

Motions Resolutions Paper – Board responses to motions and amendments

Motion 2 – Energy Policy

FOR	82	AGAINST	0	ABSTENTIONS	4
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Proposed by Camden Friends of the Earth

Seconded by Tottenham & Wood Green Friends of the Earth

This Conference calls upon the Board of Friends of the Earth Ltd. to consider developing a documented energy policy that:

- a) Provides a coherent framework for meeting annual carbon reduction targets in the UK economy;
- b) Gives authoritative leadership on controversial issues, for example on ‘clean coal’, all classes of biofuels and biomass, carbon trading in energy markets, transitional energy technologies (that is, those that might be useful only for several decades) and renewable energies; and
- c) Analyses and selectively supports emerging energy technologies.

Board Response:

We agree that we need to develop a coherent framework for delivering year on year carbon reductions. We agree with the need to develop coherent positions on controversial issues and campaign for sustainable solutions.

In 2006, we commissioned the Tyndall Centre at Manchester University to identify the emissions reductions required to meet climate targets (our carbon budget) and how the UK energy economy can live within this budget. This comprehensive report skilfully demonstrated the possibility of very significantly reducing emissions and maintaining a high quality of life, including the levels of mobility society enjoys today.

The only weakness of the Tyndall Report was that it did not identify the numerous policy changes needed to deliver these emission reductions. Since then we have commissioned Brenda Boardman and the Environmental Change Institute at Oxford University (part of the Tyndall Centre family) to provide a comprehensive policy framework for decarbonising the homes sector. We have also commissioned the highly respected Cambridge Econometrics to identify economic approaches and policies to decarbonise the energy supply sector. The Department of Transport had already commissioned the research needed to identify policies to decarbonise the transport sector. We are therefore already implementing the work needed to fulfil this part of the Conference motion. It should be noted that this is a very significant piece of work if undertaken comprehensively.

We have developed positions on a number of controversial issues, such as carbon capture & storage, and are working with others in Friends of the Earth International to develop coherent positions on others, including biofuels. We are carrying out research on the use of carbon trading and forests (we are assessing trading on a case by case basis rather than taking an ideological position for or against trading in all circumstances). We are therefore providing leadership on the specific policy areas identified in motion.

We have set ourselves an aim on climate change in our new draft Strategic Plan and specific objectives to “promote and secure the energy policy solutions and technologies required to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the UK in line with those required for the UK to live within the carbon budget identified by the Tyndall Centre report ‘Living within a Carbon Budget’”. We are in the process of determining how this climate campaign should develop after the Climate Change Bill is passed. This will involve campaigning for policy change and undoubtedly firmly backing some technologies, including emerging technologies such as tidal lagoons.

We therefore believe that we are implementing this motion in full.

Motion 4 – Information sharing between Local Groups and Campaigners

FOR	74	AGAINST	5	ABSTENTIONS	7
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Proposed by South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth

Seconded by Guildford & Godalming Friends of the Earth

This Conference calls upon the Board of Friends of the Earth Ltd. to consider:

- a) the means to improve the dissemination of information and resource materials to local Friends of the Earth campaigners so that best use is made of these valuable resources; and
- b) the need to establish networking systems for campaigners so that relevant materials, knowledge and information can be passed more quickly and efficiently to and between campaigners to enable local groups to be more effective at influencing policy and promoting local solutions for sustainable development with both developers, local decision makers and local residents.

Board Response:

The Board recognises the depth of support behind this motion, and the need for an overall and effective solution. We agree that the widespread availability of good quality, timely information to empower local campaigning is a prerequisite for effective joined up multi-level campaigning.

We acknowledge that the effective promotion, provision and exchange of some types of campaign information – particularly of a detailed and technical kind – could be improved. In the past, many local group members have not wanted or made use of more detailed and technical information so we have not prioritized the improvement of systems to provide it. Instead we focused on the consolidation of baseline systems to serve the whole network (e.g. motions, annual baseline survey, licensing, Community resources, local groups' activity table, Earthmovers, regional communications). Ongoing efforts continue to help local groups network more effectively face-to-face, electronically and by other means, so as to enable experts within the network to help each other. We are still looking for ways to facilitate the relatively small numbers of local group members who seem willing to play a proactive enough role in networks to make them function as networks. We are also looking at ways to help more people engage proactively in networks.

The support given to this motion now suggests the provision of more detailed and technical information is a priority for many groups, whether that be through networking, information provision from the centre or a combination of the two.

We have agreed an aim and objectives to promote Activism in our new draft Strategic Plan. We are now planning work to implement these (and expect to complete the plan by March 2008). Two areas of preparatory thinking that will lead to work under the first objective of the aim are directly relevant to the motion:

- Improving 'connectedness' within the network, so that people support and inspire each other more from within the network.
- Maintaining provision of local campaign information so activists have information they need to campaign locally.

Improve the organisation of information and resource materials within our website

Improve internal website search; we now have Google custom search which is an improvement on our previous search engine. It does not at present distinguish between different varieties of material available on the site, i.e. press releases from briefings. Without this, it could lead to the inefficient use of resources, and possible duplication of work. This is expected to change with the ongoing work.

Update on the work being done on the website

Restructuring of the website is in two phases, the first part is due to be finished by the end of April 08. Complete migration of current website content and deliver website phase 1 functionality - personalisation, rating, tagging, search (not specifically for local groups but creating a base to deliver local group requirements.)

The second part will lead to greater personalisation and transparency of information provision:

- May / June - Ongoing consultation with Local Groups (attending regional gatherings), development of local group website prototype
- July / August - Pilot local group websites

The new local groups' website will enable access to local groups' prepared materials. If we are to have an overall increase in campaigning, then the restrictions encountered due to excessive gate keeping in some regions must be rectified.

Increasing the quality of information going to local groups

Recognising that for a solutions based program we must have locally relevant information that also

addresses the secondary issues encountered on the ground, once the underlying message has been accepted, and that this information is of a sufficiently high quality in order to achieve a successful outcome. This will mean reconnecting the RCC's to local groups and activists within their region, so that the overall expertise within the network can be enhanced. We need a more inclusive culture, where prioritisation is used in a completely positive fashion.

The motion, local group feedback into the Strategic Plan and on-going consultations are all informing the work planning. New work will aim to ensure local campaigners are better informed of the materials, information and experience that is available from staff and within the network, and to enable this information to move quickly and freely to those who need it. Work is likely to include improvements to existing systems and perhaps the introduction of new and / or replacement ones. The emphasis of improvements is likely to be on electronic channels but not to the exclusion of other important channels.

Timely distribution of campaign materials

This is dependent on production timelines and the often short time windows from prioritising a campaign to implementing action. Improvements to campaign planning and prioritisation during 2007/08 should lead to more consistent run-in times

Resource and information needs specific to local climate/planning policy work

A few things have been done to respond to and address some of the more urgent issues detailed in the background information, regarding work on Local Development Frameworks and other initiatives to fast track local measures to prevent the worst impacts of climate change:

- The guidance provided on PPS1 has been up on the website now since early May 2007, under the climate section and via the following direct URL:
http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/climate_planning_pps.pdf.
- A joint training day on climate policy and local solutions was held in June 07 – this invited campaigners from the planning network to build skills and understanding around these specific issues - 45 people attended.
- Other resources on getting good local policy adopted are also on the website:
<http://community.foe.co.uk/campaigns/climate/planning.html>
- Rights Online (4000 subscribers) and Planning Update (a more technical e-list with 100+ activists) have both promoted these materials.

Beyond these efforts, senior campaign staff made a decision not to make this aspect of climate work an organisational priority as part of The Big Ask. The scale of The Big Ask campaign has required staff to make difficult decisions about what it can resource and communicate and these decisions cascade through to how much emphasis opportunities and resources can be given in communications to all supporters and campaigners.

Opportunities for local campaigners

Local campaigners with an interest in a specific issue and a desire to take action should register on the relevant local campaigner network. This opt-in system is designed to cater for as many needs as possible while keeping the information sent to all groups through their co-ordinator to a manageable volume. Details about these networks, together with a sign-up form are available here:

<http://community.foe.co.uk/campaigns/networks/index.html>.

Recognition of the individuality within the Local Groups network

A more bespoke approach which recognises and supports the widely differing levels of expertise and time available of different individuals and groups and supports them appropriately. Network developers to also take account of the range of abilities and interests of local groups and individuals

Motion 6 – Food Production

FOR	65	AGAINST	9	ABSTENTIONS	13
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Proposed by Redditch & District Friends of the Earth

Seconded by Stratford-on-Avon Friends of the Earth

This Conference calls upon the Board of Friends of the Earth Ltd. to consider publishing detailed information via Friends of the Earth literature and the Friends of the Earth website that will explain how the production of various foods have vastly differing environmental impacts, in order to clearly illustrate the

many environmental benefits of adopting a plant based diet.

Amendment proposed by Flintshire Friends of the Earth

(a) To the existing text, add “predominantly” before “plant-based diet”.

(b) Add a second paragraph:

This Conference calls upon the Board of Friends of the Earth to investigate the threat to our Food Security posed by Peak Oil, and to consider working with the Soil Association to help as many towns as possible to plan their “Energy Descent” by re-localising and de-industrialising their food economies as far as possible.

Result: the motion was carried but the amendment was rejected

Board Response:

We have already published and will continue to publish detailed information about food production and its impact to reach different audiences through printed materials and the web. We have recently, for instance, produced a briefing on the greenhouse gas implications of the food system including livestock (see http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/food_climate_change.pdf).

We also believe there is a real case for focusing on those aspects of our consumption that have the biggest impact on greenhouse gases and biodiversity. Meat-eating is an aspect of consumption that we have identified as particularly significant.

We have included an aim on biodiversity within our new draft Strategic Plan. We have draft objectives, currently worded, under this aim “to secure effective measures and strategies to limit deforestation due to UK consumption of ... meat” and “to ensure the UK Government provides incentives to reduce the impact of intensive meat-rearing on biodiversity”.

We envisage and are planning an activity to raise awareness of the impacts of meat and dairy products and to lobby for the kind of UK, EU and international policies which will reduce the impact of livestock and feed production on biodiversity, ecosystem services and climate change. This will include the provision of information that will, by implication, illustrate the many environment benefits of eating more plants and less meat.

It is worth noting that meat and feed production is complex area – tied in with other issues such as logging, biofuel production, land use and development. There is a danger of leaping wrongly to solutions that will not have a lasting positive impact. Changing one kind of production for another, changing policy instruments such as farm subsidies, and recommending specific diets are all part of the mix of possible solutions. We are therefore carrying out research to identify a definitive set of measures that we believe should be put in place. We will complete this research by the latter half of next year.

We therefore believe that we are fully implementing the motion as carried.

Motion 8 – Transport Campaign

FOR	54	AGAINST	15	ABSTENTIONS	16
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Proposed by Gosport & Fareham Friends of the Earth and Teignbridge Friends of the Earth Seconded by New Forest Friends of the Earth and Exeter Friends of the Earth

This Conference calls upon the Board of Friends of the Earth Ltd. to consider launching a high profile national campaign to promote the growth of public and communal transport, including safe cycle and pedestrian routes, as a means to reducing greenhouse gas emissions

Board Response:

We agree that the changes in the way we travel are an important component of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We have included an aim on climate change in our new draft Strategic Plan. This includes an objective to “promote and secure the energy policy solutions and technologies required to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the UK”. Work toward this objective includes work on the greenhouse gas emissions from travel.

We are now developing our main public campaign to follow on from the Climate Change Bill work (The Big Ask). This will involve campaigning to secure the delivery of solutions to climate change at a community level in the areas of housing, transportation and energy. The exact objectives and the design of the campaign is still being worked at the time of the writing of this response, however we are confident that it will mean that this motion will be delivered upon.

Motion 9 – Contraction and Convergence

FOR	29	AGAINST	31	ABSTENTIONS	25
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**Proposed by North Lancashire Friends of the Earth and Islington Friends of the Earth
Seconded by South Lakeland Friends of the Earth and Muswell Hill & Hornsey Friends of the Earth**

This Conference calls upon the Board of Friends of the Earth Ltd. to consider adopting the Contraction & Convergence (C&C) framework as the only realistic way for the global community to proceed effectively in preventing catastrophic climate change. Furthermore, it asks the Board to consider calling on the Government, as a first step, to lead negotiations within the European Union for the speedy adoption of the framework and thereafter for the involvement of other industrialised countries and the developing world as soon as possible in the transition to its wider application.

This Conference also calls upon the Board of Friends of the Earth Ltd to consider, if it disagrees with the Contraction and Convergence framework, setting out what superior system it has that can generate actual figures for each country's approximate future emissions pathway (successive annual allowances) adding up to the whole world having a good prospect of preventing catastrophic climate change, and specifically what this superior system would mean in terms of UK emissions; and thereafter, actively correcting those who perpetuate misapprehensions of what cuts are required.

Board Response:

Background information provided to Conference for the debate on this motion detailed why staff were opposed to the motion:

“As part of our Strategic Plan, we wish to achieve an equitable international agreement on climate change. We have been fully engaged with international negotiations, working very closely with Climate Action Network, a working coalition of all the major NGOs working on the climate change negotiations. None of the major organisations support Contraction & Convergence as a means of agreeing international reduction targets because it is overly simplistic and does not reflect the realities of climate change negotiations (for example, it does not take into account historic emissions nor the capacity of individual countries to respond).”

The majority of groups agreed with staff and the motion was defeated.

However, we have included an aim on climate change in our new draft Strategic Plan. There are also objectives “to get a sufficiently strong and just international agreement on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2010 to prevent global average temperatures exceeding two degrees centigrade above the pre-industrial average” and to “ensure the EU engages in international negotiations on greenhouse gas reductions with a commitment to reduce EU emissions by at least 30 per cent by 2020 and 90 per cent by 2050 through steady reductions”. Both these objectives embed the principles of steady reductions in emissions and a just allocation based on equal per capita rights to emit that are inherent in the contraction and convergence approach.

Friends of the Earth is fully engaged in the Kyoto process through Friends of the Earth International (Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland is a significant contributor to the Friends of the Earth International climate campaign). Friends of the Earth International has commissioned research from Eco-equity to help it identify the cuts that should be made by individuals countries. It will use this research as it works with Climate Action Network (an umbrella of NGOs working internationally on climate change) to influence the negotiations on the Kyoto Protocol for reduction targets post-2012.

Motion 12 – Biofuels

FOR	76	AGAINST	2	ABSTENTIONS	5
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Proposed by Islington Friends of the Earth

Seconded by Muswell Hill & Hornsey Friends of the Earth

This Conference calls upon the Board of Friends of the Earth Ltd. to consider:

- 1) greatly increasing campaigning against unsustainable biofuel policies and use;
- 2) campaigning against the lack of import restrictions on biofuels and palm oil that are unsustainable, including by leading to serious ecological damage whether directly or indirectly;
- 3) opposing all liquid biofuel or solid biomass targets, including the targets of the EU Biofuel Directive;
- 4) supporting greater harnessing of biogas from waste;
- 5) calling for stronger international diplomacy against damage to peatlands and old growth forests, including against unsustainable trade in biofuels and other commodities which contributes to such damage.

Amendment proposed by Cheltenham Friends of the Earth

Add the following at the end of the Motion:

The Conference calls upon the Board of Friends of the Earth Ltd. to consider a policy review and campaign on biofuels to achieve the following:

- (a) a moratorium on biofuels from large-scale monocultures. (This is because of macro-impacts where any large scale energy crops have a ramification on food supplies, food sovereignty and deforestation and therefore climate change.)
- (b) prevention of genetic engineering being involved at any stage of biofuel production in either plant development or in processing of plants for fuel.
- (c) opposition of research and development into biomass-to-liquids biofuels, known as second generation given, the high risks involved to the planet's climate. This should not include opposition of research into non GM algae.

Result: the motion was carried but the amendment was rejected

Board Response:

We agree that policies to dramatically increase the use of biofuels are unsustainable. We have included within our new draft Strategic Plan, an aim on biodiversity and a specific objective "to ensure Europe's use of biomass and biofuels is sustainable by securing legally-binding measures within EU Directives and related UK law (Fuel Quality Directive, revised Biofuels Directive and revised Road Transport Fuel Obligation) so as to protect ecosystems that are vital for biodiversity and human well-being". We are developing a campaign, with dedicated staff and a budget, to achieve this objective.

Over the summer and autumn, we have worked with Friends of the Earth Europe and Friends of the Earth International to revise and update the network's position on biofuels. We have played a leading role in the creation of the Friends of the Earth Europe position, which we have also now adopted as our own position.

This includes demands for:

- a moratorium on imports of agrofuels (biofuels from large scale monocultures) into the EU and on subsidies that encourage the development and large scale production of agrofuels, until mandatory carbon and sustainability standards are in place which empower communities to use their natural resources sustainably, guarantee carbon savings of at least 60%, and do not lead to adverse environmental or social impacts either directly or indirectly through shifting problems elsewhere;
- the European Union to drop its agrofuel quantity targets, and
- significantly increased investment in the development of energy-efficient technologies and renewable energy generation technologies including the sustainable use of local biomass and local biogas (from waste products).

The FOEI paper is still in draft form, but is likely to include similar demands.

It is possible that, in one or two year's time, we will be in a position to actively campaign for import restrictions on biofuels and palm oil, whose production leads to serious direct and indirect ecological damage. We have plans for research to help us develop policy in this area in order to promote solutions

that could govern the trade of a range of commodities whose production is potentially damaging to ecosystems.

This research will determine whether import restrictions would be a good way to ensure biofuel use is sustainable and whether we stand any chance of securing them. We also plan to carry out further research to determine the sustainable supply of biofuel (including from waste products).

It is unlikely, during the next Strategic Plan, that we will be able to devote substantial resources to calling for stronger international diplomacy against damage to peatlands and old growth forests. However, we have included an objective, within the new draft Strategic Plan “to mount a public awareness campaign to improve the understanding of the value of, and the threat posed by the destruction of, biodiversity and natural habitats to their well-being and the well-being of humanity as a whole”. This public awareness campaign will support our objectives on meat, timber and biofuels all of which aim to protect tropical forests, including on peatlands.

We therefore believe that we are largely implementing the motion, as carried.

Emergency Motion – Corporate Funding

FOR	46	AGAINST	23	ABSTENTIONS	17
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Proposed by Manchester Friends of the Earth

Seconded by South Cheshire Friends of the Earth

This Conference calls upon the Board of Friends of the Earth Ltd. to consider:

- 1) conducting a review of our current policy on partnering with commercial organisations, in consultation with Local Groups and members of staff, in order to establish a clear and transparent set of criteria that future partnerships can be judged against;
- 2) empowering the Organisational Management Team to take responsibility for deciding whether or not to go ahead with future partnerships with commercial organisations in line with the reviewed policy
- 3) encouraging the Organisational Management Team to actively pursue partnerships with external partners including commercial organisations that meet the criteria defined in the reviewed policy in order to help us to achieve our organisational Aims.

Board Response:

We welcome this motion, which is extremely timely.

Reviewing current policy

We already have a policy and procedure for determining whether to enter positive relationships with companies. The principles and parameters underpinning the policy were agreed back in 2001, after full consultation with staff, local groups and the Board. The procedures were updated during 2006-7 in consultation with a limited number of staff across the organization. No consultation on the changes to the procedure was conducted with local groups.

In the context of the new Strategic Plan – which identifies the need to raise awareness of and support for our priority campaigning work on climate change and biodiversity, to meet challenging fundraising targets, and to drive progress towards more sustainable economic activity by companies - we agree that we need to conduct a review of our **principles** and **parameters** with both staff and groups. Furthermore, the question of whether or not to work with Sky has also revealed some issues concerning the new **procedure** that we intend to consult groups on. These are:

- A need to differentiate between various types of arrangements with companies (including partnerships), and to strongly manage those arrangements in order to protect the real and perceived independence of Friends of the Earth.
- How we can effectively and independently assess the environmental performance of a company, and consequential public perceptions, and therefore accurately determine the level of risk a relationship might pose to us;
- Whether the existing list of excluded sectors needs to be reviewed (e.g. whether we have excluded

all the sectors we ought to, and how we treat related companies);

- How we (OMT and the Board) gather and take account of the views of stakeholders, staff and local groups, when a relationship is judged to be in the 'high risk' category in our established process, and decision making sits with OMT.

We therefore warmly welcome the first part of this motion. We are aware people have a range of different views about the extent to which we form various types of arrangements and partnerships with companies. We are therefore suggesting an extensive consultation with both staff and local groups to be held between February and May 2008. This will enable us to report the outcomes of the review to the Board in July 2008 and agree any changes with them. We will be able to provide feedback to local groups about the results of the review by September 2008.

In order to allow as many groups as possible to participate in this review and in order to balance resource constraints with the need to conduct a thorough consultation, we propose that we set up an online survey which can be completed by groups as a whole, or by individual group members. We will also hold a number of regional meetings around the country, specifically for local groups who want to discuss the issue in more detail before completing the online survey.

At this stage we propose that:

- The review fully consults on the **principles** and **parameters** but only focuses on those aspects of the **procedure** that we have identified above for consideration. It will not review the procedure as a whole, and will use recent or proposed partnerships (Co-op Bank, Sky, Eurostar) as case studies.;
- The review will not include consultation with Friends of the Earth International or its other member groups, as the international network is currently developing its own policy position on working with companies. Friends of the Earth International will consult on its guidelines once it has prepared a first draft.

Empowering the OMT to decide on future partnerships

We also welcome this second part of the motion. However, one outcome of the review might be that we will want to consult such as the Board and/or a representative panel of local groups about proposals in the designated 'high-risk' category.

Actively pursuing partnerships that meet the criteria in the reviewed policy

We are pleased to have received a steer from conference that this is something we should consider but cannot decide whether to 'actively pursue' corporate partnerships until after the consultation is completed.