The polluter-pay principle

Can carbon and pollution based taxation be a means to implement the polluter-pay principle?

Alain Quinet

I. The polluter-pay principle: 2 different approaches



I. The polluter-pay principle: 2 different approaches

Reduction of the global carbon budget -> carbon neutrality



→ Need for expensive technologies by 2050
→ Large uncertainties on abatement costs by 2050

I. The polluter-pay principle: 2 different approaches



Source: European Comission (2018)

II. The shadow price of carbon

1. IPPC Estimates

		Average Shadow Price of Carbon (\$2010)	
Scénario	Description	2030	2050
1.5° high	Probability of exceeding 1.5°C between 50% and 67%	129	586
Lower 2°	Probability of exceeding 2°C between 34% and 50%	164	518
Higher 2°	Probability of exceeding 2°C between 34% and 50%	56	169

Source: IPCC (2018)

II. The shadow price of carbon

2. The new French Value



Source: Alain Quinet (2019)

III. From shadow price to carbon pricing





Shadow price should be translated in carbon pricing

Shadow price should be translated in:

- better regulation (land use, spatial planning)
- low carbon infrastructure
- innovation
- carbon pricing

III. From shadow price to carbon pricing



III. From shadow price to carbon pricing



IV. Carbon pricing: design and issues



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IV. Carbon pricing: design and issues

1. Carbon pricing is regressive

Impact of a 10€/t carbon tax

	Rural area	Paris area
Richest 20% of households	- 80 €	- 40 €
Poorest 20% of households	- 40 €	- 20 €

2. Carbon dividends can avoid unwanted effects

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To maximize the fairness and political viability of a rising carbon tax, all the revenue should be returned directly to U.S citizens through equal lump-sum rebates. The majority of American families, including the most vulnerable, will benefit financially by receiving more "in carbon dividends" than they pay in increased energy prices.

3. Carbon tax is the worst form of instruments except for all the rest



Annex



Reduction in CO₂ from Comprehensive Cabon Pricing, 2030

Source: IMF (2019)