

ICW Environment Advisor letter to Ministers and Shadow/Opposition Ministers regarding the urgent need to mitigate climate change.

Dear Minister...

ACTIONS FOR REDUCING GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

In December 2015, in Paris, 194 countries' representatives are to negotiate how each country is to make meaningful cuts to greenhouse gas emissions, so as to keep global temperature rise to below 2 degrees of warming. These agreements are to follow the Kyoto Protocol, for post 2015.

In Kiev 2006, the International Council of Women Resolution 6 stated:

"The International Council of Women calls upon all its member councils to urge their national governments to:

1. Subscribe to and implement the Kyoto Protocol and its successors, as long as they seek to enact similar outcomes such as moving away from fossil fuels, and work actively for their implementation,
2. Co-operate with other developed and developing countries in measures to reduce greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere with the object of mitigating catastrophic world-wide climatic changes, and
3. Support and encourage the development of renewable energy technologies such as solar and wind power, geothermal energy and the hydrogen economy."

There has been growing optimism that countries appreciate the need to cooperate, and to respect diversity. At the National level there have been commitments from all European Union members to reduce emissions by 40%; the USA is targeting 26-28%; also Russia, Switzerland and Norway, as well as Mexico, Gabon, Andorra have made commitments. (See: <http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/indc>)

The improvements have been helped by the technological developments in wind and solar electric energy. The solar efficiencies have increased 40%, and wind power is cheaper and more efficient. So, along with new developments in storage (eg, Tesla battery & Zen) it is possible for Renewable Energy to clean up electricity.

(Ref: <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/clean-energy/new-batteries-can-boost-renewables-tesla-launch/>)

More countries are adopting policies, in the national interest, and for energy security and health benefits for clean energy and energy efficiencies. Energy efficiencies in the built environment have been and will be important.

There is growing mass mobilisation for action. Before the Lima CoP, China and the USA agreed to act and to act jointly on 5-6 projects.

If the World is to achieve less than 2 degrees of warming, then there needs to be carbon neutrality by 2050. For the first time in a million years there have been months of emissions at 400 ppm, and globally they are continuing to rise. There will need to be increases in absorption involving forests (reafforestation and not cutting and burning forests), and improvements in land management and agricultural practices to restore carbon in the soil. (Ref. National Council of Women Australia Environment Advisor's report, 8 May 2015, on talk by Christiana Figueres, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), at the Australian National University on 7th May, 2015.)

The International Council of Women urges each country to realise the urgency of the need to commit to reduce emissions substantially, (30-40% post Paris 2015), and adopt practices that sequester carbon. That if insufficient actions are taken, then future generations will suffer more, and changes will be much more costly. There is a moral imperative to take responsibility for making the needed changes.