



Halfdan Muurholm is a journalist at the Danish Radio and among other things, he produces documentary films related to climate change.

Watch the interview with Halfdan and see slides

### Halfdan Muurholm: Global media landscape – a reality check

The Energy Academy is a major inspiration to me, and I've always been interested in sustainability and renewable energy. I have made TV programs about sustainability with varied success, but I think the DR (Denmark's Radio, the public service channel, ed.) where I work has a responsibility to communicate what the scientists have found out. Unfortunately, a lot of my colleagues do not share my point of view. Solar panels simply are not sexy seen from the TV producer's perspective. Climate stuff doesn't attract a lot of viewers, that is the challenge.

Another problem is what I call "the Lomborg Syndrome": journalists learn that they have to show two sides to every story, so when you have an article or a news item about climate change you always invite someone with Bjørn Lomborg's climate sceptical point of view to "balance" the story. Maybe for that reason there are still people who are very skeptical and don't "believe" – as 97 percent of all scientists do – that climate change is manmade. At COP15 there were a lot of news stories everywhere in the world, but recent US studies have shown that since then hardly anything about the climate has been on BBC, CNN etc. Al-Jazeera covers it a lot, Obama used Hurricane Sandy as part of his election campaign, but when it comes to a flooded Germany we don't even hear

about it. These things are not news anymore, and it's not an agenda that is dominating the world the way it should be in my opinion. Perhaps people share the same feeling I do: I used to be very emotionally engaged, but I'm not anymore – I'm still engaged, though.

I made a program with Soeren Hermansen that didn't attract a lot of viewers in Denmark but was sold to China. I also followed Soeren to Japan, but I couldn't sell the story when I returned. The next documentary I'm going to make is in five parts and it will be about extreme weather. I'll put some climate stuff in there as well. It's all about framing and about the content lurking behind the content. We shouldn't focus on what we really want to tell but instead wrap it up. The "real" stories are found in fiction now, that's where they can deal with it. Think of the Danish television series "The Killing" where they actually made real news headlines about pig farms. I don't make fiction, but I try to learn from fiction and practice the "content behind the content".

