



Cynulliad Hinsawdd
Climate Assembly

Expert Witness

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What is your passion / specialism / position on solutions to the climate crisis?

Climate change is an ethical issue, not just a scientific one. That means there are no 'right' or 'wrong' ways to tackle climate change – it depends on your values and how you see the world, and this is why people may have different views on how best to tackle it.

In my talk, I'll cover some of the main ethical considerations you may want to factor in when you're deciding which policy options should be taken:

- a) Protecting people and the planet: If we care about people (including ourselves!) and other species, we should tackle climate change, because it is already having an impact on the environment, society and economy in Wales and around the world.
- b) Climate change has unequal impacts and causes: Poor people are more vulnerable to climate impacts, but wealthier people/societies emit more carbon dioxide that causes climate change. So many say this makes tackling climate change an issue of fairness.
- c) Young people and climate change: 'Intergenerational justice' means that while climate change will affect future generations more, young people are less able than adults to take part in decision-making about how we tackle it (e.g., vote). This is another reason why many see tackling climate change as an issue of fairness.
- d) How soon should we act? The sooner we take action, the less severe the impacts of climate change will be; and the less disruptive the transition will be to society.

<https://www.thegef.org/news/climate-change-isnt-fair>

<https://www.unep.org/emissions-gap-report-2020>



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<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/grantham/publications/climate-change-faqs/how-and-when-do-we-need-to-act-on-climate-change/>

Thinking about critics and/or alternative views to that which you have put forward above – what would others say about your perspective and idea?

Tackling climate change is likely to improve our lives. Most of us have a lot of other things to worry about, besides climate change – things like money or health – whether or not they accept the ethical arguments above. But actually, many or even most of the things we can do to tackle climate change will actually improve our lives directly – having an energy-efficient home or using less energy will save you money; walking or cycling, and eating less red meat is good for your health, and spending time in and supporting nature is really good for mental health. Tackling climate change can also help the economy and create ‘green’ jobs, such as in home insulation or green heating products.

To achieve these benefits, we need to ensure we don’t leave some people behind. If policies are designed badly they may make life harder for some – putting a tax on gas, for example, may reduce emissions, but it will make life even harder for those in fuel poverty who already struggle to heat their homes. This is another aspect of fairness to bear in mind when thinking about how to tackle climate change.

Imperial College London: [What issues are the UK public concerned about and how can action on climate change help to address them?](#)

<https://neweconomics.org/2019/11/trust-in-transition>

Use this final part of your presentation to help Assembly members better understand your position in relation to others and what that means for addressing the question that they have been set.

Many argue that ‘climate change isn’t fair’ because the people most affected by climate change are the ones least to blame for it and the least able to make decisions about it. Also, tackling climate change could make things more difficult for some than others – but it is possible to design measures to tackle climate change that are fair and reduce inequality, as well as improving our lives in other ways.