

## **The Energy Reality Group**

### **Statement for the Climate Change Summit**

**Session 6 A, Thursday 5 March 2009**

#### **Who are we?**

**ERG is a group of South African scientists, engineers and economists active in aspects of the climate change debate. We specialise in the quantitative understanding of macroeconomic impacts of mitigation.**

#### **Our contribution to the debate**

- **South Africa has a footprint of about 2.6t carbon equivalent per capita per annum, equivalent to about 130Mt carbon emission per annum**
- **The OECD nations have a footprint of about 6.1t carbon equivalent per annum**
- **With a population of about 1.3 billion, the OECD emissions total 7 900Mt carbon per annum, about 60 times South Africa's**
- **Climate change is a global problem, and a 10% drop in our footprint is equivalent to a 0.16% drop in the OECD footprint. Until the OECD fixes its problem, we will be wasting time and money trying to do our bit.**
- **There is little doubt we could mitigate some of our emissions, but there is no point in doing so until the OECD makes real commitments to reduce theirs.**
- **The OECD nations have failed to honour their Annex 1 commitments under Kyoto, and there is little sign of their agreeing achievable targets in the near future**
- **Until the OECD agrees to real targets, any reduction in our footprint, however desirable, is futile**
- **Because there is a strong linkage between the availability of energy and economic development, as shown so graphically by Eskom's problems last year, we should concentrate on**

**economic development and minimal cost adaptation until such time as the OECD adopts real targets.**

- **Mitigation costs are high, and the threats that climate change poses are too uncertain to justify diverting significant resources from development.**
- **Adaptation is a human trait, easily pursued at minimal cost**
- **The Long Term Mitigation Scenario should not be pursued until**
  - **The OECD nations have agreed to significant reductions, and**
  - **There is more solid evidence for the as-yet unproven impacts**