

## 1 **Stopping climate change**

2 *(Original at [http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=15017322](http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=15017322))*

3 A two-week meeting starts in Copenhagen on December 7th. Some 100 world  
4 leaders are coming to Denmark to renew the Kyoto protocol on climate. If things  
5 go according to plan, an agreement to cut emissions will be struck to avert a rise  
6 in temperature that might turn out to be marginal and self-correcting.

7 It might; and then again it might not. Uncertainty about the consequences of  
8 climate change makes it hard to persuade people to spend money on it, for  
9 where the damage is uncertain, so are the benefits of averting it.

10 Yet these benefits are incalculably large. And the costs of doing so should not be  
11 enormous—as little as 1% of global output, if policy is well designed. The  
12 problem is not a lack of low-carbon technologies. Electricity can be generated by  
13 nuclear fission, hydropower, biomass, wind and solar energy; and cars and  
14 lorries can run on electricity or biofuels. Nor is the problem an economic one. A  
15 percentage point of global economic output is affordable for a worthwhile project.  
16 Saving the banks has cost around 5% of global output.

17 So the problem is both simpler and cheaper to fix than most people think. But  
18 mankind has to agree on how to share out the costs, both between and within  
19 countries. That splits into two challenges. The first is to get an international deal,  
20 which is what world leaders are trying to do at Copenhagen. The second is to  
21 implement that deal at a national level, with better policies than those currently  
22 in place. Otherwise the cost will be far more than that 1%.

## Questions:

- 1) Read through paragraph 1 (lines 3 to 6). Why are world leaders meeting in Copenhagen and what is expected to come from the meeting?
- 2) 'Rise in temperature that might turn out to be marginal and self-correcting' (line 6) – what is the meaning of this phrase? Can you give it in your own words?
- 3) Why is it so difficult to persuade people (and governments) to spend money on fighting climate change?
- 4) What about the cost of the action to stop climate change - are they far too high? What about the means for tackling climate change – are they available?
- 5) What are, according to the text, the two chief problems to be tackled with respect to climate change?
- 6) In linguistics, *modals* are expressions broadly associated with notions of possibility and necessity. These may be modal verbs (like *must*) but also other words like adverbs (*probably, certainly, allegedly*) or even verb phrases (*seem to be...*). Scan the text for modals and decide what their role is.
- 7) 'challenges' (line 19) – give synonyms for this word.
- 8) 'Fix a problem' (line 17) is a common *collocation* (two or more words frequently used together). Are you familiar with other words that go with 'problem'?
- 9) Now, having thoroughly read and analyzed the text, give a brief summary of it, focusing on the main ideas (the *message* of the text).
- 10) What is your opinion on climate change and the Copenhagen summit? Do you think fighting global warming and reducing CO2 emissions is worthwhile?

## Vocabulary:

go according to plan (5) – to happen as expected

strike an agreement (5) – to agree/ to come to an understanding/ to approve collectively/ get a deal

implement (21) - to fulfil; perform; carry out

otherwise (21) – under other circumstances/ if that is not the case

You can find additional explanation and more examples to help you understand and use English words and phrases at <http://dictionary.reference.com>, <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>, or <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Přejeme Vám mnoho studijních úspěchů.

Tým jazykové skupiny Spěváček: