

Tekst 8

DANISH DARTS

Reviled for sticking it to ecological dogma, Bjorn Lomborg laughs all the way to the bank

- 1 How did a lanky Danish vegetarian who wears T shirts to
important meetings and votes only for left-wing politicians
become the great Satan of environmentalism? By telling
everyone he is an environmentalist but sounding like the
5 opposite. “We are not running out of energy or natural
resources,” writes Bjorn Lomborg, 37, an associate professor
of statistics at Denmark’s University of Aarhus and a former
member of Greenpeace, in his 1998 book *The Skeptical
Environmentalist*. “Air and water around us are becoming less
10 and less polluted. Mankind’s lot has actually improved in terms of practically
every measurable indicator.”
- 2 The book, which was published in English last year, became a best-seller, and
conservatives worldwide use its ideas to justify inaction on such issues as
deforestation and global warming. “We should do something that actually does
15 good and not sounds good,” he says of the expense of complying with the Kyoto
Protocol on global warming. “For the cost of Kyoto for one year, we could give
clean drinking water and sanitation to every human being on earth.”
- 3 Some scientists say they initially hoped to ignore Lomborg but in the wake of
his book’s popularity have reacted with a fury rarely seen in academia. Peter
20 Raven, chairman of the American Association for the Advancement of Science,
calls Lomborg “the prime example in our time of someone who distorts statistics
and statements to meet his own political end.” A dozen esteemed environmental
scientists, including Raven and Harvard’s Edward O. Wilson, are demanding that
Lomborg’s publisher cut him loose. “We are deeply disturbed that Cambridge
25 University Press would publish and promote an error-filled, poorly referenced and
non-peer-reviewed work,” they write in a letter calling on Cambridge to transfer
publishing rights to a popular, nonscholarly press.
- 4 The problem is, Lomborg gets many of his facts right— and provides 2,930
footnotes to make them easy to check. Some scientists and environmental
30 advocates have made exaggerated claims about environmental doom, and it’s not
surprising that they have finally been catalogued. Yet Lomborg is as guilty of
exaggeration and selective use of data as those he criticizes. He is right that air
and water quality and agricultural productivity have improved in much of the
world. But to look at the data on global warming, biological diversity, marine
35 depletion and deforestation and still say
things are generally getting better takes a
willful blindness. That’s why it’s a shame
so many of the attacks on Lomborg rely
on name-calling. All that does is avoid
40 what could be a valuable debate on the
substance of environmental policy— and,
of course, help Lomborg sell books. “I’m
making a fair amount of money from the
book,” says Lomborg. “A lot more than
45 Cambridge thought.” *By Andrew
Goldstein. With reporting by Ulla
Plon/Copenhagen and Charles P.
Wallace/Berlin*



Time

■ Tekst 8 Danish Darts

- 2p **35** Geef van elk van de onderstaande beweringen over Bjorn Lomborg aan of deze wel of niet overeenkomt met de inhoud van de alinea's 1 en 2.
- 1 His ideas are embraced by opponents of global environmental policies.
 - 2 He now actively supports the conservationist movements he used to oppose.
 - 3 He refuses to share the more pessimistic views of his fellow environmentalists.
 - 4 He denies the effectiveness of prevailing policies on environmental issues.
- Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door "wel" of "niet".
- 1p **36** ■ Which of the following is/are correct with regard to Lomborg's book, judging from paragraph 3?
- According to a number of scientists,
- 1 it is meant to serve his own political agenda.
 - 2 it does not meet academic standards.
 - 3 it will make Lomborg's position as a university professor untenable.
- A Only 1 is correct.
 - B Only 2 is correct.
 - C Only 3 is correct.
 - D Only 1 and 2 are correct.
 - E Only 2 and 3 are correct.
- "cut him loose" (line 24)
- 1p **37** Hoe zou dat moeten gebeuren? Geef antwoord door middel van een citaat.
- "The problem" (line 28)
- 1p **38** ■ Which of the following could be added to this?
- A with these errors
 - B with these objections
 - C with these publishing rights
- 1p **39** Met welk zinsgedeelte bestaande uit twee woorden benoemt de schrijver in alinea 4 zijn belangrijkste punt van kritiek op Lomborg?
- 1p **40** ■ Which of the following is in agreement with the last paragraph?
- A Bjorn Lomborg's book could contribute to a useful discussion on the environmental issue.
 - B Bjorn Lomborg's book has brought home the urgency of the environmental issue.
 - C The success of his book has convinced Bjorn Lomborg all the more that he is right.