Climate change? What climate change? Brown addresses the CBI…

written by Clive Bates | 5 December 2006



What does Gordon Brown really *feel* about climate change and the Stern review? Right at the moment of the Stern launch, the Chancellor weighed in with what I felt was a kind of relief mixed with complacency, an assertion that, fundamentally, not much needs to change: "*the world does not need to choose between averting climate change and promoting growth and development*" [see Stern review speech].

But to be fair, he did announce that his entire economic framework was to have a new third strand: "[Stern's] report confirms that if in the 20th century our national economic ambitions were the twin objectives of achieving stable economic growth and full employment, now, in the 21st century our new objectives will be threefold: growth, full employment and environmental care".

You could be forgiven for expecting to see some development of the major new idea:

So profound was this change of direction that by the time he got to the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) on 28th November, less than a month after the Stern launch, he felt able not to mention climate change or Stern at all [see CBI speech]. He had an opportunity to frame his message to business around climate change and he ducked it completely. I'm left wondering if he is remotely serious about this, and hoping for something that looks like he is taking this seriously in the pre-Budget report tomorrow (6th December).