

QUESTIONS FROM WONDERFUL COPENHAGEN

How has hosting the COP15 climate meeting influenced people's knowledge and their notion of Copenhagen in the UK?

"The future is not somewhere we go, we create the future." This has been my opening line in several recent talks. I always refer to Copenhagen as the place to go if you want to experience the future.

"Copenhagen is referred to everywhere, all the time – almost as if it was a borough in London. "We must aim to create a sustainable future and it seems like Copenhagen is leading the way – not only as a host to COP15, but as a globally respected Scandinavian city of possibilities."

In spite of accelerating arguments between sceptics and believers concerning climate change as the creation of man, COP15 and Copenhagen has already succeeded in setting the 'green agenda' and there are still high hopes for a Copenhagen Consensus.

As seen from London, Copenhagen has already living the future. When Boris Johnson opened "Dreams on wheels" at London City Hall * September this year - I realised how much Copenhagen is ahead of the 'Green Game'. Bicycle culture is so inbred and a natural part of the Danish cityscape – we don't even realised it. London could learn a lot from Copenhagen.

* <http://www.amblondon.um.dk/en/menu/TheEmbassy/News/MayorBorisJohnsonOpensDreamsOnWheels.htm>

The real challenge will be to keep 'Copenhagen' firmly on the map even after COP15. As we all know, tomorrow's people are already saying *"Don't tell me, show me."* So really we have to do the walk – not just talk the talk. That said I am proud of being Danish these days and I am confident that the positive effects of Copenhagen will continue after COP15. Afterall we are the happiest people in the world, in one of the wealthiest nations and Copenhagen was voted best city in the world in 2008 and 2nd best in 2009. So really we have a lot to offer even after COP15.

We asked a group of people their general consensus about the Copenhagen talks. Here are some quotes and insights into what was said:

"I don't think people are very optimistic about the results that is going to get out of the COP15 meeting. The government in the UK are not really committed. We need to apply more common sense as citizens to the problem and Britons are not very optimistic about the government being genuinely interested to solve this problem – all they just want to do is to stay in power. People have lost faith in the UK government – especially after the credit crunch. "

People in the UK will really like to get behind this, but politician has underestimated what people want. They want ethics.

I also asked:

Who are the goods guys then? Most people agreed that Scandinavia was the place to look for 'Green Inspiration' and that Copenhagen should show they way. "They could really take the lead here if they wanted" – was what a lot of people said. "They should make intelligent alliances within Europe and take a strong lead – that would really make a difference."

Best regards

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P.S. NOTE THIS:

COP15 has really pinned Copenhagen to the map over the last few months. As Obama and president Hu Jintao recently* made their united statement about joint climate actions in Beijing, I noticed the mix up of Rasmussen. Quote:

“Washington — The United States and China say they will work toward a successful outcome to the December 7–18 climate change summit in Copenhagen and in support of Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen’s call for a comprehensive agreement, President Obama told reporters in Beijing.

“As the two largest consumers and producers of energy, there can be no solution to this challenge without the efforts of both China and the United States,” Obama said November 17 in a joint statement with Chinese President Hu Jintao. “

During their talks, the two leaders made progress on the climate change issue, Obama said. Along with a series of joint initiatives on clean energy, China and the United States agreed to work together to make the Copenhagen conference a success.

*“Our aim there, in support of what Prime Minister Rasmussen of Denmark is trying to achieve, is not a partial accord or a political declaration, but rather an accord that covers all of the issues in the negotiations, and one that has immediate operational effect,” Obama said. “This kind of comprehensive agreement would be an important step forward in the effort to rally the world around a solution to our climate challenge. And we agreed that each of us would take significant mitigation actions and stand behind these commitments.” * **

* * www.america.gov/st/energy-english/2009/November/20091117140130esnamfuak4.710025e-02.html&distid=ucs

<http://twitter.com/americanagov>

... in support of what Prime Minister Rasmussen of Denmark is trying to achieve” (I’m wonder which Rasmussen they referred to? It looks like they got the the last Rasmussen mixed up with the new one). However Copenhagen is mentioned twice in the top three paragraphs :)