



GECHS

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE
AND HUMAN SECURITY

Samfunnsutfordringer som følge av endrede klimaforhold

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The Potentials of and Limits to Adaptation in Norway

- How do social processes influence the capacity to adapt to climate change?
- What are the limits to adaptation as a response to changing climate conditions?
- What are the implications of these limits for human security?

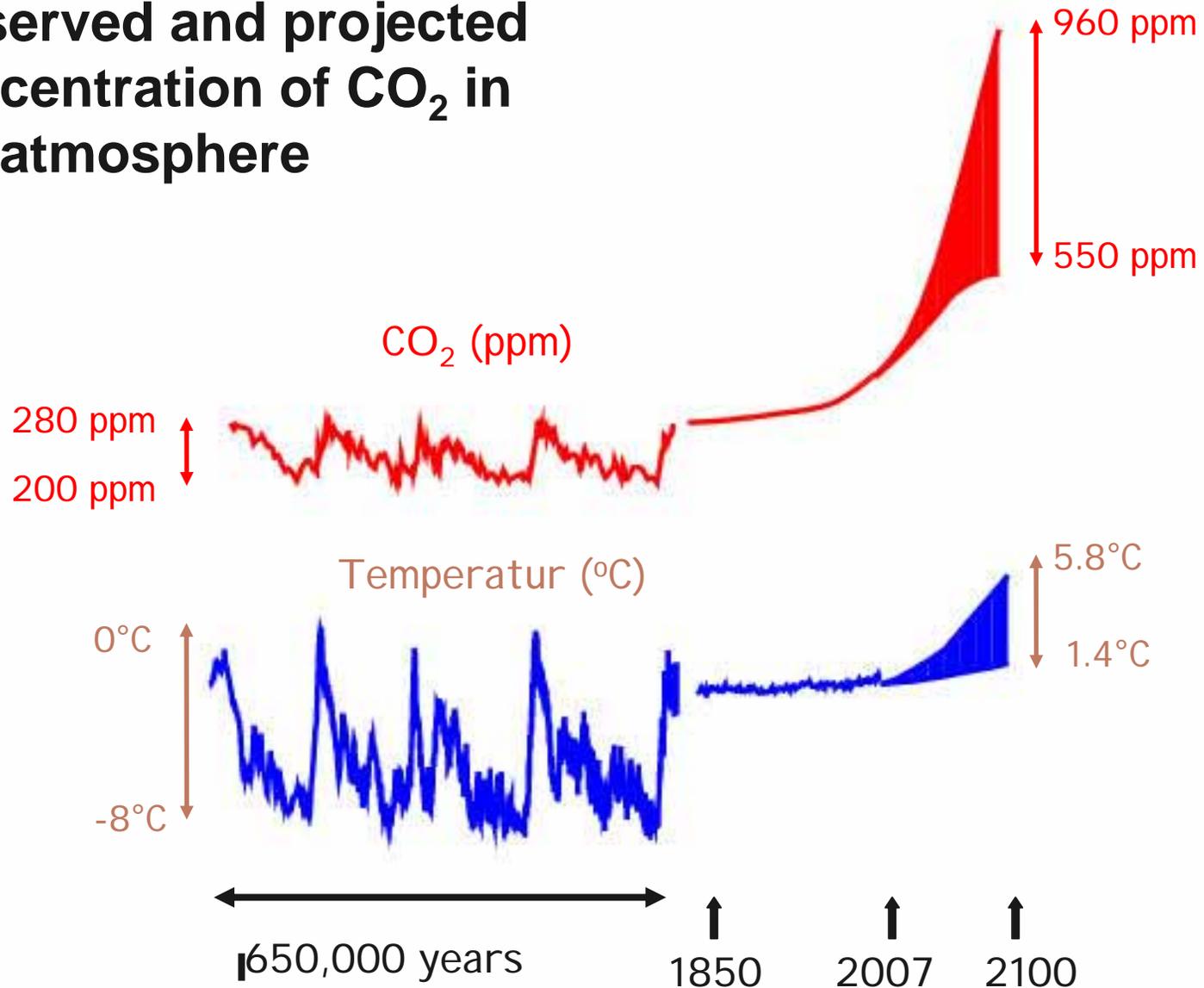
<http://www.gechs.org/plan>

Key points

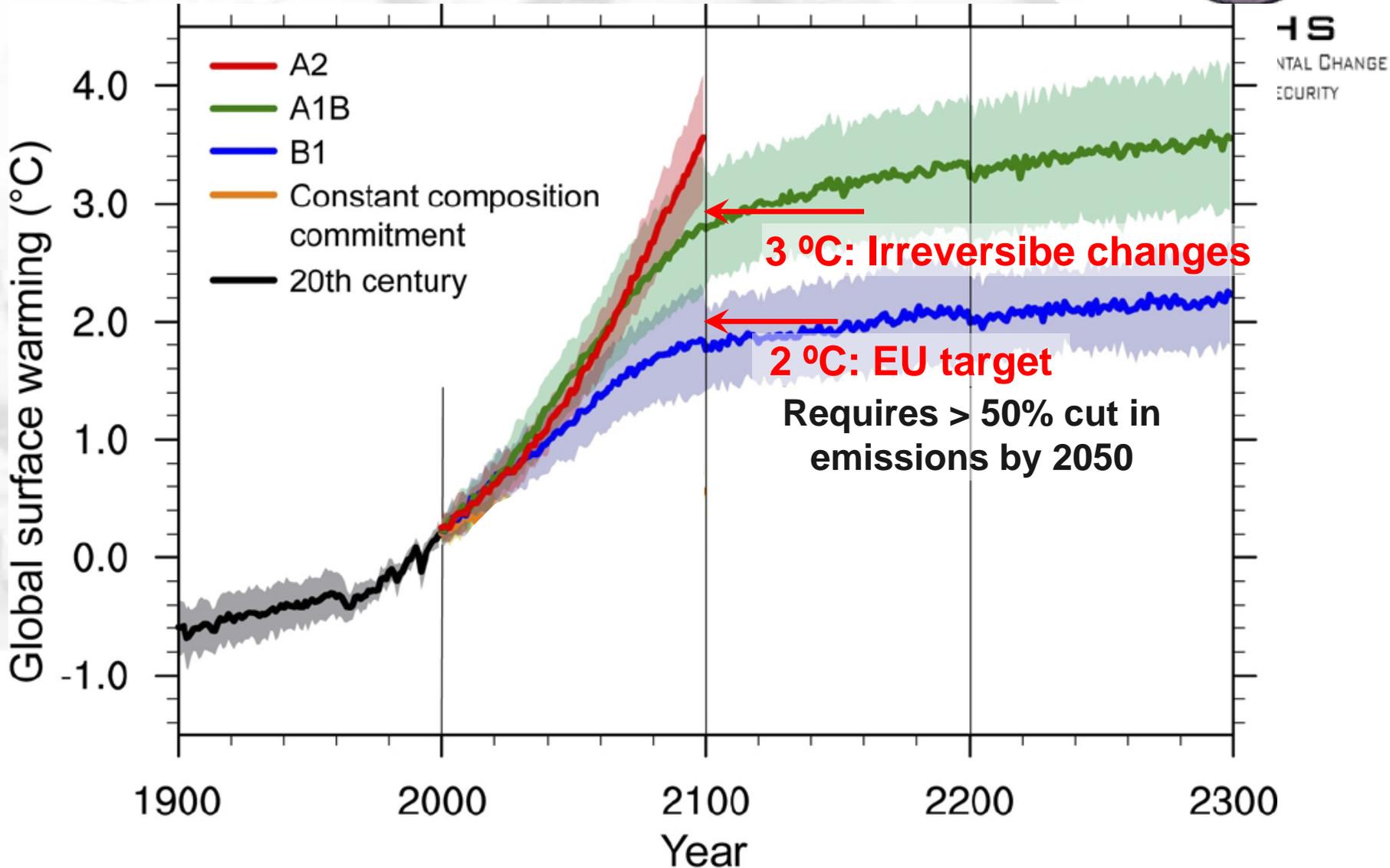
- Climate change is a serious global problem;
- It will have consequences for the things that people value, including cultural heritage;
- In Norway, this is important--yet often dismissed as trivial;
- The role of beliefs, values and worldviews needs to be more visible in debates and responses to climate change.



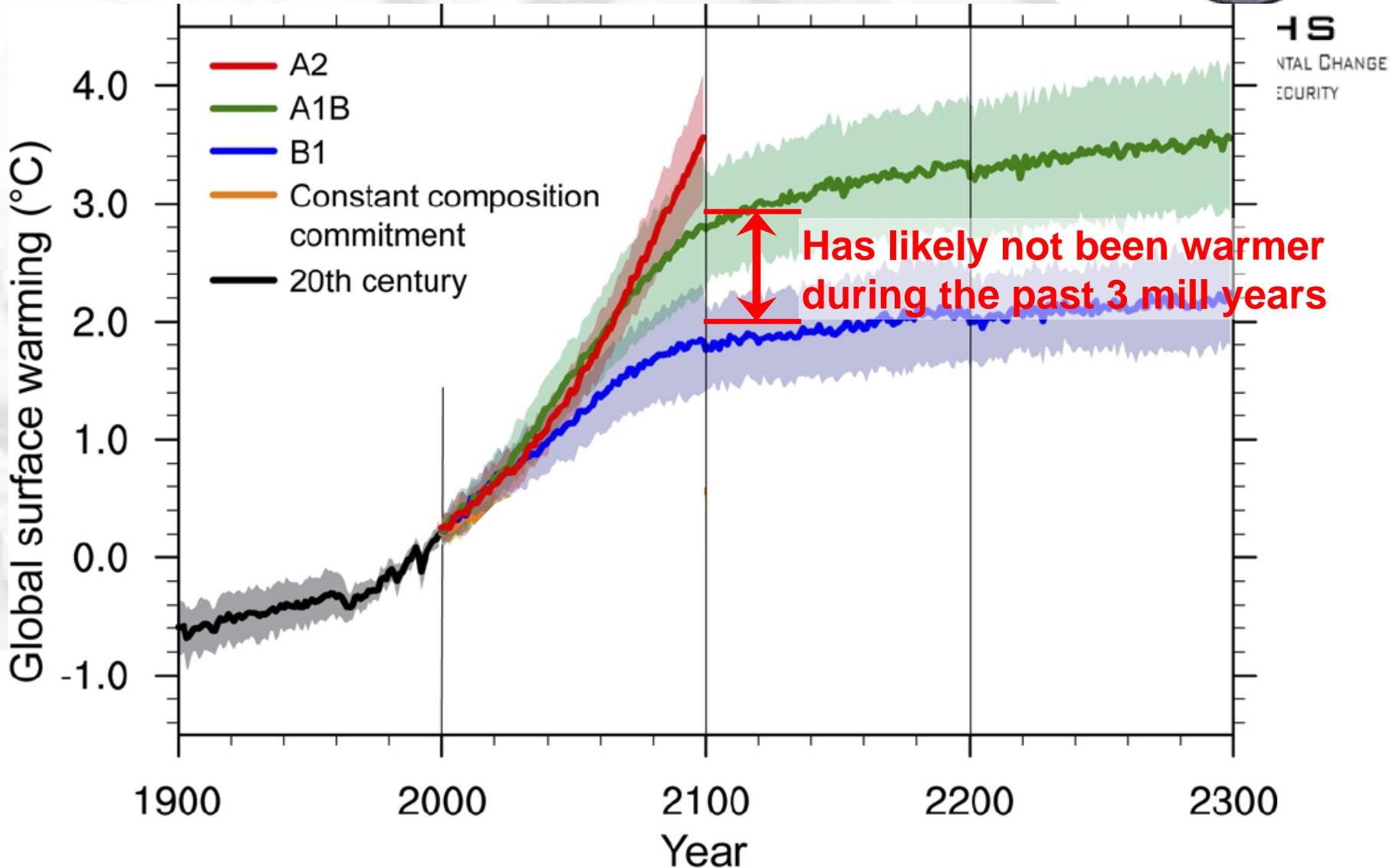
Observed and projected concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere



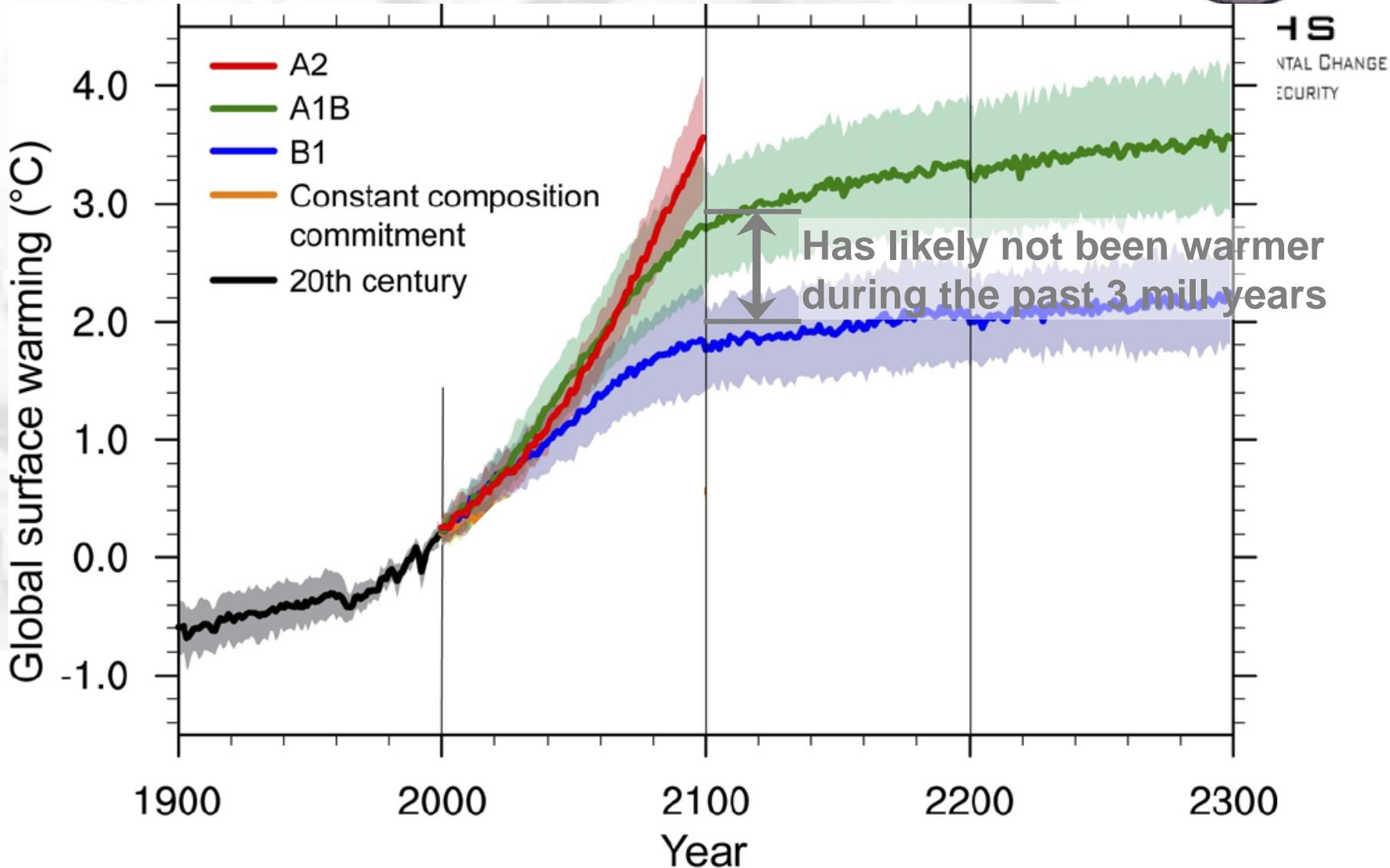
Projected global warming



Projected global warming



Projected global warming



What does this mean for Norway?

- RegClim Results
- Extreme events: Floods, storms, heat waves
- Melting of Arctic ice and permafrost
- Implications for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, health, infrastructure
- Potential benefits (e.g., agriculture, tourism, oil extraction)



Norway has a high adaptive capacity

- Economic wealth
- Social development
- Technological know-how
- Education
- Equity



This does not mean that Norway is not vulnerable!

- Vulnerability is determined by multiple processes of change (social, economic, cultural);
- Adaptive capacity is not evenly distributed within Norway (some communities and individuals are more vulnerable than others);
- Adaptive capacity does not necessarily translate into adaptations, and there is a possibility for maladaptation;
- There are likely to be surprises (the Earth system is complex);
- Norway is not an isolated country (globalization processes have diversified Norway's interests).



What matters to people?

- People value different things, and at different times in their life;
- Interests and priorities differ among people and groups;
- Some responses to climate change may affect what is valued by others (e.g., sea walls and wind farms may obstruct coastal views)
- Climate change responses involve power and politics; it is not a “neutral” issue (i.e., it is not about scientific uncertainty).



Climate change and snow skiing: A cultural relic in Norway?

- Relic: 1) a survivor or remnant left after decay, disintegration, or disappearance; 2) a trace of some past or outmoded practice, custom, or belief.



People can adapt in many ways to life without snow.



<h2>About Super-Glide</h2>	
	
	<p><u>Overwhelming Acceptance of Synthetic Ice!</u></p> <p>Over 1 Million public skaters have enjoyed the sensation of Super-Glide™. Since December 1, 1999 over 50 facilities have been completed in areas including West Virginia, Miami, Caracas-Venezuela, Guatemala City-Guatemala, Texas, Connecticut, New Jersey, Kansas, Vermont, New Hampshire, the Czech Republic, and many more. No matter where we put down Super-Glide™ the response is spectacular!</p>

But snow itself cannot be replaced

- The color, form, texture, smell, sound, and ambience of snow cannot be replicated.
- 2100: The emotional impact of snow described by poets and suggested by photos may not be experienced by most Norwegians



Snow is part of Norway's cultural heritage; will it be lost to climate change?



Responding to climate change

- The emphasis has been on the biophysical impacts and their material consequences;
- It is assumed that everyone shares a global worldview, when in fact more people hold egocentric and ethnocentric worldviews.
- The role of beliefs, values, and worldviews is important – yet has played only a minor part in debates about climate change.
- How will climate change affect the things that are valued by Norwegians?



Climate change in Norway: What have we got to lose?

