Activity: Technologies for Climate Change Mitigation

Purpose: Critically evaluating technologies introduced for climate change mitigation

Age level: 14-18

Time needed: 60 minutes

Resources:

- ✓ A sheet of flipchart paper and markers for each group of four
- ✓ A few examples of advertisements or descriptions of technologies for climate change mitigation, obtained from a newspaper, magazine, technical journal or website.

Procedure

Stage 1

Students form a group of four.   Each group organizes their sheet of flipchart paper as follows and places their given advertisement/description in the centre.

1. Values/Assumptions	2. Purposes	3. Winners and losers
6. Reasons against	Advertisement/description of climate change mitigation technology	4. Consequences
	5. Reasons for	

Each group is asked to work on all six sections.   Sample questions to be addressed in each section are as follows:

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1. Values/Assumptions
   a) What values are the promoters of the technology supporting?
   b) What assumptions are they making about preferable lifestyles, quality of life and social and economic developments?
   c) Who are the target audience of this advertisement/description and why are they being targetted?

2. Purposes
   a) What are purposes of the technology?
   b) Can you discern *hidden* purposes as well as *overt* purposes?

3. Winners and losers
   a) Who benefits from the introduction of the technology?
   b) Who are the people and other life forms likely to lose from the introduction of the technology?

4. Consequences
   a) What are economic, environmental, political, social and cultural consequences likely to stem from the technology's widespread uptake?
   b) Do you see *unforeseen* consequences?

5. Reasons for
   a) What are good reasons for the technology being widely applied?

6. Reasons against
    a) What are good reasons against technology being widely applied?

Stage 2

Having completed their tasks, two or three groups join together (i.e. groups that have been, perferably but not necessarily, working on different advertisements/descriptions) to share their work.   Class discussion follows.

Extension

Students, individually or as a group, are encouraged to identify, consider or even design amended or new technologies of what they consider a more 'appropriate' kind, given their reflections under the six sections.   They are also encouraged to consider if there are the ways in which they, as citizens, could influence technological trends.

Potential/Facilitation Guidance

This activity gives students the opportunity to critically assess technologies being introduced for climate change mitigation (e.g. renewable energy, nuclear energy, biofuel, energy efficiency and conservation measures, transportation-related technologies, biological technologies).   The plenary discussion will reflect upon if a technology is 'neutral', an outcome of 'value free' science, or the product of ongoing political, social and economic processes that reflect the interests of particular powerful or influential groups.