

STATES OF JERSEY



CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY: ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF JERSEY

Lodged au Greffe on 11th March 2019
by R.J. Ward of St. Helier

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

that there exists a climate emergency likely to have profound effects in Jersey,
and that in order to deal with this situation –

- (a) Jersey should aim to be carbon-neutral by 2030, and the Council of Ministers is accordingly requested to draw up a plan to achieve this, for presentation to the States by the end of 2019;
- (b) the Council of Ministers is requested to publish, with the forthcoming Government Plan for 2020, a climate impact assessment on the proposals set out in the Plan; and
- (c) the Chief Minister is requested to ensure that consideration of action to tackle climate change in Jersey is included as a standing item on the agenda of the Council of Ministers.

DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER

REPORT

Climate change should be considered the greatest long-term threat to our way of life, our future security and well-being. An explanation of climate change can be found at this link: [Climate change](#).

Current action to combat the emissions of greenhouse gasses such as carbon dioxide and methane, and to ultimately fight anthropomorphic driven climate change, are based around the Paris Agreement, details of which can be found at the following link: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>.

It has reached the point where, to achieve the goals set out during the Paris Agreement (i.e. “holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels,”) we need make a specific response.

The Paris Agreement was the best outcome that could be negotiated amongst all the nations of the world in a context where there is not yet a general understanding that an emergency response is possible. By definition the Paris Agreement, arising from a consensus of all the world’s governments, could not represent a leading-edge position, not least because it had to be signed off by countries that earn major export income from fossil fuels (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Australia).

However, one of the big achievements of the Paris Agreement was recognition, at last, that a +2°C temperature cap is not safe and not acceptable.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s (“IPCC”) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published in October 2018, describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause, compared with a 1.5°C rise, and confirms that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible. However, this is entirely dependent on ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities and others (see link below): <https://www.ipcc.ch/2018/10/08/summary-for-policymakers-of-ipcc-special-report-on-global-warming-of-1-5c-approved-by-governments/>

This makes it clear that the Paris Agreement’s best case temperature cap of +1.5°C will not –

1. prevent the Pacific and Indian Ocean atoll nations from being permanently flooded;
2. prevent permanent flooding of low-lying, heavily populated areas (Bangladesh, Vietnam, China, Egypt, etc. where over 100 million people live);
3. prevent the destruction of coral reefs around the world, including the Great Barrier Reef;
4. prevent the mobilisation of the huge carbon stores in the Arctic (which will cause the release of CO₂ and methane that could exceed the emissions from all fossil fuels so far);
5. provide food security; and provide a foundation for military security and positive peace.

The impact on Jersey as a small Island will be significant, long-lasting, and life-changing.

A report from January 2018 outlines some of the major risks to Jersey:
<https://www.gov.je/SiteCollectionDocuments/Government%20and%20administration/R%20Analysis%20of%20Future%20Jersey%20indicators%20that%20are%20at%20high%20risk%20from%20climate%20change%2020180323%20DM.pdf>

I will not list the risks, as the report itself goes into them in detail. Instead, I will emphasize the significance on the Jersey population and our economy.

What would this proposition achieve?

This proposition would change the focus of Jersey's Government and the Assembly, and include the issue of climate change onto the agenda of the Council of Ministers and into the process of producing the government plan. This will then mean that climate change impact is an integral feature of policy-making.

The targets set are not a ceiling to what we can achieve. Indeed, they are achievable and a key starting-point for future actions. With a defined focus from the Government of Jersey and the States Assembly, we have the opportunity to demonstrate to our population that we can take action for the future good of all Islanders. Our young people certainly need this assurance.

Jersey may be a small Island, but it has a much bigger influence on an international stage. By our recognition of climate change as an emergency, we add our name to an ever-growing list of forward-thinking jurisdictions that lead the way in climate action.

The value of passing a specific proposition for delivering climate action is that it goes beyond 'business as usual' and 'reform as usual'. Special features of this mode are –

1. a very strong focus on the issue;
2. a strong priority for action and budgets relating to the issue;
3. delivery of solutions as a package (rather than piecemeal, incremental change);
4. delivery of solutions in a strong enough way to address future situations;
5. delivery of temporary protection and adaptation measures while prevention and restorative measures are put in place and while they achieve their full effect.

This proposition enables policy-makers to have climate change included as a key factor in their planning. It is time for us as a community, a government, and as citizens of the planet, to have this consideration at the front and centre of our decision-making. The legacy we leave for our children and beyond should be the measure of the success of the period of this States Assembly. Putting children first is at the core of this Government's priorities. Leaving a habitable planet to live on is at the very foundation of this pledge.

Financial and manpower implications

The financial cost of this proposition is difficult to detail. Both in terms of pre-empting the contents of the government plan, and future policy. However, we have to consider the significant possible cost, both in financial and societal terms, of not taking this action.

Staff time will be required, but this can be minimised by including the consideration of climate change throughout the planning process of both the government plan and future policy.

List of Councils declaring climate emergency

(Principal) Councils which have already passed motions declaring a Climate Emergency:

Bradford Metropolitan District Council ([90% reduction in carbon emissions compared to 2005 levels by 2030](#))

Brighton Hove City Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))

Bristol City Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))

Calderdale ([no fixed target date](#))

Cambridge City Council ([no new target date](#), campaign continues to press for a more ambitious target)

Carmarthenshire ([zero carbon by 2030](#))

Cheltenham ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))

Cornwall County Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))

Forest of Dean District Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))

Greater London Authority (call for the Mayor to declare climate emergency)

Hastings Borough

Kirklees Metropolitan District Council ([carbon neutral in line with IPCC carbon targets](#))

Lambeth Borough Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))

Lancaster City Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))

Leicester City Council ([carbon neutral by 2025-2030](#))

Lewes D.C.

Lewisham Borough Council

Manchester City Council ([carbon neutral by 2038](#))

Mendip District Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))

Milton Keynes (carbon neutral by 2030)

North Somerset Council ([net zero carbon by 2030](#))

Nottingham City Council ([carbon neutral by 2028](#))

Oxford City Council ([carbon neutrality target TBC](#))

Reading Borough Council (to pursue zero carbon by 2030, but ‘this date can only be achieved with substantial policy changes from national government’ – final motion on last 2 pages of [meeting agenda](#))

Reigate and Banstead B.C.

Scarborough Borough Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))

Sheffield City Council ([carbon neutral asap](#))

Somerset

South Cambridgeshire

Stroud District Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))

Trafford Council ([carbon neutrality target TBC](#))

Wiltshire County Council.

Parish and Town Councils:

Alnwick Town Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))
Frome Town Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))
Glastonbury Town Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))
Ladock Parish Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))
Langport Town Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))
Machynlleth Town Council ([carbon neutral asap](#))
Oswestry Town Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))
Stithians Parish Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))
Totnes Town Council ([carbon neutral by 2030](#))
Tywyn Town Council ([carbon neutral as soon as possible](#)).

More cities and Governments declaring a climate emergency can be found here:

<https://www.theclimatemobilization.org/city-by-city>

Useful References

<https://www.campaigncc.org/climateemergency.shtml>

<https://climateemergencydeclaration.org/>

https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/projects/climate-change-evidence-causes/basics-of-climate-change/?gclid=Cj0KCQiAn4PkBRCDARIsAGHmH3c-DWl29STgE8KzaXlxEAsQjojxlsMooFZ2d8sUeHJIBiWXe24ZMjQaArCQEALw_wcB

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/408222/turning-point-report-contents-and-chapter-1-2019-2020-140822-DM.pdf