

Dimitri Zenghelis, Principal Research Fellow at the Grantham Research Institute at the London School of Economics and an Associate Fellow at Chatham House, UK

London, UK

What event most shaped the course of the global environment?

Mr. ZENGHELIS: Katrina, the Rio Earth Summit, Kyoto, the seminal work of climate scientists.



If we are to meet environmental challenges on a global scale, what one policy initiative do you think would have the most significant impact?

Mr. ZENGHELIS: None. For the world to transition to a low-carbon resource-efficient economy, policy must be integrated, coherent, and mutually reinforcing. There is no single magic trigger or bullet. In which case, the best overarching initiative would be a public awareness campaign focusing not just on climate risks, but on a clear line of sight as to what can be done to transition, and how economically efficient and innovative such a world might look. This would then provide the basis for a coherent policy push.

Given that the public and governmental debates on environmental issues are mired in indecisiveness, what do you think is the most constructive path to achieving active working relationships with all members of society?

Mr. ZENGHELIS: The most constructive path to achieve active working relationships with all members of society would be to move the debate out of the realm of the usual suspects (e.g., NGOs, environment ministries, eco-lobbies) to the realm of business and economics (e.g., finance ministries, the IMF and World Bank, and the financial press). This must be articulated as a growth story and not as an environment story. This is a prerequisite for fully engaging society, and helping to make it resilient to lobbying by commercial interests opposed to change.

BIOGRAPHY

Dimitri Zenghelis is a Principal Research Fellow at the Grantham Research Institute at the LSE and an Associate Fellow at Chatham House. He was recently Senior Economic Advisor to Cisco's long-term innovation group. Previously, he headed the Stern Review Team at the Office of Climate Change, London, and was a senior economist working with Lord Stern on the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change, commissioned by the then-Chancellor Gordon Brown. He continues to act as an advisor to the UK Government and to Lord Stern at the LSE. He is an Associate Fellow at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House). Before working on climate change, Dimitri was Head of Economic Forecasting and Head of the Macroeconomic Analysis Branch at HM Treasury. He provided regular briefings to the Chancellor Gordon Brown and Prime Minister Tony Blair.

The Stern Review is widely acclaimed as the most comprehensive study to date of the economics of climate change. It was intended not just to inform UK policymaking—the UK makes up only 2% of global greenhouse gas emissions—but also to underpin discussions about the wider international policy framework and provide a common understanding of the key issues. Lord Stern's report was submitted to the Chancellor and the Prime Minister on 30 October 2006. Dimitri Zenghelis was lead author on the costs of mitigation, model analyses and comparisons, and “competitiveness” impacts, and a significant contributor to the conceptual, theoretical, and ethical framework adopted in analyzing the economics of climate change. He also led in disseminating and presenting the Review post-publication.

Prior to joining HM Treasury Dimitri worked as a consultant with Oxford Economic Forecasting, and at the Institute of International Finance, Washington, DC, on East Asian and Southeast Asia trade and investment flows, and macro economic policy. He also worked for Tokai Bank Europe, London. In the early 1990s, Dimitri was a Senior Economic Advisor for the Liberal Democrats, House of Commons, London. His university education was at St Hugh's College Oxford and Bristol University.

Dimitri is an artist and a published photographer. His interests range from architecture to philosophy of science, and despite being born with two left feet, he enjoys rock-climbing, skiing, and advanced nitrox scuba diving.