



# COCK & BULL

## NO, WE CAN'T...

...agree a climate deal. World leaders met in Copenhagen in December and successfully racked up enough air miles to fly to the moon on Virgin, but not much else

### Hopenhagen? A lot of hot air if you ask me...

Very funny.

### So, what did all those jet-setting politicians achieve?

Well, they didn't manage to nail down a binding agreement and even the pledges they did agree to are nowhere near enough to achieve their own target of no more than a 2C rise this century. Researchers from the Sustainability Institute, the MIT Sloan School of Management and Ventana Systems reckon that the emissions reduction pledges will lead to roughly double the targeted warming.

### Have you been outside?

It's cold.

### Freezing cold, more like. Seems like this global warming malarkey is a load of tosh anyway...

I think you're confusing weather with climate. And, anyway, freakish weather conditions are hardly confirmation that the climate is not changing.

### But the hottest year on record wasn't even this century.

You've been reading those websites again, haven't you? It's true that 1998 was the hottest year on record, according to one set of global temperature data, but everyone agrees that the long-term trend is still upwards.

### Who's everyone?

The people who analyse these things.

### Not those emailers?

I wonder when you'd get to Climategate. OK, so the line between science and activism might seem a bit blurred, but it's tough to know that you're right – because you're an expert in these things – and yet have to put up with no-nothing dullards dismissing your work based on their simplistic understanding of matters beyond their intellectual grasp.

### Sounds like you're still bitter about that mix-up with the Financial Services Authority.

Sorry, where were we?

### Activist scientists.

Ah, yes. Well, it's all academic anyway. Who cares about Siberian tree rings and hockey stick graphs?

### Err, isn't that the very basis of the theory of global warming?

Warming schwarming. Look, the oil's running out. And we use oil to make pretty much everything, from that cheap suit you're wearing to the soap you never use – which means that as soon as the oil reserves start declining, by about 2030 according to the most conservative oil-industry forecasts, we're all doomed anyway. I no longer care.

### Oops. Sorry, old chum. Cigar?

Yeah, why not?

### What's next?

I'll probably get a curry and fall asleep to Newsnight.

### I meant for the climate talks...

I see. Well, it looks like we need to go back to the drawing board. These gigantic

multilateral talks are clearly not the way to get anything done, but nobody seems to have a better idea.

### What's the sticking point?

Nobody trusts anybody else, basically. It's game theory – everyone knows that the planet is doomed in the long term, but in the short term nobody wants to concede more than anyone else. It's unclear how we get past that.

### How about a game of rock, paper, scissors?

It's as good a way as any.

### One-two-three...

Hang on, are we going on three or after three?

### On.

OK. We should probably gather a few world leaders first...

