

# Top-Down Decarbonization

EES 3310/5310

Global Climate Change

Jonathan Gilligan

Class #26: Monday Oct. 22 2018



Announcement  
No office hour today (Monday)

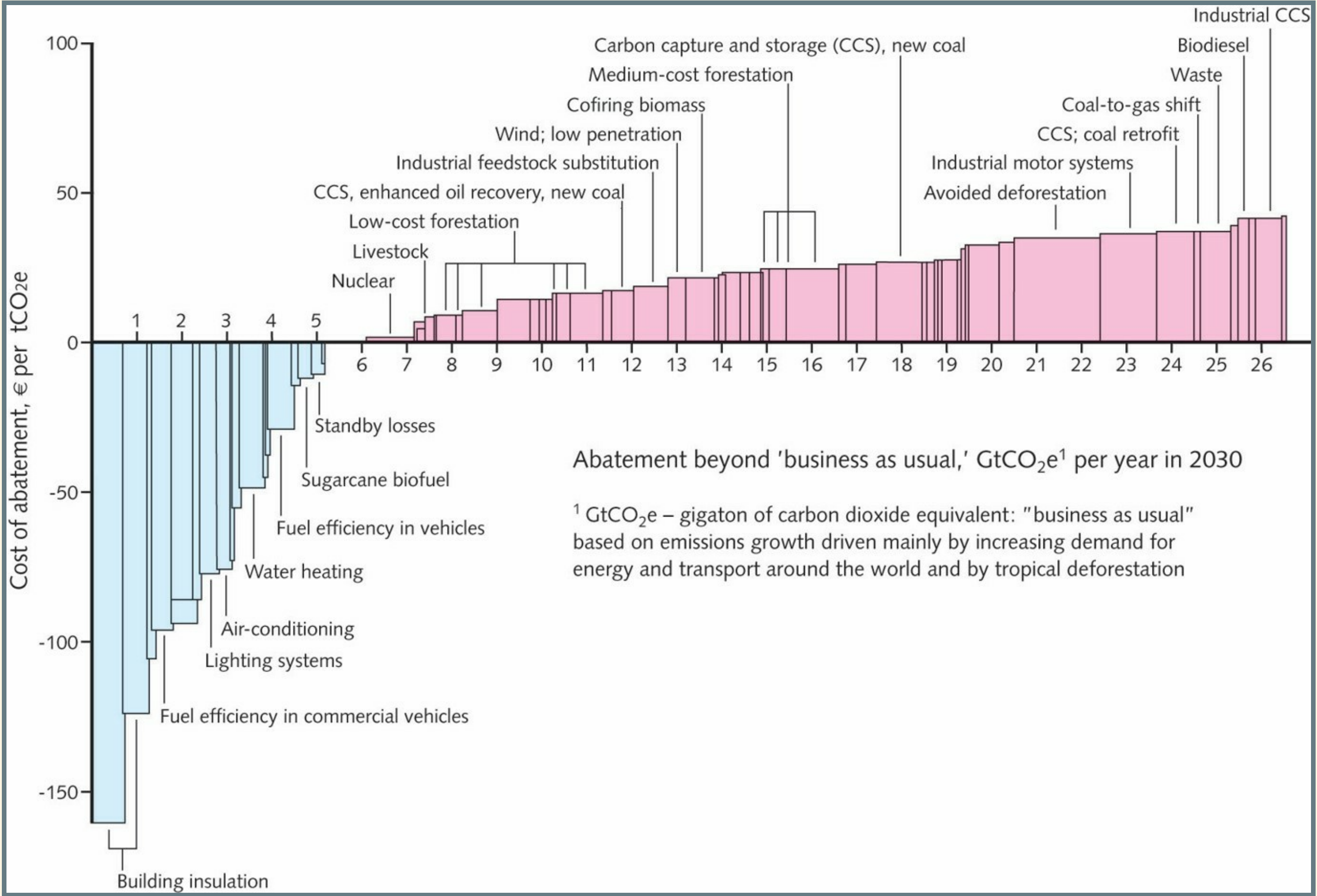
# Considerations on Projections of Future Emissions

# Grain of Salt

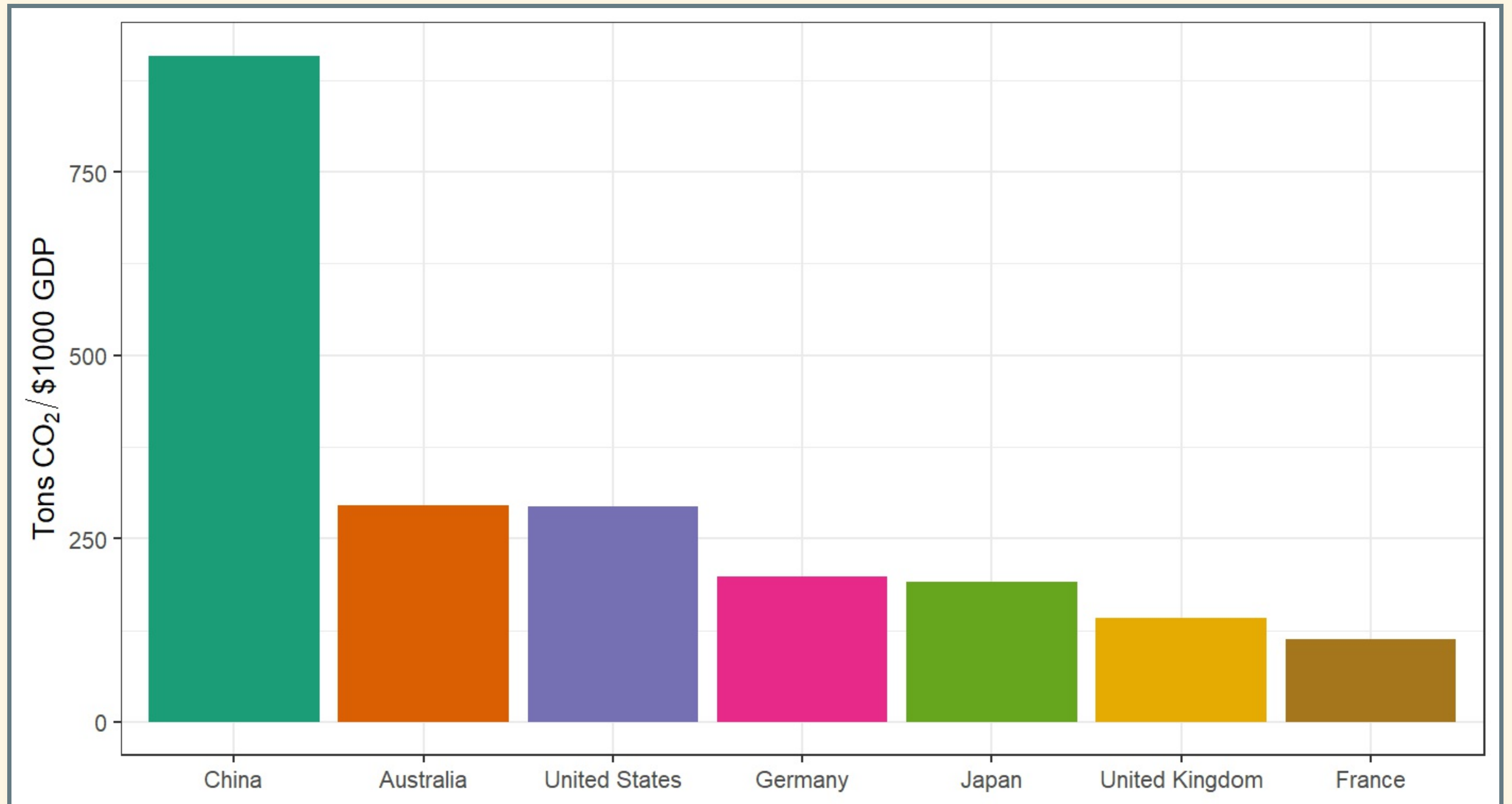
- Implied decarbonization rates depend on predictions of  $P$ ,  $G$ , etc.
- Predicting population and economic growth are very tricky and imprecise.
- So take any of these calculations with a grain of salt.
- But are they still useful, despite the uncertainties?

# How Can We Decarbonize?

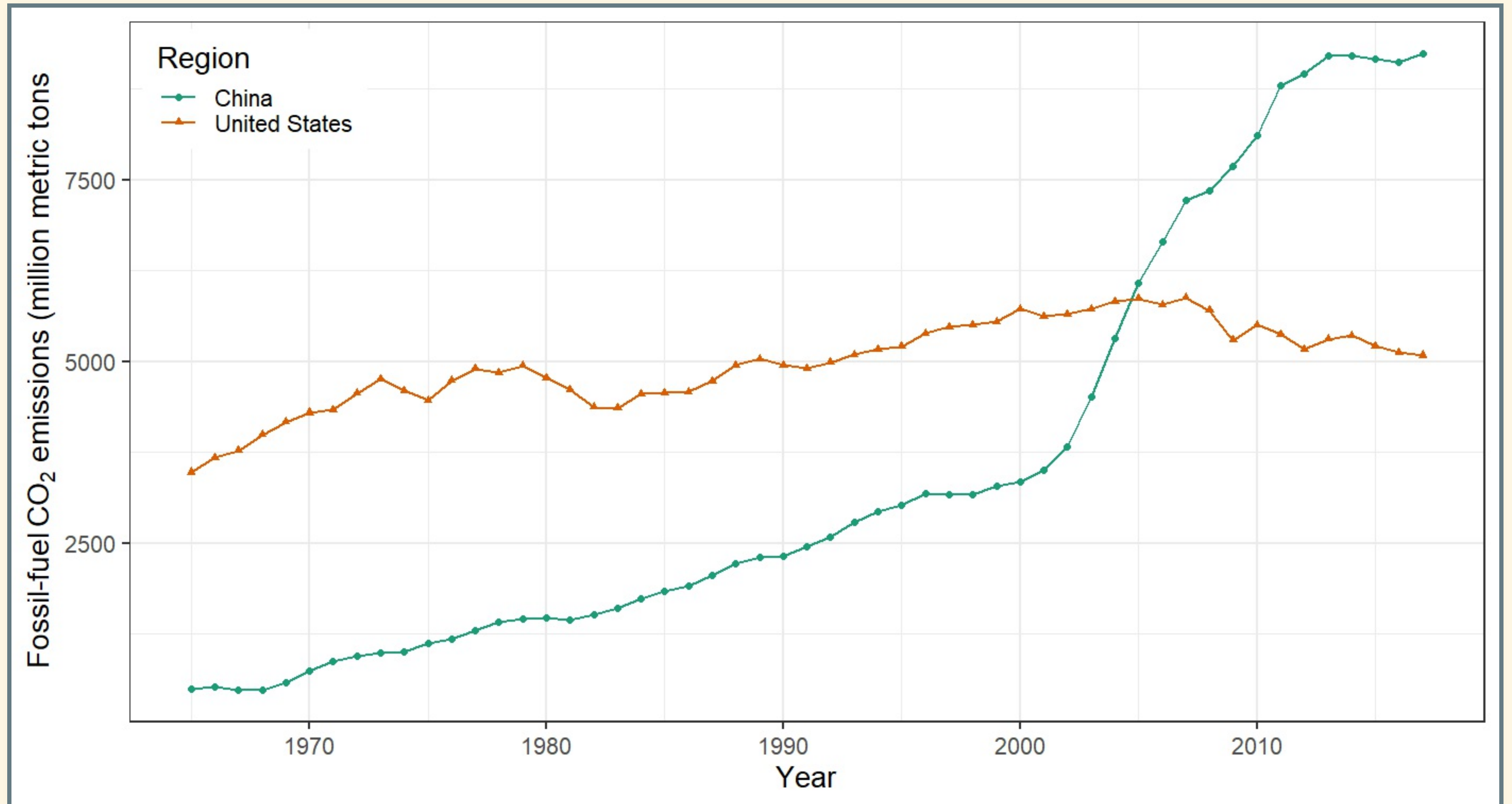
# Detailed Abatement Options



# Economic Carbon Intensity in 2017

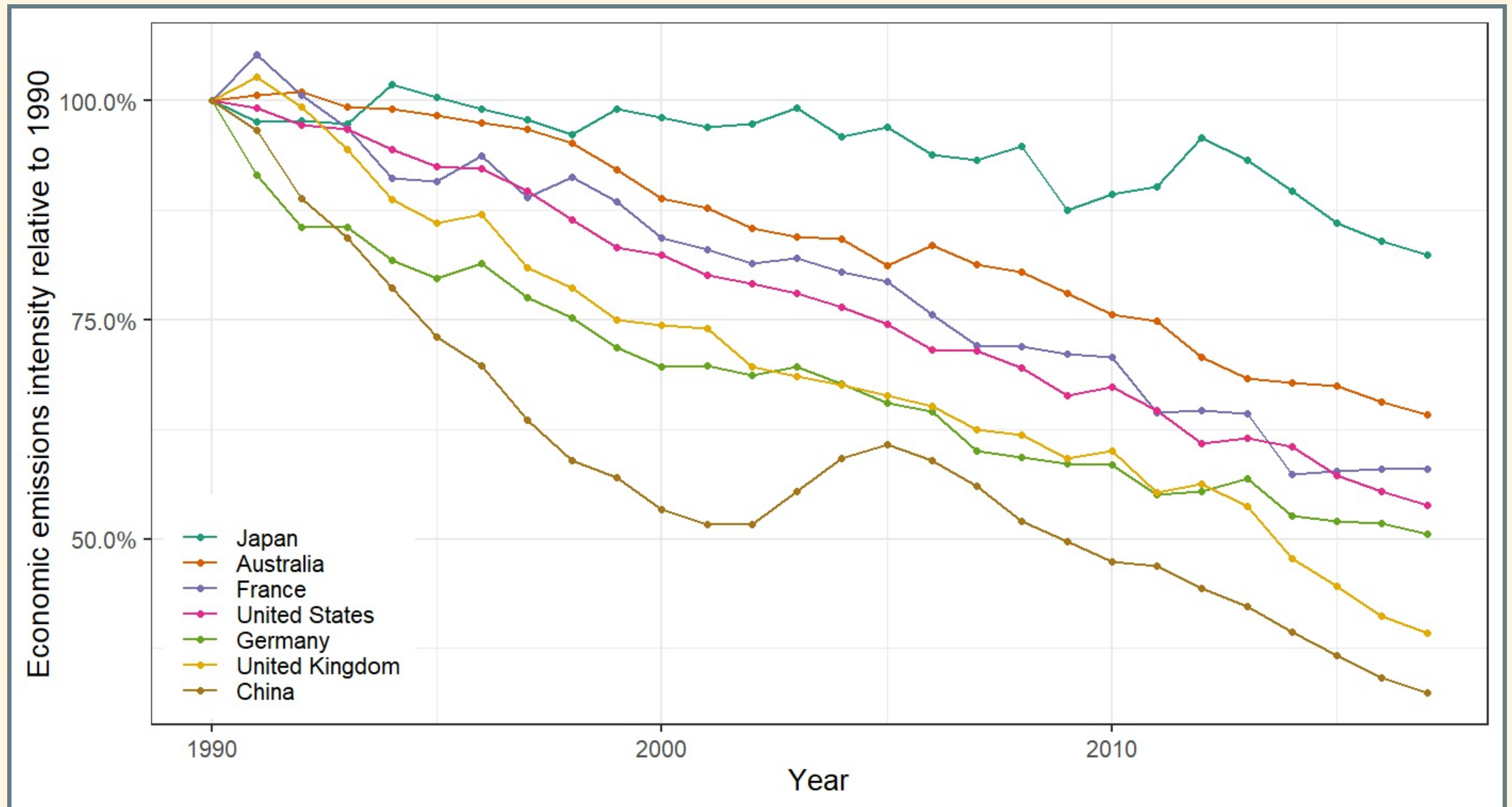


# CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 1965–2017





# Relative improvement in carbon intensity 1990–2017

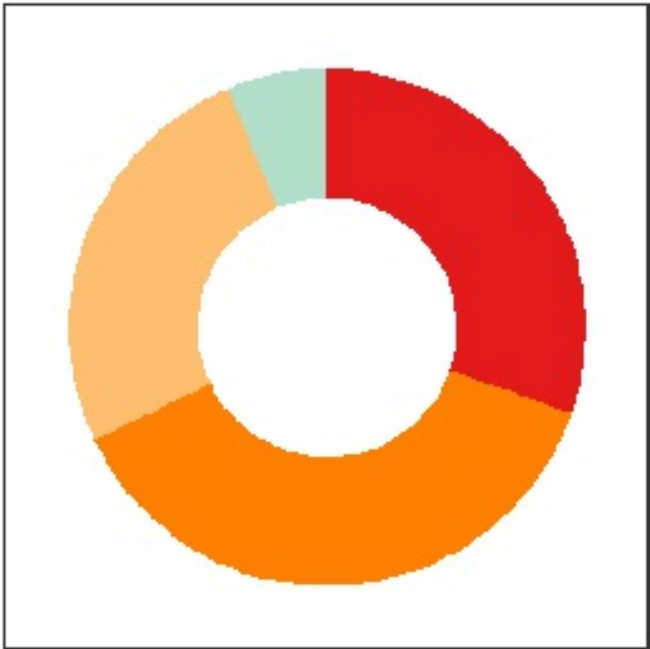


# Top-Down Analysis for Australia

# Projected Energy Use in 2050

- Energy Information Administration top-down projection for energy demand in Australia in 2050:
  - Total 2050 Primary Energy Use = 9.44 Quads
  - Assume  $P$ ,  $g$ , and  $e$  are fixed.
  - Manage emissions by reducing  $f$ 
    - switch from fossil fuels to clean energy

# Energy Mix in 2017



Fuel

- Coal: 1.68 quads (30.3%)
- Oil: 2.08 quads (37.6%)
- Natural Gas: 1.43 quads (25.8%)
- Nuclear: 0 quads (0%)
- Renewables: 0.35 quads (6.3%)

Fuel	Quads	%
Coal	1.68	30.3
Natural Gas	1.43	25.8
Oil	2.08	37.6
Nuclear	0.00	0.0
Renewables	0.35	6.3
Total	5.53	100.0

# Emissions Factors

Fuel	MMT CO <sub>2</sub> per Quad
Coal	94
Oil	70
Natural Gas	53
Nuclear	0
Renewables	0

## Projected Business as Usual Emissions in 2050

Fuel	%	Quads	MMT/Quad	MMT CO <sub>2</sub>
Coal	30	2.86	94	270
Natural Gas	26	2.44	53	129
Oil	38	3.55	70	248
Nuclear	0	0.00	0	0
Renewables	6	0.60	0	0
Total	100	9.44	NA	648

# Top-down emissions-reduction

Fuel	%	Quads	MMT/Quad	MMT CO <sub>2</sub>
Coal	30	2.86	94	270
Natural Gas	26	2.44	53	129
Oil	38	3.55	70	248
Nuclear	0	0.00	0	0
Renewables	6	0.60	0	0
Total	100	9.44	NA	648

- Projected emissions for 2050 (no change in  $f$ ): 648 MMT
- Emissions goal for 2050 = 139 MMT
- Must cut by  $(648 - 139) = 509$  MMT
- Start with coal:
  - Cut 270 MMT (2.86 quads)
  - 239 MMT left
- Next, cut gas:
  - Cut 129 MMT (2.44 quads)
  - 110 MMT left
- Finally, cut oil:
  - Cut 110 MMT (1.57 quads)
- Total energy cuts =  $2.86 + 2.44 + 1.57 = 6.87$  quads.

# Clean Energy Sources

- 11,000 megawatts (MW) for one year = 1 quad
  - (See Climate Fix, p. 97)
- **Nuclear Power Plant:**
  - $1000 \text{ MW} \times 75.0\% \text{ efficiency} = \mathbf{750 \text{ MW average}}$
  - $1 \text{ quad per year} = 11,000 \text{ MW} / (750 \text{ MW per nuclear plant}) = \mathbf{14.7 \text{ nuclear plants}}$
- **Concentrated Solar Power:**
  - $10 \text{ MW} \times 33.0\% \text{ efficiency} = \mathbf{3 \text{ MW average}}$
  - $\mathbf{1 \text{ quad} = 3,300 \text{ concentrated solar-thermal plants}}$
- **Wind Turbine:**
  - $2.5 \text{ MW} \times 33.0\% \text{ efficiency} = \mathbf{1 \text{ MW average}}$
  - $\mathbf{1 \text{ quad} = 13,300 \text{ wind turbines}}$



# Meeting Australia's Goal

- Cut CO<sub>2</sub> by 509 MMT
  - 270 MMT from coal (2.86 quad)
  - 129 MMT from gas (2.44 quad)
  - 110 MMT from oil (1.57 quad)
- Total clean energy needed: quads per year
- 6.87 quads × 14.7 nuclear plants/quad = **101 nuclear power plants** in 33 years (3.1 per year)
- 6.87 quads × 3,300 concentrated solar plants/quad = **22,658 concentrated solar plants** in 33 years (687 per year, or 13 per week)
- 6.87 quads × 13,300 wind plants/quad = **91,320 wind turbines** in 33 years (2,767 per year, or 8 per day)



# Pielke's Bottom Line

- Unfeasible to build so much clean energy so quickly
- Expense of building so much clean energy would defeat Australia's economic goals
- This is why we don't have the technology to decarbonize as quickly as politicians and activists have been promising.

# But ...

- Australia used 5.53 quads in 2017.
- If it uses 9.44 quads in 2050,
  - Extra 3.91 quads
  - 14.7 coal-fired power plants per quad
  - 57 new coal-fired plants (1.7 new coal plants per year)
- Costs of building new fossil capacity
  - Costs of coal, ash disposal, etc.
  - Public health: illness, death from air pollution

# Review

# Bottom-Up Analysis

- Start with individual Kaya-identity variables:
  - $P, g, e, f$
  - Figure out historical rates of change for each
- Gross Domestic Product:  $G = P \times g$ 
  - Rate of change of  $G$ :  $r_G = r_P + r_g$
  - Rate of change of a product is the sum of the rates of change of the factors.
  - Use rate of change of  $G$  to extrapolate  $G$  in the future:

$$G(2050) = G(2017) \times \exp(r_G \times (2050 - 2017))$$

# Bottom-Up Analysis

- Start with individual Kaya-identity variables
- Gross Domestic Product:  $G = P \times g$
- Figure out implied rate of change of emissions  $F$ :
  - Policy: reduce emissions in 2050 60% below 2000:

$$F(2050) = (1 - 0.60) \times F(2000)$$

- Figure out change in  $F$  from this year:

$$r_F = \frac{\ln\left(\frac{F(2050)}{F(2017)}\right)}{2050 - 2017}$$

- Figure out implied rate of decarbonizing the economy:
  - Carbon intensity of the economy is  $ef = F/G$ .

$$r_{ef} = r_F - r_G$$

- Compare implied rate of decarbonization to historical trend to assess the difficulty of meeting the policy goals.

# Top-Down Analysis

- Start with macroeconomic estimate of future energy demand  $E$
- Use mix of energy sources and emissions factors to calculate future emissions ( $F$ ) if the mix of energy sources does not change.
- Calculate policy goal for  $F$  the same way as for bottom-up analysis
  - (this is purely a comparison of the policy goal to today's emissions)
- Calculate difference between projected future  $F$  and policy goal for  $F$ .
- Calculate how many quads of fossil-fuel energy you would have to replace with clean energy to meet the policy goal.
  - Start with cutting coal, then cut natural gas, and finally cut oil
  - Why?
- Figure out how many power plants of different kinds you would have to build to supply the necessary clean energy.
  - Remember that the actual average power output is the nameplate power times the duty factor (also called the efficiency).