

Cornwall Council - Climate Change Training  
via Zoom 28<sup>th</sup> March

Training provided by GEP Environmental (gepenv.co.uk) - energy and environmental consultants (so presentation not available)

Context – definitions of weather, climate, global warming, and climate change. Now agreed that climate change is being driven by global warming which is caused by human activities.

Natural levels of greenhouse gases (eg CO<sub>2</sub>, methane, nitrous oxide, water vapour etc) from natural sources (decomposition, respiration, volcanoes, forest fires, evaporation) necessary to keep planet warm enough for life. GHGs from human activities (burning fossil fuels, deforestation, agriculture etc) have increased this level from 278ppm of CO<sub>2</sub> pre-industrial (approx 1760) to 420ppm today, which has increased the average temperature

Impacts

**Global** At current 1.1°C increase impacts are being felt. At 1.5°C there will be noticeable loss of biodiversity, sea level rises, ice-free arctic summers etc. At 4°C there will be extreme impacts with irreversible loss of polar ice and sea level rises of 1-2m, floods and displacement of people, more storms, failing crops and shortage of food etc

In **UK** will mean longer, hotter and more frequent heatwaves, more extreme and variable rainfall, more frequent and intense flooding events, problems with crops etc

**Cornwall** could have sea level rises of 1m by 2100 leading to coastal erosion, floods and destruction of property. Stronger and more frequent storms, higher temperatures and droughts,

Social impacts

food and water shortages lead to conflict  
cost of adapting infrastructure  
health issues – new diseases and pandemics  
poorer health and wellbeing lead to lower productivity  
cost of insurance increases  
emergency responders overwhelmed with calls

Policies

**International**

- UNFCCC – developed countries to lead way, balance needs of developed and developing countries
- UN Paris Agreement 2015 (COP21) – to limit rise to 2°C, stabilise CO<sub>2</sub> to 450ppm
- COP 27 – Glasgow. Agreed to limit rise to 1.5°C, set up loss & damage fund, phase out fossil fuels

**UK** Government declared Climate Emergency. May 2019 Emissions to be below 1990 levels by 2050 etc Various strategies – Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Green (2021), Heat and Buildings Strategy (2021), ban sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2035 etc

**Cornwall** Council declared Climate Emergency in January 2019, various policies/action plans eg to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Local action groups include Newquay Community Orchard, Our Only World (marine conservation), Stithians Energy Group, South Kerrier Alliance CIC, Bude Climate Partnership.

Various actions that businesses and individuals can take to reduce their CO<sup>2</sup> footprint

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