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AVOID e-Bulletin Issue 2 (January 2012)

Is dangerous climate change avoidable?

The AVOID programme provides scientific advice to the UK Government on what is potentially dangerous climate change and pathways for avoiding it. This bulletin highlights some recent key pieces of work that AVOID has produced. [Read more about AVOID...](#)

AVOID studies China's pathways to a low-carbon energy system

AVOID researchers, together with officials from the Department of Energy and Climate Change ([DECC](#)), travelled to China to discuss technology options for meeting a 2050 emissions target consistent with the global 2°C goal. A combination of significant decarbonisation of the electricity sector, energy efficiency across all the sectors and the introduction of technologies such as electric vehicles will provide elements of a low-carbon future for China. [Read the AVOID Report...](#)

Assessment of dangerous climate change impacts for COP-17

The AVOID programme provided a major contribution to a new set of scientific reports on observed climate change and future potential impacts. Funded by DECC, the study focused on more than twenty countries, with engagement from scientists in those countries. This up-to-date synthesis strengthens the scientific evidence that warming in excess of 2°C could have damaging and widespread impacts. However, for modest amounts of climate change some beneficial effects may occur, although the uncertainty in projecting future impacts remains large. [Read more...](#)

The reports were launched at the 17th Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Durban last December and introduced by UK Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, Chris Huhne MP, alongside ministers from Bangladesh and Mexico. There was wide coverage of the findings in UK and international media.

What part can carbon capture play in emissions reduction?

Analysis by AVOID of proposed technologies for removing CO₂ directly from the atmosphere has been used to inform the [DECC 2050 Pathways Calculator](#). The Calculator demonstrates how near-term planning is critical for achieving long-term climate goals, and helps build understanding of the choices that need to be made over the next 40 years.

The AVOID study looks at the potential for CO₂ removal technologies to help the UK achieve its emissions reduction target for 2050, examining their technical and economic viability, as well as their environmental impact. This work was also recently used to inform a position paper by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers on carbon capture directly from air and a report on negative emissions commissioned by Friends of the Earth. [Read the AVOID report...](#)

Improved estimates of regional benefits of mitigated emissions

The AVOID programme has become the first to produce an ensemble of complex earth system models to assess regional climate change for a future pathway with large emission reductions. This new approach places previous understanding of how likely it is that global warming could be limited to 2°C on a much stronger footing and has allowed a more complete investigation of the spatial distribution of projected climate changes, including the impacts on the Greenland ice sheet and Amazon forests.

The results confirm 2°C as an achievable but challenging target, and quantifies the spread in regional benefits of limiting warming. [Read more...](#)

www.avoid.uk.net

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Future bulletins are planned for each quarter.

If you do not wish to receive emails from the AVOID programme please send an email to:

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