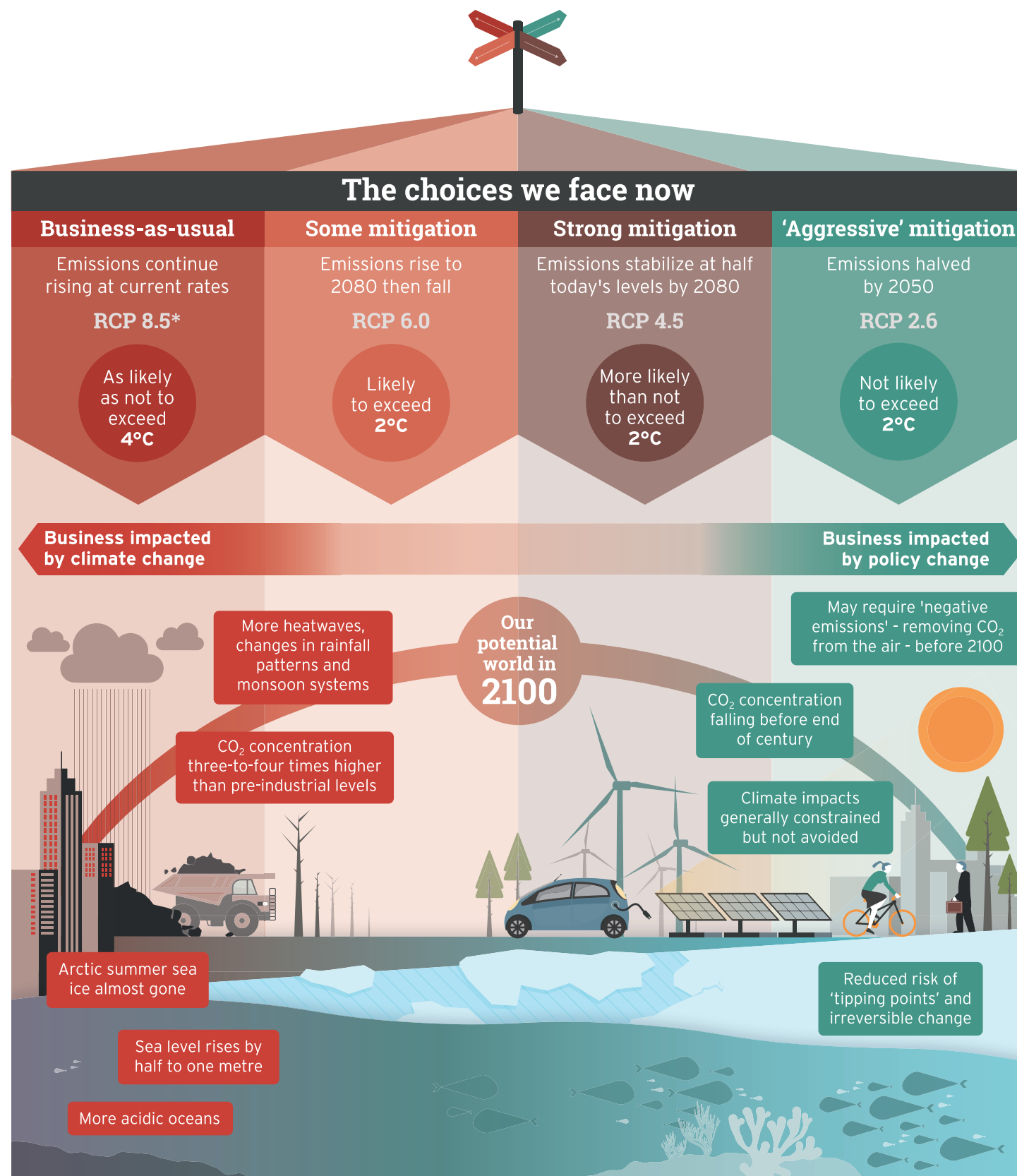


Carbon crossroads

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) explores four potential futures depending what policies governments adopt to cut emissions

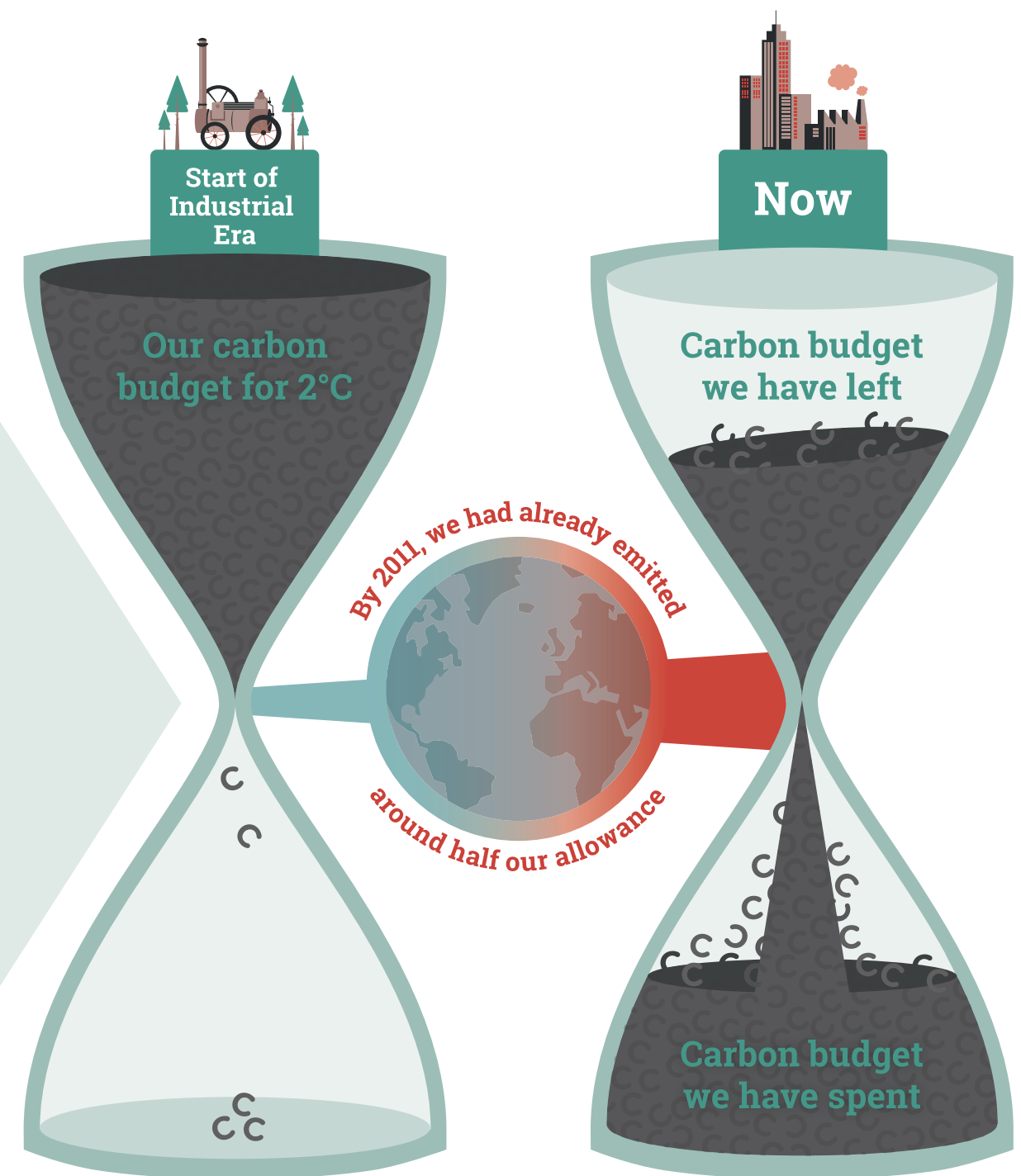


*The four RCP (Representative Concentration Pathway) scenarios each project a certain amount of carbon to be emitted by 2100, and as a result lead to a different amount of human-driven climate change. Climate change will continue after 2100 and elevated temperatures will remain for many centuries after human CO₂ emissions cease.

This material can be freely used to advance discussion on the implications of the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Working Group 1 Report and impacts for business. The report is made available via a creative commons licence.

The pathway to two degrees

Meeting the internationally agreed target of 2°C means spending what remains of our carbon budget wisely*



Unless we follow the '2.6' path we will reach our budget limit between 2050-2070

*To have a better than two-thirds chance of limiting warming to less than 2°C from pre-industrial levels, the total cumulative CO₂ emissions since the start of the industrial era would need to be limited to 1,000 gigatonnes of carbon. About half of this amount had already been emitted by 2011. The amount of carbon that can be released would be reduced if concentrations of non-CO₂ greenhouse gases continue to rise. Other factors (for example, the unexpected release of greenhouse gases from permafrost) could also tighten this 'carbon budget'.

For more information: cpsl.cam.ac.uk

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