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IPCC Confirms Energy Transformation Must Start Now

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Stockholm, Sweden (27 September 2013): After 25 years of IPCC reports, the inconvenient truth is confirmed: climate change is real; it's happening at an alarming rate, and human-activities, mainly the burning of fossil fuels, are causing it.

We, six of the world's largest environmental and development non-government organisations, with the international trade union confederation, make a unified call to governments to act on the findings and introduce strong climate pollution controls.

We are more certain now than ever that climate change is, and will continue to have, devastating impacts on our communities and on our planet – with catastrophic temperature rise by as early as 2050 - unless we change our policies today, the groups say

We can no longer ignore the ominous signs, our tragic experiences, the confirmed science or the stubborn facts. The focus must now be on ensuring comprehensive government action to avert the worst of the impacts and to put us on a different path.

We already know that the energy sector is the main culprit – but also the main solution – for global climate change. We already know that a large source of climate-changing pollution comes from burning fossil fuels. Extraction of fossil fuels is also increasingly a driver for the displacement of people, local pollution, and the direct loss of biodiversity.

At the same time, renewable energy provides a straightforward, proven and increasingly affordable solution (with far fewer direct impacts) that can also bring energy access to the 1.2 billion people currently without. If we are to follow what the science says, then we have to stop investing in fossil fuels and increase investment in sustainable renewable energy.

We affirm that the worst impacts of climate change can be averted without resorting to false solutions such as dangerous “geo-engineering” (or large scale disruption of natural processes) in an attempt to stop climate change with little knowledge of their unintended consequences.

WWF

The IPCC report confirms what we know: we have no choice but to act now to arrest runaway climate change. Climate change is a gigantic and clear risk to the natural world and all of the people who depend on it, threatening coastal cities and communities as well as a third of all animal species and half the world's plant species. We know that pollution from burning fossil fuels is the main cause of climate change. We are calling on governments and the financial community to act immediately to stop risky investments in coal, oil and gas, and start investing in our long term future based on sustainable, renewable energy.

Samantha Smith, leader of the WWF's Global Climate & Energy Initiative

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Governments have a responsibility to tackle global unemployment, precarious work and climate change. There are solutions available for governments. Green and decent job promotion in climate-friendly sectors, and building a Just Transition for sectors in hardship can demonstrate that we don't have to choose between people and the planet.

Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH EWNI

This report is the equivalent of a planetary alarm bell ringing its final chimes. The merchants of doubt who deliberately muddy the science so they can hit the snooze button - have no option but to wake up and accept the debate is over. The call for an immediate ban on new dirty fuel projects, and in support of a clean energy transformation, is already being echoed by communities from every corner of the world. The demands for these real solutions will continue to intensify until no government is able to put the interests of dirty energy corporations above that of their citizens and the planet.

Asad Rehman, Head of International Climate, Friends of the Earth EWNI

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Scientists have confirmed what farmers in poor countries around the world have been telling us for years, that changes to their climate are destroying their livelihoods, ruining crops, hitting incomes, food quality and often their family's health. Governments must respond to today's IPCC report by urgently slashing emissions to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, and financially assisting the poorest countries to cope now and in the future.

Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of Oxfam

ACTIONAID

This report is part of a larger trend: climate science is becoming clearer every year, and so are climate impacts. Communities are already facing loss and damage attributable to climate change - the East Africa and Sahel droughts since 2011, which have caused not only widespread hunger but also disease and refugee crises, are just two terrible examples of a broader phenomenon. The IPCC report is one more piece of evidence that governments must take immediate and urgent action to cut emissions, provide finance for adaptation, and address loss and damage.

Brandon Wu, Senior Policy Analyst, ActionAid

CHRISTIAN AID

This IPCC report shows that the science of climate change is now settled. For many people in the poorest parts of the world their own experience of living with climate chaos told them that long ago. The scandal is that it's the rich, carbon hungry developed nations which have contributed most to the conditions which the world's climate victims now have to live in. We have a moral duty to act and if we act quickly there is still time to secure a healthy future for our planet.

Mohamed Adow, Senior Advisor, Global Advocacy and Alliances, Christian Aid

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What the IPCC has set out are projections not prophecies. Alongside the warnings of unimaginable levels of warming and the chaos that would follow, the report shows us the potential pathway to a very different tomorrow. We can still limit global warming by ramping up renewable energy and making faster and deeper emissions cuts but the longer we wait the more the prospects diminish



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and the costs increase. A bleak and hopeless future is not a foregone conclusion, it's a choice.
Stephanie Tunmore, Senior Climate and Energy Campaigner, Greenpeace International

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