



THE SIMPLE GUIDE TO DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

April 2020



LowCarbonCity

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INTRODUCTION

Media and public discussions in the past year, when talking about climate change and its increasingly visible effects, are more frequently using the term *climate emergency*. Simultaneously a growing number of governments, institutions and private organisations are publicly declaring climate emergencies, often accompanied by political or monetary commitments towards urgently tackling climate change.

At Low Carbon City we have undertaken the challenge to clarify the meaning and implications of a climate emergency, so as to support stakeholders in their decision-making and processes towards decarbonization.

We appreciate the urgent necessity of tackling climate change and therefore want to call on those whose role is designing public policy, investing, or educating the public to understand that climate change is not a trend or a fleeting issue, but a critical matter that requires concrete and immediate action.

We declare ourselves in a climate emergency! And to adequately deal with this crisis we call for emergency plans and their implementation.

We hope that this simple guide to declaring a climate emergency will be able to provide the necessary input for governments, the private sector, universities and other relevant actors to not only declare a climate emergency, but to build the required plans and take the necessary steps to effectively address this crisis.

“

My generation has failed in its responsibility to protect our planet. That must change.

The climate emergency is a race we are losing, but it is a race we can win.

The climate crisis is caused by us – and the solutions must come from us.

António Guterres, UN Secretary General

Climate Action Summit 2019

”

KEY CLIMATE CHANGE DATES

First scientific article on anthropogenic climate change coining “global warming”, by Wallace Broecker.

1975

1896

Svante Arrhenius identifies the extent to which a rise in CO₂ levels will increase Earth's surface temperature or “greenhouse effect”.

Adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

1992

1990

First assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Adoption of the Kyoto Protocol

1997

1995

2nd assessment report by the IPCC

3rd assessment report by the IPCC

2001

2000

Colombia ratifies the Kyoto Protocol

First commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol (2008- 2012)

2008

2007

4th assessment report by the IPCC

Establishment of the Durban platform for enhanced climate action.

2011

2010

UNFCCC: Cancun Adaptation Framework

First climate emergency declarations across the world

2016

2015

UN Climate Change Conference with Paris Climate Agreement

First climate emergency declarations in Colombia

2020

2018

IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels

FROM CLIMATE CHANGE TO CLIMATE CRISIS

10 CLIMATE CHANGE FACTS



Temperature

Temperature will increase by 3° C above pre-industrial levels by the end of this century if no measures are taken.



Emissions

We need to reduce CO2 emissions by 45% from 2010 levels until 2030 and transform to a zero carbon emission society by 2050 to comply with the Paris agreement goals.



Biodiversity

Wildlife populations have declined an average of 60% since 1970.

We are on our way to losing more than half of all insects globally by the end of the century.



Urbanism

The instability of the Antarctic ice sheet as well as the irreversible loss of the Greenland ice sheet could cause a sea level rise of several meters. This would mean the flooding of areas currently inhabited by more than 150 million people.



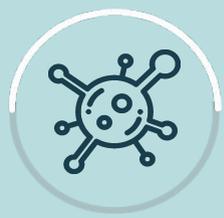
Risk

The past five years have been the hottest years recorded in the past 139 years. If this trend continues, the Arctic will be completely ice-free by 2040.



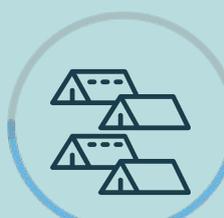
Biodiversity

70% to 90% of coral reefs could disappear by 2040, with an invaluable biodiversity loss and affecting fisheries and food resources worldwide.



Health

Climate change can have a great impact on the spread of diseases as approximately 63% of pathogens are sensitive to climate.



Migration

Climate change will drive the migration and displacement of 200 million people worldwide by 2050.



Agriculture

Climate change is going to drastically increase world hunger as the most common crops will all see significant productivity losses - Rice 12%, Wheat 15% and Corn 20% by 2080.

TIPPING POINTS

Tipping points in climate change sciences are essential thresholds after which some of earth's specific systems would be unable to return to their previous states, and would actually create accelerating feedback loops. These changes would permanently disturb global climate and thereby generate serious consequences for the planet and its inhabitants. Scientists have identified a variety of tipping points, whose probability of occurring varies accordingly to different emission scenarios. Here we will briefly explain these as well as their irreversible consequences to the climate.

1

Disturbance of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning circulation (AMOC)

This term refers to a system of currents in the Atlantic Ocean which carries warm water to Europe from the tropics. The AMOC, is part of a broader complex system of global ocean circulation patterns that helps to regulate temperature in the surface. Climate change by melting greenland ice or changing rainfall patterns interfere with this circulation. Studies suggest that the AMOC has already been weakened by 15% since the mid-20th century. A weakening or complete shutdown of AMOC would lead to severe consequences in Western Europe and North America, and disturb oceanic ecosystems. Though probability of a shutdown of the AMOC remains low, if we reach this point, even if emissions are curbed or stopped the changes would be permanent.

2

Permafrost and methane hydrates

Permafrost is soil or rock which contains ice or frozen organic material that has remained at maximum 0° C for the past two years. It covers about a quarter of unglaciated land in the Northern Hemisphere, and parts of landmasses in the Southern Hemisphere as well as the shallow parts on the Arctic and Southern oceans. As the climate warms up, there is an increasing risk for permafrost to defrost, releasing gases until now contained in this soil. As climate change increases temperatures, large-scale thawing of permafrost areas is increasing, feeding back at the same time more greenhouse gas emissions.

3

Disintegration of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet (WAIS)

WAIS is one of the three regions which make up Antarctica and contains enough ice to raise the global sea level by 3.3 meters in average. Even a partial meltdown of the ice covering of this region could have dramatic impacts on global coastlines, putting in peril million of inhabitants of coastal areas, their homes and livelihoods.

Click on the titles to discover further information !



Changes in the boreal forest

Boreal forests, also referred to as Taiga, can be found in the high latitudes of the northern hemisphere. The environmental characteristics shaping them are restricted tree growth due to freezing temperatures and lack of rainfalls throughout the year. Boreal forests are one of the largest ecosystem on Earth and make up 30% of the world's forests, thus being a valuable carbon storage system. Regarding boreal forests the IPCC's special report on 1.5C notes that "increased tree mortality would result in the creation of large regions of open woodlands and grasslands, which would favour further regional warming and increased fire frequencies, thus inducing a powerful positive feedback mechanism".

Amazon rainforest dieback

The impact of the loss of the Amazonian rainforest would be felt locally as well as globally. In addition to being a catastrophe for biodiversity and wildlife, it would disrupt atmospheric circulation around the world and thereby make it significantly harder to tackle climate change. Whilst the vital function of the forest as a carbon sink would go lost, the amount of released CO₂ through forest fires and dying of trees would also accelerate the amount of carbon in the world's atmosphere.

Coral Reef die-off

Coral reefs are one of the ecological systems which react most sensitively to global warming. In recent years, a massive bleaching has been observed amongst warm-water corals caused by the prolonged exposure to elevated sea temperatures. Under continuous heat stress, corals expel the algae that live in their tissue, known as zooxanthellae, leaving only a white skeleton behind. As this algae provides energy to the coral through the process of photosynthesis, without it corals slowly starve. This leads to the death of entire coral reefs due to persistent heat stress. Massive coral bleaching incidents have become five times more common worldwide in the past 40 years. Loss of coral reefs puts at risk livelihoods and ecosystems, According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature Coral reefs "directly support over 500 million people worldwide" and "host more than one quarter of all marine fish species".

Disintegration of the Greenland ice sheet.

The Greenland Ice Sheet is the second largest ice mass on Earth. It contains enough water to raise the global sea level by 7.2 meters, also having a significant impact on global coastlines. The melting of the Greenland Ice Sheet is currently accelerating and adding 0.7mm to global sea levels each year. It could reach a tipping point where surface temperatures would reach a level that would reinforce the melting of all other levels, thus creating a feedback loop.

WHAT IS A DECLARATION OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY?

To declare a climate emergency is to pass a resolution in a governing body which officially states that a public organization has recognised climate change as an emergency and supports urgent and drastic action to slow or reverse it. This includes placing climate change it's mitigation as well as adaptation policies at the center of policy and planning decisions. The term 'climate emergency' was first used by a municipality, with Darebin, Australia declaring in 2016. It has become widely known and recognized through the activism of groups such as 'Extinction Rebellion' and 'Fridays for Future'.

WHO CAN DECLARE A CLIMATE EMERGENCY?



Governments



Universities



Religious groups



Companies

WHY DECLARE A CLIMATE EMERGENCY?

Whilst a climate emergency declaration is mostly symbolic, it is also a viable tool to mobilize and engage stakeholders. It allows for the spreading of accurate information about the nature of this emergency and the impending collapse of our ecological systems, while pushing for meaningful commitments. The declaration can also help prepare stakeholders for adaptation, resilience and necessary but complicated changes in economies and societies.

In summary:

- **Builds awareness** of the issue amongst the public
- Classification of 'emergency' allows for **more resources** to be mobilised and measures to be taken
- Displays belief in the existing **scientific evidence** of man-made climate change and its consequences
- **Empathises the urgency** and scale needed to combat the issue
- Links the **overlying global trend** of climate change to specific **regional areas**
- Makes the **governing body accountable** for action to be taken against the crisis

HOW TO DECLARE A CLIMATE EMERGENCY?

Regardless of the sector in which your organisation operates, declaring a climate emergency will be valuable. However, this process requires planning and consultation with stakeholders. In the following section a list of important matters to consider when declaring a climate emergency.

Scientific foundation

1

Inform yourselves about how climate change affects our planet as well as its implications on the national, regional and local context. Publicly acknowledge the relevant scientific consensus and research. Use your position as government or business leaders to strongly support the science, remove impediments to action, or correct questions or doubts regarding the relevance of addressing climate change.

Commitment to change

Public commitment to climate change should involve taking concrete action and developing strategies, plans and goals that your government, company or organization will undertake in the immediate and long term future. These should be summarized in a Climate Emergency plan that not only includes detailed descriptions of the actions which will be executed, but also measurable and verifiable indicators within specific time frames. The defined deadlines and objectives must accurately reflect the urgency of the depicted issues, whilst also accounting for the national political and legislative context, and align with the goals set in the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015. Likewise, climate justice and an equitable transition considering inequality should be included in any commitment and declaration.

2

Discover more on climate justice [here](#)



Guidelines for a just transition to an environmentally-friendly economy and a sustainable society [here](#)

Allocate resources

3

A vital aspect of a coherent climate policy is the durability of the measures taken, especially financially. Therefore, it is crucial to allocate sufficient resources for the proposed measures and not only establish this for the current legislative term or business cycle, but also for following terms and years.

Assign a responsible work team

The required change should be led and overseen by a group of qualified experts. The responsible work group should be autonomous from the rest of the body or institution to ensure coherence and the longevity of undertaken measures and policies.

4

Mobilisation and shared work

5

Change should not happen in a top-down manner within institutions, these processes should be inclusive and consulted at every stage with all relevant parties. Engaging in the formulation and activation of shared solutions and commitments helps to drive broader societal change. The declaring body should seek to link all their stakeholders, partners, the media, businesses, communities, families as well as educational institutions in their emergency considerations. Promoting awareness, education and communication with all involved parties and citizens makes the process inclusive and democratic, and this will surely increase chances for successful outcomes. For companies, this specifically means continuously inspiring their employees, executives, competitors and customers to ensure that climate action stays a priority.

International cooperation

6

Many countries, municipalities and institutions have already embarked on this path and therefore have dealt with similar challenges. International cooperation allows us to learn from their successes and mistakes and approach this process together, as collective solutions need collaboration. It is important to link to existing networks in this sphere or promote the creation of new relevant ones.

Continuous evaluation and improvement

7

In order for the objectives defined in the climate emergency declaration to be achieved, it is essential to have regular monitoring and evaluation of results, indicators, adapting and reviewing goals and strategies. This ensures spaces for identifying new tools and addressing new issues which were not apparent in the initial declaration.

Essential issues which should be addressed after declaring a climate emergency:



Urban spaces



Just transition of the workforce



Mobility



Risk management



Energy



Water



Waste Management



Agriculture & Food



Education



Equality

DECLARATION OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY

EXAMPLES FROM VARIOUS ACTORS



Governments

1.490

governments have declared a climate emergency

1,490 jurisdictions in 29 countries have declared a climate emergency. The population of these jurisdictions amounts to 822 million citizens.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

European Union

The European Parliament declared a climate emergency in November of 2019, becoming the first political union to participate in this movement. The European Union followed up on its declaration with the publication of the **European Green Deal** in 2020 that among its objectives has carbon neutrality by 2050. This objective will be achieved through major structural changes in mobility, agriculture, energy and construction, with the EU assigning a €100 billion budget that will facilitate the transition. Whilst some climate groups criticize the plan for being insufficient, this represents an unprecedented level of action that few countries or regions have followed. After the declaration the EU has already made a number of specific decisions on certain topics such as with their **Circular Economy Action**. In this they commit to recycling 60% of the municipal waste within the EU by 2030 and to make all food packaging recyclable or reusable.



CEDAMIA

To see all the examples, visit the CEDAMIA page, an open data tool that monitors climate emergency declarations from governments. Click [here!](#)

DECLARATION OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY

COUNTRIES

Argentina



Argentina declared a climate emergency in July of 2019, however this has not been reflected enough in the country's policies. Though the country's declaration is important, few concrete policy frameworks exist, and the emission reduction goals do not align sufficiently with the Paris Climate Agreement's goals. Recently there has been a push for further exploitation of domestic fossil fuel sources, and tax exemptions in that sector have not been removed. For the time being, this declaration can be viewed as tokenism, until more concrete actions are taken.

SUB-NATIONAL ENTITIES: REGIONS, DEPARTMENTS OR STATES

Antioquia, Colombia

A very recent declaration was made by the department of Antioquia in Colombia in February 2020. This step was motivated by all the impacts that climate change has already had in the department. Frequent forest fires, heavy torrential rains and severe air pollution are just some of the ailments that the region's inhabitants have had to cope with. Accordingly after the declaration, this term's policy plan was drafted for the years 2020 - 2023 specifying concrete actions, budgets and policies for the upcoming four years in office. This strategy includes for the first time one specific component dealing explicitly with sustainability and climate change, with an increase of 136% for the environment secretariat's budget for this term in office.



MUNICIPALITIES

Hualpén, Chile

Hualpén was the first municipality in Latin America to declare a climate emergency in October of 2019. Their compromise was to allocate significant resources of the community budget to climate issues such as gaining stricter municipality-wide sustainability certifications. Additionally, they aim to improve their water efficiency strategy and provide general education for the entire population about the climate crisis and the responsibilities it brings.



Recife, Brazil

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Recife is the 16th most vulnerable city to climate change in the world. The city declared the climate emergency at the end of 2019. Whilst they had had a strong sustainability agenda prior the declaration, the council committed in a comprehensive plan for the carbon neutrality of the city by 2050. Additionally, they will make education on sustainability and the climate crisis compulsory in all public schools in 2020.

Medellín, Colombia

Medellín declared a climate emergency in February of 2020. This decision was motivated due to the increasingly deteriorating air quality crisis in the city. Although the declaration was accompanied by a proposal of 10 actions that included, for instance, the expansion of cycling infrastructure, the city does not yet have a climate change plan with indicators and concrete goals in its policy.





7.000

universities have declared a climate emergency

Universities

In July of 2019, 7,000 higher education institutions declared a "climate emergency" and committed to comply with a three point plan published in an open letter:

- "Mobilizing more resources for action-oriented climate change research and skills creation;
- Committing to going carbon neutral by 2030 or 2050 at the very latest;
- Increasing the delivery of environmental and sustainability education across curriculum, campus and community outreach programmes."



Bristol University

The University of Bristol was the first educational body in Great Britain to take this step. They have committed to being completely carbon neutral by 2030.

This commitment does not only apply to the carbon emissions which are directly being produced by the institution, but also extends to divesting their assets from businesses or research associated with fossil fuels.



11.258

scientists have declared a climate emergency

Scientists

In November of 2019, 11,258 scientists from 153 countries publicly declared a climate emergency. Here are some important extracts from their declaration.

“*Scientists have a moral obligation to clearly warn humanity of any catastrophic threat and to “tell it like it is.” On the basis of this obligation and the graphical indicators presented below, we declare, with more than 11,000 scientist signatories from around the world, clearly and unequivocally that planet Earth is facing a climate emergency...*

... The climate crisis has arrived and is accelerating faster than most scientists expected. It is more severe than anticipated, threatening natural ecosystems and the fate of humanity Especially worrisome are potential irreversible climate tipping points and nature's reinforcing feedbacks (atmospheric, marine, and terrestrial) that could lead to a catastrophic “hothouse Earth,” well beyond the control of humans. These climate chain reactions could cause significant disruptions to ecosystems, society, and economies, potentially making large areas of Earth uninhabitable...

...We believe that the prospects will be greatest if decision-makers and all of humanity promptly respond to this warning and declaration of a climate emergency and act to sustain life on planet Earth, our only home.

”

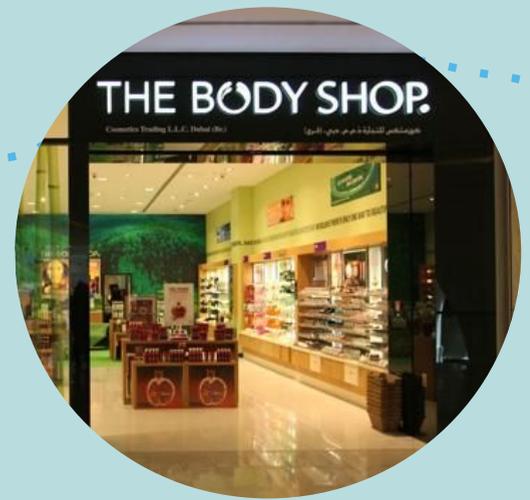

COMPANIES

The Body Shop

The Body Shop is a UK based cosmetics and skincare company which declared a climate emergency in 2019 alongside other like-minded companies who are striving towards taking climate action. The Body Shop aims to deeply understand and offset the climate impact caused by its business operations. Additionally, they will be launching a commitment in 2021 to cause zero environmental and social harm by 2030.

The employees of The Body Shop have spoken out in support of the company's environmental advocacy, naming it an appropriate and justified response to the climate emergency. As The Body Shop anticipates that this is also a matter which is important to their customer base, they have said that they want to continue to take on their responsibility in challenging the status quo and speaking out against inadequate environmental policies.

One of their directors, Christopher Davis explained the motivations behind the climate emergency declaration, as on the one hand wanting to continue a customer-oriented and profitable business model whilst at the same time acting accordingly to the 'heart' or values of the company.



“

“The call for action in response to the climate emergency is getting louder and louder yet we are still seeing global emissions continuing to rise. If we are to stand a chance of tackling this crisis, we need to work together and we are proud to be joining fellow B Corps across the world in taking action.”

**Christopher Davis, International Director
of Corporate Social Responsibility, The
Body Shop**

”



COMPANIES

Discover how businesses can take action and declare a climate emergency.



DECLARATION MODELS

FOR A GOVERNMENT

[Place & Date]

The Mayor [X] / [City] / [Council] unanimously declares a climate emergency.

[Name of city] recognizes that urgent measures are required to reduce emissions and address the impacts of climate change.

The citizens of [Name of city] and around the world have a fundamental right to adequate health, air, water, land, food, education, medical care and shelter; and as a local government we are obligated to make this a priority in our policies.

As part of the climate emergency declaration, [Name of city] has committed to (examples of possible actions which could be part of a climate emergency declaration):

- 100% renewable energy by 20xx
- Support companies in reducing their emissions by xx% until 20xx
- By 20xx, xx% of all municipal transport will be carbon neutral.
- Carbon neutral city by 20xx
- Develop a broad and profound local commitment to climate emergency action.

This declaration builds on []'s existing commitment to the Covenant of Mayors for the climate and energy, where [] has already committed to [insert actions / objectives] and thereby joins one of over 10.000 cities in 132 countries that are working together towards a low carbon and resilient society.

SIGNATURE

FOR A BUSINESS

[Place & Date]

Our business grew in a time where there was a different expectation of the role which the private sector could play in climate action. Today as we face this situation we must take immediate and radical action and undertake changes in the way we conduct and drive our business.

We believe, based on the available facts and science, that our obligation as leaders and toward our different stakeholders and shareholders is to tackle the climate crisis.

This requires a commitment to carbon neutrality by 20xx with realistic intermediary milestones based on scientific advice.

This statement also commits us to rethink the company's strategy and business model in the short, medium and long-term and redesign it under the principles of a 'just transition' that takes into account the people affected by this change.

We will seek to guarantee benefits for all stakeholders (shareholders, employees, suppliers, customers) whilst being fully committed to taking the action that a climate emergency requires.

SIGNATURE

Language builds the spaces for political and policy action. Therefore, it is really important to consider which **vocabulary** to use in a climate emergency declaration. This language will inform the scale of actions which can be undertaken as each term is associated with a specific audience and impact.

People who were previously uninterested in the climate crisis may be alarmed by an emergency declaration from their government. This fright can be channeled into action if institutions provide their citizens **clear information and guidance** with which actions they can undertake collectively or as individuals, and clear information on their scope. If people are not informed on what to do during an emergency, this initial alarmism can quickly turn to panic, despair or resistance.

The more structures of engagement are provided for people and organisations that give clear instructions and support, the more people will be ready to efficiently enter emergency mode.

To understand the proper use of language in the context of the climate emergency, it is vital to understand the perception, use and context of each word from different perspectives. **This to guarantee messages are effective, adapted and the public is receptive.**

CRISIS

Profound, impactful change of a process or situation.

A crisis is a decisive stage or turning point in a process where a situation can evolve for better or for worse. This process includes **several stages**, from the emergence of the crisis over its management to the eventual end. Crisis vary in terms of causes, intensity, duration, geography, diffusion as well as social actors involved.

By using the term 'crisis' to refer to climate change, the public is forced to perceive a structural process that incorporates a solution. The urgency that is conveyed with this term can help the responsible authorities execute the actions which are necessary. However, according to Mike Hulme,, countries that are amidst other crises such as economic, political or sanitary can have a different reaction to the term crisis as they will perceive climate change as only one of many pressing issues, and misjudge the necessity of action on this topic.



People are able to respond to emergencies with reason, focus, dedication and surprising success. Emergency mode is the mode of the human psychological functioning that occurs when individuals or groups respond efficiently to existential or moral emergencies.

**Margaret Klein Salamon, Phd
Founding Director, The Climate
Mobilization**

CLIMATE CHANGE

“Climate change” means a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.”

according to Article 1. of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The term ‘climate change’ has mostly replaced the term ‘global warming since the 90’s’ in academia and policy as it better reflects the complex phenomena provoked by the increase in emissions, aside from the mere rise in temperatures. It’s use is still preferred by many governmental bodies as it is perceived as neutral and therefore lends itself better to objective discussions, and with members of the public not well acquainted with the situation.

EMERGENCY

Connotation of an accidental event. Situation of danger or disaster that requires immediate action.

This term is associated with phenomena such as emergencies related to conflicts or natural disasters. Emergencies, by definition, are uncommon events and therefore can be met with ‘exceptional measures’. Though these exceptional measures tend to otherwise be difficult to implement in functioning democracies, an adequate use of the term emergency can be helpful. In the face of the climate issues, the expression ‘emergency’ can translate future deadlines or goals

towards low carbon economies into the present. Additionally, this term also creates awareness in the **public consciousness**, relating the urgency and reality of climate change to current events such as it happened with Australia’s wildfires.

THREAT

To bring people into emergency mode, it is important that the ‘threat’ of which they are being warned, is combined with an ‘emergency solution’ (when possible). The climate movement must begin branding the climate crisis as a threat, also in terms as it is able to cause the collapse of our civilization and kill millions of species as well as people. Scientific consensus shows us that these events will probably transpire within this century if no urgent action is taken, potentially even during its first half. The climate movement is not about ‘protecting the planet and future generations’, but rather protecting our lives and the lives of our loved ones as we are in immediate danger in these upcoming decades. The climate threat is by far the biggest threat to our security , public health as well as the main threat to our economy and wellbeing.

EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS

When the scale of the necessary response to a crisis is minimized, it prevents actors from entering into emergency mode. Therefore, to make the climate crisis more visible, we need to be 'alarmed' by the crisis and prepared to make important and profound changes in our habits and economy.

Emergencies can only be coordinated by institutions that have the necessary tools, legitimacy and power at their disposal, be it governments or corporations. We need to reduce and remove greenhouse emissions from our atmosphere in years not decades, until a safe model can be restored. The reality is that this will require a colossal effort from the whole of society and require of individuals many significant lifestyle changes.

Discover a declaration



Assembly calls on the Mayor to declare a Climate Emergency

06 December 2018

The government should give the Mayor of London more powers to...

...the London Assembly called on the Mayor to put an...

...Emergency in London.

...Russell AM, who proposed the motion said

...climate breakdown might be as little

...in every aspect of our lives in

...our food supply chains

**Zero carbon London:
A 1.5°C compatible plan**

December 2018



**Discover and compare
emergency plans!**

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN AND A CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN ?

The key differences between a climate emergency plan and a climate change plan are that a greater emphasis is placed on:

- Changing the government or organisation's priorities and integrate a climate emergency response that involves the entirety of the institution including the internal education and engagement of staff members
- Commitment and collaboration with other governments and institutions at local, regional and international level.
- Strong communication with local and regional governments
- Community mobilization: Collaboration with the community (for example residents, taxpayers, workers, organisations and businesses) to deliver local solutions and mobilize the population.
- Plan for the reduction of emissions that even goes beyond zero emissions as it recognizes that existing emissions will also need to be compensated to avoid the worst outcomes.

AVOID FALSE NARRATIVES AND DISMISS MYTHS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

Spreading the truth and bringing the public to emergency mode means putting aside false narratives that alienate the public from reality.

MYTHS:

"2°C or 1.5°C of warming above pre industrial levels represents a "safe limit" for global warming."

"Our grandchildren" may endure a "climate emergency" in the future if we do not change."

"We still have a considerable 'global carbon budget' left to safely use before matters get out of hand"

"The transition to a zero carbon economy can take decades and until then we can just continue emitting carbon. "

"The climate crisis is just an energy problem that can be solved without any further action."

"Solving the climate crisis is a utopia: Nothing that we do can still help the situation and we will all definitely be extinct by 2030 one way or another."

"The market will bring all the necessary solutions to reduce the emissions."

REALITY:

According to the IPCC, an increase in 1.5 degrees would have serious consequences for humans and the survival of ecosystems.

We are already living in an unprecedented emergency that will only worsen for the following generations.

There is no such thing as a carbon budget as the planet has already exceeded the capacity which it can bear.

Emissions must be limited as soon as possible and the transition accelerated.

It is most definitely not only an energy problem, but also has to do with agriculture, livestock, consumption, production, waste and many other issues that require concerted and significant action.

This is not true. There are many paths and technologies already available, but the transition must be accelerated now.

Whilst there are certain market based solutions which are or can be useful such as a carbon tax or carbon markets, markets or financial instruments on their own are not able to regulate an emergency situation.

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