

# BRIEFING: CLIMATE CHANGE



Across 58% of the world's land surface, the level of biodiversity loss is substantial enough to **threaten the ability of ecosystems to support human societies.**

When the earth was created God proclaimed "it is good". Loss of biodiversity and a changing climate brings home to us the challenge to be good stewards of God's creation. The Bible exhorts us to act justly towards all God's children and to "speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute" (Proverbs 31:8-9). Our calling to be just should extend toward justice for future generations who will be impoverished if we consume the earth's resources unsustainably.

## CONTEXT

### THE 2020 IPCC SUMMIT IN GLASGOW

Over the coming year the UK is ideally placed to influence global climate action. The UK government will host the climate summit in Glasgow in December 2020 at which there are expected to be 30,000 delegates including the leaders or representatives of most nations. This crucial summit will be the first opportunity since the 2015 Paris Summit for governments to increase their climate commitments. This is necessary to ensure that the objective of limiting global warming to 1.5°C degrees becomes achievable. In the preparations for the 2020 Summit strong leadership on the part of the UK Government is vital.

### ACHIEVING UK NATIONAL TARGETS

In 2019, the UK Parliament declared a climate emergency and committed to achieve net-zero emissions in the UK by 2050. But there is currently a huge gap between this stated intention and the necessary policies to bring this about. There is a



Across our four nations there are almost 2700 registered Eco Churches and Eco Congregations.

## QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

In order to get us on track for achieving net-zero emissions in the UK what policies must the government introduce over the next year?

What would your targets be to get new build homes contributing to net-zero?

Can a goal of unlimited economic growth be compatible with the declaration of a climate emergency?

danger that the UK government might factor-in the use of offsets achieved by financing action in other countries but this should be avoided. We must achieve UK targets with actions in the UK, including in the following areas:

### HOUSING

All new homes should be built to zero-carbon standards as soon as possible providing benefit both to residents and the environment.

### POWER GENERATION

The Committee on Climate Change has proposed that by 2050 99% of our electricity should come from 'low-carbon' sources which could include nuclear power, or make use of Carbon Capture and Storage (a technology that has not yet been used at scale).

### TRANSPORT

The electrification of transport has the potential to make a big impact on UK carbon emissions. However, phasing out diesel and petrol cars will only be feasible with a major expansion of charging points in the UK and also needs to have public acceptability.

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How will future generations reflect on the current debates around the climate crisis?

What changes are needed in your local area to help reduce emissions from transport?