

SCYM MINUTE ON CLIMATE CHANGE: REPRESENTATIVES MEETING 2019 AND CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION ANNEX

RM 2019.05 Friends Approved the Climate Change Minute as amended.

Minute Follows:

SCYM MINUTE ON CLIMATE CHANGE REPRESENTATIVES MEETING 2019

I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, that you and your children may live. Deuteronomy 30:19. NIV

Two and a half centuries ago, John Woolman asked Friends “May we look upon our Treasures, and the furniture of our Houses, and the Garments in which we array ourselves, and try whether the seeds of war have any nourishment in these possessions or not.” War harms not only the dead, the maimed, and the widowed and orphaned but diminishes the entire society, all those therein. In the words of the Friends Committee on National Legislation “We seek a community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled.” Scientists from diverse fields have been telling us, with increasing certainty and urgency since Svante Arrhenius in 1896¹, that we humans are harming ...our only home, Earth, which will result in mass migrations, mass malnourishment and starvation, civil unrest, disintegration of civil society, wars, wide-spread impoverishment, epidemics and plagues, and mass species extinctions - including, likely, humans. John Woolman reminds Friends “The produce of the earth is a gift from our gracious creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now to support outward greatness appears to be an injury to the succeeding age.” Listen deeply, consistently, persistently to Spirit. We will courageously face Truth and truth, for the Light often shows that which is ugly, embarrassing, uncomfortable, or unfamiliar.

- Educate ourselves deeply about climate science and what it tells us about the future. We will evaluate the evidence critically and carefully, realizing that clouding the evidence are many motives, from misanthropy and cynicism through intellectual laziness to egocentrism and greed, that produce misunderstandings, misinterpretations and self-serving lies. Confirmation bias and self-delusion are part of the human condition. We will educate ourselves on the actions necessary to achieve the future we want. We will do this hard work. Here also, truth may be uncomfortable, overwhelming, or alarming. However, we will, as we are led, unflinchingly incorporate these truths into ourselves.
- Thus equipped spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually, we will, under the guidance of Spirit and as appropriate to our strengths and limitations:
 - Ask ourselves for our every action “What is its carbon footprint? Can another action serve the same need but with a smaller carbon footprint?” Examples include: Not turning on lights and turning off as soon as no longer needed. Can the thermostat be set a few degrees warmer (cooler)? Must I drive now on this errand (1 gallon gasoline = 8.89 kg carbon dioxide) or can I wait and combine errands for fewer miles total – indeed, do I need this at all? Do I need this new article of clothing, or will what I have suffice? What is the source of this foodstuff, and its environmental cost? Can I be satisfied with a

¹ Arrhenius, S. 1896. *On the influence of carbonic acid in the air upon the temperature of the ground.* London, Edinburgh, and Dublin Philosophical Mag. Ser. 5, 41, 237-276, https://www.rsc.org/images/Arrhenius1896_tcm18-173546.pdf, accessed 24 Nov. 2019

different vacation, one with a lower carbon footprint? In summary: refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle.

- We recognize that human overpopulation is a key component driving global climate change. This occurs through direct depletion of natural resources including clean water, deforestation, increased energy consumption, planetary trauma resulting from warfare, and oceanic stress. We also recognize that it is important to improve the status of women throughout the world, in order to have a positive impact on overpopulation, and therefore, climate change.
- Recognizing that lonely change is even more difficult, we will support each other in the changes they are led to make – and solicit and accept support. This support includes our families and our Meeting community.
- Realizing that the needed changes are societal, structural and global, we will, as way opens, press all levels of government, from city through to national, to implement changes necessary to preserve a habitable climate. We will work with compatible non-governmental and international organizations, as way opens. We will press, as led, by persistent direct lobbying; by writing letters to the editor and opinion pieces; by commenting on blogs, radio call in programs, etc.; by marches and demonstrations; and by supporting candidates and voting.

A friend commended the committee for the clear calls to action in the minute.

It was asked where and how to promote this document. It was discussed that this should be sent to meetings, particularly the Peace and Social Concerns committees in each of the meetings.

The committee also submitted: Climate Change Action Annex which Friends gathered recommend to send to each meeting's Clerks and Peace & Justice Committees to provide guidance for action.

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION ANNEX

LEVEL 1: Start the Conversation

Talk with family and friends (that's rare in America): start with your experience, why you're concerned and what you're doing, find an emotional connection by shared value and connect to the larger picture

The larger picture can make one feel efforts are insufficient - accept shortcomings and live each day closer to our values

Install rooftop solar and have a neighborhood party: word-of-mouth works

Can't do rooftop solar? buy into community, aka "roofless", solar, and talk about it

Have a yard? reduce or eliminate grass, plant native species (think about species which are presently on the northern edge of their range as that edge is moving north), eliminate fertilizer use (use compost), use hand tools: gas tools are highly polluting besides CO₂, and electric tools are predominately powered by fossil fuels

Take public transit if available

If physically able, walk or bike for trips under a mile

Drive gasoline/diesel cars efficiently: gentle acceleration, minimize brake use by slowing well in advance

Buy carbon offsets when traveling by air; use certified programs such as Green-e

Get an energy audit for your house: use your local utility's program, or a certified pro, e.g., via hersindex.com

Improve your home as suggested by the energy audit: prioritize by results of the energy audit

Have heating and AC serviced at least annually; replace filters on schedule

When replacing, get furnace with AFUE rating 95% and up, AC with SEER rating of at least 16

Insulate hot water heater and pipes, set its thermostat at 120 Fahrenheit

Consider solar water heater when replacing the water heater

Replace lightbulbs, appliances, electronics, etc. with ENERGY STAR rated - if you NEED it at all

Set thermostat higher during cooling season, lower during heating season: your schedule may call for a smart thermostat

LEVEL 2: Lead Your Community

Work

Set the thermostat higher: offices are too cold for women as men wear jackets (doff the jacket!)

Print thoughtfully: double-sided and draft mode whenever possible

Pack your lunch: less packaging and refrigeration than store-bought

School

Include climate change in the curriculum: climate.nasa.gov has scientist-reviewed lesson plans

School lunches lighter on meat and richer in plants can be better nutritionally and cut carbon footprint too

Cost effective building updates:

LED lighting, less toxic cleaning and other products

Places of Worship

Building and grounds: same as home, work and school

Partner with other faith groups: GreenFaith.org has ideas and tips

City Hall

Bring a solution with the problem: even a poor solution sets the tone and starts consideration

Efficiency improvements is generally the place to start

Find co-benefits: native plants in parks reduce maintenance, are a carbon sink, and may mitigate rain runoff

Local food system

Food banks and shelters need the surplus food of other institutions (see "412 Food Rescue")

Compost yourself, get the city to institute a composting program: some farmers markets have compost drop-off stations

Coping skill Worry isn't action, fear is not a durable motivation - social justice and preservation of the natural world is healthier and more effective, don't go it alone - join a group

Town resilience

Plan for the displaced, from seacoasts *and* from inland rivers

Advocate for affordable housing - most climate migrants will be financially stressed

Plan for services: schools, social services of all kinds, e.g., counseling: get involved with any local non-profit with experience with refugees

Retrofitting existing buildings is often more climate friendly than new construction ("embodied carbon")

Parks, with adapted, native plants, in floodplains, using property buyouts as appropriate

Minimize seawalls and levees: use judiciously always thinking of the long term (at least a century)

LEVEL 3: Rebuild - or revamp - the machinery

Tackle the entrenched system and political stagnation

Organize people who are not with us (yes, very hard work): the environmental movement is too slender a silo

Develop network from book clubs, scouts, parent-teacher groups, student groups, faith leaders and groups, civic organizations (e.g., Lions Clubs, Rotary), trade unions, sports teams...

Select a specific goal and identify the people and organizations you need to influence and how they can be brought on board - schedule face-to-face meetings whenever possible

Influence newspaper editors, which includes letters to the editor (stick closely to your point, observe their guidelines)

Lobby legislators - city, county, state and federal - persistently: FCNL has suggestions from 76 years experience

Lobby for changes to electricity generation and distribution: end archaic subsidies; no limits rooftop solar or wind farm siting (with due regard to protecting volant species); encourage storage to permit 100% clean energy; enhance grid resilience with microgrids and other infrastructure hardening; pressure the Public Utility Commission (including running for a board position if you have a municipal utility or a co-op)

LEVEL 4: Build a broader movement

These quotes come from Audubon Magazine online “Your Guide to Climate Action” at <https://www.audubon.org/climate-action-guide>

"Make no mistake. The most important climate action you can take at any level, but especially the national one, is to vote for political candidates who are ready to take meaningful steps toward curbing carbon emissions and tackling climate change."

"The second-most important action involves deeper, harder work: supporting a movement that is inclusive of all and representative of those without power. Our path to a greener future must be one in which everyone has a say - most of all those who are already suffering from a warming planet. Climate change is a crisis, but it can also be an opportunity to create a more just world."

"To achieve this, people advocating for climate action everywhere need to thoughtfully and deliberately make a 'just transition' central to their work...This starts with respectfully listening, and being aware of the messages sent by our own actions and words. 'People who are historically accustomed to being excluded, or worse, must hear and know, explicitly, that we want to learn from them, and that they will be safe with us,' says Deohn Ferris, Audubon's vice president of equity, diversity, and inclusion."

work to equalize economic opportunity: support transition from legacy jobs like petroleum production and coal mining

elevate youth voices and actions, especially in historically marginalized groups - support BUT DO NOT LEAD

press for proper financial support from governments for more equitable services

Some Resources to Use:

<https://www.unclearn.org>

<https://unenvironment.org/>

<https://climate.nasa.gov/>

<https://www.niehs.nih.gov/about/stewardship/index.cfm>.