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C A M P A I G N

EUROPE IS CHANGING

Climate Witnesses and the Impacts of
Climate Change on their Lives



A WWF call for a stronger 2nd Phase of the
EU Emission Trading Scheme

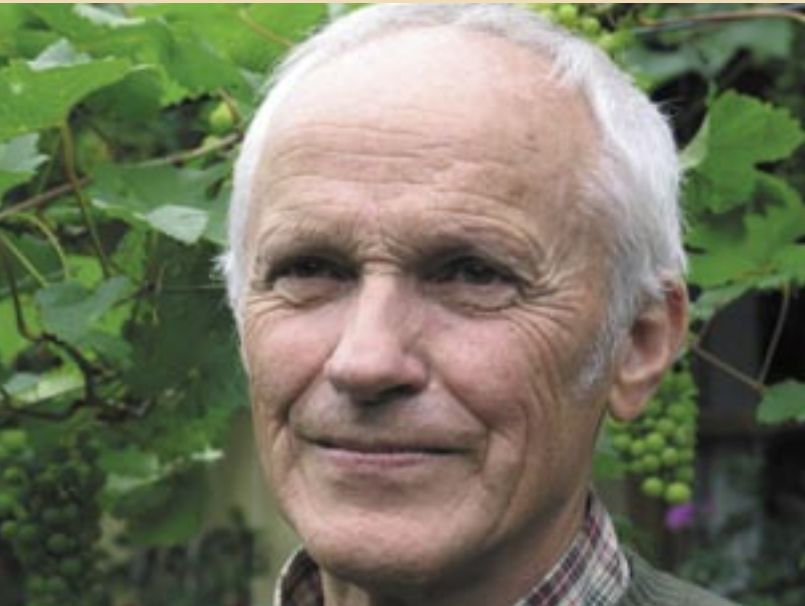
Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. The Earth's average temperature has risen by 0.7°C since pre-industrial times. Even this apparently small change is having major impacts now on people and nature, through increased storms, floods, droughts and wildfires.

WWF has brought together a number of European 'Climate Witnesses' who can testify about the effects. These Witnesses represent the tip of the iceberg. Many more European citizens are already feeling the heat of changing weather patterns.

Scientists agree that a global average temperature rise of 2°C above pre-industrial times is a danger threshold. Above that, climate impacts on people and nature will become dramatically worse. We have no time to lose to avoid this future. The priority should be to tackle the single biggest cause of climate change – CO₂ pollution from power stations, especially coal-fired power stations.

Georg Sperber (Germany)

"You hear a lot about global warming in the media, but out there in the woods you can really feel the difference. The Nineties have been the warmest decade in climate history, and this was obvious to anyone who lives in touch with nature. In my forests the consequences for spruce trees are especially dramatic. Spruce is the backbone of the German forest industry. Higher average temperatures and more frequent droughts due to climate change weaken these trees. They are under attack from bark beetle populations, which have massively increased because of the warming. And over past years heavy storms have wrecked havoc on spruce forests. With global warming, spruce is a tree without a future."



Georg Sperber, 72, is from Bavaria. He started a career as a forest ranger. For 33 years, he was in charge of a large, well known deciduous forest called "Steigerwald". He has watched nature closely ever since and has kept a diary of his observations for more than 20 years.

Cassian Garbett, 45, has lived in the Cuckmere Valley on the South coast of England for 15 years and is the last permanent resident in the coastguard cottages which perch on the chalk cliff edge. He works as a furniture maker, using materials collected from the beach.

Cassian Garbett (England)

"The sea definitely looks bigger to us, it is a different beast. We used to witness the changing of the seasons and it was like a very gentle pulse. But more recently, there has been a greater frequency of storms. The sea defences here suffered wholesale destruction in 1999. We had a severe force eleven gale - effectively a hurricane. There was nobody around here who can remember the defences being so thoroughly broken up. The hardest thing is that you can repair what is there, but what's there was built for a different set of dynamics. What we see along the coast here is the dilemma. Do you put money in to strengthen the defences up or do you let things go? We don't see it as a battle with the sea. We live with it. But in my child's lifetime I can't see how they would be able to maintain the defences."

Giuseppe Miranti (Italy)

"Honey has always had its place in an Italian buffet: it's sweet and delicious. But over the last years something has changed. Due to warmer temperatures flowers are blooming at unusual times, which makes the bees change their behaviour. As a consequence, the level of activity in the apiary has slowed down drastically. Another serious problem is that bee parasites are living longer and are more persistent - because of the warmer climate. This has negative impacts on bee populations and on honey production. Albert Einstein once said: "Should the honey bee ever disappear, mankind would only survive a few years beyond it"."

Alan Stewart (Scotland)

"A lot of things are changing in Scotland due to the weather. I ran about 40 sled dog courses this year with people from all over the UK. But three or four times now I've had to stop the course, because within the hour the temperature changes so quickly that the snow disappears in front of us. Years ago I was catching temperatures of minus 18°C up here which would last for a week. We have none of that now. The coldest we've had all winter is minus one or two - the pipes don't even freeze like they used to. I've seen flies in the middle of winter because the place is so warm. The craziest thing of all is that I've got Siberian huskies moulting in the middle of winter. That tells you what nature is saying to them, to us."



Alan Stewart, 49, was brought up in a fishing village on the West Coast of Scotland. He started running sled dogs 15 years ago as a hobby, but has run it as a business for 2.5 years now. Alan and his wife Fiona run the only sled dog centre in the UK which is based at the foot of the Cairngorm Mountains.

José Luis Oliveros Zafra (Spain)

"I've been working on these fields for many years, but we have never suffered such a lack of water. When I was a little boy of 10 years, there were streams here in the low lands, and you could hear the frogs croaking. My parents and grandparents have told me about times when the rain wouldn't stop for two months. But in 2005 we have seen hardly any rainfall here. Due to the drought we lost 100% of our leguminous and cereal crops. It's depressing, but I keep watching the ants these days to find out what the climate does next. When it's going to rain, they will make a kind of 'volcano', piling up soil to elevate the anthill, so that rain water can't break in. This year there have been no 'volcanoes'."



Giuseppe Miranti, 26, is from Piacenza in Northern Italy. Following his great passion for farming he worked as an agro-industrial consultant, before starting his own bio-agricultural company. In 2001 he joined the National Executive Board of Coldiretti, Italy's biggest farmers' association. Giuseppe is also a bee-keeper.

José Luis Oliveros Zafra, 46, lives in Villanueva del Alcarduete, Spain. He is a farmer and, like so many other farmers in his region, he has suffered huge losses because of climate impacts. In 2005 Spain is experiencing its worst drought since the beginning of data registration 120 years ago.



Climate Solutions

The EU power sector is the single biggest contributor to Europe's CO₂ emissions. This is unsustainable and must change if we are to avoid dangerous climate change. The EU should drive the power sector towards **a clean energy future. The most important policy for achieving this is the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS).** The ETS commenced 1 January 2005, however, in its first phase the ETS fails to cut emissions significantly and fails to provide sufficient incentives for investments in clean fuels and more efficient technologies.

Phase 2 (from 2008 to 2012) is the chance to get it right. Fortunately, the policy solutions are clear and achievable. WWF urges EU Member States and the European Commission to agree to **stricter CO₂ caps for all countries to ensure a downward trend in emissions** and to ensure Europe meets its Kyoto target. Where Member States have tougher national targets, the CO₂ caps should reflect these. WWF also urges Member States to auction CO₂ allowances ('permits to pollute') to the maximum allowable level (10%) for Phase 2 **to maximise economic efficiency and environmental effectiveness.**

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:

- conserving the world's biological diversity
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

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