In the book *The Handbook of Disaster and Emergency Policies and Institutions* (Handmer and Dovers, Earthscan 2007), we identified a lack of previous focus on the policy and institutional aspects of disasters and emergencies, as opposed to more operational aspects. In this paper, we use the occasion of rewriting the book for the second edition to reflect on this issue in light of (i) the increasing emergence of climate change as a major influence on thinking about disasters, and (ii) the lessons from recent events such as floods and cyclones in Australia. A particular emphasis is on the degree to which existing agendas of policy and institutional reform, and existing institutional capacities, provide a basis for coping with what is likely to be a future punctuated by more and more serious disasters and emergencies. In more full world, and with changing climate extremes, will we need more of the same, much more of the same, or radically different policies and institutions?