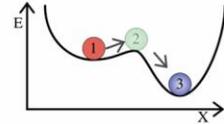


How to win the climate game

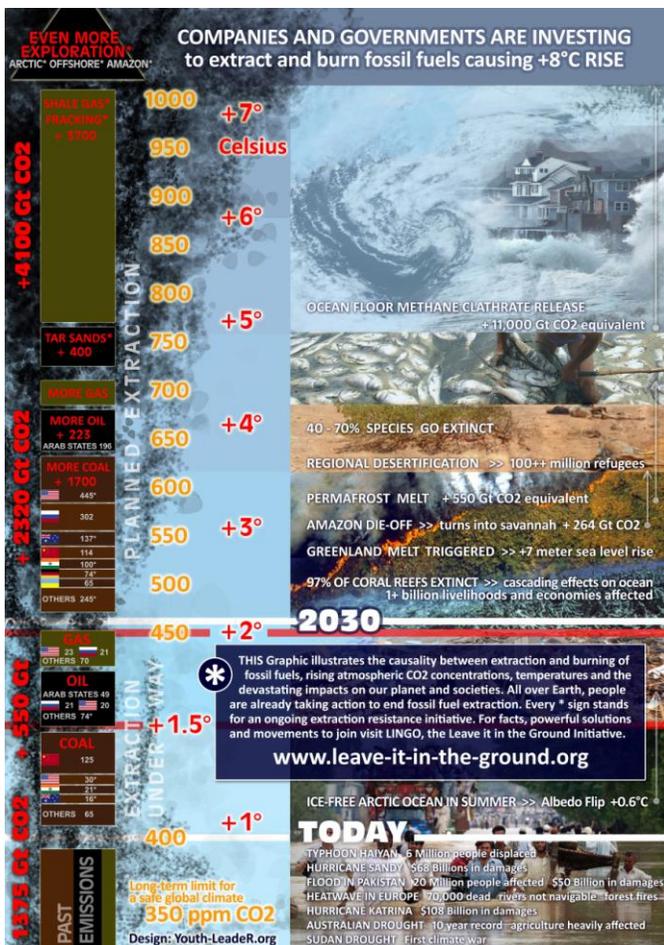
Rule 1: There is a point of no return in the overall game.

It is called “tipping point” of the global climate system, where our whole planet tips into run-away climate change. There are different attractors in planet Earth’s climate. One is very cold (“Snowball Earth”). One is very hot. That is the one we are heading towards. Once we pass the point of no return, it keeps rolling on until this very hot stage. The point of the Climate Games is to keep our planet in the playing field where humanity knows how to live fairly well.



Check the below infographic to understand where the point of no return lies.

The little arrows on the right side are an indicator of the tipping elements that will contribute to run-away climate change. Big surprise: it is very hard to tell at what point exactly run-away climate change starts. That makes the outcome of the climate game quite difficult to predict.



One more thing becomes clear: only our generation gets to play this game. Our kids are too late to play it. It’s our turn to play and we can’t even decline. Even if you are not consciously playing, you are a player in the climate game, just by participating in modern society. So we’re here to play it actively and to win the game, right?

Rule 2: Only stopping fossil fuel extraction counts.

As nice and psychologically powerful as solar panels and windmills are, no fossil fuel extraction avoided = no points in the climate game. Physics are pretty straightforward. More fossils extracted and burnt = more warming, less fossils extracted and burnt = less warming. Same amount extracted, less burnt in one place, but more in another = well, you get the idea.

Good luck to all of us in playing the climate game! The face of our home planet will be determined by the outcome of this game.

How to play for maximum impact

- Check the amount of **reserves**. Conversion factors: Coal 1 ton = 2 tons CO₂, Oil 3 barrels = 1 ton CO₂, Gas 1000 cubic meters = 2 tons CO₂.
- Check **current extraction**. If you are sitting on a billion barrels of oil and extract a thousand barrels per day, it will take you 2700 years to get it all. If you pump at a million barrels per day, you will run dry in just three years. (It's not all that simple, but this gives you an idea.) If we all play the climate game hard enough, you can forget about anything that is supposed to get extracted after 2050 anyway. So the places that extract the most per year are good ones to focus on.
- Check **new plans and expansions**.¹ Slow extraction doesn't have to stay that way. "I have a dream" of a huge coal mine says the coal company boss. "You're dreaming" says the smart climate gamer and draws up his strategy. Once the dream has turned into reality it is "slightly" more difficult to shut it down again.
- Identify **weak spots**. Every project has them. They can be found in the legal, communications, financial, and logistics fields. Find out the bottlenecks for "your" project. Often infrastructure, such as railways, roads, pipelines and ports are bottlenecks, permits are critical to project progress and can be delayed if some reason is found. Or politics can mess with it. If people are unhappy and it is election time, politicians may be ready to mess with a project.
- You may want to **look for an easy kill**. A good idea is to focus on projects with bad economics (lately almost all of coal and shale...). High cost projects can be identified on the supply cost curves (Here are some examples for [oil](#), [gas](#), [coal](#)).
- On the other hand, for maximum impact focus on the **head of the pack**. If you can bring down the strongest enemy, the weaker ones will pull in their tails and run away. This is a bold strategy, but if you're looking for maximum impact, this is where to find it.
- Some really **big prizes are still up for grabs!** You can identify them on the above infographic. Any good-size chunk that has not yet an asterisk to it – that's where you can write history!
- If you can manage to **break a paradigm**, you can win so many more points as many other players will be favourably influenced by your success. This doesn't even necessarily have to be played in direct extraction resistance. Watch the space of [Climate Game Changers](#) for some smart players that could easily gain more points than any foot soldier...But since this is a cooperative game, my gain is your gain as well. ;)
- **Delaying means winning**. Sometimes. This is probably true for some of coal, because renewables, the main competitors to thermal coal are getting cheaper all the time. So if you can delay a coal mine expansion for a couple of years, chances are, it is not going to be competitive ever again.
- On the other end, for oil I wouldn't bet on it. We are already past peak conventional oil and all those cars and planes are not going to disappear overnight. So when killing projects make sure to **lock in your victories** in a way that the project cannot get reactivated once the prices climb up again.

¹ Greenpeace's ["Point of No Return"](#) report is a good starting point.