

What is climate change?

The climate naturally changes, but the past century has seen a dramatic difference. Increased emissions from human activity have contributed to the artificial rise of the global temperature and sea level.

What's happening?

The UK has 1% of the world's population yet produces 2.13% of the world's CO₂ emissions and is the 7th largest producer globally.

The EU produces about 22% of total global emissions.

By 2080 temperatures in the UK and the rest of the world could rise by 4°C causing glaciers to melt and sea levels to rise.

Glaciers in eight of Europe's nine glacial regions are at their lowest levels for 5000 years leaving both animals and humans facing severe consequences as a result.

- **Fresh water supplies are at risk of contamination from salt water.**
- **Extreme weather conditions have left many people in drought affected areas.**
- **5 million people in the UK and many coastal towns, cities and islands around the world are at risk of devastating floods – Canvey Island in Essex and the Thames Gateway are on the same level as Bangladesh – and just as much at risk.**
- **Plant species across Europe are at risk of becoming extinct .**

Those in poor countries are the most vulnerable and the least responsible for climate change, but they will be affected first. Water shortages and reductions in food production capacity will lead to famine in the poorest parts of the world and rich countries will still be affected.

What is the EU doing about climate change?

The EU says tackling climate change is a priority. Under Kyoto it aims to reduce emissions by 8% on 1990 levels by 2010.

Measures to reduce emissions are integrated into key EU policy areas such as agriculture, energy, regional policy and research.

The European Climate Change Programme (ECCP) – launched in 2000 – identifies a range of cost effective measures to reduce emissions. Those applied include:

- **The EU Emissions Trading Scheme.**
- **Legislative initiatives to promote renewable energy sources – target now 20% by 2020.**
- **Expansion of the use of biofuels in road transport – target now 10% by 2020.**
- **Improvement in the energy performance of buildings.**

EU Commission's proposals to assist the EU's battle against climate change include:

- **Energy reduction of 20% by 2020.**
- **Aviation in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme from 2011.**
- **Strengthen the EU strategy for reducing CO₂ emissions from new cars through legislation.**
- **Integrated package of measures to establish a new energy policy for Europe aimed at boosting the EU's energy security and competitiveness, and the battle against climate change.**

The EU wants a global and comprehensive post 2012 agreement to follow Kyoto, completed by the end of 2009, and will work to achieve that.

Is this enough?

“Climate change cannot be addressed simply through money. It requires a change in behaviour and an understanding of cause and effect. Turning off the lights becomes not only good domestic economics but an act of international solidarity.”

Jean Lambert, Green MEP

- **The Commission says that EU member states are on target, however to meet the Kyoto targets all planned measures must be put into practice. In 2004 EU member states were only a tenth of the way to meeting the 8% emissions reduction required under the Kyoto Protocol. Only five member states were likely to meet their burden sharing targets.**
- **40% of transport emissions come from urban transport where most journeys under 5km are still made by car.**
- **85% of the electricity used by electronic appliances may be consumed while they are not actually on. Many technologies are still being made with a stand by setting.**
- **One third of the heat in our homes can be lost though un-insulated walls and in London emissions from the domestic sector account for 37%, higher than levels from transport. Nearly ten million homes across the UK however still need cavity wall insulation.**
- **There are 21 sources of renewable energy that are affordable, safe and clean. The UK could meet its electricity needs three times over with the use of wind power at sea alone yet the Government continues to follow the path to nuclear power.**

What do the Greens in Europe say?

Greens / EFA say that Europe needs to drastically reduce its environmental impact. We want at least 30% reduction of greenhouse gases by 2020 and a nuclear free future. Our **Climate Stability Pact** includes:

- Sustainable city planning bringing services closer to people so there is less need to travel: safer walking and cycling and efficient public transport.
- 25% of total energy in Europe to be from renewable sources by 2020.
- Heavy traffic reduced by one third by 2010.
- The Emissions Trading Scheme to include more greenhouse gases and the transport sector.
- A cap on global aviation emissions and measures to curb the climate impact of EU flights.
- Car taxes and charges to reflect emissions.
- Legally binding greenhouse gas emission limits on new cars.
- Strict insulation standards for buildings and mandatory energy saving targets driving more environmentally friendly technology into the market.
- An EU law requiring manufacturers to limit consumer appliance standby energy use to a maximum 0.5 watt.
- Local producers boosting the local economy, with prices reflecting the full environmental impact of transportation.



“We know the risks of climate change and what needs to be done. Governments decide on infrastructure, standards for industry, planning and finance. They have to make change possible. The longer they delay, the worse the consequences will be.”

Jean Lambert, Green MEP

The websites below provide further information on Europe's actions on climate change:

The Office of Jean Lambert MEP
www.jeanlambertmep.org.uk

The Greens / EFA
www.greens-efa.org

The Green Party of England and Wales
www.greenparty.org.uk

The European Environment Agency
www.eea.europa.eu

The European Commission
www.ec.europa.eu

For more information please contact:

The Office of Jean Lambert:
Suite 58, The Hop Exchange
24 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TY

Tel: +44 (0)20 7407 6269

Email: jeanlambert@greenmeps.org.uk

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climate change climate crisis?

“Time is running out – act against climate change now.”



Jean Lambert, Green MEP
www.jeanlambertmep.org.uk



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