



student action on world poverty and the environment

Forum 2006: Climate Change Session Summary

The 2006/2007 academic year should be an exciting one for climate campaigning at P&P, with the continuation of Go Green and Stop Climate Chaos, a new campaign aimed at switching funding from fossil fuels to renewables and the launch of a workshop on climate change for sixth formers, aiming to raise awareness of the issue and to empower sixth formers to start campaign groups

Go Green

Go Green campaign materials:

Small groups looked at the current campaign materials to give feedback on how they used them, what worked, what didn't and what they would like to see in an updated campaign pack for Go Green. This is what the groups thought:

- **Action Guide:** already has clear step-by-step campaign plan and lots of creative ideas depicted in the cartoons. Suggestions were made for including more success stories from other universities.
- **Newsletter:** should be printed more often, with more case studies and another advice page.
- **Going Green report:** should have more up-to-date case studies and practical examples from other universities, especially of financial incentives and potential savings.
- **Leaf petitions:** some people like them, and used them for 'tree installations' and other stunts, whilst some felt they were a waste of paper and needed redesigning. No specific suggestions were offered.
- New materials suggested were Go Green **stickers** to hand out on stalls, as well as information **flyers**. There were also suggestions that individual groups' needs vary across the network and that each pack should be tailored to suit different group size and planned activities.
- **Website:** should act as a hub for information and resource-sharing between groups running the campaign. Other suggestions included a Go Green hit list of Vice-Chancellors, a wishlist for green unis and examples of resources like environmental policies.

How we will take the consultation forward:

We are developing a revised campaign pack for the new academic year (2006/2007), and we will incorporate these suggestions as far as we can.

We have already been working on a new interactive web resource called 'How Green is your University?' to be launched at the end of March. This will allow groups to share experiences and resources online and communicate with each other through a new Go Green e-group.

If you have any other comments, feedback or suggestions for improving the campaign materials please email: gogreen@peopleandplanet.org

Where next for Go Green?

The second part of the session took the form of an open discussion in which we investigated the possibility of taking Go Green to the next level. Considering the success of the campaign at many universities and the number of groups running it, there were two main questions to address:

1. Should we be researching and developing a 'national ask' for Go Green which could help to really 'transform the environmental performance of the HE sector'?
2. How can groups that have already won the 4 Go Green demands continue to push the campaign further at their universities?

Ideas raised in discussion were to target Universities UK (the association of Vice Chancellors in the UK) to put pressure directly on Vice Chancellors, the Funding Councils, or push for universities to sign up to the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC). It was felt that there was potential for top-down legislation to reduce the need for campaigning locally, that making use of the competition between universities would be valuable, and that it would be possible to get 'green' Vice Chancellors on-board as powerful lobbyists for a greener sector.

How we will take the consultation forward:

The outcome of this session was majority agreement that we should investigate the possibility of a national ask to promote the aims of the Go Green campaign. In the Support Office we will work on this in the next couple of months and, if appropriate, incorporate the ask into the new campaign materials.

If you would like to contribute further ideas or have any comments related to a national ask then please email us on gogreen@peopleandplanet.org

Sixth Form Climate Change Workshop

This session involved university students and focused primarily on what they felt would work to engage slightly younger students on the issue as opposed to specific content of any workshop. Key points arising from the discussion were:

- Climate change is such a huge and complex issue that it motivates people in very different ways.
- There was some consensus that specifically human aspects, notably the questions of climate injustice and links to development and poverty, rather than economic or purely biodiversity based concerns, would be most effective in encouraging sixth formers to take action.
- Individual, governmental and corporate action were all considered important, but there was a broad consensus that personal lifestyle action was more appropriate as the INITIAL action path for sixth formers than lobbying the government.
- Many barriers were identified that might prevent young people from taking action on climate change. Many of these dealt with the “vastness” of the problem and the lack of empowerment of individuals to take action on it. It was felt that a key aspect of the workshop should be presenting action in an initially very simple and local way and then building connections through to the global level.

How we will take the consultation forward:

We will be developing the workshop for launch in September and this discussion was a really useful opportunity to get early input into the themes and emphasis of the workshop. One of the key things to come out of this session, which we will try to address when designing the workshop, was that we need to try not only to inform students about impacts and solutions, but to empower students to make links between personal, local and global solutions.

Several students also expressed an interest in helping develop the workshop and possibly deliver it. Tom Russion in the Support Office will liaise with these students directly. If you have any comments on the sixth form climate workshop please email climate@peopleandplanet.org

'Financing Fossil Fuels'

The session started with an overview of the campaign aims and asks. One of the key developments since the network decision to run the campaign at P&P's G8 Summer Festival has been the decision to target both public and private sources of finance (ie high street banks as well as the government). This decision was made in the support office on the basis of further campaign research and contacts with other organisations. Private banks provide a larger amount of financing for energy, and similar campaigns in the US have already been successful in changing the position of banks. The importance of students to high street banks means that P&P groups have the potential to have a significant impact.

Discussion on this decision, and the campaign more generally, brought up the following:

- emphasis should be placed on the positive side of the campaign (pushing renewables) as well as the negative (stopping funding for oil). In connection with renewables, it was also suggested that we could push for decentralised/small scale renewable energy. Other people asked for more information on renewable energy, biofuels etc and suggestions were made about sources of information.
- questions of why we can't target both DfID and banks together, and whether we should have committed to a 2nd phase of the campaign at this stage. Both of these questions are connected with funding applications and office capacity.
- on process and decision making, it was highlighted that it would be good to have ways to involve the network in campaign decisions (like this one) in between national events.

How we will take the consultation forward:

The next stage of campaign development is researching and writing a detailed campaign strategy paper, and this will incorporate suggestions about emphasising renewables, and we will be researching microgeneration and decentralised energy options in this process.

Once this research is complete, we hope to arrange a series of focus sessions with different groups in the network to get input on campaign tactics and campaign materials. We will publicise these to groups in the summer term – if you're interested in hosting one of these sessions please email bronwen.thomas@peopleandplanet.org

Finding a new name for 'Financing Fossil Fuels':

Potential new names for the campaign were brainstormed in small groups and people indicated which they liked with stickers. Unfortunately we didn't have enough time for a full discussion and were unable to make a decision. However, lots of possible names were suggested, including:

- WATS the Future? (WATS = Wave, Air, Tidal and Solar)
- Fossils Don't Belong in the Future
- Fuel the Future
- FRED (Funding Renewable Energy Development) – could be 'Ask for FRED' or 'Bank on FRED'
- Fueling the Future without Costing the Earth

How we will take the consultation forward:

Finding a good name is really hard – as everyone who was at this session pointed out! We'll keep working on this, and if possible, come up with a way to get more input from the network (maybe at the focus sessions described above). Email bronwen.thomas@peopleandplanet.org if you have any suggestions.