

How to measure/denominate the Carbon Tax

A propos, I have found it useful and informative to express the proposed carbon tax in terms of eurocents/litre.

Motivation? CO₂ is a gas, how do you weigh a gas? The public certainly doesn't understand that (at least not in USA, perhaps it's different in France where people are more numerate). In round numbers:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} 20 \text{ Euros} & & 1 \text{ tonne CO}_2 & & 800 \text{ g CH}_2 & & 44 \text{ g CO}_2 \\ \hline \text{-----} & \times & \text{-----} & \times & \text{-----} & \times & \text{-----} \\ \text{tonne CO}_2 & & 10^6 \text{ g} & & \text{litre} & & 14 \text{ g CH}_2 \end{array}$$

$$= 5 \text{ eurocents / litre}$$

Now 20 Euros is a lot of money, a banknote, while 5 cents is a small coin, a modest sum compared to the price of a litre of petrole.