



Oxford Round Table

Two Decades of Academic Discourse

PRESS RELEASE

A five day Oxford Round Table on *The Copenhagen Protocol: Problems and Possibilities*, concluded today at the Oxford Round Table held at Lincoln College in the University of Oxford, Oxford, U.K. March 22 through March 26, 2010. Attending the Round Table were scientists and professionals from eight countries: Australia, Canada, Japan, South Africa, Sweden, U.K., U.S.A. and Zimbabwe..

The participants, *en banc*, composed the following statement:

The earth processes are changing in numerous ways; many of these are detrimental to humanity and other species. Worldwide, human society has accelerated the use of natural resources, bringing about massive changes in the productive base of land, air and water resources. A consequence of this has been reduced biological diversity because of habitat loss, land use change and the spread of invasive species. Degradation of ecosystems has been accentuated by introduction into the environment of massive quantities of inorganic and organic materials that degrade the integrity of ecosystems. The climate change will exacerbate the degradation of ecosystems that are necessary to support a still-expanding human population.

Papers at the Round Table included multiple perspectives from a diversity of biological, chemical, physical, ecological, educational, legal, engineering, social science, public health, forestry, geology, architecture and economic perspectives.

Participants called for global political leadership to commit to a redefinition of economic growth in light of market imperfections, social inequities, quality of life and sustainability of resources. At the basis of this should be the concept of ecological justice and rights of dignity for all people of the earth without regard to culture, gender, ethnicity or region.

Participants agreed that the earth's biosphere has been a dynamic interacting system throughout its history. However, a relatively stable climate which has characterized approximately the last 10,000 years is essential to a thriving human society.

Specific recommendations on a number of strategies included the following:

- Strategies that seek to synthesize the best indigenous and historical knowledge and practices from traditional cultures with the latest technical improvements based on democratic decisions. The intent is to take the best from each regional and culturally appropriate sectors to maximize the benefit of all and to minimize detrimental impacts on the earth and humans.
- That energy, manufacturing and waste cycles should, as much as possible, conform to closed loops with the primary goal of minimizing waste and preventing pollution. This should include minimizing the energy, pollution and waste costs incurred by current inefficient transportation systems.
- Rally science and technology experts to advocate that government leaders enact stronger and more cohesive climate change policy and strategy.
- Support a mix of local, regional and global action that involves the active and democratic involvement of all stakeholders and shifts the balance toward data-driven scientific knowledge and public participation away from special interest manipulation.
- Youth today are growing up more environmentally conscious; we should foster and fund stronger curricula of educational institutions that reflect and advance this interest as they inherit the earth from us. We need to bequeath it to them in an improved state.

The Round Table affirms that the discovery of new concepts and invention of new technologies should be directed toward a richer quality of life for all by minimizing environmental impacts and moving society toward long-term sustainability with a reorientation of societal priorities.

Oxford Round Table
Lincoln College, U.K.

The Oxford Round Table is a not-for-profit educational organization chartered in England and Wales

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