

Stakeholder Forum: Climate Change Statement

There is no doubt in the minds of most people – scientific, political and other – that climate change is happening and that human activity is deeply influencing it. It is affecting the whole globe and some of its consequences are almost certainly unavoidable and potentially cataclysmic; the very poorest people and countries of the world will suffer through no fault of their own. However, we hope that the point of no return has not yet been reached and to prevent it from doing so, urgent action is necessary to be taken immediately by us all – Governments, the United Nations, industry and commerce, NGOs, communities, other bodies and individuals – to stabilise global atmospheric carbon concentrations at 400 parts per million, which they are currently predicted to meet by 2015. To maintain concentrations at that level is understood to limit the global temperature rise to less than two degrees Celsius, above pre-industrial levels.

Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future believes that there urgently has to be global agreement to a binding international commitment to limit concentrations at the above level and to limit carbon emissions in order to achieve it within the necessary time-scale. It supports the framework of Contraction and Convergence, as developed by the Global Commons Institute (GCI) in the United Kingdom¹, as the most practical means for doing so, along with equal per capita human entitlements/limits for determining the means of convergence.

Stakeholder Forum recognises that there are many practical ways in which populations can meet their carbon entitlements/limits across the institutional, commercial and domestic sectors – including carbon trading, energy efficiency and reduction measures and employing renewable carbon-free forms of energy. We remain unconvinced that nuclear energy is an option to be pursued because of the very real security threats and other implications involved.

Stakeholder Forum will integrate consideration of climate change and global warming factors into the discussions, roundtables, conferences and other activities as a major influence on its thinking and recommendations to the United Nations, Governments and others and endeavours to work together with others on these issues.

¹ From the work conducted by the GCI, contraction refers to the lowering of carbon emissions, with the aim of stabilising global carbon concentrations in the atmosphere at a sustainable level, to be agreed internationally. Convergence refers to the distribution of available future entitlements to emit carbon dioxide in order to achieve the agreed level of concentrations, assuming entitlements to be on a per capita basis globally. This basis enables less developed countries to earn credits, under a carbon trading system, which they can sell to developed countries which have exceeded their quotas of emissions.