

Assignment 2.

This short study was conducted via a focus group discussion around two main questions regarding climate change. The questions were “What do you want to know? How did we get to the current state of things?”. The focus group consisted of myself (researcher) and three fellow students at LUSEM who are not and have not taken part in this course. The aim of this short study is to explore what we know about climate change. Below follows an account of the main outcomes of the discussion.

From the discussion about “What do you want to know? How did we get to the current state of things?” 3 main talking points stood out. *Firstly*, “What do you want to know?” stirred up more emotions than anticipated. As a generation that was raised with technology and the internet, keeping up to date with world events and climate change is not difficult, it is on the contrary rather hard not to see the ever more frequent reporting of natural disasters and the rising temperature in the political climate debate. Although the heartfelt stories about people affected by natural disasters do a great job of raising awareness of climate change and engaging people with the issue, the group agreed that more focus should be put on what each individual can do to mitigate their climate impact. Granted that individual efforts cannot and will not make a dent in CO₂ emissions, public education on the matter would make a difference if the majority of whole countries would think about their own impact on the environment. In continuation, as climate impact becomes a more central part of the individual's life that would also be reflected in their political choices and affiliations nationally and by extension be a greater part of the discussion internationally. A *second* topic on this part of the subject was the role of environmental accounting. As students at LUSEM, the entire focus group have taken basic accounting during their studies. When thinking back in terms of climate change nearly all reflect on the fact that there is such a thing as environmental accounting. At first glance, that fact of course seems like a good step in the right direction with the end goal of understanding the impact of our most famous brands and companies on the environment. However, this chapter in the course book on introductory accounting easily got lost in the many chapters on other parts of accounting and

environmental accounting got little focus from the teachers. The group identified the root cause of this problem to be the loose laws and regulations on this new form of accounting and the lack of uniformity on how companies measure and account for their climate impact. The group clearly envisioned a uniform and clearly legislated way of reporting environmental impact for companies. This, the group believe, would further enhance the possibilities for individual climate action and decision-making. *Lastly*, the group talked about the 2030 agenda (it was mentioned as the United Nations' global climate goals) and how something of the sort is needed as we all share this earth together. It was also agreed that the 2030 agenda have lost its place in the political debate, something also suggested by the course literature. The group highlighted that a greater focus and more updates about what we are doing to fulfil the ambition of the 2030 agenda and what progress we and the rest of the world are making would be needed in order to feel engaged with the topic. Furthermore, the group reflected on what role the 2030 agenda plays in less developed countries with more pressing needs such as poverty and so on if the agenda plays a minor role in privileged countries such as Sweden.

On the second question “How did we get to the current state of things?” the group talked about how humanity has had an exploitative attitude towards society building throughout history and that it is first now that the true consequences of our exploitative nature and the acceleration of climate impact that came with the industrialization and our modern consumption society. Furthermore, the group talked about politics and how elections might not be won as often on promises of climate change then they are on promises of more direct personal gains for the voters. The last reflection on this question was that our generation has not played a major part in the making of the current state of things but will have to play a major role in mitigating the damages done to our environment.

In conclusion, it can be said that the focus group had somewhat limited knowledge about climate change and what is actually being done about it in both national and world politics however some suggestions and reflections from the group could be worth a second thought. Access to news channels plays an important role in engaging a larger audience into the trauma of climate change, such channels could also be used in a more proactive way and nudge societies into

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making more conscious decisions about their climate impact. Clear and uniform legislation on environmental accounting could also enable people to make informed decisions about their climate impact. These are just some of the suggestions that the group produced on seemingly easy ways of improving awareness of climate change and the possibility for the individual to take action. This leaves me with the impression that concrete knowledge and understanding of the specifics of climate change might be lacking, however, the will and attitude towards solutions to the climate challenges, however small, are in abundance.