Time for BitCarbon?

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Many have heard of crypto currencies and in particular of BitCoin. Very few people fully understand the 'blockchain' technology that allows an independent ledger to be shared and verified across the planet. This ledger has been around since January 2009 and is now growing more or less linearly at over 50GB per anum. There are obviously network transmission and storage issues but the latter is more than afforded through the advances and cost efficiencies of hardware. Even network constraints are being overcome with solutions such as Lightning Network* and trusted shared blockchain verification.

Leaving aside the technical issues which will inevitably be overcome as the 'blockchain' developers come up with evermore novel solutions; the 'blockchain' could be used to store carbon data for potentially every person and corporation on the planet. No Govt would have control and it would be a way of maintaining knowledge of our carbon footprint allowing transparent policies on national and individual targets to be verified. Rather than taxing carbon to the point where rationing is by price there could be carbon trading at both individual and corporate level. If we set a target of say 35bn tons globally then each person on the planet could have a carbon allowance of 5 tonnes. Individuals could sell part of their allowance to corporations or others for financial reward. In order for this to work globally one would need to have Govts to adopt the scheme for all their citizens and commerce and there would need to be careful arithmetic to avoid making farming, manufacturing or some other vital area handicapped against foreign competition. Ideally it would be adopted by enough nations globally so that trade could be driven by fair use of carbon intensive resources - it is no good for Green parties in the mature western economies to say we must cut back whilst others ignore any restrictions or global targets.

Without independent BitCarbon ledgers Govts will hijack the green agenda to tax ordinary people further in the name of 'saving the planet' (http://www.money-liberty.com/gallery/greensqueeze.pdf). The younger generations may see this green agenda as a way of hitting back at baby boomer generations and support the imposition of higher taxes (http://www.money-liberty.com/gallery/greenroadtoserfdom.pdf). Whether one believes in climate change or not if we have a growing population with evermore people in the developing economies there will be unprecedented demand for finite resources. The 3b in the developing nations will want to aspire to the living standards of the 1bn in the developed West. How does the saying go – you can't fit a quart into a pint pot!

Western Govts and the EU in particular are driving green environmental standards across the EU which is already having an effect on standards of living. The move to eradicate fossil fuelled engines is having a huge structural effect on manufacturing but there is no strategy of creating high skilled and/or well paid jobs. The 'green agenda' is being used to drive austerity as the real cost of living for ordinary people continues to rise well above the official cpi (consumer price index) measure.

It always gets back to nationhood and the need for sound money (http://www.money-liberty.com/gallery/soundmoneyorbust.pdf); only then can we build a fairer society in which all have a stake and success is built on merit rather than privilege and protection of the status quo. Sound money would provide a means of trusted trade and would allow BitCarbon to also be traded at an international and individual level. You may rightly ask what would stop a nation encouraging population growth to milk the BitCarbon system but surely Govts could agree population targets based on economic performance thus weighting individuals in each nation. None of this will work unless we end the failed fiat debt based system that has drained resources from our real economies.

- • Lightning Network is a means by which small everyday transactions can be made without each one having to be immediately verified on the Bitcoin blockchain database. These transactions are rolled up after a period of time and then verified with one entry on the blockchain. This will hopefully allow bitcoin users to transact more speedily and encourage mainstream adoption.

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