The Queensland Climate Movement Summit

:: Community Convergence ::

:: Saturday, October 25th, 2008 ::

:: Dutton Park State School Hall, Annerley Road ::

Summit Proceedings

Proceedings also available online @ www.enoughhotair.com

Hosted by Six Degrees
>>Taking Climate Change Personally<<

www.CLIMATEMOVEMENT.org.au

Connecting communities active on climate change

About the Summit

The Queensland Climate Movement Summit was a community convergence hosted by Six Degrees on the 25th October, 2008.

The impetus for the Summit came from a series of conversations between people from a range of organisations concerned about climate change, and also about the implications of climate change for peace, justice and sustainability.

We were aware of what could be described as a growing international climate action movement, of literally hundreds of thousands of individuals and organisations, with an incredibly wide range of concerns and perspectives. We were also aware that in Brisbane and right across Queensland, there were passionate and committed individuals affected and concerned about climate change issues, but who work in relative isolation from others who share their concerns.

The Summit was conceived, in the initial phases, as a communication forum, to allow these varied groups and individuals to connect with each other and begin a dialogue for taking meaningful collective action on climate change. It would also serve as a preparatory session for the National Climate Action Summit, to be held from January 31st to February 3rd, 2009.

Invitations were sent out, with activists, thinkers and citizens from across Queensland invited to meet to discuss ideas, issues, opportunities, campaigns and strategies in response to the impacts of climate change. The overall aim was to encourage discussion and co-operation between groups and individuals who are working on or interested in working on climate change in order to strengthen and build a movement for change across the state. But we also hoped that through those discussions, we would be able to provide:

- an opportunity for information sharing about key issues and campaigns
- an opportunity to develop 'cross movement' strategies
- an opportunity to debate tactics, strategies and politics
- an opportunity to discuss visions and alternative energy futures
- an opportunity for people who are new to the movement to gain an understanding of who is doing what, how, and why.

Sixty people from Queensland and across the country converged upon a small community hall at a local primary school, and participated in an open and self-organised forum space; which resulted in more than 26 workshops and discussions. The proceedings here provide a glimpse of the inspiring moments that resulted from the multitude of spontaneous, dynamic and abundant interactions made possible by the convergence. These pages contain the vision, the hope and the promise of a committed and resilient people's movement for change.

Participating Organisations

- ABC Carbon
- Australian Students Environment Network
- Australian Youth for Climate Change Coalition
- bestfutures
- Climate Action Brisbane
- Climate Emergency Network
- Community Action for Sustainable Transport
- Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Critical Mass Brisbane
- Engineers Without Borders
- Ethos Foundation
- Ferny Grove Relocalisation
- Food Not Bombs
- Friends of Pooh Corner
- Friends of the Earth (Brisbane)
- Green Cross
- Greenleap Strategic Institute
- Humanist Society, Queensland
- Just Rights Queensland
- Make Poverty History
- National Tertiary Education Union
- Oxfam
- Pine Rivers Climate Action Network
- Queensland Climate Emergency Network
- Queensland Conservation Council
- Queensland Environmental Activists Network
- Queensland Environmental Defenders Office
- Quest 2025
- Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS)
- Save the Mary River (Brisbane Group)
- Social Action Office
- South Queensland Bio Con
- St John's Wood Sustainability Group
- TEAR Australia
- The Greens
- Transition Towns Kenmore
- University of Queensland Environment Collective
- UQ Climate for Change
- Six Degrees

Open Space Workshops

Workshops conducted in the open space at the Queensland Climate Summit are listed below.

Session 1

- A Queensland community-owned mobility bus service
- Targets to save the Great Barrier Reef: how to get to 350ppm
- How our food consumption effects our environment and impacts climate change
- Population and climate change
- Human displacement through climate change
- Urban sustainability

Session 2

- Nightly climate news: a campaign project
- Improving our forms of communication around climate change and responses
- Queensland energy generation and use
- Global safe climate covenant and coalition
- Why no-one's fooled by 'Clean Coal': the science of CCS and geosequestration

Session 3

- Solar energy in the kitchen
- Queensland coal production and the actions and activities on coal in the next year
- Local re-skilling and lifestyle transformation (including sustainable homes)
- Illustrated overview of global issues and solutions: the need for a new holistic paradigm
- Greenhouse sceptics: where have they gone?

Session 4

- Grief and sadness: how to look after ourselves and each other in this crisis
- Step-in to step it up: how to stage an effective meeting in MPs offices
- Opposing the Greenhouse Mafia: creating a powerful people's climate change lobby
- Radical rethink: following the paradigm shift
- Climate justice and development: international perspectives and actions

Movement Building Discussions: Collaboration

This workshop identified a series of ways and means for groups and individuals within the Queensland Climate Movement to work together more effectively. It noted the current successes of climate emergency networks around the country, and posed a series of questions about the needs and possibilities for collaborative campaigning.

Questions about collaboration

Participants in this workshop agreed that working locally with communities is a good and important place to start, **but** we need to connect with others that are working in other regions if we are to be more effective. From this premise, however, a series of questions necessarily arise, including:

- Do we need to get consensus on key issues, for example environment or climate change focus? Can we work with together with different objectives or different approaches to key issues?
- Do we need a co-ordinating entity?
- What is the role of political parties in this? Do we want or need to participate in electoral politics?
- What level of community mobilisation is required? Whole of community? War-time mobilisation?
- Do we need some form of co-ordination? Can this be done online? How will it be resourced?

What is working at the present time

Alliances, networks and covenants are currently being developed and acted upon at all levels. The Summit itself is a reflection of this.

Of particular interest in this group was the recent emergence of Climate Emergency Networks. Climate Emergency Networks have developed in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. These groups are developing online presence, co-ordinating actions and events. These networks represent an important interface between the multiple groups with multiple interests and objectives. These alliances and networks need to extend and facilitate actions from a local to a global level.

Learnings from these networks include the need for clear messages and the identification of common rallying points, communication, providing for a hub of exchange of information and knowledge, resource and experience.

What happens next?

- Do we need all Queensland groups to get together to plan a joint strategy?
- Should this occur at a national level?
- Who will co-ordinate this process?
- What are the infrastructure needs for a state-wide or national strategy?

Movement Building Discussions: Collaboration

This workshop was part of the movement building discussions, and addressed issues around collaboration across the multiple groups, individuals and networks that make up the Queensland Climate Movement. Specifically, this workshop focused on:

- What opportunities are there to work together more effectively?
- What communications and network infrastructure do we need?

In response to these questions, this workshop considered issues related to web-based tools, and their contribution to collaboration.

Discussion

- **Limiting the number of climate e-lists to avoid duplication**

Recent research by The Change Agency identified a large number of e-lists and subscriber newsfeeds that were used by the climate movement in Australia. The Change Agency report found that:

Almost all (90%) the climate action groups described in survey responses have electronic mailing lists (e-lists) and 98% of respondents to our survey subscribe to electronic bulletins. In response to our question 'How do you receive information about climate change?', almost all survey respondents identified email as their primary source. Most climate action groups rely on email to organise and record meetings and exchange information. Email is also one of the ways that groups make ongoing decisions about campaign strategy.

Discussion in this workshop focused on ensuring the most effective communication of information via key channels, and proposed a series of alternative strategies for minimising duplication and maximising targeted email exchanges.

- **Better website communication**

The second related point was the need for a more effective approach to the use of websites in communication, with a need to ensure regular and targeted information dissemination and contact. This discussion suggested the possibilities of perhaps separating national, international and local climate issues, but in a way that linked local activities to the international context more effectively. We discussed the possibility of linking with more established websites - like climatemovement.org.au or ourbrisbane.com.

However, within these discussions, the need for someone to co-ordinate the movement's web-based communications was recognised. One proposal was for Six Degrees to undertake this role.

- **Website content**

Participants in this workshop also considered the types of content that would be useful for web-based communications. Proposals included: ways to identify how to access information and groups who have organised and experienced similar campaigns and campaign tools; using websites as an information archive or repository so that past records are not lost; information to show people how the breadth of organisations working on climate change; and credible information to show how campaign specific issues are connected to climate change. Our website content should also reflect the need to recognise small victories in campaigns and inform other groups of strategies for success.

- **More efficient campaign tools**

The proliferation of information technology tools and widgets provide us with the opportunity for improving the tools we rely upon in our campaigning. Participants discussed the use of blogs and wikispaces, social networking applications, Google-Earth, podcasts and video media.

- **Support and information**

There are a number of purposive environmental web providers who provide expert assistance for environmental and climate action groups: participants recommended Greennet and enviro-geek as examples. The need to identify, promote and provide support for climate movement enterprises was acknowledged.

- **The importance of direct communication**

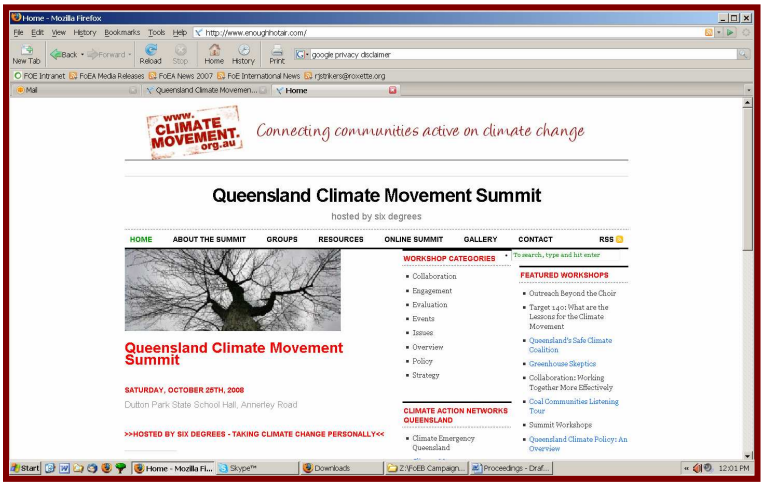
Participants in this workshop also acknowledged however that face-to-face contact is the most effective way of informing and sharing information. Nonetheless, it was seen to be important to make effective and efficient use of web-based tools as a method for more effective organising.

Resources

The following resources were recommended for participants in this workshop:

Building the Climate Movement Online, 2008, The Change Agency (PDF, 668k)

The Virtual Activist 2.0, 2006, Net Action



Movement Building Discussions: Outreach and Engagement

This workshop considered the Queensland Water Commission's recent Target 140 campaign as an exemplar of a social marketing approach to reducing consumption, in this case water. Participants distilled the lessons from the Target 140 campaign for a similar campaign in Queensland to reduce energy demand and consumption.

What features of the Target 140 Campaign were successful?

- Example of a community level campaign targeting the reduction in consumption
- Used a variety of media, including large scale and expensive advertising
- Offered freebies, but linked to the objectives of the campaign (shower timers)
- Conducted face-to-face meetings
- Provided feedback and accountability systems (metering and reports) to keep people aware of progress
- Turned wasteful consumption into a socially/morally unacceptable position

How can we do this with energy?

- Could consist of quarterly campaigns where we build on the water reduction to reducing: energy, transport, water, commodities.
- Provide people with the opportunities to re-think their lifestyles
- How do we engage with people who simply don't want to know?
- Some scope for clever ideas - for instance, EPA has a "low carb diet" book in progress
- Gated communities and greenfield developments provide important opportunities
- Ensure that we maintain the face-to-face element
- Keep things present and visible, do things on streets and for neighbours
- Recognise that emergencies bring people together and create a sense of community (community of fate)
- Establish options which provide positive alternatives to the status quo: community-supported or co-operative food, freedom from the grid, pooling resources, SMARTer homes
- Provide opportunities for people to participate that are fun
- Make use of the power of arts: music, street theatre
- Recognise that people respond most to positive experiences
- Recognise that the awareness is there - we need to provide ways for people to incorporate sustainability into every decision

Movement Building Discussions: Outreach and Engagement

This workshop was focused on outreach and engagement practices of the movement, and considered the question: how can we engage more people in our communities in meaningful action on climate change?

Participants in the workshop considered the barriers to a more broad-based movement. For each of the identified barriers, a suite of potential movement-building solutions were developed.

Barriers to effective outreach

We need a mass movement on climate action with urgency. Why isn't this happening?

- The climate crisis is too big and overwhelming to face
- We have focused on providing information, which does not necessarily lead to behavioural change
- Concerned people are often isolated and can feel overwhelmed when not part of a larger movement
- Economy consistently takes centre stage
- We do not really know our audience, or potentially even what audiences we need to reach
- Good campaigns are happening right across the state, but aren't getting the publicity
- Have 'we' really 'got it'? Do our lives model the changes we advocate?
- Media neglect of the climate crisis

Overcoming barriers to effective outreach

- Start with a sustainability focus
- Understand the psychology of change
- Form groups to educate and support
- Develop messages and messaging that appeals to the hip-pocket
- Understand the opportunities provided by the economic downturn
- Use language that suits the needs, interests and values of the target audiences
- Recognise the capacity of existing groups in community engagement (ie. local government)
- Identify our target audiences and their key interests and needs (unions, churches, industry, community)
- Be so bold and radical in our actions that the media can no longer ignore the issue
- Provide support and mutual 'report ins' for campaigners to assess how we are managing the change in our own lives
- Devise new media strategies that will make climate reporting commensurate with financial reporting

Resources

Outreach and Engagement

The St John's Wood Sustainability Group provided a template for a letter that they developed in their neighbourhood to build awareness of and engage the local community in their Climate Action Group. This letter was delivered to residents, complete with a reply paid envelope, and included an invitation to a film screening in the neighbourhood.

The text of the letter is provided below to be adapted for other Climate Action Groups.

Small Steps for Sustainability - St John's Wood

A group of St John's Wood residents met on August 3rd and discussed what we as a community can do to live in a more sustainable and ethical way.

The following ideas were raised at the meeting:

- ☐ Bulk buy solar hot water systems
- ☐ Bulk buy solar panels to generate renewable energy (possibly connected to the grid)
- ☐ Bulk buy water tanks
- ☐ Smart meters to monitor your electricity use - bulk installation
- ☐ Creek rehabilitation and tree planting to absorb and store carbon Wildlife care
- ☐ Community edible garden
- ☐ Planting fruit trees in the suburb (with expert advice)
- ☐ Local market day - sell or exchange garden produce, recyclables, craft
- ☐ Buying regular box of organic fruit and vegetables from local farmers
- ☐ Political lobbying for sustainability policies and action
- ☐ Collection points for recyclables (eg corks, mobile phones, stamps)
- ☐ Educational video evenings or discussions groups
- ☐ Social event
- ☐ Car pooling
- ☐ Local Community Skills Directory - eg dressmakers, yoga teacher, tradespeople

Please indicate your household's interest by ticking any of the above boxes. By filling out this form it is hoped we can connect interested people and start a unified grass roots action group in St John's Wood to tackle climate change and sustainability issues.

The more people who can get involved and start taking small steps the better!

Your contact details (Name, phone, email, or street address)
……..

Thank-you
David, Sandra, Patricia and Sue for the St John's Wood Sustainability Group

Movement Building Discussions: Outreach and Engagement

This workshop was part of the movement building discussions, and addressed issues of outreach, communication and engagement in building the capacity and strengths of the Queensland Climate Movement. Specifically, it addressed questions of:

- *How can we engage more people in our communities on climate change issues?*
- *What words or phrases are current in climate matters?*
- *What alternative messages could be effective?*

How to get more people involved in working on climate change?

Multiple targets of climate change outreach and engagement:

- **Influence the receptive**
- **Politicise the passionate**
- **Empower the committed**

Making Use of Events

Events like Walk Against Warming provide a basis for large scale community participation in a low-key action on climate change. How can we make it more effective? Memorable? Eye-catching? Media-savvy? Moving beyond placards, t-shirts…

Making climate action a status symbol and developing role-models? How can we use marketing techniques to position climate action as sexy/fun?

We need to ensure that our events create opportunities for meaningful engagement and active participation. How can we create concrete involvement that equals rewarding participation?

How can we maximise media coverage of our events to build awareness/branding? A good local example was Greenfest, which was very well advertised, covered extensively in all local papers, and had the support of Quest News.

Another example is provided by the water revolution - media got behind it also. Can we build on the momentum of the water shortage and the success of getting

on top of it? This campaign also relied upon personal self-interest, and promoted the message that we are all at risk, and all in this together.

Building Community

Difficult to do, but highly rewarding in terms of the outcomes. 'If you want to go faster, go alone. If you want to go further, go together.' The objective is the long term development of the movement –> keeping people empowered. Some suggestions:

- 'Power of Community' screenings
- 'Plan it for the Planet' community building slogan
- Getting support and building relationships around similar interests (farmers and environmentalists against coal)

Targeted letter-writing campaigns

We should recognise the power of the pen - there could be some very useful resources to be promoted including templates, skills and providing an organised structure to the process.

Could be extended to information campaigns - but we need to ensure high quality and consistent information, economic arguments, stats, $$ impacts. We can also make use of the opportunities provided by the impacts of climate change - for example, as food prices are rising, we can hand out brochures/letters at supermarkets.

Getting our messages right

There is no one silver bullet when it comes to messages and messaging about climate change - some people emphasise the emergency element, others stress the positive positioning over the negative. A number of ideas were floated, including:

- Ensuring that we use positive and empowering language - use terms like demonstration over protest
- Emphasing the opportunities that might be available, and using that to appeal to people's rational self-interest - 'green money making opportunities'
- Getting beyond terms like global warming (too cuddly?) and climate change (redundant) - moving to crisis and emergency language
- Stress the influence on the broad community, the common interest, all involved, all affected
- About our kids futures (long time frame)
- Affirm the value of lower consumption (of fuel, resources) - consume less, live more
- 70% of Australians are concerned about climate change, but may need to find meaningful ways to express this
- We need to be prepared with responses for people as they hurt.
- Identify and provide ways to create moments of organised collective action to support leaders and activists - reclaim democracy in the process of achieving collective objectives.

Resources

Invitation to Australia's Climate Action Summit

In February, community climate action groups from across the continent are joining together for Australia's Climate Action Summit in Canberra, the weekend before the first day of the 2009 Federal Parliament.

Last year, Kevin Rudd was elected to government in the world's first climate change election. One year on, we are still waiting for the urgent action needed to peak our greenhouse gas emissions and begin this urgent transition to renewable energy. In December 2009, Kevin Rudd will meet with world leaders in Copenhagen, to set the framework and benchmarks for future global action on climate change. We need to ensure the Australian Government goes to Copenhagen with the strongest commitment to reducing greenhouse pollution and averting runaway climate change.

In February at Australia's Climate Action Summit, people from climate change groups will create and launch a cohesive and strategic national climate campaign, form a national grassroots network, and send a powerful message on the eve of the second year of the Rudd Government that sets the agenda for urgent climate action.

What will happen at Australia's Climate Action Summit:

Australia' Climate Action Summit will be two days of facilitated meetings and workshops to build a unified national climate campaign. It will be followed by one day of dynamic training in climate campaigning skills for taking action, facilitating climate action groups, effective lobbying and more. On the first day of the 2009 Federal Parliament, we will mobilise thousands of people in a high profile demonstration for real action on climate change.

Check out the website as it develops: www.climatemovement.org.au/summit

How you can support Australia's Climate Action Summit:

1. Join, build or form a climate change group in your area, and come along to Australia's Climate Action Summit www.climatemovement.org.au/groups

2. Write proposals for a national climate change campaign, network and policy. Read this document and fill in the forms.

3. Encourage and mobilise people in your area to come along: contact info@climatesummit.org.au for posters, flyers and information packs.

4. Get involved in organising meetings (fortnightly phone link ups) or one of the working groups: contact info@climatesummit.org.au Already, people from Climate

Change Balmain-Rozelle, Clean Energy for Eternity Bega, Friends of the Earth Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney, Greenpeace, Australian Student Environment Network, Climate Action Pittwater and more are working together on this important Summit. We would love your input.

5. If you're in Canberra, help us organise logistics such as location, accommodation, billeting and food. Contact info@climatesummit.org.au

6. Donate money, equipment, or in kind skills and services: contact info@climatesummit.org.au

We need you and your climate change group in Canberra in February to formulate a strong and strategic national campaign and network.

We need you to put climate change at the very top of the Rudd Government's agenda.

We need to make 2009 the year Australian people turned the tide of history, and pushed government, industry, and the globe toward a safe and just climate future.

See you in Canberra! For a safe and just climate future,
Australia's Climate Action Summit Organising Team

web: www.climatemovement.org.au/summit
email: info@climatesummit.org.au

Open Space Workshops:

Coal-Communities Listening Tour

This workshop was to inform and obtain feedback from participants about the proposed Coal Communities Listening tour being conducted in November, 2008, through southern and central Queensland, as an attempt to build awareness, understanding, and relations between Queensland climate campaigners and residents and workers in Queensland's coal communities.

Follow the tour online here…

About the Tour

The Coal Communities Listening Tour is an engagement and consultation project with members of coal dependant and affected communities to ground future campaigning on coal expansion in a thorough and robust knowledge of the concerns, issues and needs of the these communities.

Above all, this project starts with listening.

This project recognises that in the expansion of infrastructure and development to sustain the coal industry in Queensland, local interests and concerns with the effects of this expansion tend to be seen as being less important than corporate, state and economic interests. The expansion of the coal industry will have significant environmental, social and economic impacts on these regions, particularly those in which the mining industry is in an exploratory phase and is yet to be developed. Increasingly, however, such expansion occurs with little to no regard for the concerns and issues of directly affected citizens, who are regarded as secondary, incidental or even irrelevant.

A team of researchers and students from Friends of the Earth, Griffith University and the University of Queensland has initiated this project to redress this imbalance – an attempt to genuinely bridge the gap between government, business, climate campaigners and community by listening to the issues and concerns of affected community stakeholders, without judgment or debate.

Through this project, a series of Listening Posts in a variety of public spaces in selected coal affected regions of Queensland will be established over a period of two weeks. Each of the Listening Posts will be staffed by trained volunteers who will actively listen to residents' ideas, concerns, feelings and perspectives.

Outcomes from the Tour

A series of reports will be published on the basis of the findings, and made available to respondents, stakeholder groups and local residents, as well as formally submitted to relevant state and local governments, coal companies and research organisations working in the coal regions of Queensland.

These reports will detail the key findings of the listening project. In this way, these individuals and organisations will get a more thorough understanding of the attitudes and perspectives, and the hopes and concerns of the local community regarding climate change, and proposed coal infrastructure development, and will be better equipped to respond accordingly.

This is the first major project of Six Degrees – a campaign initiative of Friends of the Earth that seeks to reduce dependence on the Queensland Coal Industry as part of meaningful action to address climate change. In addition to providing a voice in the climate change debate for communities affected by coal expansion, the findings from the listening project will be used as a basis for the development of a suite of campaign tools for Six Degrees.

Find out more about the tour online here…

Open Space Workshops:

Greenhouse Skepticism

This workshop considered communication around the continued existence of greenhouse skepticism, and what it means for the messaging of the climate movement.

Concerns were raised about the strength of greenhouse skepticism in the community - it was noted that while many no longer see this as an issue, others felt that we need to strengthen our responses to greenhouse skepticism significantly before we will gain sufficient policy traction.

Participants felt that governments and industry perpetuate the myth of finding *Aladdin's lamp* - but, as one person noted, the genie misbehaves. Huge amounts of money are invested in media, PR and research. Very strong vested interests undertake massive amounts of communication efforts to dismiss climate change impacts. Some examples include:

- **Astroturf groups:** these are groups that are apparently grassroots-based or coalitions, but in actuality are that conceived, created and/or funded by corporations, industry trade associations, and political interests.
    - Examples in Australia include the Australian Environment Foundation and the Lavoisier Group.
- **Greenwash campaigns:** this is the unjustified appropriation of environmental virtue by a company, an industry, a government, a politician or even a non-government organization to create a pro-environmental image, sell a product or a policy, or to try and rehabilitate their standing with the public and decision makers. A combination of whitewash and brainwashing.
    - Examples in Australia include NewGenCoal, a PR campaign funded by the Australian Coal Association.
- **SLAPPS:** This stands for Strategic Law Suits Against Public Participation, and consist of court cases against campaigners by corporations or project proponents in an attempt to distract or dissuade them from their campaign.
    - Examples in Australia include, most famously, the Gunns 20 case.

Participants noted that people are more inclined to believe skeptics, as the message of climate change activism is less palatable and would require significant action and lifestyle changes.They also noted that some of the skeptics are clever, with established reputations and have significant influence on decision-makers and opinion-shapers.

A few things that they say are patently false, but often you have to do research to locate this. Most people are not sufficiently critical of what we take on board - and hence can often reinforce the general message. The sorts of evidence that skeptics quote:

- Emphasise the costs of action on climate change
- Global modelling needs to be re-assessed in light of financial crisis
- Not do anything until others do it
- Slump in public support for climate change actions

Open Space Workshops:

Urban Sustainability

This workshop discussed the role that could be played by the Queensland Climate Movement in building effective transition pathways for urban sustainability. A series of position statements were developed by the group that could be used to form the basis of an urban sustainability policy platform.

Lifestyle, planning and design

1. Our lifestyles impact on the climate in multiple ways: transport, water, energy, food. Understanding the relationship between our daily lifestyle and the climate impacts is critical to building the connection between individual actions and greenhouse gas mitigation.

2. Innovative housing and community design can provide for urban agriculture. The need to ensure the re-introduction of biodiversity and food security into urban environments is a critical step in establishing sustainable urban settlement patterns.

3. Urban and regional planning is critical to the achievement of sustainability. Planning in Queensland, and in the south-east corner particularly, has paid insufficient attention to the need for the protection of agricultural land against urban encroachment and mining development.

4. There is a need to change the South-East Queensland Regional Plan to preserve agricultural land within the urban footprint. Vulnerability of food supply due to peak oil and climate change will significantly add to the need to ensure a regionally-sustaining supply of essential goods and services.

Energy

5. There are no real impediments to the use of solar energy in all building design - commercial and residential.

6. As an incentive for the conversion to solar and other renewable energy sources, the opportunity for feed-in tariffs can provide financial rewards to individuals and communities, and can assist in the co-generation and decentralisation of energy and power. Currently in Queensland, the Solar Bonus Scheme, which commenced on 1st July 2008, provides customers with a direct payment of 44 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) for surplus electricity fed into the grid.

7. Impediments to the transition to renewable may include installation costs. As such a campaign which urges low interest loan and micro-finance providers to create credit arrangements to allow households to convert quickly to renewable energy.

8. Creating a sense of the urgency of climate change, and the impact of the carbon emissions trading scheme will help to encourage householders to financially plan ahead for conversion to solar energy.

9. Retrofit of urban spaces will require regulatory support. We advocate for change to the building codes in Queensland to require all buildings to convert renewable energy and to incorporate passive solar design.

Greenfield Planning

10. With the ever-expanding urban footprint of the south-east corner of Queensland, greenfield urban developments are a critical interface. New urban communities should be required to be independently sustainable as a precondition to their approval. The sustainability requirements should include community-level sufficiency in energy, water, transport and food components.

11. As a condition of their approval, new residential and commercial greenfield sites should have infrastructure required for the achievement of sustainability provided first and not afterwards.

Open Space Workshops:

Sustainable Population & Climate Change

This workshop discussed issues around population and climate change, recognising that questions of population have almost become taboo to speak about. Discussions in the workshop attempted to identify the contribution of population growth to climate change, and what can be done about it.

Population: The highly controversial topic

It is highly controversial to talk around many of the issues connected with population:

- Family planning
- Reproductive rights
- Abortion
- Contraception
- Sex

Wild oscillations - chaos theory & population numbers. Not just our species. The problem: how to cut population (growth rate? total numbers? carrying capacity?)

- *500 million people in 1000 AD*
- *3 billion people in 1950s*
- ***more than 6 billion people now***

This population requires effectively three planets to sustain. Medical advances have promoted life, religion has served to hamper the achievement of balance.

Question of the relationship between population, consumption and technology. Intensive economic system promotes growth (ie. expansion) in all of these areas. Not hard to solve balance - given political will.

Cultural practice complicates the achievement of balance. Women's and children's rights are the first to go where there is pressure on resources.

What does this mean for Australia?

Population displacement - due to climate refugees, sea level rise, uninhabitable regions. It is critical to work with recognised social justice agencies, churches - people listen to messages through these channels.

Consumption is not being talked about in Australia - our ecological footprint is far too large.

Education, so people can make informed choices about the consequences of decisions.

Population settlement patterns in Australia are inappropriate for carrying capacity of the continent. Developers have priority in decision-making around urban settlement, leading to dangerous patterns of consumption. This is compounded by the disconnect between government departments making decisions which are not linked through concern with climate change.

With a market economy all based on overproduction, profit, consumption, growth, redundancy - all of this promotes population growth. Built in obsolescence, wastefulness is part of what maintains our economic order.

Where to?

We need an ecological well-being index: for our local environment, aggregrating upwards towards a planet-wide index of ecological health. This can be used as the basis for identifying environmental impacts of policy and personal choices.

But, could this be used as a basis for not upholding our international moral obligation for refugees? Climate refugees?

Campaign on those policies that promote perverse population outcomes: ie. baby bonus. Putting the money towards greater care of the children we have, not producing more.

Campaign on carrying capacity: we need to recognise and establish what we can sustain. Promotion of a standard of living and consumption that the global population could live at.

Get creative and knowledgeable: Try to narrow down the specific areas of concern and expertise. Delegate areas and start becoming experts. Developing models of population growth and collapse, effective use of historical statistics.

Open Space Workshops:

Queensland Climate Policy

This workshop considered the current, required and desired legislation and policy on climate change in Queensland. Specifically, it focused on:

- What current policies are in place or are being developed?
- What might be needed? How will we decide?
- What can we propose as necessary policy/legislative initiatives?
- What role can the Queensland Climate Movement play in the design, development and delivery of climate change policy?

Current Climate Change Policy

Current national greenhouse gas emission targets nationally propose a 60% reduction in emissions by 2050. This target has been replicated at a state level in Queensland.

Queensland has, however, proposed a tripling of coal production over that same period. This endorsement and ongoing support provided for the coal industry in Queensland is occurring at the expense of renewables, particularly in the financial support provided by the Queensland Government to coal.

At the same time, the government continues to provide support and to fund propaganda campaigns for so-called Clean Coal Technology.

Although some initiatives in Queensland have been undertaken to address climate change, the policies are fragmented, isolated from key infrastructure proposals and administered by marginalised agencies. It was considered that the amalgam of policies lead to an outcome which encourages the continuation of unsustainable practices in Queensland.

How do we decide what might be needed?

The necessary outcomes from government policies on climate change were identified. Specifically, these centred upon the articulation (and subsequent

achievement) of a tangible greenhouse gas emission target that is scientifically robust and defensible, and is able to:

- ensure the long-term ecological health of the Great Barrier Reef;
- prevent the massive displacement of climate refugees, particularly in our Pacific Island nation neighbours; and
- achieve consistent and targeted improvement in environmental and resource condition indicators of environmental well-being.

What policy is required?

Some proposals for government policies to achieve these targets included:

- Legislated CO2 emission target of 350 parts per million as a maximum
- Carbon neutral Queensland
- Environmental well-being index for Queensland (and baseline data)
- Incentive programs and R&D funding arrangements for solar and other renewable development
- Local Government climate policies developed across Queensland based on Cities for Climate Protection
- Energy costs
- Energy needs will be reduced to match what renewables are capable of producing
- Transition pathways for the phase out of sea-borne coal export trade in Queensland
- Reduced funding to CCS research and abandon of CCS technology development
- Just transition policies for coal communities and workers to the green-collar sector

Open Space Workshops:

What are the Limits of Climate Policy?

This workshop discussed the potential and limits of government intervention in moves towards a safe climate. The potential of new forms of democratic participation were considered, and a rationale for a wider scope for public participation in decision-making was articulated.

Levels of Policy

Current policies extend from local council regulations, through to regional level planning, to state level legislation and policy, Commonwealth/national and to the international negotiations level.

The major problem is the fragmentation between these levels of governance - leading in some instances to perverse outcomes and contradictory objectives.

What do we want the public to understand is needed and would be adequate, at what levels of government? What do we see as our aim from the political process, and how do we get there?

As a movement, we need to be aware of, but look beyond, current processes and the existing delineations between levels of government. We need to be proactive in voicing what we want to see at a systemic level, and not merely reactive to specific policies and legislation.

Review of Institutions

We need to advocate the need for government to re-examine the institutional and political infrastructure in terms of the capacity to respond to climate change. In specific terms, we must ask of our current institutional arrangements:

- Are they adequate, responsive, authoritative, coherent, aligned and integrated?
- Can they act fast enough?
- Can they respond not only to democratic demands, but also to rapid changes in the environment and in our knowledge of non-linear changes?
- Can they co-ordinate an emergency response?

New Institutional Arrangements

We need an additional process of deliberative democracy to supplement the existing political framework. A people's policy development process which is acknowledged, empowered and listened to in the context of climate change responses. A pre-condition and an outcome of these arrangements are an active citizenship generating solutions and voicing them.

This starts from the question of what is needed (eg a safe climate), then how can we get there (eg a just and viable transition strategy). This can in turn be presented as a coherent and viable alternative. Questions to be resolved through this process might include:

- What can we agree on?
- What is our values statement?
- What would be needed physically, based on best available science and modelling?
- How can we reach that socially, economically and politically?

Resources

Proposal for A Global Safe Climate Covenant

Philip Sutton from the Greenleap Strategic Institute and Green Innovations presented a proposal for a Global Safe Climate Covenant at the Summit. The proposal is presented here for consideration and debate, courtesy of Philip. Philip can be contacted at philip.sutton{at}green-innovations.asn.au

This is the fourth version of this proposal, as at 4th October, 2008. More recent versions, along with Philip's other work on Climate Code Red, may be available here.

Proposal for a Global Safe Climate Covenant

Ross Garnaut and the government have let Australians down on climate change. Disheartened by the failure at home, many people are likely to put their hopes in being saved by international action.

But I've got a feeling that even if we get a 'good' result at the Copenhagen climate negotiations next year it will still be a suicide pact eg. a 25% reduction of emissions by 2020 will be about ¼ of what is needed by that time to avoid dangerous climate change and to get back to a safe climate. I think an inadequate result will lead to the more aware activists being depressed and we may end up with less action at a time when more action is needed.

I think that consensus treaties and politics are giving us lowest common denominator results when what we need are the strongest possible commitments.

I've been trying to work out how to break out of this dilemma. An idea is starting to take form and I'd love to get your feedback.

The genesis of the idea was to get beyond the disappointment of a most-likely failed agreement between governments at Copenhagen and to aspire instead to a 'treaty' signed by community groups or non-state parties to commit to a ten year transition to a safe climate economy - building on Al Gore's 10 year challenge to the US.

A community 'treaty' is something that community climate and environment groups have more control over and so we might be able to get a good result.

I was imagining that this non-state party 'treaty' would be a real treaty rather than just a pious declaration of principles with no follow through and no consequences - instead the parties would be bound by agreement to actions and outcomes and there would be a secretariat to encourage action and a compliance regime. Like government signatories to a traditional treaty, the non-state parties to the community treaty would agree to take action in areas/aspects of life and society that they control.

But a weakness of this idea is that such a community treaty would not engage governments and they of course need to play a major role in creating a safe climate future. And the world public might eventually be discouraged by this lack of government engagement.

Having identified this weakness, I then thought, why not invite local governments to be signatories, because many of them are doing fabulous practical work based on zero emissions and safe climate goals? And once I thought that the dam burst……

Why not create a *Global Safe Climate Covenant* for ***any*** party that is prepared to sign on - whether non-state or state party, where the parties agree to commit to the very rapid achievement of a safe climate future?

This could be a real Covenant with parties agreeing to a highest common denominator outcome, coming together to start creating a new world in a way where they are not held back by laggards.

So how might it work?

We could start with community groups, like for example the grass roots climate action groups in Australia. Quite possibly the February 2009 Australian conference could lead to Australian grass roots climate action groups signing on in large numbers. But to make the project really work well internationally it would probably be essential for Al Gore and his 'We' campaign to share in active leadership. But that could be possible. Also with its new climate policy Greenpeace could well sign on too and take a leadership role.

Then there would be hundreds of local councils around the world that could sign on.

And then I started to think about some whole countries eg. Pacific Island States that might want to sign on.

And there could be some larger state parties eg. Cost Rica and progressive provinces/sub-national states that might be fired up enough to be a signatory eg. Oregon or California. And so on.

My feeling is that with such a treaty in place the morale of the climate movement around the world would be lifted so much that a huge tide of change could be unleashed so that in due course most or even all nations of the world might join in (eventually!).

What could the core of the treaty be?

I would imagine it would involve amongst other things:

- some sort of ethical commitment to consideration for the protection of all people, all generation and all species.
- a recognition that we face a global climate emergency.
- a commitment that society should live within the biophysical limits of the earth.
- a commitment to the very rapid achievement of a safe climate.

- a commitment to stopping sea rise, to restoring the summer Arctic sea ice reflectivity, restoring the extent of the Himalayan ice fields, to refreezing the Arctic ocean floor carbon sinks and the circumpolar land based permafrost lands, to halting the melting of Greenland, and to protecting the West Antarctic ice sheet from disintegration and melting, etc.
- a commitment to contribute effectively to the necessary and rapid cooling of the earth.
- a commitment to drawing down fair shares of the excess CO2 in the atmosphere.
- a commitment to making evidence-based policy using the latest climate and earth system science and to applying a precautionary approach to risk management in the face of uncertainty.
- a commitment to undertake an intense decade of transformation of the economy.
- a committing to prepare, implement and periodically update a strategy for driving the implementation of the signatory's commitments make as a result of signing onto the treaty and as a result of unilateral and voluntary commitments going beyond the minimum requirements of the treaty.
- a commitment to fully solving the climate crisis in ways that are complementary to the solutions to other major sustainability issues (eg. peak oil); and
- a commitment to provide some resources for shared activities in support of the objectives of the treaty.

The Covenant could have schedules of actions that the parties could sign up to (or they could commit to their own via their own registered Covenant Strategy). Clearly most of the signatories won't have the power to achieve the Covenants major goals by themselves. Actions could range from individual ones (writing letters to local MPs, joining online campaigns) to organisational ones to eliminate emissions, replace fossil-fuelled power stations etc. Actions would fall into two categories: those under the signatories' direct control and those where they can reach out to influence others.

The Covenant could provide for regional or specialist collaboration of parties. For example all (or most of) the parties lying within the borders of a national state or a sub-national state could formally enter into a collaborative program. Since our understanding of what is needed to achieve a safe climate is developing rapidly, the Covenant would need probably need to have an effective process for rapid evolution and revision.

The concept of the Global Safe Climate Covenant could be followed up establishing a working group that could prepare a very rough mock up of what it might look like (a concept draft) and then the working group could be expanded/augmented (in all sorts of ways) to provide the capacity to negotiate with potential signatories around the world.

Getting to Implementation

Implementation might involve 4 streams of work to:

1. work on the drafting of the Covenant
2. manage consultation and feedback into the drafting process
3. gather support around the world for the Covenant
4. feed the goals of the Covenant into the UN Copenhagen process and nation state processes.

Open Space Workshops:

Step In to Step It Up: A National Campaign

This workshop was provided to organise actions around the Step In to Step It Up Campaign, happening across the country from December, 2008. More information on the the Step In Campaign is available from the website, and you can download a copy of the Guide Book for Stepping In to plan your own campaign.

Below is a letter to the climate movement from Emma Brindal, one of the participants in a sit-in action in Brisbane in protest of the lack of meaningful action on climate change.

Dear Friends in the Climate Movement

At the end of September as part of a national week of action on climate change, a group of friends, including myself, held a sit-in in Kevin Rudd's electoral office in Brisbane.

We had all been feeling increasingly concerned about our government's lack of meaningful action on climate change. We felt it was time to do more than write letters and bemoan our government's inaction. The sit-in was really successful and great fun to be a part of.

In the first days of December, the Rudd Government will release the White Paper, outlining the Emissions Trading Scheme and emissions reduction targets for 2020 - the most important policy in contemporary Australia.

I'm calling on you to do a similar action in your MP's office in the first week of December – step in to your MP's office and be part of stepping it up on climate change.

At our 'step in', five people went into Kevin Rudd's office and asked to make an appointment with Rudd. I felt a bit nervous walking in, but having a group of us together made it a lot easier. After some discussion with a staff member and the office manager, we established that we weren't going to get a meeting straight away. So we said, "That's ok, we'll wait" – and we sat down on the floor and pulled out our signs that we had prepared beforehand. With perfect timing, our other friends came around the corner with a banner that read 'Great Barrier Reef – not negotiable'.

Soon, television crew from three different stations arrived. Our media spokesperson conducted a number of interviews while we continued to sit on the floor in the office. After two hours, the police hadn't turned up.

We felt we had succeeded in getting the media we wanted and decided to call it quits for the day… perhaps to return for a much longer sit-in in December!

I think the action was successful because we were really organised in advance. We'd had a couple of meetings before the day of the sit-in. On the day, we met up near Rudd's office about an hour beforehand to go over what we wanted to do.

Another key part to the success of our action was having two excellent media people (one a media spokesperson and the other a media liaison) who sent our media release and made follow-up calls to key media outlets once we were in the office. They had practiced by roleplaying interviews and were feeling well-prepared before the action. Sending out a media release with high resolution photos was also important so media outlets that didn't make it were still able to do stories with photos on the action.

You can see some of the media on our action here: http://climateemergencyqueensland.blogspot.com/2008/09/climate-emergency-launch.html

It was great having supporters chanting and with colourful banners outside. They kept us entertained with chants of "Save our Reef, Mr Rudd, Garnaut's targets are a dud!' Their presence provided us with moral support for what we were doing.

I think the only problem we had on the day was when trains were suddenly cancelled – just before our train was due to head to Kevin Rudd's office! We had to go and find a bus and we were running about half an hour late. Leaving plenty of time before the event was due to start definitely paid off for us!

I encourage you to do a similar action in your MP's office in the first week of December. Now is the time to step in and step up community action on climate change!

To get you started, download the great information kit on how to do a Step In

http://stepitupaustralia.files.wordpress.com/2008/10/step-in-to-step-it-up-on-climate-change.pdf

Next, get together with your climate action group or your friends and talk about what you would like your 'Step In' to be like. What will you do when you are there? What are the core messages you want to convey to your MP, to the public, and to media? What do people in your group need to feel prepared? Email hollycreenaune@gmail.com with any questions or for an experienced activist to visit your group to help you plan.

Then, a short time after the Federal Government releases their White Paper, step in to your MP's office with a group of people from your community, and be part of stepping it up on climate change!

See the website for more information, tips and stories from a whole range of climate change groups who have 'stepped in' to their MP's office already:

http://stepitupaustralia.wordpress.com/

Get informed, inspired, and ready to STEP IN this December.

All the best in stepping in,
Emma Brindal

Open Space Workshops:

A Queensland Safe Climate Coalition

This workshop considered the role and prospects for the establishment of a safe climate coalition in Queensland. It used two proposals circulated at the summit as the basis for the discussion, the Proposal for a Safe Climate Coalition and the Proposal for a Global Safe Climate Covenant.

Coalitions already do exist - what is proposed here?

How do new things avoid duplication? How does this coalition idea relate to what is already happening?

Current targets would move us quickly into catastrophic disasters. How do we turn ideas around by next year? To go back to zero and below zero emissions. Immediate, emergency need for urgent action. Concepts need to be out there. Can be get common agreement between groups. A compatible statement that is put out for public consideration. The question isn't what it costs.

Are you targeting a certain level of emissions?

No, that's one of the questions. 300-350 is the proposed target, which represents the concentration in the 1980s and the last time when we had a stable climate. It is really important not to let 'safe' be distorted. Stern managed it. We do need specific numbers attached.

The 350.org movement is steaming ahead in the United States. We are currently at around 387ppm globally.

Coalition and/or Covenant

What is the difference between committing to be a member of the coalition and signing the covenant? None.

You could get people to sign onto a three sentence statement easily. The covenant is more detailed. Calling it a coalition might not help. It might be worth talking in terms of a safe climate objective. Earth Charter. Declaration is a good word - the Safe Climate Declaration. Almost the least amount you could say and still have something to say. Provides the least opportunities for objection.

Looking for getting with what other groups are saying. Encourage people to get on the same page.

Three demands: state of emergency, need for action, need to get back to safe levels.

What are the conditions under which we lose all the ice in the Arctic (or 70m sea level rise)? 425ppm plus/minus 75 ppm. We shouldn't be within the risk zone at all. What about the conditions for Greenland, to get back the Artic sea ice, the permafrost, the Great Barrier Reef, the Himalayas, the Amazon? 300 - 325ppm. The target 350 campaign may not be enough.

Want to move away from 'what will it cost?' to 'what is safe?'. The future of life on earth is now at risk.

"Safe Australia"

The Garnaut recommendations are recommendations for the death of Australia. Australians did not ignore the risks of WWII.

Individuals and groups to sign on. How will you disseminate it? Collect signatures? We'd now try to frame political campaigns, everything we do, through this approach. The continuity is the concept of 'safe' - not necessarily 350. As the science strengthens, the concept of safe climate can tighten up.

We have a lot of fuzziness around the danger and very unclear ideas about who the enemy is (unlike wartime mobilisation). Surveys show public ideas are ahead of the politicians. But they are not doing it. They see hypocrisy from the government. Tunnels drilled and no public transport. Qld Coal industry racing ahead.

People have to believe that what they do makes a difference. This is lacking - which is debilitating.

If you change people's beliefs, then they will change their behaviours.

Pictures of all of the species that are going to go extinct, People have to see it, get it and realise that they can do something about it.

It's like we've been diagnosed with cancer, and we're in a denial stage. We've been told go and take an aspirin - and not chemotherapy or the appropriate cure for the illness. Take 2 aspirin and you'll be dead in six weeks. No! I want chemo! - need the right level of action commensurate with the terminal illness.

Concept of the Covenant

How to follow it through in action. Copenhagen is likely to be hopeless and dispiriting. How can we empower ourselves and get control.

Citizen treaty: cascade up through organisations, local government, from cities, to states to nations.

Why bother: we're in a transition time where we're realising that it is going to become much harder - 100% in ten years. What if all the people who share this aspiration are able to connect around the world. Tiers to engage more and deeper levels.

Open Space Workshops:

Principles for a Safe Climate Coalition

A global call for emergency action to prevent catastrophic global warming

Humanity and all of life is facing a planetary emergency: the threat of runaway global warming. We call on communities and governments in every part of the world to take immediate action to reduce average global temperatures to safe levels in order to prevent the catastrophic collapse of ecosystems and human societies. It is time we made an emergency commitment to the reestablishment of a safe climate.

The principles of the Safe Climate Coalition

1. The planet must be brought back within its safe biophysical operating limits as a matter of extreme urgency.
2. In order to do this we will need to transform our ecologically unsustainable economy so that it operates within the Earth's carrying capacity.

Who is the Safe Climate Coalition?

We are a coalition of organisations working to develop viable solutions to the threats posed by climate change. The primary role of the coalition is to encourage and support participation, education, dialogue and cooperative action.

The coalition will seek to strengthen the role of civil society on climate change issues. Our organisational objective is to build as large and active a movement as possible through encouraging the linkage and expansion of existing campaigns, the identification and filling of gaps and an inclusive approach that reaches out and involves all sectors of society. The coalition will simultaneously work on local, national and global levels.

Some specific campaigns will target key events: e.g. the international conferences on climate change scheduled for Poznan in December 2008 and Copenhagen in December 2009. Other campaigns will act to directly begin the process of creating a safe-climate economy.

All individuals and organisations are encouraged to sign and support the *Call for Urgent Action*. Individuals and organisations that agree with these principles are invited to join the Coalition. Participation in the coalition in no way limits the rights of participants to make other agreements and engage in other activities.

Open Space Workshops:

Direct Action on Coal in Queensland

This workshop discussed the history of direct action against coal in Queensland, the future opportunities and the strategic issues around the use of peaceful direct action as part of the broader movement's response to the issues of climate change.

This workshop was facilitated by Six Degrees.

History of Direct Action Against Coal in Queensland

Much of the information below is taken from the CoalSwarm project website at Sourcewatch. This history was used as a basis of discussion and to provide a context for the consideration of future actions.

June 16, 2008: Protesters upstage major coal conference

Protesters rallied outside while two campaigners infiltrated a major coal conference in Brisbane, calling for more Queensland Government support for renewable energy. Once inside, the the two activists took the floor and addressed the Queensland Coal08 conference, which was held to discuss the future of the coal mining industry in the largest coal exporting state in the largest coal exporting country in the world. No arrests were made.

July 11-12, 2008: Greenpeace activists occupy coal-fired power plant smokestack for 33 hours

On July 11, 2008, four Greenpeace activists climbed the 462 foot high smokestack of the coal-fired Swanbank B power station near Brisbane, in Queensland, Australia. While the smokestack climbers hung a 'Renewables Not Coal' banner, two other activists climbed onto the roof of the plant and unfurled a banner reading 'Energy [R]evolution'. The four remained on the smokestack overnight in near freezing temperatures. On July 12, one of the protesters painted 'Go Solar' in huge lettering down the side of the smokestack. After 33 hours of occupation, all four climbers descended voluntarily. The goal of the action was to raise the level of debate in Queensland and the rest of Australia, re-emphasize the urgency of the climate change issue and the need to start shifting from coal to renewables.

July 13-14, 2008: Climate Camp stops coal trains at worlds' largest coal export port

On July 13, 2008 a large contingent of Queenslanders joined with approximately 1000 activists in stopping three trains bound for export at the Carrington Coal Terminal for almost six hours. Dozens of protesters were able to board and chain themselves to the trains while others lay across the tracks. Hundreds were held back by mounted police. Police arrested 57.

On July 14, 2008, five activists stopped coal loading at the Kooragang coal export terminal for more than two hours by chaining themselves to a conveyor belt. Later that afternoon four protesters padlocked themselves to the tracks at the Carrington terminal, stopping all train traffic until police were able cut the group free. All nine were arrested.

The direct actions, organized as part of the Australian Camp for Climate Action, were an attempt to bring worldwide attention to coal's role in climate change and the expansion of Australian coal exports.

July 28, 2008: Greenpeace paints anti-coal messages on 20 coal ships

Using inflatable rafts, nine Greenpeace activists painted anti-coal messages on 20 coal ships waiting to enter the world largest coal export port in Queensland, Australia. The action intended to highlight the contradiction between the Australian prime minister's stated intention of urgently reducing greenhouse pollution while doubling Australia's coal exports. All nine activists were arrested.

September 22, 2008: Prime Minister's office occupied

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's Brisbane electorate office was occupied by his local constituents, who staged a peaceful sit-in for several hours, demanding a discussion on the government's lack of response to the phase out of the coal industry. The action was the first in a week of national climate emergency protest events, which targeted Queensland government and coal mining corporations.

October 31, 2008: Farmers occupy Qld Premier's office to save Darling Downs from coal mining

The Friends of Felton group occupied the Premier's office to demand the Government introduce legislation to protect prime farmland from mining. The peaceful protest involved around 25 people. The group set up a mock lunch table on the pavement outside the office, with a plate of coal for the Premier's lunch, and a glass of polluted water.

November 7, 2008: Activists shut down Tarong Power Station

On November 7, 2008, two activists locked onto a conveyor belt and forced the evacuation of Queensland's Tarong Power Station, which produces around 1400MW of the State's energy. Station operator Tarong Power produces up to 25 percent of Queensland's electricity from three coal fired power stations, uses up to 7 million tons a coal a year from the company's nearby coal mine. This action was the fourth action in just seven days targeting the coal industry in Australia and calling for the phase out of coal-fired power. The action also served to highlight the risk to Queensland's world heritage icon, the Great Barrier Reef, posed by climate change. Three people were arrested.

External Links

Protesters picket Qld coal conference, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, June 16, 2008.

Greenpeace protesters scale 140m chimney, Sydney Morning Herald, July 11, 2008.

More coal protest arrests at Newcastle Business Spectator, July 14, 2008.

Garrett defends coal exports, Sydney Morning Herald, July 28, 2008.

PM's Brisbane office targeted by green protesters, Brisbane Times, September 22, 2008.

Climate protesters occupy PM's office, news.com.au, September 22, 2008.

Friends of Felton Occupy Anna Bligh's Office, Friend of Felton webpage, October 31, 2008.

Police arrest Tarong Power Protesters, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, November 7, 2008.

Climate activists disrupt Australian power plant, Reuters, November 10, 2008.

Open Space Workshops:

The Need for A New Holistic Paradigm

This workshop was conducted by Graeme Taylor, based on his book "Evolution's Edge: The Coming Collapse and Transformation of Our World" (New Society Publishers, 2008). If you would like to see Graeme's presentation, please contact graeme[@]bestfutures.org

Some of the ideas presented in Graeme's model for creating a sustainable future are captured below:

The Next Ten Years

The most critical time in human history. Rapidly rising oil and food prices are signs that our unsustainable global system is running out of cheap resources. The next decade will not only be a time of growing crisis, but also a time of growing opportunities.

The Global Emergency

Preventing runaway climate change. Why we have less than five years to stop global warming and prevent disaster, and why rapid constructive change is possible.

The Future is Our Choice

We will either create an ethical civilisation or suffer the catastrophic collapse of the environment and human societies. Why our immoral and destructive global system is unsustainable, and why a sustainable civilisation cannot be built without love, caring, peace and justice.

Paradigm Shift

The design of a sustainable economy and culture. The challenge is to quickly transform our environmentally, economically and socially unsustainable consumer society into a sustainable conserver society. Future economic growth is only possible if we use systems thinking, renewable energies, nanotechnologies, biomimicry, lean design and closed-loop manufacturing processes to efficiently produce products without waste or pollution.

On the Edge of Evolution

Why transformative societal change is inevitable. A new, sustainable level of civilisation (a new historical age) with holistic views, values, technologies and social structures has already begun to emerge. We can and must support this evolutionary process: the survival of our species is at stake.

Evaluation Summary

What Influenced people to attend the Summit?

On the evaluation forms for the summit, people were asked to suggest what influenced their decision to come to the summit. Three key themes emerged from this:

➢ They were personally invited by one of the organisers or a friend/collegue/someone they respect.

➢ They wanted to meet other people, share ideas & dialogue, be inspired by them.

➢ They were motivated by a sense of urgency and importance of taking action.

These factors are an important reminder that the dominant modes of communication and exchange within the climate movement are derived from our personal relationships. The movement shares many of the characteristics of what are referred to as small world networks. Research into the dynamics of these networks demonstrate that they have the capacity for "enhanced signal-propagation speed, computational power, and synchronizability" but also that "infectious diseases spread more easily in small-world networks".

What does this mean for the shape of our movement?

Whilst there is much to commend a movement based on personal relationships and networks, it should perhaps also prompt us to pose questions about inclusion & exclusion, and to consider strategies for using our existing relationships and networks as a foundation for growing the movement.

For a creative website on small world networks, see www.small-world-network.com

Comments verbatim:

• sense of crisis
• need to find creative responses
• looking for ways of "popular engagement"
• my friends organised it
• was really keen to network & see how groups can work together
• Personally invited by one of the organisers (x2)
• Personally invited by a friend/collegue (x3)
• Been a while since I've been to an activist gathering, wanting to network with others re sustainable living • To share ideas
• Need to learn about & connect with the diverse groups of people who see the urgent need for change

- Anger, frustration, need to participate
- To learn more about climate change & actions in Brisbane
- I stood in for someone else
- I'm part of a sustainaibility Committee/group. I contacted Philip Sutton to tell him it was happening… (so had to come!)
- Keen to meet up with other people working for safe climate
- A lot of climate events were on this month and I decided to go to them all
- The need to reconnect with people and see if anything could emerge
- Contact at GreenFest
- passion for the cause

Evaluations and Reflections

In the evaluation of the summit, people were asked to reflect on what they thought worked best about the event, and how it could have been improved. Three key themes emerged from what worked best:

➢ Above all, participants enjoyed meeting and making connections with different people in the Qld climate movement.

➢ Through the opportunity of hearing peoples' stories, participants valued learning of the breadth of what different people within the movement are working on.

➢ The decision to use an open spaces format was affirmed in the evaluation, particularly in the flexibility this gave participants.

Four key themes emerged from what could have been improved for future summits:

➢ There was a desire for more report backs, action points/outcomes, and more time dedicated for a 'where to from here' discussion.

➢ The venue acoustics made hearing difficult, and participants also indicated that this was compounded by the need for clearer/slower/more enunciated speech from facilitators & participants.

➢ In general, people thought that better written & verbal communication could have been provided. This was also emphasised in relation to facilitating more equal speaking time for the large group reporting.

➢ Participants also noted that people & energy dissipated near end of day.

Positive Comments verbatim:

• Sense of broad & diverse involvement in working for change
• Learning from wisdom of others in many domains
• Renewal of hope
• Opening session finding out what everyone is up to
• Networking (x2)
• Maybe the beginnings of on-going collaboration
• John filled me in on aspects of climate change geopolitics and it changed my position on some stuff
• Open space to create our own experience
• Relaxed facilitation yet firm re time frames
• Recycled food available
• Awesome people
• Flexible framework
• Open space & report backs

• Afternoon groups session worked really well
• Getting a clear sense of the climate activist landscape
• Meeting motivated, energetic others (x2)
• Food
• Looking at different aspects of climate change
• Lively discussion among like-minded people
• Loved it all, Really
• It's an important meeting with great people
• Well organised – great to meet ll the people involved and hear.
• Conceptual breadth. It all worked well.
• A couple of unscheduled off the cuff conversations and making a couple of connections with people
• Seeing the breadth of information
• Meeting people from various backgrounds
• The open spaces
• Good turn out of people with ideas
• Hearing from everyone in the first round
• New info

Improvement Comments verbatim:

• clearer overall communication (oral & written)
• less diffuse range of discussion topics
• longer time for each workshop
• report backs on second session (break-out groups)
• People could be better read & come with definite ideas that they could articulate so we are at the forefront of the discussion rather than the beginning
• Longer wrap-up time to generate clearer idea of how we will continue to interact
• Closer facilitation of the initial intros to give more equal speaking time
• Could have benefited from Indigenous peoples involvement and perspectives
• Pathway to action? It's hard.
• Each session could have had a single statement or action step to be created from it
• I'd like to see more outcomes-based meetings – but I don't think that was realistic at the first meeting
• I think a full day is too much. Not many stayed to the end (<50%).
• Slightly more attention to clear loud speaking in the great big group early on
• Participants thinned out and got slack in the final session, but even that was ok, it just meant a different sort of discussion.
• Especially the names of all one groups were part of
• Meeting people, getting feedback on issues
• Energy dissipated a lot – more focus. Clean, slower speech.
• Hard to hear and see
• Need a gong for timing
• After 3pm groups seemed to disintegrate
• Peoples 2 mins need to be kept to 2 mins
• Acoustic was really bad
• Mike/amp/speakers would have helped
• Not being able to hear well at times created strain – not advocating microphones, but acoustics is a consideration
• Venue was ideal in other ways
• Include a bit of exercise?