

# **Saving Our Planet**

INFORMATION, TRAINING AND VIDEOS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE  
INSPIRING ALL TO WORK TOGETHER TO SAVE THE PLANET

**<https://savingourplanet.net>**

## **Saving Our Planet's contribution to the Talanoa dialogue**

### **Where are we?**

Due to Climate Change, Planet Earth has gone through unprecedented changes in recent decades. Its global surface, atmosphere and oceans are warmer. The sea is rising at an increasing rate (1) and the ocean's acidity has increased by 26%. Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets have lost mass and glaciers have been shrinking.

Climate change is projected to undermine food security and to reduce renewable surface water and groundwater resources in many regions. Many animal species face the risk of extinction. Climate change can also increase risks of violent conflicts by amplifying drivers of these conflicts such as poverty.

At over 400 ppm, levels of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere are higher than they have been at any time in the past 400,000 years (2). As a result, global warming has reached 1°C above preindustrial levels (3). According to Climate Action Tracker, current policies put the planet on track for global warming of between 2.5 and 4.7°C by 2100. (4)

The precise levels of climate change sufficient to trigger irreversible change are uncertain, but the risk associated with crossing such thresholds increases with rising temperature. For example, the potential risk from the release of methane from melting permafrost might trigger such an event. Many aspects of climate change and associated impacts will continue for centuries, even if anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases are stopped (5).

### **Where do we want to go?**

The Paris Agreement of 2015 has set a goal to hold the global average temperature increase to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts to limit the rise to 1.5 °C. It is still possible to meet the Paris goals if emissions peak by 2020 at the latest (6). But this will require a serious, generalized commitment from policymakers and the world's citizenry. Scientists, educators, business leaders, NGOs and the media have an important role to play in keeping the public well informed about climate change, the real risks and the urgency of action. A well-informed public is crucial to enlightened decision-making.

## How do we get there?

1) The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) will collectively need to be revised upward, because currently the NDCs collectively fall short of what is needed to meet the stated goal of the Paris Agreement. The NDCs need to be harmonized so they can be evaluated and compared. The NDC Explorer is an online interactive tool that can be helpful in such an evaluation (7).

2) Each country's performance should have a continuous assessment and review process. This will help to provide more transparency and increase comparability. It can reveal some of the weaknesses of the scope and content of NDCs, including the omission of important mitigation sectors. It can also support civil society to hold governments accountable for implementing NDCs and help actors such as development banks and climate funds to check whether their climate projects address the NDCs and to mainstream climate change in the broader project portfolio.

The review outputs should be published at least every six months and open to public consultation. Results need to be evaluated in terms of actual fossil fuel emissions. The actual results should be consistently measured against the NDC roadmap specifying a planned carbon budget at each stage, and a combined roadmap should be published at least annually showing the aggregate progress of the Parties towards the Paris Agreement goal.

We stress that the results that count concern actual greenhouse gas emissions reduction. Substituting one low-carbon energy for another without advancing this goal can be a sheer waste of funds which could be otherwise used to good purpose. Technology toward this goal should be chosen on the basis of the best available scientific knowledge, avoiding political pressure, prejudice, and any influences not relevant to this objective.

3) It's clear that coal, oil and gas levels of consumption must be sharply reduced in a very short time frame. This can be done with a combination of incentives and regulations. Incentives would include a generalized carbon tax (or fee, or price) and the withdrawal of all subsidies to fossil fuels. Each Party should commit to a moratorium on new coal power plants; or failing that, should make a binding and audited commitment that no new coal power plants can be built without CCS effective to capture substantially all greenhouse gas products from the plant.

4) Removing greenhouse gases from the air will be essential. This can be achieved by agroforestry (50%), CO<sub>2</sub>-negative materials (40%) and CCS (10%). All current pathways to +1.5°C assume carbon dioxide removal in order to achieve negative global emissions before 2050.

Priority should be given to tree-planting (8), reforestation, halting deforestation, and technologies that durably lock CO<sub>2</sub> into materials (such as carbon fibers). An important reduction in energy use and emissions can be obtained by substituting materials made using optimal manufacturing processes in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and energy (like carbon fiber stone (CFS)(9) for highly CO<sub>2</sub> and energy-intensive materials (like steel and concrete).

5) Developing countries, particularly, need financial help for adaptation to climate change, to which they are usually particularly vulnerable, and to implement low-carbon energy solutions to needed growth. Solidarity and generosity by wealthy countries is in everybody's interest. Green bonds may be part of the solution.

6) Global human population has grown from 1 billion in 1800 to 3 billion in 1960 and 7.5 billion today... and continues to grow. Every additional person contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and to deforestation, consuming their growing part of finite resources like clean water. Appropriate ways need to be considered to reduce population growth, such as providing easy and widely available access to voluntary birth control. Governments should refrain from policies that encourage large families.

Saving Our Planet's (10) mission is to inspire, energize and enable humans worldwide to work together to save Planet Earth from disastrous climate change, and to convince World Leaders to make this their number one priority. We stress that decisions about solutions to climate change must be based on science and not on politics, vested interest or myth.

The above recommendations require decisions and implementation by Governments across the World. How can Governments be motivated to step up to their climate responsibilities? Saving Our Planet is working on a movement, NOCO2 (7), whereby individuals reduce their CO2 footprint as much as possible and then compensate their remaining CO2 by means of highly cost-effective tree-planting in regions like Madagascar.

Concerted action of individuals across the world will persuade policy makers that there has been a global culture shift, motivating them to carry out the six actions described above and to deliver on their Paris Agreement promises.

***Eden Reforestation Projects, the International Association for Human Values*** and the ***International Art of Living Foundation*** join ***Saving Our Planet*** in this input.

Eden Reforestation Projects is a non-profit that plants millions of trees every year to recreate healthy forest systems and build local economies in impoverished communities. (11)

The International Art Of Living Foundation (AOL) is an international educational and humanitarian non-profit organization running for over 35 years with a presence in over 10,000 centers in over 150 countries. (12)

The International Association for Human Values (IAHV) was created in Geneva in 1997 as a global platform for humanitarian initiatives that solve problems by uplifting human values. Through its country organizations and partners, IAHV conducts service projects and supports humanitarian and disaster relief initiatives throughout the world. (13)

Both organizations (AOL and IAHV) were founded by the Global Humanitarian leader ***Sri Sri Ravi Shankar***. (14)

This input is also supported by ***George Monbiot***, author, journalist and regular contributor to ***The Guardian*** newspaper on environmental topics. (15)

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