

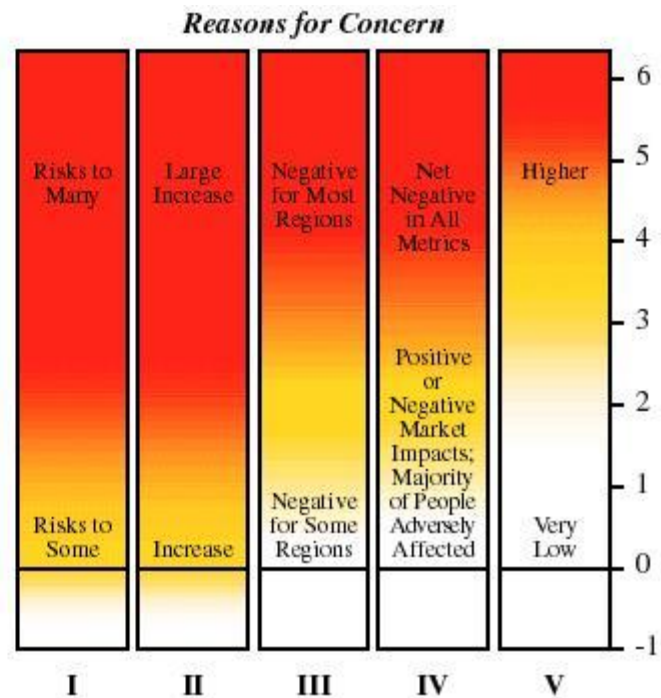
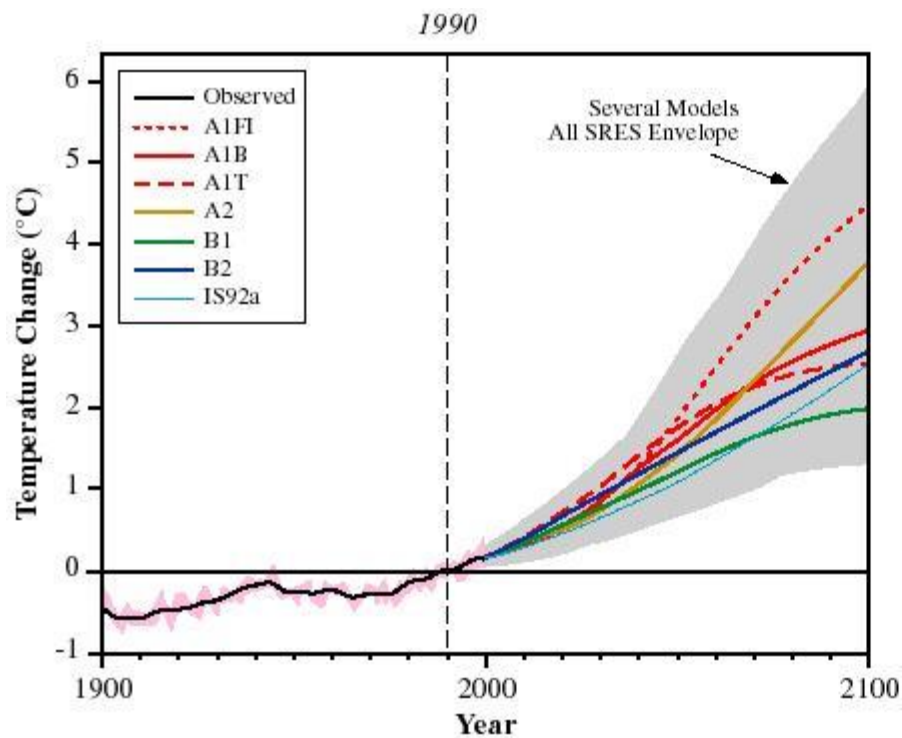


# Visual cultures of the IPCC

**Objectivity, judgment, futures**

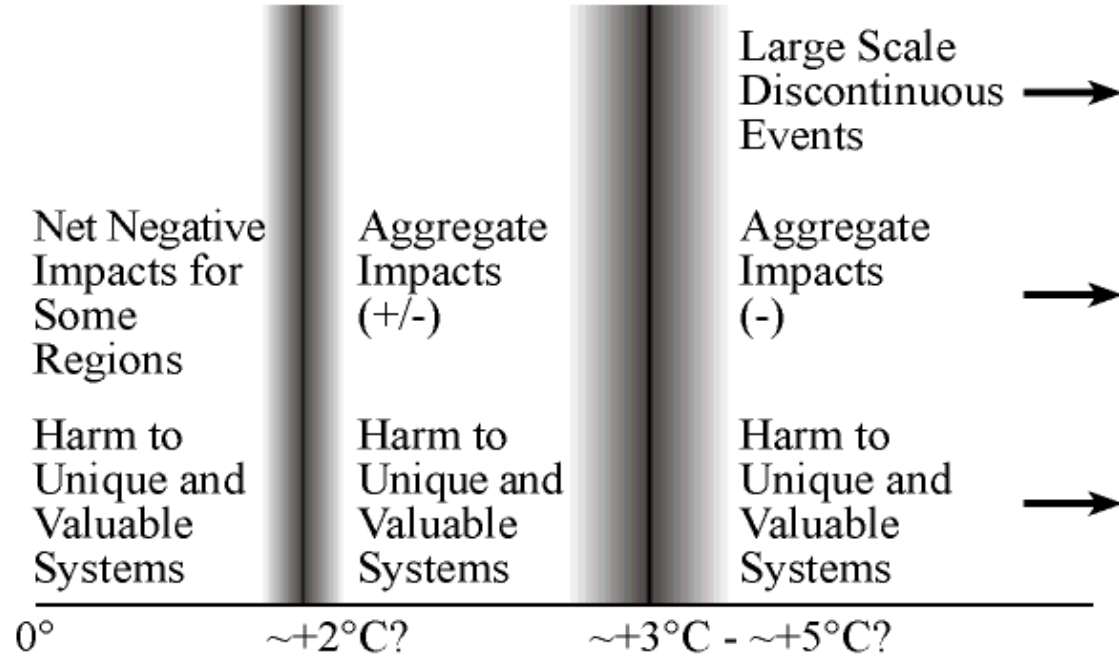
Martin Mahony

Department of Geography, King's College London



- I Risks to Unique and Threatened Systems
- II Risks from Extreme Climate Events
- III Distribution of Impacts
- IV Aggregate Impacts
- V Risks from Future Large-Scale Discontinuities

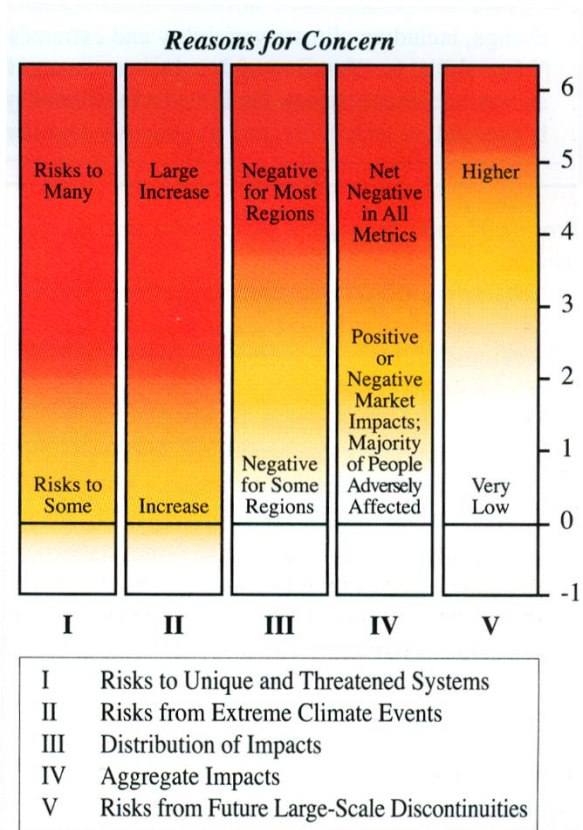
Figure x-x  
Climate Change Risks Synthesis

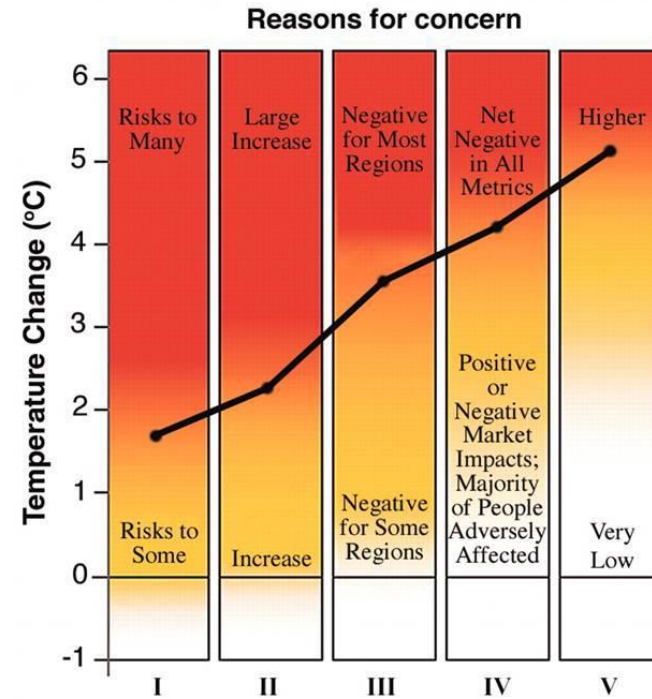
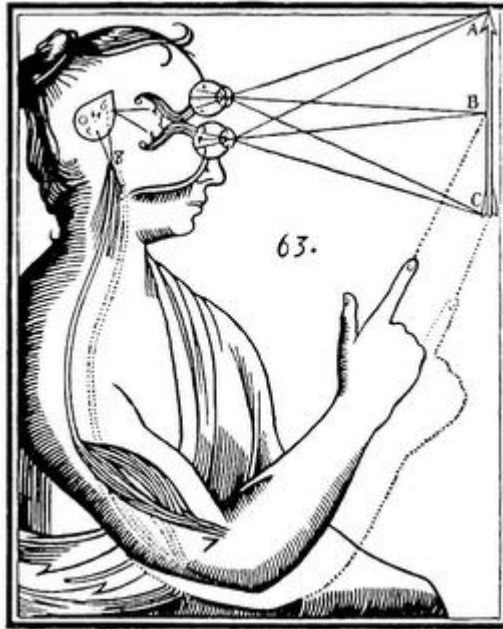


‘I guess the *robust* thing to say is if you’re looking for an algorithm, a piece of analysis that calculates the number, we didn’t have that. We were looking at the evidence and then using value judgements, and portraying that by being cloudy and making the colours sort of mesh into each other.’

‘the chart is sort of skilfully blurred to make sure you don’t have an on-off switch. [We] deliberately didn’t want that, because we weren’t able to say ‘1.9 degrees good, 2.1 degrees bad’. It doesn’t work that way, so we blurred it’

‘we changed things to a bit more red than we actually had agreed on, but everybody was so exhausted of fighting about this that we all just said ‘fuck it, nobody’s going to take this seriously’, which was a big mistake because people did take it seriously.’





- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| I   | Risks to Unique and Threatened Systems        |
| II  | Risks from Extreme Climate Events             |
| III | Distribution of Impacts                       |
| IV  | Aggregate Impacts                             |
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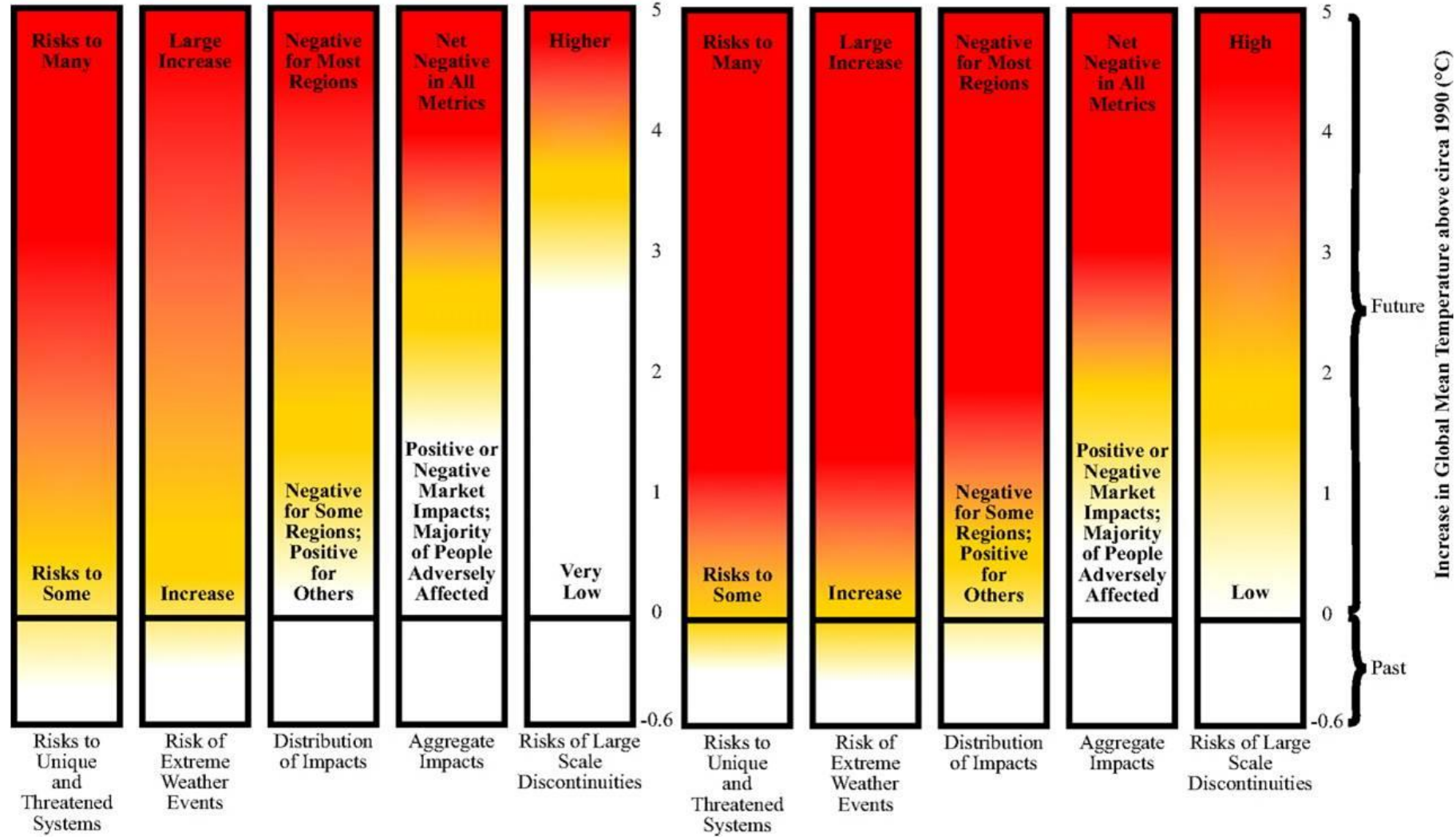
Mastrandrea & Schneider, 2004

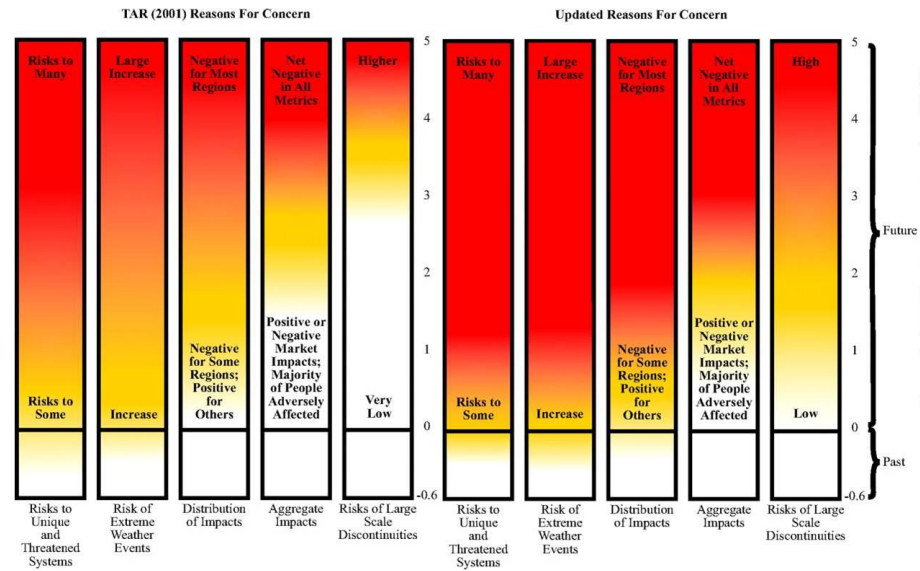
“The conceptual movement from the landslide of immensity to the pleasure of asserting the control of reason (from a distance) can be seen as a form of transcendence, albeit one that restores the originary condition of control. The movement is from ‘form’ to ‘formless’ then back to ‘form’. The mathematical sublime [referencing Kant] can be seen as a negative moment between two forms of ordering, that of immensity and that of reason” (Yusoff 2009, *Society & Space*)

# Situating objectivity

TAR (2001) Reasons For Concern

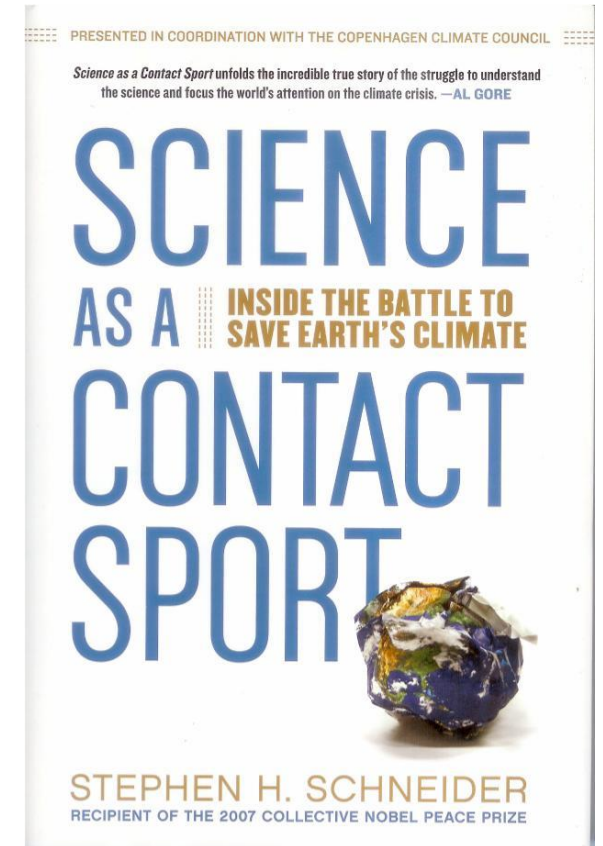
Updated Reasons For Concern



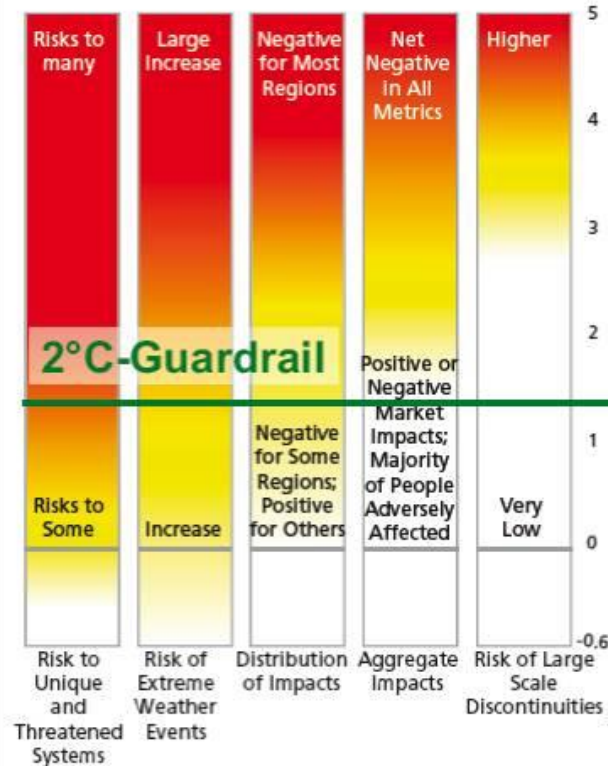


Smith  
*et al.*,  
2009

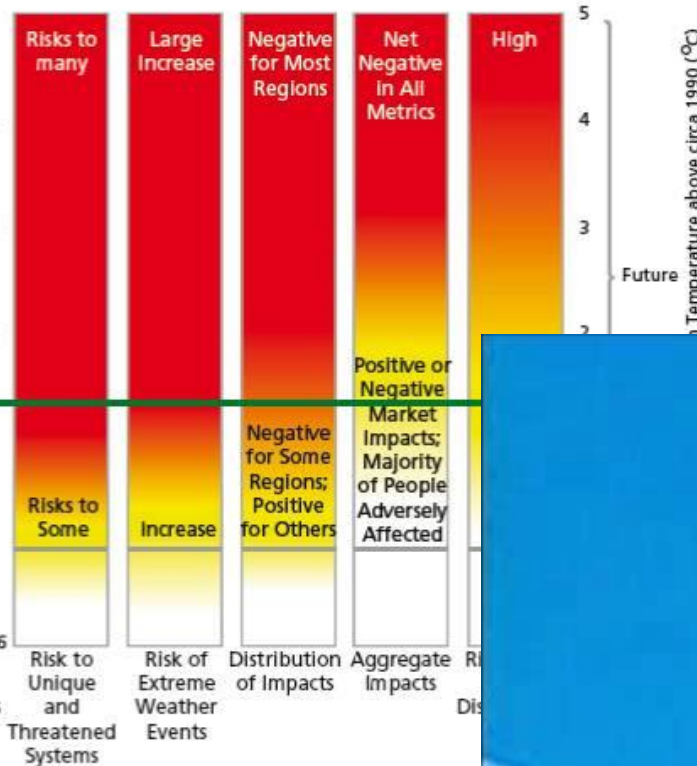
“....the diagram's bright orange gradients of levels of risk from increments of warming were too subjective. In its place the report used written descriptions of levels of risk. Because words are less powerful than a colorful, iconic chart, many from Europe, Canada, New Zealand, and small island states demanded to include it. Unfortunately, governments of the four big fossil-fuel dependent and producing nations opposed it.”



TAR (2001) Reasons for Concern<sup>21</sup>



Updated (2009) Reasons for Concern<sup>31</sup>

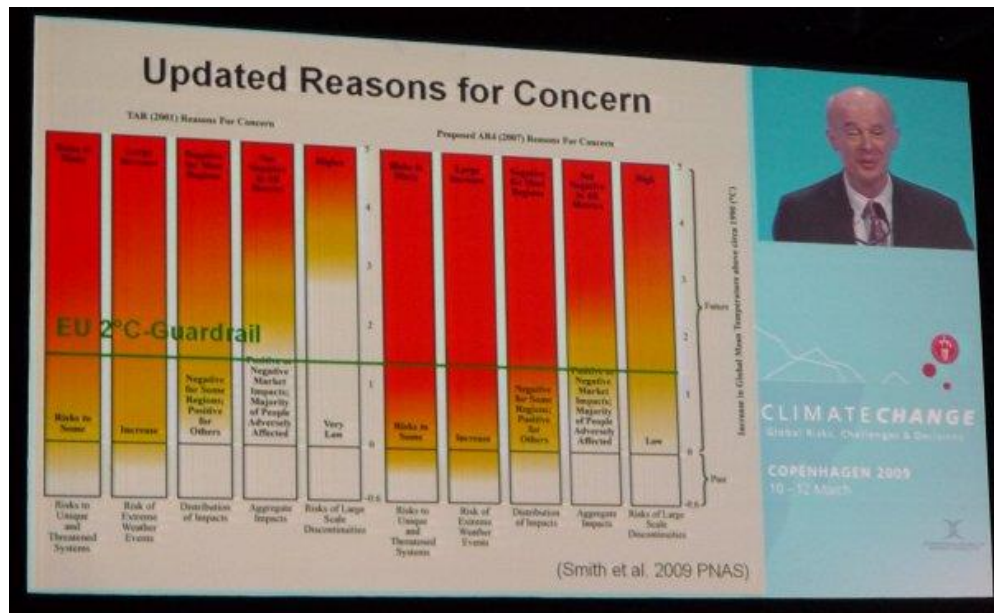


2°C-Guardrail



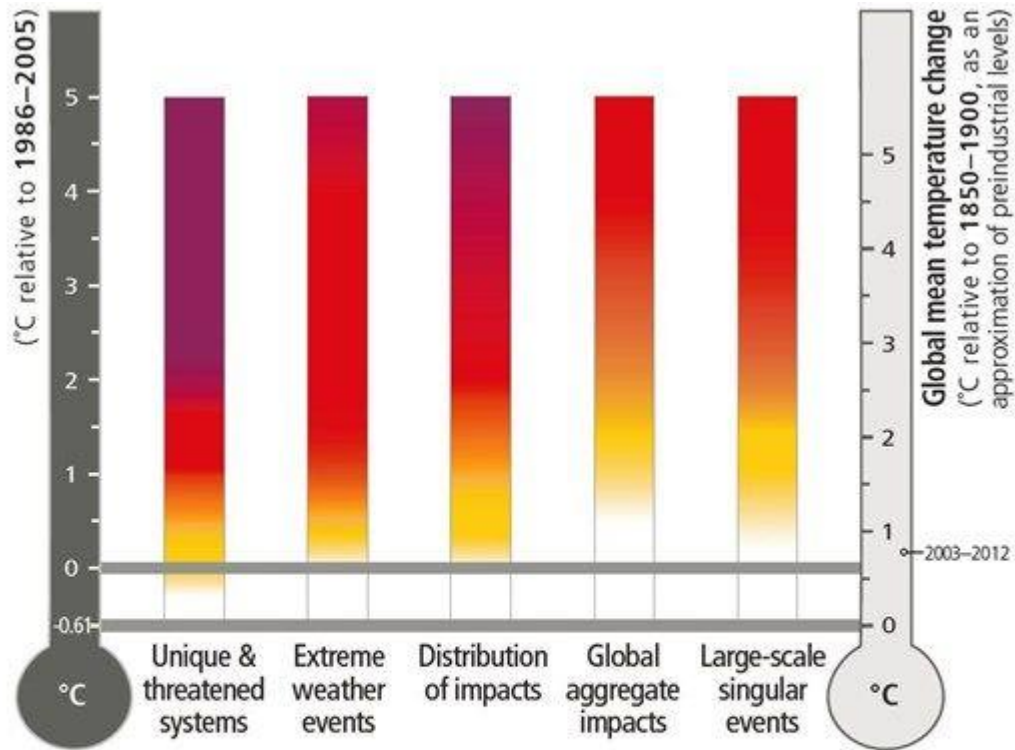


‘one person approached me at one of the COPs, I think in Copenhagen, and said ‘the burning embers shows that 2°C is too high’, so I said ‘no, no it does not.’ 2°C in the new one – I think it’s within the range of where we describe that transitions could occur’



‘I think the burning embers served a function in their original form, and then particularly in the [new] form, of validating the 2°C target. Because all you have to do is look at where the danger zone or the highlighting starts to get darker on the burning embers and...lay a 2°C target on top of that, and it becomes fairly clear that 2°C is...one sensible way you can look at the information, and it drops out at you very quickly.’

Global mean temperature change



Level of additional risk due to climate change



2014

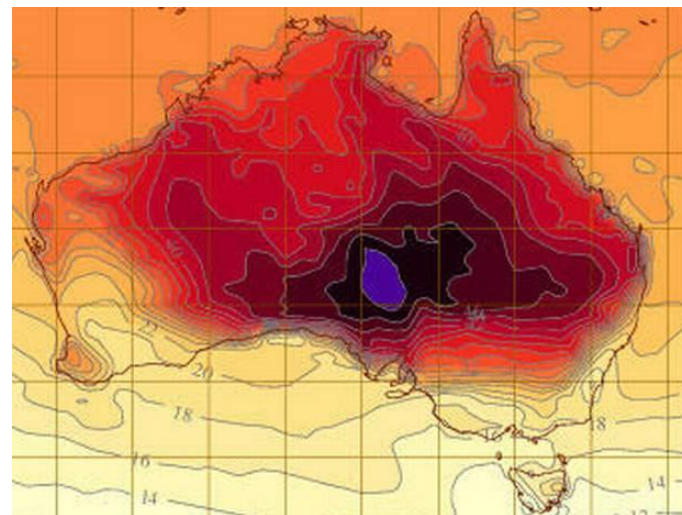
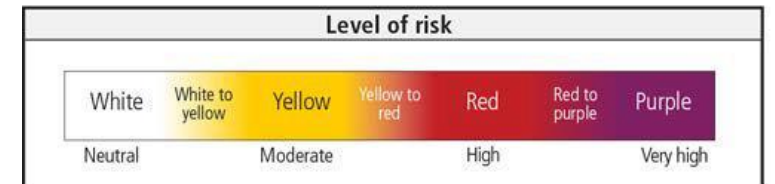
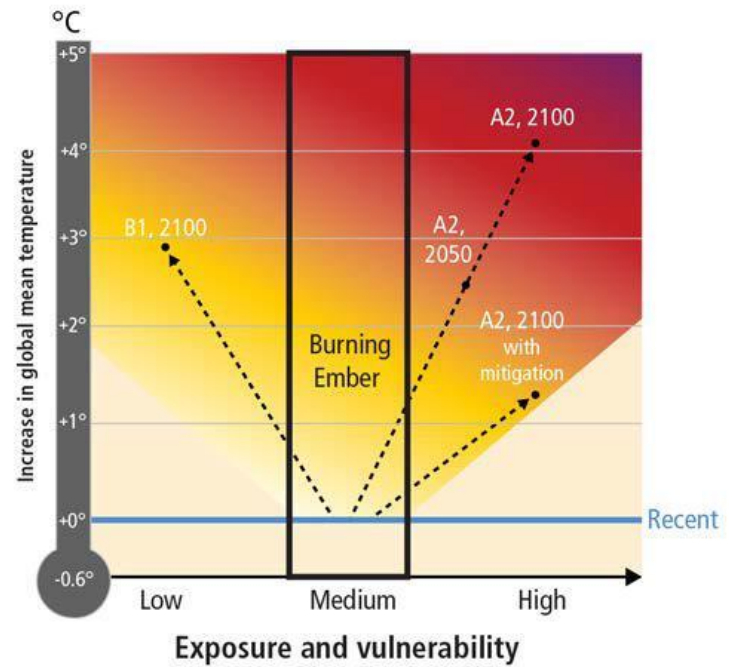
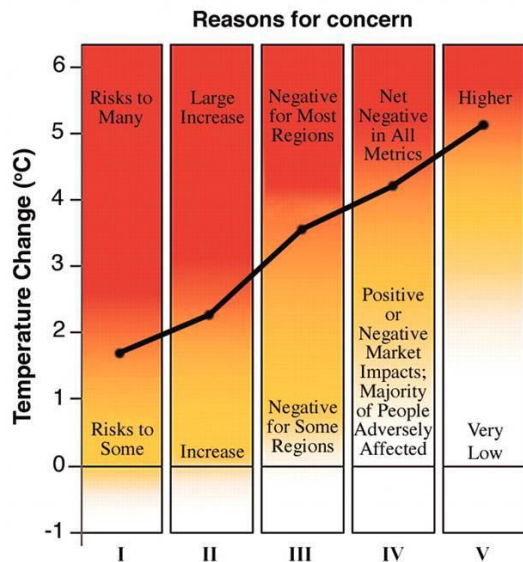
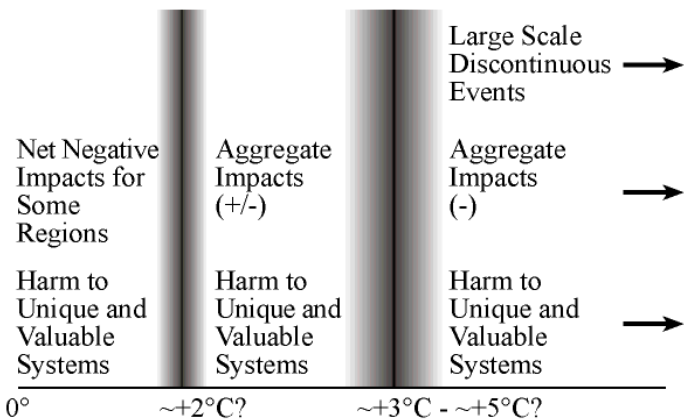


Figure x-x  
Climate Change Risks Synthesis



# Objectivity, judgment, futures

