

Online Conference 2020

A Green Recovery for Wales

Proposed by: Policy Development Committee

Conference notes:

1. That climate change affects weather patterns, ecosystems, islands, coastlines, and cities across the globe, but also poses a threat to the health, safety, and security of every person worldwide.
2. That on 29th April 2019 Welsh Government declared a climate emergency.
3. That the latest evidence from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that we have 12 years to avoid irreversible and catastrophic climate breakdown.
4. That the findings from the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) that the rate of species extinction is accelerating with a million species under threat.
5. That the latest UK Climate Change Committee (UK CCC) Reducing UK Emissions [Progress Report](#) to Parliament found that Welsh emissions in 2016 had fallen by 14% in comparison to 1990. Despite this, emissions have been rising gradually at an average rate of 1.4% per year, with a 5% increase in 2016.
6. That COVID lockdown measures could result in global Carbon Dioxide Emissions reducing by around 8%, more than any other year on record. However, the UN Environment Programme estimates that global GHG emissions must fall by 7.6% every year from 2020—2030 to keep temperature increases to less than 1.5%.
7. That 10 years ago, if countries had acted on the science, governments would have needed to reduce emissions only by 3.3% each year. Every year we fail to act, the level of difficulty and cost to reduce emissions goes up.
8. That only around 1% of the Welsh Government's Budget is currently being spent on decarbonisation.

Conference believes:

- A. That addressing, slowing, or arresting emissions is necessary but insufficient - our goal must be to reverse global warming and stop the irreversible breakdown of our climate and ecosystems.
- B. That our aim should be to create an economy that enables people as well as our planet to thrive - a social foundation of well-being that no one should fall below, and an ecological ceiling of planetary pressure that we should not go beyond.
- C. That stopping catastrophic climate change must be a central priority for everyone and for government at all levels and should be achieved as quickly, safely, and equitably as possible.
- D. That our approach should go beyond a 'do no harm' principle to being regenerative by design, and that this principle should be threaded through all policy and decision making.

Conference calls on the Welsh Liberal Democrats:

- i. To ensure that its policies for the 2021 Senedd elections balance the limits of our planet with the needs of people, creating a social contract that no one will fall short on life's essentials (from food and housing to healthcare and political voice), while ensuring that collectively we do not overshoot our pressure on Earth's life-supporting systems, on which we fundamentally depend.
- ii. To commit to passing, within the first 100 days of Government, a Clean Air Act for Wales.
- iii. To make the climate emergency and creating a thriving planet a core element of its manifesto for the 2021 Senedd elections.

Conference calls for:

1. A Wales Emergency Green Recovery Package, committing the Welsh Government to an annual spend of £1bn - funded from public and private sources - on measures to stop the climate breakdown and decline in biodiversity, create new jobs, and cut household bills. This should include:
 - a. A Greener Homes programme - Making homes more energy-efficient, cutting household energy bills, and tackling fuel poverty, creating green jobs
 - b. A Clean Air and Healthier Communities programme - Cleaning up the air we breathe, creating new green jobs, and creating healthier communities.
 - c. A Climate resilience and greener communities programme - tackling biodiversity loss, urban greening, and flood measures.

2. A programme of reform to re-wire Wales so we can invest in climate change mitigation projects and ensure a faster decarbonisation pathway that will bring green jobs, cheaper energy, cleaner air. Including:
 - a. amalgamating Welsh Local Authority Pension Funds along with Welsh Government Pension Fund, divesting from fossil fuels and creating an Investment Fund dedicated to investing in climate change mitigation projects such as renewable energy and energy efficiency.
 - b. the devolution of the Crown Estate to support rapid deployment of more marine renewable energy.
3. A programme to rapidly move towards a Zero Carbon Public Sector in Wales by:
 - a. Working with all public sector bodies to adopt the UK Green Building Council's Zero Carbon Buildings Framework for public sector funded buildings.
 - b. Creating a Carbon Literate public sector by embedding decarbonisation in all public sector planning, decision making, and procurement.
4. A programme of reform of planning regulations to focus on increasing the energy efficiency of new homes and delivering 'Homes as Power Stations'