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## 100 TOP GLOBAL THINKERS 2012

### The FP Top 100 Global Thinkers

Foreign Policy presents a unique portrait of 2012's global marketplace of ideas and the thinkers who make them.

DECEMBER 2012



#### 58 BJORN LOMBORG

*For taking the black and white out of climate politics.  
Director, Copenhagen Consensus Center | Czech Republic*

The climate-change debate's most consistent iconoclast continued to go after environmental sacred cows this year, dismissing the **Rio+20** summit as a "**wasted opportunity**," warning against "**policy by panic**" efforts to connect this summer's droughts to global warming, and **celebrating** hydraulic fracturing as "this decade's best green-energy option."

But Bjorn Lomborg, a Danish political scientist often mislabeled a "climate skeptic," is more than just a critic of environmentalism run amok. In a world of terrifyingly daunting problems and limited resources, Lomborg doesn't say that global warming isn't happening; he tries to urge leaders to think realistically about what to tackle first. For his innovative **Copenhagen Consensus 2012** project, he convened a panel of more than 50 experts, including four Nobel-winning economists, and asked them how they would spend \$75 billion -- a 15 percent increase in global aid spending -- to most efficiently bolster global welfare. The panel's **top recommendations** were interventions to fight hunger and improve education, as well as increasing subsidies for malaria treatment and childhood immunizations. Research to "fight biodiversity destruction and lessen the effects of climate change"? That came in sixth.

#### Reading list:

*Thinking, Fast and Slow*, by Daniel Kahneman; *Sustainable Energy -- Without the Hot Air*, by David MacKay; *The Haves and the Have-Nots: A Brief and Idiosyncratic History of Global Inequality*, by Branko Milanovic.

#### Best idea:

Fracking gas could be this decade's best green option -- it has actually reduced U.S. emissions twice what the Kyoto Protocol ever did.

#### Worst idea:

Predictions that 100 million people would die from global warming by 2030 -- turned out it was exaggerated more than 12-fold, to get attention.