A few months ago, Rhead set a Legal Planet record for attracting comments: 33 (mostly hostile) reactions on a relatively straightforward post about how Canada had achieved the gold medal for "fossilhood", i.e. most antagonistic to a climate treaty.

Well, it appears as if Rhead has understated the matter:

> Federal Conservatives are downplaying concerns over Prime Minister Stephen Harper's newly-selected boss for Environment Canada and the bureaucrat's knowledge about global warming.
>
> The department's new deputy minister, Bob Hamilton, ran into trouble last Monday at a parliamentary committee when he was asked to explain what causes climate change.
>
> "Wow. Umm. They didn't tell me I'd have to answer questions like that when I took this job. I think that it's – I don't know the total answer to that –," said Hamilton, before Conservative MPs interrupted to prevent him from continuing.

Note: this isn't just any member of Parliament or even the federal government: it's the boss of frigging *Environment Canada*.

My Dad was born in Montreal, and large chunks of my family still live there and in western Canada. So I'm a Canada-ophile. But environmentalists have given the Dominion (if one can still call it that) pass on its environmental policies. Especially under the Harper government, it has become essentially a Petro-state, deriving an enormous portion of its national income from mineral extraction. We need to be careful with this, because Canadian

positions on the environment vary significantly by region and province: British Columbia, for example, has recently instituted a high successful carbon tax.

But our perceptions of other nations' climate policies need a readjustment: as I pointed out last week, China has instituted a cap-and-trade scheme, and India has invested heavily in solar. Middle income countries understand the danger of climate change the opportunities for growth presented by clean energy technology. Do we?