



# Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

## Why the Paris climate talks matter

November 2015

### Introduction

2015 is a crucial year in the fight against climate change. This December, world leaders will meet at the UN climate talks in Paris to negotiate an international deal to limit global warming.

This deal will replace the current international agreement on climate change, the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2020. Since that UN Protocol was agreed in the 1990s, the science of climate change has grown ever stronger and the impacts more evident. Now, more than ever, every government, community, business and every individual in all corners of this earth need to act urgently to stop uncontrollable global warming.

A fair and ambitious agreement is vital, but whatever is agreed in Paris, it won't encompass everything needed to reduce global emissions and help those in poorer countries who are already affected by the impacts of the changing climate. At the same time as pushing hard for the best deal possible in Paris, we must also keep up the pressure at national, regional, local and community levels: where change is actually put into practice.

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland is a diverse coalition of organisations campaigning together on climate change. Our members include environment, faith and development organisations, trade and student unions and community groups.

Across the broad spectrum of our members, there are a range of opinions about what can be achieved as a result of the Paris climate talks, as well as exactly how humanity creates a sustainable way of living in a fair and just manner. But we are united in our determination to see Scotland become a low carbon society and play our fair part in avoiding dangerous levels of global warming.

### Why the Paris climate talks matter

One way or another, we are all affected by climate change. People across the UK are increasingly connecting the things they care about with the impacts of climate change: the food on our plates and the people that grow it; the Arctic and the Great Barrier Reef; bluebells and butterflies; our children and grandchildren.

Our changing climate affects us all: young and old, rich and poor. We're all bound together by our planet, relying on it for our livelihoods and our lives. But we're not all affected by climate change equally. The world's poorest people – those communities who have done the least to cause climate change – bear the brunt of its chaos. Increasingly erratic weather is prompting more storms and droughts, ruining harvests across the globe and eroding the gains made by poor communities as they try to work their way out of poverty.

The Paris climate talks present an important moment for people across the world to collectively stand up for what matters to them, calling for action on climate change and justice for the world's poor who are most affected by it. Hundreds of thousands of people in capital cities around the world will march for climate action as the UN climate talks in Paris begin. Together we will show world leaders the level of public support for action on

this issue, and pressure them to make low carbon decisions at Paris and afterwards in their own countries.

### **What we want political leaders in Paris to do**

It is imperative that what is agreed in Paris then translates into meaningful and urgent action by regional, national and local Governments across the world. This is why strong civil society movements across the world are needed after the Paris climate talks; to ensure that what is agreed there is then enacted by their respective political representatives.

We want all leaders to sign an internationally binding agreement on climate change which:

- a) Limits global greenhouse gas emissions in a just and fair way, peaking by 2020;
- b) Commits to phasing out the burning of all fossil fuels by 2050
- c) 100% clean, renewable energy across the world by 2050
- d) Commits to sufficient funding for low income countries affected by climate impacts

Political leaders must return home from Paris and take responsibility for the commitments they have made. These commitments must then be enacted in their respective countries. Strong climate movements across the world will keep up the pressure post-Paris to ensure this happens.

### **What we want political leaders in Scotland to do**

- a) Take a strong and positive message on climate action to the conference in Paris;
- b) Fully deliver Scotland's legally-binding climate commitments;
- c) Commit to move away from our current oil-based economy towards one that is low carbon, using a 'Just Transition' approach;
- d) Rapidly increase the level of energy we generate from renewable sources, especially in the heat and transport sectors.
- e) Reinforce Scotland's support for those communities overseas most affected by climate change, via the Scottish Climate Justice Fund or similar mechanism.

Ends