, Lomborg said. “This is a theoretically beautiful point, but of course it’s not going to happen in real life.”

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