

**Now You See It,  
Now You Don't**

# The Psychological Framing of Radical Emission Reductions

'Radical' means *root*. The root cause of emissions is fossil fuels.

Control the supply of fossil fuels ...

... and we *automatically* control the emissions which occur when those fuels are burnt somewhere down the line.

**To turn down a sprinkler, do you block up the holes - or simply turn off the tap a bit?**

Cap & Share [1] delivers radical reductions by looking upstream

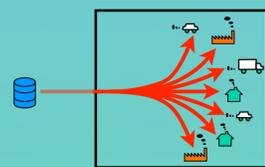
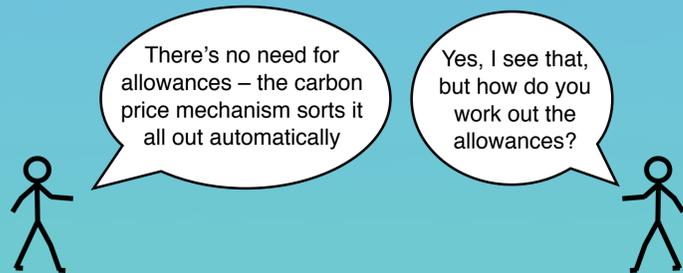
But Cap & Share often encounters blocks to understanding

Blocks are often the result of 'framing' which rules things *out*

But frames also smuggle 'Trojan Horse' assumptions *in*

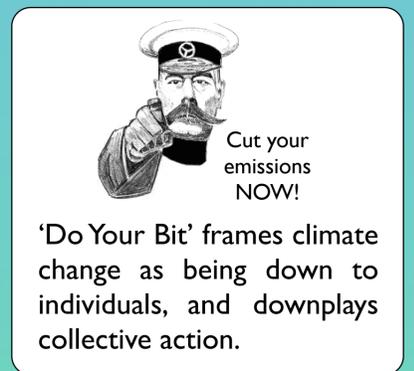
Looking at frames uncovers assumptions which can then be examined

Doing this for global governance may lead to new - radical - ways forward



Radical emission reductions

Frames (often unconsciously) impede discussion, or even comprehension, of concepts 'outside the frame'. A frame focussing on emissions themselves will block consideration of 'upstream' approaches. And frames in conventional politics and economics all too often exclude 'radical' ideas.



People sometimes think of upstream and downstream approaches in terms of taxes and rations respectively. In each case we use the more concrete concept as a tool to get a cognitive hold on the more abstract one. But the result is that framing assumptions can then lead to faulty reasoning [2].

### Rations frame

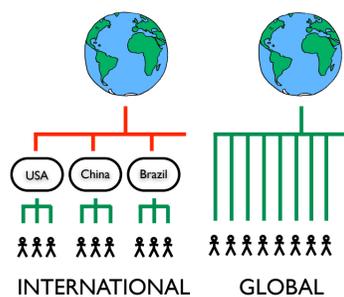
rations are ...  
**temporary;**  
**fixed by what's available;**  
**equal;**  
**with strong taboos against stealing / trading.**

### Taxes frame

taxes are ...  
**long-lived;**  
**subject to debate;**  
**unequal (with rationale);**  
**with only weak taboos against avoidance.**

### Do we need international agreements?

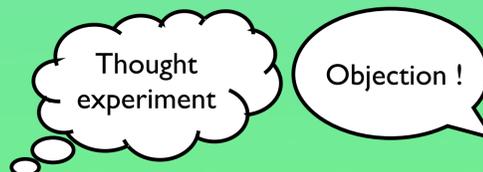
The *international* approach combines actions taken by sovereign nations, according to an agreed formula. Of course, agreeing the formula is where negotiations break down.



A *global* scheme would be simpler. Cap & Share (for example) can operate as a single global scheme for the world as a whole. This bypasses nations, except perhaps as a vehicle for transmitting the funds to their populations.

**It's global warming, not international warming!**

Imagine a global scheme to keep fossil fuels in the ground: a Global Climate Trust [1], run perhaps by the UN, operating a global Cap & Share system. What better symbol could there be of our collective efforts to solve our common problems?



Objectors to this idea might question the legitimacy of such a Trust. Inside the 'world consists of nations' frame, legitimacy can only come from the support of national governments [3]. But what of other frames?

Laurence Matthews  
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### Cap & Share

Cap & Share is simple and transparent; fair; cheap and fast to implement; effective and efficient [4]. It's the simplest, least intrusive way of achieving reductions in emissions (even radical ones), with minimal interference in existing economic and governmental systems. See [www.capandshare.org](http://www.capandshare.org) for details (and a colour copy of this poster).

### References

- [1] Davey, Brian, ed. (2010). *Sharing for Survival*. Dublin: Feasta.
- [2] Matthews, Laurence (2010). 'Upstream, Downstream', *Climate Policy* 10 (4), 477-480
- [3] Goldin, Ian. (2013). *Divided Nations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [4] Douthwaite, Richard and Fallon, Gillian, eds. (2010). *Fleeing Vesuvius*. Dublin: Feasta.