



The Institute of Quarrying Australia
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QUARRYING 2007 – ABSTRACT
GARTH PLATRIDGE

What you have always wanted to know about climate change

Despite an enormous publicity campaign to the contrary, there is still a lot to argue about in the global warming controversy. The fundamental questions still remain. Will global warming be significant? If it is significant, will it have much real impact on man and beast? If there is an impact, will it be good or bad? If it is bad, should we spend our money now on prevention or wait till later and simply adapt to the change?

This talk will take a quick canter through the basic science of the issue in an attempt to identify those things which might in principle (and those other things which almost certainly will not) be predictable about future climate. Global-warming forecasts will be discussed in the context of their associated uncertainty. From there the talk will consider the possible economic consequences of climate change, and the not-so-esoteric question of the relative benefits associated with prevention and adaption. The case for present action is far from open and shut.

And finally there is the interesting political question as to why the climate-change issue has travelled so far and so fast over the last 18 months – this bearing in mind that the fundamental knowledge of climate science hasn't changed much over the last 18 years.