



Editorial Reviews

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Amazon.com Guest Reviewer: Michael Crichton

In his many science-themed bestsellers--including [The Andromeda Strain](#), [Jurassic Park](#), [Prey](#), and most recently, [Next](#)--Michael Crichton has covered everything from genetically engineered dinosaurs to time travel to nanotechnology run amok. Having cast his own views on the dangers and hysteria surrounding global warming with [State of Fear](#), he turns his pen toward the often controversial Bjørn Lomborg and his latest book, *Cool It: The Skeptical Environmentalist's Guide to Global Warming*.

Bjørn Lomborg is the best-informed and most humane advocate for environmental change in the world today. In contrast to other figures that promote a single issue while ignoring others, Lomborg views the globe as a whole, studies all the problems we face, ranks them, and determines how best, and in what order, we should address them. His first book, [The Skeptical Environmentalist](#), established the importance of a fact-based approach. With later books, [Global Crises](#), [Global Solutions](#) and [How to Spend \\$50 Billion to Make the World a Better Place](#), this mild-mannered Danish statistician has steadily gained new converts. Not surprisingly, *Time Magazine* named him one of the 100 most influential people in the world.

Cool It: The Skeptical Environmentalist's Guide to Global Warming will further enhance Lomborg's reputation for global analysis and thoughtful response. For anyone who wants an overview of the global warming debate from an objective source, this brief text is a perfect place to start. Lomborg is only interested in real problems, and he has no patience with media fear-mongering; he begins by dispatching the myth of the endangered polar bears, showing that this Disneyesque cartoon has no relevance to the real world where polar bear populations are in fact increasing. Lomborg considers the issue in detail, citing sources from Al Gore to the World Wildlife Fund, then demonstrating that polar bear populations have actually increased five fold since the 1960s.

Lomborg then works his way through the concerns we hear so much about: higher temperatures, heat deaths, species extinctions, the cost of cutting carbon, the technology to do it. Lomborg believes firmly in climate change--despite his critics, he's no denier--but his fact-based approach, grounded in economic analyses, leads him again and again to a different view. He reviews published estimates of the cost of climate change, and the cost of addressing it, and concludes that "we actually end up paying more for a partial solution than the cost of the entire problem. That is a bad deal."

In some of the most disturbing chapters, Lomborg recounts what leading climate figures have said about anyone who questions the orthodoxy, thus demonstrating the illiberal, antidemocratic tone of the current debate. Lomborg himself takes the larger view, explaining in detail why the tone of hysteria is inappropriate to addressing the problems we face.

In the end, Lomborg's concerns embrace the planet. He contrasts our concern for climate with other concerns such as HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, and providing clean water to the world. In the end, his ability to put climate in a global perspective is perhaps the book's greatest value. Lomborg and *Cool It* are our best guides to our shared environmental future.

--Michael Crichton

(photo credit: Jonathan Exley)