



**“Thinking Outside the Box:
Borderless Strategies to Combat
Climate Change”
Conference Report**

On 30 April 2009, the London and South East Region of the United Nations Association organized a one-day conference entitled “Thinking Outside the Box: Borderless Strategies to Combat Climate Change.” The main objective of the conference was to provide a forum for leading experts and members of the public to debate and exchange ideas on effective and equitable strategies to reverse climate change.

The 250 participants included international organisations, diplomats, NGOs, national and local government staff, delegates from business and trade unions, and UNA members. The International Maritime Organization generously hosted the conference.

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The presentations of the speakers are posted at www.unalondonandse.org.

I. Summary of Discussions

Welcoming Remarks

Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos, Secretary-General of the IMO, opened the meeting and welcomed all participants. He pointed out that to deal with the phenomenon of climate change – in Ban Ki-moon's words “the defining challenge of our age” – the United Nations had a crucial role in pursuit of the “borderless strategies” required. The IMO was of course playing its part and was currently energetically pursuing the limitation and reduction of greenhouse gases from shipping operations, and the shipping industry had already made considerable progress in reducing air pollution and on energy efficiency issues.

Plenary Session

The opening session was chaired by Neville Grant, Chair of the London and South East Region of the United Nations Association. The conference began with keynote speeches from Dr Robert Watson, the Chief Scientific Adviser to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Lord Hannay of Chiswick, Chair of UNA-UK, and journalist and author Mr. Oliver Tickell.

Dr Watson's presentation illustrated alternative scenarios facing the planet, each dependent on different increases in temperature. He forecast at least a four degree temperature rise, over time, a very serious prospect. To achieve a lower, two degree increase, a reduction of 80% of CO₂ emissions must be achieved by 2050. Referring to the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), he warned that any changes in temperature would have a disproportionate effect on developing countries.

Lord Hannay addressed the prospects for the Copenhagen conference in December. He pointed out that it will be full of diplomats, representing governments who could only deliver what they felt they could deliver, “in the real world.” Diplomats are, by training, compromise-seekers, and it was likely that there would have to be a compromise between what was seen as politically possible and what the science demanded. Agreements will need to be reached in advance - and towards this end, the EU needed to take a leading role.

Mr Oliver Tickell averred that greenhouse gases are global pollutants and can only be regulated under a global emissions cap. He called for borderless accounting (of carbon), as nation-based accounting which characterized the current Kyoto Protocol has not succeeded in reducing global emissions. His proposal, “Kyoto2”, describes a global cap with a global auction system to sell permits to produce CO₂ and other greenhouse gases. The funds raised by this auction, which he predicts would be of the order of \$1trillion per year, would be invested in both mitigation and adaptation efforts.

Afternoon Plenary

This session was chaired by **David Wardrop**, Chair of Westminster Branch of the United Nations Association. Mr. Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, spoke on “Why I believe Copenhagen can deliver.”

Mr de Boer indicated that the importance of COP 15 could not be over-emphasized. Although broadly optimistic, he pointed out that there was little time to negotiate text now on the table and he saw the role of the US as crucial. However, while the new President was forthcoming in his support for the process, he was also under strong financial and internal pressures. He saw the role of the US as being crucial, and while the new president was forthcoming in his support for the process, he was also under strong financial and internal pressures. The latter were particularly pressing given that December 2009 was halfway towards mid-term elections.

During the negotiations, issues that needed clarifying included:

- Individual emissions targets for industrialized countries;
- Individual emissions targets for developing countries, particularly those with large and rapidly growing economies such as Brazil, China, India, and Indonesia; and
- Funding arrangements for developing countries to develop mitigation and adaptation strategies

Mr de Boer reported on difficulties anticipated in ongoing negotiations, particularly as they were being overshadowed by concerns about the economic and financial crisis.

Breakout sessions

There were three breakout sessions in the morning, and three in the afternoon. Reports on these sessions can be found on pages 4-9.

II. Breakout sessions

A. Maritime and Trade

Chair:	Paul Gunton, Lloyd's Register - Fairplay
Speakers:	Peter Hinchliffe, International Chamber of Shipping Peter Lockley, Head of Transport Policy, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Eivind Vågslid, Head, Chemical and Air Pollution Prevention Section, IMO
Rapporteur:	Jenny Yamamoto, London and Southeast Region UNA

With the expansion of global trade, the shipping industry has become a growing contributor to global carbon emissions, accounting for as much as 3% of global emissions. When negotiations on the Kyoto Protocol began in 1992, the IMO presented nine approaches to addressing maritime emissions but there was no agreement on the matter and the sector was not included in the final agreement. This is largely because shipping is a truly global and very complex industry, and its “borderless” nature has meant that the industry’s preferred approach has been to establish a “level playing field” for all countries, which contradicts the “common but differentiated responsibilities” principle of the Kyoto Protocol. However, over the past few years the IMO, industry and governments have been studying the issue more closely and will be discussing it further in preparation for the COP 15 in Copenhagen.

The International Chamber of Shipping, which represents 40 national shipowners' associations and 75% of all fleets, noted that shipping has always been a servant of world trade and shouldn't become a limiting factor. There was general consensus on the need for some kind of market-based instrument but still no agreement on what the most cost-effective and equitable instrument would be. WWF stressed the need for a cap on total emissions from the maritime sector, as well as an international tax with “differentiated compensation” to channel the funds to developing countries. WWF also noted that there was a need for a *de minimus* threshold to exclude routes to remote islands, as these islands depended on shipping for survival.

In order for any mechanism to be successful, it would have to be credible and international. It was also noted that the simpler the mechanism the better; for example, if companies had to introduce complex carbon accounting systems, this would increase their costs and therefore push up the cost of trade. It was stressed that there was a need for a greater sense of urgency on the issue, including both a greater effort by the industry to improve ship efficiency and an effective mechanism to account for emissions. It was noted that the technology to reduce greenhouse gases already existed, but shippers were not using all of them.

B. Local Initiatives

Chair:	Joyce Edmond-Smith, Brighton and Hove UNA
Speakers:	Cllr. Louise Bloom, Eastleigh Borough Council Steve Dawe, Transition Towns, Kent Dirk Hazell, Chief Executive, Environmental Services Association
Rapporteur:	Jane Grant, Blackheath and Greenwich UNA

This session demonstrated some excellent local initiatives supporting the principle: 'Think Global, Act Local'. Cllr. Louise Brown showed how Eastleigh's Beacon Council is working to make the area carbon neutral by reducing emissions, through energy projects which raise awareness, through energy saving and better re-cycling.

Steve Dawe demonstrated a 'bottom-up' approach, finding local solutions for local areas – which could be seen as challenging in a prosperous area like Tonbridge. The Transition Towns movement organize around agriculture and bio-diversity and have a wide agenda which can appeal to different groups. They are particularly concerned about climate change but also the issue of peak oil, due to peak (they say) in 2013.

Dirk Hazell of the Environmental Services Association, the trade body for Waste Management policy at European level, also spoke. The improvement in re-cycling is very good news but there is lack of information from government for local initiatives. Re-cycling of food waste is very desirable but there is usually a trade-off.

During the discussion that followed consensus was reached on the following points.

1. Action has to take place at **all** levels.
2. Local initiatives cannot succeed without Government support and enabling legislation/ finance.
3. There is a need to look more closely at green procurement and manufacturers' responsibility to produce goods that can be repaired rather than disposed of – on the principal of 'Reduce, repair, re-cycle'.
4. Government to give more attention to clear policies on crucial issues like insulating all homes in the UK, which would make a huge difference (an estimated 40% of carbon emissions comes from homes and office buildings).
5. This is a strong value-based issue, and faith organizations should be involved (the Diocese of London of Church of England has a Head of Environmental Challenge).

C. Energy for Today and Tomorrow

Chair:	Dr. Geoff Meaden, University of Kent, and Chair, UNA Canterbury
Speakers:	Polly Higgins, DESERTEC-UK Andy Limbrick, Head of Environment, Association of Electricity Producers Alex Roehrl, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Oliver Tickell, Journalist and author of <i>Kyoto2</i>
Rapporteur:	Roger Hallam, Chair, Enfield and the Barnets UNA

There are many challenges facing the power generation industry, including difficulties in raising finance in the context of the banking crisis; increasing national and international emphasis on reducing carbon emissions and the shift to renewable energies; and technological change.

There was a strong divergence of opinion on whether nuclear power generation would or should form part of the solution. There was a wide variety of national policies on this, from expanding nuclear power to no change and in some cases to the phasing out of nuclear. There were disagreements as to risk and also about the long term availability of uranium ore and the rising costs of milling lower grade ores. New technologies, such as Generation IV closed fuel cycle reactors, were unproven and, in the case of fusion technology, too far in the future to contribute to immediate needs. There was an unrealized potential of renewables, notably including wind and desert-based photovoltaics. Bringing such technologies to market would require large scale investment. One proposal for generating the required investment funds was a carbon price. Such development funding would eventually allow photovoltaic generation to compete with coal.

Oliver Tickell identified two crucial “tipping points”:

1. The point where it would be cheaper to build renewable generating capacity rather than fossil fuel generating capacity
2. The point where it would be cheaper to build renewable generating capacity rather than to operate fossil fuel generating capacity

Investment on the scale necessary to reach these points would require the intervention of civil society: the market alone would not generate it. With political will, major reconfiguring of an economy was possible, as was demonstrated when following Pearl Harbour the US government had forced the automotive industry to switch from car production to military production within a matter of weeks. Finally Polly Higgins called for a remapping of the world not in terms of economic development/underdevelopment but instead on the basis of an ecological creditor/debtor model. However, there was no international legal architecture to give effect to the rights of creditors against debtors.

D. Aviation and Tourism

Chair:	Jane Hupe, Chief, Environment Section, ICAO
Speakers:	Sian Foster, Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility Manager, Virgin Atlantic Airways
	Professor Harold Goodwin, Director of the International Centre for Responsible Tourism, Leeds Metropolitan University
	Daniel Jowers, Department for Transport
	Peter Lockley, Head of Transport Policy, World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
Rapporteur:	Margaret Rayner, Twickenham and Richmond UNA

Chairing the session, Jane Hupe gave details of ICAO's history and areas of responsibility. On the issue of climate change, she stressed that aviation produces only 2% of total emissions, but noted that there was a need for further research, as well as greater cooperation between all relevant UN bodies. The main challenges for the aviation sector included the need to balance future growth with the needs of the environment, and to establish global aviation emissions goals. She hoped that new technology would result in a new generation of aircraft, and that alternative fuels could be developed without compromising other sectors such as food and forests. She also saw the need for better global air traffic management.

Professor Harold Goodwin noted that progress in the aviation industry was too slow, as there was not enough incentive to airlines to use the most modern (and more fuel efficient) technology. They were keener on it when fuel was dearer. He considered carbon off-set was a get-out clause "like a mediaeval pardon", and argued that the polluter should pay, with the globally generated funds should be used for adaptation and development, especially in the developing world. Consumers should fly less, fly direct, and fly smart.

Danny Jowers noted that although pollution was relatively small, it was growing fast and could increase five-fold by 2050. In addition, the non-CO₂ effects were still uncertain but probably serious. He said that excluding international aviation was like "going on a diet and not including chocolate", and in this regard, noted that aviation must be part of global climate change arithmetic, and that the post-Copenhagen agreement must also be about implementation, not just setting targets. Emissions trading should be supported – by the EU in the first instance, but global action was needed.

Peter Lockley also noted that linking emissions with individual countries was less complicated than it would be for shipping. An emissions trading scheme is therefore possible, but revenues should be channelled to developing countries. Any compensation scheme needed to be credible and international. In the EU, at present permits are auctioned at national level – this was unsatisfactory, resistance to ring-fencing for climate work.

E. Influencing Public Attitudes and Action

Chair:	Dr. Peter Greaves, Blackheath and Greenwich UNA
Speakers:	Liz Lainé, Consumer Focus Helen Rae, Abbot Mead Vickers BBDO Advertising Agency Tom Levitt, Environment Editor, MSN.com
Rapporteur:	David Wardrop, Chair, Westminster UNA

The three speakers of this session focused on the question of the media's role in influencing public attitudes and galvanizing action on climate change. Consumer Focus' research covers many issues where public perception of suppliers can jeopardise energy saving initiatives. These include the quality of service from energy suppliers, examining areas where customers are disadvantaged by poor service; also, bogus green advertising claims made by companies, evidenced by the growing number of complaints to the Advertising Standards Authority that result in adverts being withdrawn. This 'greenwash' undermines consumer confidence to make informed choices: three in ten consumers believe that companies are not trustworthy when they label products as 'green'. Research shows that many people know their rights and make sure they get the best possible deal. The Internet and social networks enable them to share views, but there are still many barriers to getting a fair deal in Britain. Unequal income, disparities in Internet access and language barriers mean that as many of us are becoming empowered, other consumers are losing their voice.

Abbot Mead Vickers BBDO is the advertising agency retained by government to assess the success of its Act on CO₂ programme. It is charged to develop and promote the programme and assess feedback. Research shows that public assessment of the programme is very positive and that this benefits public assessment on the performance of government itself even though that is not the intention of the Act on CO₂ programme. Some in the audience showed concern that government might choose to use survey results to its own advantage.

Tom Levitt, Environment Editor for MSN.com informed the meeting that the MSN News Environment section was set up in 2008 to cater for increased interest in environmental issues. It has 18 million unique visits a month. Articles tend to be entertaining and informative as well as shorter, being targeted at younger audiences. While Kyoto and Climate Change have been covered, the UNFCCC and the Copenhagen summit will be tackled during the summer. Research shows that the UN is not seen as a major player in this process and that leading personalities should be engaged to promote it as these prove to be powerful influencers for modern youth.

F. Business Responses to Climate Change

<u>Chair:</u>	Keith Hindell, Westminster Branch UNA
<u>Speakers:</u>	Martin Ferstl, GM Strategic Planning, Shell Trading Niclas Svenningsen, Sustainable Buildings and Construction Initiative, UNEP Daniel Turner, Carbon Disclosure Project
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Alan Bullion, Tunbridge Wells UNA

The three speakers on the business and climate change panel collectively made the case that tackling global warming was good for business, and that economics and the health of the environment were inextricably linked.

The UN is doing sterling work on 'greening buildings', but it is surprising that 40% of all greenhouse gas emissions still come from the built environment. This is an aspect sometimes neglected with the focus on transport and aviation emissions.

Other speakers emphasised the onus on companies to report responsibly on their emissions in order to ensure good practice. The speaker from Shell said his company had a strong policy on tackling carbon emissions from the petrochemicals industry that need not compromise profitability.

III. Final Plenary and Vote of Thanks

Delegates had been invited to pin up their “Bright ideas” on a bulletin board in the delegates' lounge during the course of the day; a selection of these was then read out and discussed during the closing plenary session. Mr Alan Bullion (UNA Tunbridge Wells), an experienced commentator on environmental issues, commented on each of these. There were many good ideas, which could not be shared in the interest of time. Among them:

1. We need stronger North-South partnerships to accelerate action on adaptation, mitigation and clean development in all countries – particularly the south.
2. We need more than political/technological change: the challenge is to “change the human heart.” and create spiritual change
3. Individuals may be discouraged from saving energy if they do not see big business changing its ways to reduce harmful emission
4. Fast-track a transformational training programme in transformational leadership that takes into account long-term. Interdisciplinary decision-making
5. A global framework for action on climate change is essential. In its absence we cannot be assured of sufficient action from every country. This framework is contraction and convergence, and its application in the form of equal Personal Carbon Allowances.
6. To fund mitigation and adaptation in developing countries we should explore a ticket levy on all international flights, and a Tobin-style (0.05%?) levy on all international currency transactions over £100,000 (at present there is NO tax on such transactions)
7. Every pension fund and insurance company should adopt a climate change plan to use their influence over companies and their choice of investments to speed up the private sector response to climate change, to reduce risks and to protect future pensioners
8. Humans are a highly evolved dominant primary mammal who are now overpopulating the planet; the long-term solution has to be the eventual control of this population

The Chair of London and Southeast Region UNA, Neville Grant, thanked all the speakers, who generously gave their time to share their expertise at the conference, as well as the Chairs, Rapporteurs, volunteers and conference services staff of the IMO for their help in organising the conference. He thanked Jenny Watt-Yamamoto, David Wardrop and Peter Greaves for helping with the organization of the conference. Finally, he thanked the delegates for their valuable contributions, and expressed the hope that the Copenhagen conference in December would be a success.

Annexes follow:

- Annex 1 The Conference Programme**
- Annex 2 Selected Speaker Bibliographies**
- Annex 3 List of Delegates**