



HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES'S

BUSINESS & THE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
DEVELOPED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE PROGRAMME FOR INDUSTRY

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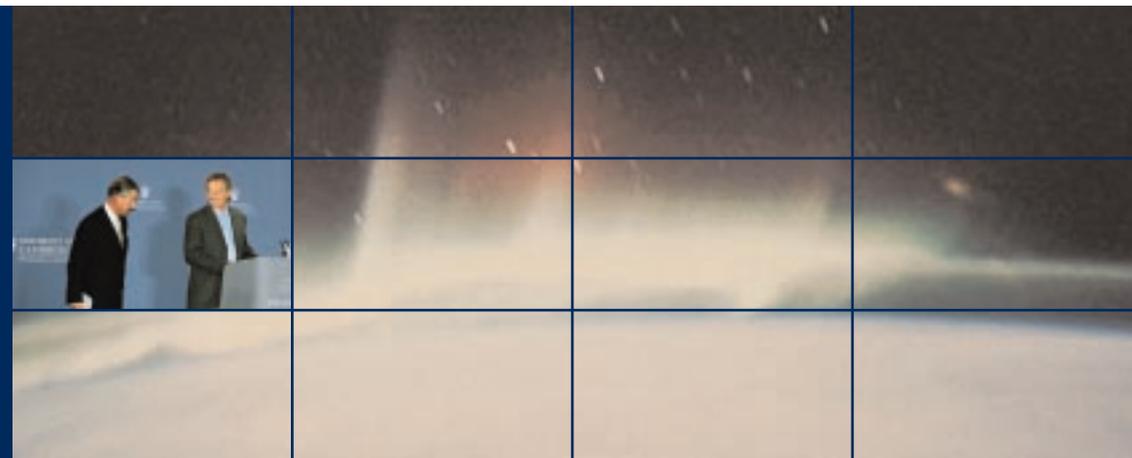
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HRH The Prince of Wales's Business & the Environment Programme
10TH ANNIVERSARY LECTURE

14 September 2004

Given by
THE PRIME MINISTER, THE RT. HON. TONY BLAIR, MP



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In the presence of
HRH The Prince of Wales,
alumni of HRH The Prince of Wales's
Business & the Environment Programme and guests

With introductions by
Sir Nick Scheele, Chairman of the BEP Management Committee, and
HRH The Prince of Wales

The 10th Anniversary Lecture
was kindly sponsored by





From the left: Sir Nick Scheele (Chairman of the Business & the Environment Programme Management Committee), Polly Courtice (Director of the Business & the Environment Programme), HRH The Prince of Wales, the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, Jonathon Porritt (Director of the Business & the Environment Programme), Professor Alison Richard (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge)

Introductory remarks by Sir Nick Scheele, Chairman of the Business & the Environment Programme Management Committee

Your Royal Highness, the Prime Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends of the Business & the Environment Programme: It gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome you here this evening for what I am sure will be a very inspiring and insightful talk by the Prime Minister, but also for me personally, a time to look back and look forward.

It was ten years ago, back in 1994, that this Programme was founded. It was founded through the hard work and the efforts of many people and many institutions. There are three that I would like to talk about briefly tonight.

Firstly, today's Programme co-directors, Jonathon Porritt and Polly Courtice, both of whom are with us tonight. They have led the Programme through a period of expansion so that it now runs in four countries in three continents, with a fourth continent under consideration. The Programme's work has already touched more than 900 people, including industrialists, governments, NGOs and public policy advisors across the globe. To Jonathan and Polly much of that is due.

Secondly, the University of Cambridge, without whose backing we would never have received the credibility, the scope and the scale that have been so necessary to this Programme.

And then His Royal Highness, without whose vision and without whose commitment of time and of intellectual drive this Programme could not have succeeded. He it was who had the initial vision that we needed a forum where the great subjects that would touch our children and grandchildren could and should be debated, and who then set it up in conjunction with the University of Cambridge Programme for Industry, together with Jonathon and Polly.

To you, Sir, I would like to say thank you, because without that we would not be here today, and we would not be looking forward to reaching out further and doing more in the areas of policy debate and sustainability which are clearly going to be critical to all of our futures. With that, if I may, I would like to ask you to come forward and introduce our speaker tonight and it gives me great pleasure to ask you to do so.



The Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP and HRH The Prince of Wales

Welcome address by HRH The Prince of Wales

I could not be more delighted that the Prime Minister has agreed to deliver this year's lecture to my Business & the Environment Programme and I look forward very much to hearing what he has to say. But I just want to say a very few words first.

When I started this Programme, a little over ten years ago, one of my aims was to build up a 'core of champions' – people who would have a good understanding of the importance of sustainability and, hopefully, be in positions where they could make a real difference. So earlier this year I started to ask awkward questions about what had been achieved by the more than 900 people, from over 30 countries, who have been through the various seminars. And I was presented with an amazing dossier of personal statements, telling of every sort of endeavour and initiative. This was obviously immensely encouraging, as was the fact that when one person from a company had been to a seminar they tended to go back and encourage others to put their names forward.

It is also encouraging that so many alumni of this Programme stay in touch through the alumni network, and through events such as this. About half of the people in this room have personal experience of the Programme, and I hope they will do a convincing sales job on everyone else over a little drink or two afterwards!

The success of the Programme is very much about the people who run it, and the support they receive. So I do just want to pay a very public tribute to Polly Courtice and Jonathon Porritt, as the Co-Directors of the Programme; to the Management Committee, chaired so ably by Sir Nick Scheele; and to the Core Faculty who somehow manage to make every seminar sharper and more relevant than the one before. I also want to thank the staff of the Cambridge Programme for Industry for the great skill with which they administer the Programme. But none of that would have been possible without the more than £4 million of corporate support that the Programme has been able to attract. These funds have been used to build the reach of the whole Programme, to fund participants from emerging and developing economies and to support individuals who, for financial reasons, would otherwise have been excluded. The companies who have provided those resources are too numerous to mention, but they know who they are, and they deserve great praise if I may say so.

The ten years of the Programme have seen the 'sustainability agenda' develop considerably. Arguably, we now know quite a lot more about the state of the planet, and even about the steps we should be taking to ensure a sustainable existence. But how much progress are we really making in implementing the necessary changes? So many of the changes we do see look to be largely cosmetic (in fact sometimes "business as usual" with little brass sustainable knobs on), and where there is real action by the business community it tends to be confined, still, to a comparatively small group of major companies – most of whom are probably represented in this room. I absolutely recognize that regulation is at best a blunt instrument and can inhibit innovation. But unless the companies that are taking action on environmental and social issues can find ways of putting sustained and effective pressure on those that do as little as possible, as late as possible, and nothing at all when they think they can get away with it, then I think the pressure for greater accountability will be difficult to resist. In this regard, and leaving aside the urgent issue of climate change, the tragically scandalous destruction of the world's fish stocks is I think a classic case of the world's inability to act on a rapidly approaching man-made, industrialized disaster of gigantic proportions. If we can't, collectively, prevent the extinction of a crucial part of the world's food supply for future generations, then all this talk of "sustainable development" is a cynical charade and the continued use of inappropriately over-sophisticated technology an indication of the depths to which our so-called civilization has sunk.

Now, before I introduce the Prime Minister, I also want to mention just one other special guest. Professor Alison Richard has been Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University since October last year, but this is the first time I have been able to welcome her appointment and say how delighted I am that she has agreed to join the Management Committee of the Programme. With her background in anthropology, her distinguished leadership of environmental studies at Yale, and her strategic skills, I am sure she will make a major contribution to guiding the next ten years of the Programme.

Finally, I do want to introduce the Prime Minister with the observation that achieving sustainable development is a task for the whole of society. Each sector, and particularly the business community, will need to play its part in that process, but the one absolutely essential ingredient – without which we can't hope to, or even begin to, make progress, especially, and crucially, in the two areas of climate change and the protection of future fish stocks – is political commitment. The Prime Minister has always made it clear that this is an issue that matters a great deal to him personally, not least, if I may say so, by coming here tonight and I really could not be more grateful to him.



The Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP

10th Anniversary Lecture Climate change

The Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP

The 10th anniversary of His Royal Highness's Business & the Environment Programme marks what is now recognised as the premier international forum for exploring sustainable development in the context of business.

Over the coming months we will take forward the wider sustainable development and environment agenda. Margaret Beckett is working on a comprehensive DEFRA 5 year programme to be released this year and a new sustainable development strategy for early next year. This will deal with, amongst other matters, issues of waste, recycling, sustainable agriculture, all aspects of biodiversity and fishing, and will set out policies in each key area. For example, on the marine environment, I believe there are strong arguments for a new approach to managing our seas, including a new Marine Bill.

But tonight I want to concentrate on what I believe to be the world's greatest environmental challenge: climate change.

Our effect on the environment, and in particular on climate change, is large and growing. To summarise my argument at the outset:

From the start of the industrial revolution more than 200 years ago, developed nations have achieved ever greater prosperity and higher living standards. But through this period our activities have come to affect our atmosphere, oceans, geology, chemistry and biodiversity.

What is now plain is that the emission of greenhouse gases, associated with industrialisation and strong economic growth from a world population that has increased sixfold in 200 years, is causing global warming at a rate that began as significant, has become alarming and is simply unsustainable in the long-term. And by long-term I do not mean centuries ahead. I mean within the lifetime of my children certainly; and possibly within my own.

And by unsustainable, I do not mean a phenomenon causing problems of adjustment. I mean a challenge so far-reaching in its impact and irreversible in its destructive power that it alters radically human existence.

The problem and let me state it frankly at the outset – is that the challenge is complicated politically by two factors. First, its likely effect will not be felt to its full extent until after the time for the political decisions that need to be taken has passed. In other words, there is a mismatch in timing between the environmental and electoral impact.

Secondly, no one nation alone can resolve it. It has no definable boundaries. Short of international action commonly agreed and commonly followed through, it is hard even for a large country to make a difference on its own.

But there is no doubt that the time to act is now. It is now that timely action can avert disaster. It is now that with foresight and will, such action can be taken without disturbing the essence of our way of life, by adjusting behaviour, not altering it entirely.

There is one further preliminary point. Just as science and technology has given us the evidence to measure the danger of climate change, so it can help us find safety from it. The potential for innovation, for scientific discovery and hence, of course for business investment and growth, is enormous. With the right framework for action, the very act of solving it can unleash a new and benign commercial force to take the action forward, providing jobs, technology spin-offs and new business opportunities as well as protecting the world we live in.

But the issue is urgent. If there is one message I would leave with you and with the British people today it is one of urgency.

Let me turn now to the evidence itself.

Apart from a diminishing handful of sceptics, there is a virtual worldwide scientific consensus on the scope of the problem. As long ago as 1988, concerned scientists set up an unprecedented Intergovernmental Panel to ensure that advice to the world's decision-makers was sound and reliable.

Literally thousands of scientists are now engaged in this work. They have scrutinised the data and developed some of the world's most powerful computer models to describe and predict our climate.

UK excellence in science is well documented: we are second only to the US in our share of the world's most cited publications.

And amongst our particular strengths are the environmental sciences, led by the world-renowned Hadley and Tyndall centres for climate change research.

And from Arnold Schwarzenegger's California to Ningxia Province in China, the problem is being recognised.

Let me summarise the evidence:

- The 10 warmest years on record have all been since 1990. Over the last century, average global temperatures have risen by 0.6 degrees Celsius: the most drastic temperature rise for over 1,000 years in the northern hemisphere.
- Extreme events are becoming more frequent. Glaciers are melting. Sea ice and snow cover is declining. Animals and plants are responding to an earlier spring. Sea levels are rising and are forecast to rise another 88cm by 2100, threatening 100m people globally who currently live below this level.
- The number of people affected by floods worldwide has already risen from 7 million in the 1960s to 150 million today.
- In Europe alone, the severe floods in 2002 had an estimated cost of \$16 billion.
- This summer we have seen violent weather extremes in parts of the UK.

These environmental changes and severe weather events are already affecting the world insurance industry. Swiss Re, the world's second largest insurer, has estimated that the economic costs of global warming could double to \$150 billion each year in the next 10 years, hitting insurers with \$30-40 billion in claims.

By the middle of this century, temperatures could have risen enough to trigger irreversible melting of the Greenland ice-cap – eventually increasing sea levels by around seven metres.

There is good evidence that last year's European heat wave was influenced by global warming. It resulted in 26,000 premature deaths and cost \$13.5 billion.

It is calculated that such a summer is a one in about 800 year event. On the latest modelling, climate change means that as soon as the 2040s at least one year in two is likely to be even warmer than 2003.

That is the evidence. There is one overriding positive: through the science we are aware of the problem and, with the necessary political and collective will, have the ability to address it effectively.

The public, in my view, do understand this. The news of severe weather abroad is an almost weekly occurrence. A recent opinion survey by Greenpeace showed that 78% of people are concerned about climate change.

But people are confused about what they can do. It is individuals as well as Governments and corporations who can make a real difference. The environmental impacts from business are themselves driven by the choices we make each day.

To make serious headway towards smarter lifestyles, we need to start with clear and consistent policy and messages, championed both by government and by those outside government. Telling people what they can do that would make a difference.

UK Action

I said earlier it needed global leadership to tackle the issue. But we cannot aspire to such leadership unless we are seen to be following our own advice.

So, what is the UK Government doing? We have led the world in setting a bold plan and targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We are on track to meet our Kyoto target. The latest estimates suggest that greenhouse gas emissions in 2003 were about 14% below 1990 levels. But we have to do more to achieve our commitment to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20% by 2010.

Our targets are ambitious and we must continually review and refine how we can meet them. In 2000, we published our Climate Change Programme, which set out a comprehensive range of policies aimed at reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. Tomorrow, we'll be setting out the details of this review to see if it is achieving the necessary progress towards our short-term and long-term emissions targets, and if not, to see how we can do better.

In the longer term, The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's seminal report on energy concluded that to make its contribution towards tackling climate change, the UK needed to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions by 60% by 2050. This implies a massive change in the way this country produces and uses energy. We are committed to this change.

There are immense business opportunities in sustainable growth and moving to a low carbon economy.

The UK has already shown that it can have a strongly growing economy while addressing environmental issues. Between 1990 and 2002 the UK economy grew by 36%, while greenhouse gas emissions fell by around 15%.

But business itself must seize the opportunities: it is those hi-tech, entrepreneurial businesses with the foresight and capability to tap into the UK's excellent science base that will succeed. Tackling climate change will take leadership, dynamism and commitment – qualities that I know are abundantly represented in this room.

As part of next year's G8 process I want to advance work on promoting the development and uptake of cleaner energy technologies begun under the French Presidency in 2003 and continued by the US this year.

We need both to invest on a large scale in existing technologies and to stimulate innovation into new low carbon technologies for deployment in the longer term. There is huge scope for improving energy efficiency and promoting the uptake of existing low carbon technologies like PV, fuel cells and carbon sequestration.

This technology is coming out of the laboratory and becoming reality in new fuel cell cars, combined heat and power generators and in new low carbon fuels.

The next generation of photovoltaics are unlikely to need the now familiar panels: smart windows could generate the power required for new buildings. And carbon sequestration: literally capturing carbon and storing it in the ground, also has real potential. BP are already involved in an Algerian project which aims to store 17 million tonnes of CO₂.

What we need to do is build an international consensus on how we can speed up the introduction of these technologies.

And there are already many great examples of companies here in the UK showing the way:

- Ceres Power, based in Crawley and utilising technology developed at Imperial College, have developed a new fuel cell that has unique properties and is a world leader, and
- just a few weeks ago Ocean Power Delivery transmitted the first offshore wave energy from the seas off Orkney to the UK grid.

And these are not isolated examples.

Understandably, climate change focuses minds on big, industrial, energy users. But retailers are also working with suppliers to reduce the impacts of goods and services that they sell. I want to see the day when consumers can expect that environmental responsibility is as fundamental to the products they buy as health and safety is now.

Government has to work with business to move forward, faster. For example, we will help business cut waste and improve resource efficiency and competitiveness through a programme of new measures funded through landfill tax receipts. We will follow up the report of the Sustainable Buildings Task Group to raise environmental standards in construction.

The Carbon Trust is helping business to address their energy use and encourage low-carbon innovation. In total, efficiency measures are expected to save almost 8 million tonnes of carbon from business by 2010, more than 10% of their emissions in 2000.

Our renewables obligation has provided a major stimulus for the development of renewable energy in the UK. It has been extended to achieve a 15.4% contribution from renewables to the UK's electricity needs by 2015, on a path to our aspiration of a 20% contribution by 2020. In the short term, wind energy – in future increasingly offshore – is expected to be the primary source of smart, renewable power.

Our position on nuclear energy has not changed. And as we made clear in our Energy White Paper last year, the government does “not rule out the possibility that at some point in the future new nuclear build might be necessary if we are to meet our carbon targets.”

In short, we need to develop the new green industrial revolution that develops the new technologies that can confront and overcome the challenge of climate change; and that above all can show us not that we can avoid changing our behaviour but we can change it in a way that is environmentally sustainable.

Just as British know-how brought the railways and mass production to the world, so British scientists, innovators and business people can lead the world in ways to grow and develop sustainably.

I am confident business will seize this opportunity. Cutting waste and saving energy could save billions of pounds each year. With about 90% of production materials never part of the final product and 80% of products discarded after single use, the opportunities are clear.

But Government can give a lead in its own procurement policy.

New sustainable schools

There is a huge school building programme underway. All new schools and City Academies should be models for sustainable development: showing every child in the classroom and the playground how smart building and energy use can help tackle global warming.

The government is now developing a school-specific method of environmental assessment that will apply to all new school buildings. Sustainable development will not just be a subject in the classroom: it will be in its bricks and mortar and the way the school uses and even generates its own power.

Our students won't just be told about sustainable development, they will see and work within it: a living, learning, place in which to explore what a sustainable lifestyle means.

Housing

The economic and social case for new housing is compelling. But we must also ensure that our approach is environmentally sustainable. This means action at both the national and local level. Heating, lighting and cooling buildings produces about half of total UK carbon emissions.

In 2002 we raised the minimum standard for the energy performance of new buildings by 25%. And next year we'll raise it by another 25%. The challenge now is to work with the building industry to encourage sustainability to be part of all new housing through a new flexible Code for Sustainable Buildings.

The new developments proposed in specific parts of the south east including the Thames Gateway represent a huge opportunity for us to show what can be achieved in terms of modern, smart, 21st century, sustainable living: not just in terms of reduced energy use, but also through better waste management, sustainable transport and availability of quality local parks and amenities.

Re-invigorating Agenda 21

Many local communities understand the links between the need to tackle national and global environmental challenges and everyday actions to improve our neighbourhoods and create better places to live.

In 1997, I encouraged all local authorities to work with their communities and produce Local Agenda 21 plans by 2000.

There was an overwhelming response: from County Durham to Wiltshire and from Redbridge to Cheshire: local people showed what could be done. Next year, as a key part of our new Sustainable Development Strategy, I want to reinvigorate community action on sustainable development.

Action in the EU

From this base of domestic action we move out to action Europe-wide.

We believe, as I know many of you do, that trading is the most cost-effective way to reduce emissions. The emissions trading scheme which we have advocated and pushed in Europe is of great importance to our goals, and to those of Europe. The establishment of a carbon trading market throughout the world's most important economic area next year will be an enormous achievement, and will change the way thousands of businesses think about their energy use. Cutting carbon emissions is the way the future will be, and we have repeatedly said that there are advantages to British industry from early action.

In Britain and throughout the world, the expected rapid growth in demand for transport, including aviation, means that we must develop far cleaner and more efficient aircraft and cars.

I am advised that by 2030, emissions from aircraft could represent a quarter of the UK's total contribution to global warming. A big step in the right direction would be to see aviation brought into the EU emissions trading scheme in the next phase of its development. During our EU Presidency we will argue strongly for this. And the UK is taking a strong lead globally.

From Europe, we need then to secure action world-wide. Here it is important to stress the scale of the implications for the developing world. It is far more than an environmental one, massive though that is. It needs little imagination to appreciate the security, stability and health problems that will arise in a world in which there is increasing pressure on water availability; where there is a major loss of arable land for many, and in which there are large-scale displacements of population due to flooding and other climate change effects.

It is the poorest countries in the world that will suffer most from severe weather events, longer and hotter droughts and rising oceans. Yet it is they who have contributed least to the problem. That is why the world's richest nations in the G8 have a responsibility to lead the way: for the strong nations to better help the weak.

Such issues can only be properly addressed through international agreements. Domestic action is important, but a problem that is global in cause and scope can only be fully addressed through international agreement. Recent history teaches us such agreements can achieve results.

The 1987 Montreal Protocol – addressing the challenge posed by the discovery of the hole in the ozone layer – has shown how quickly a global environmental problem can be reversed once targets are agreed.

However, our efforts to stabilise the climate will need, over time, to become far more ambitious than the Kyoto Protocol. Kyoto is only the first step but provides a solid foundation for the next stage of climate diplomacy. If Russia were to ratify, that would bring it into effect.

We know there is disagreement with the US over this issue. In 1997 the US Senate voted 95-0 in favour of a resolution that stated it would refuse to ratify such a treaty. I doubt time has shifted the numbers very radically.

But the US remains a signatory to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the US National Academy of Sciences agree that there is a link between human activity, carbon emissions and atmospheric warming. Recently the US Energy Secretary and Commercial Secretary jointly issued a report again accepting the potential damage to the planet through global warming.

Climate change will be a top priority for our G8 Presidency next year.

Recently, I announced that together with Africa, climate change would be our top priority for next year's G8. I do not under-estimate the difficulties. This remains an issue of high and fraught politics for many countries. But it is imperative we try.

I want today to highlight three key parts of my G8 strategy.

First, I want to secure an agreement as to the basic science on climate change and the threat it poses. Such an agreement would be new and provide the foundation for further action.

Second, we need agreement on a process to speed up the science, technology, and other measures necessary to meet the threat.

Third, while the eight G8 countries account for around 50% of global greenhouse gas emissions, it is vital that we also engage with other countries with growing energy needs – like China and India; both on how they can meet those needs sustainably and on how they can adapt to the adverse impacts we are already locked into.

Given the different positions of the G8 nations on this issue, such agreement will be a major advance; but I believe it is achievable.

The G8 Presidency is a wonderful opportunity to give a big push to international opinion and understanding, among businesses as well as Governments.

We have to recognise that the commitments reflected in the Kyoto protocol and current EU policy are insufficient, uncomfortable as that may be, and start urgently building a consensus based on the latest and best possible science.

Prior to the G8 meeting itself we propose first to host an international scientific meeting at the Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research in Exeter in February. More than just another scientific conference, this gathering will address the big questions on which we need to pool the answers available from the science:

- “What level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is self-evidently too much?” and
- “What options do we have to avoid such levels?”

This can help inform discussion at the G8.

Conclusion

The situation therefore can be summarised in this way:

1. If what the science tells us about climate change is correct, then unabated it will result in catastrophic consequences for our world.
2. The science, almost certainly, is correct.
3. Recent experience teaches us that it is possible to combine reducing emissions with economic growth.
4. Further investment in science and technology and in the businesses associated with it has the potential to transform the possibilities of such a healthy combination of sustainability and development.
5. To acquire global leadership on this issue, Britain must demonstrate it first at home.
6. The G8 next year and the EU Presidency provide a great opportunity to push this debate to a new and better level that, after the discord over Kyoto, offers the prospect of agreement and action.

None of this is easy to do. But its logic is hard to fault. Even if there are those who still doubt the science in its entirety, surely the balance of risk for action or inaction has changed. If there were even a 50% chance that the scientific evidence I receive is right, the bias in favour of action would be clear. But of course it is far more than 50%.

And in this case, the science is backed up by intuition. It is not axiomatic that pollution causes damage. But it is likely. I am a strong supporter of proceeding through scientific analysis in such issues. But I also, as I think most people do, have a healthy instinct that if we upset the balance of nature, we are in all probability going to suffer a reaction. With world growth, and population as it is, this reaction must increase.

We have been warned. On most issues we ask children to listen to their parents. On climate change, it is parents who should listen to their children.

Now is the time to start.

University of Cambridge Programme for Industry

The Business & the Environment Programme is developed and run by the University of Cambridge Programme for Industry (CPI). CPI defines its purpose as building the leadership capacity of business, governments and civil society to respond to contemporary societal challenges. Our work supports the mission of the University of Cambridge, which is to contribute to society through pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

As the University's largest dedicated unit for professional and executive programmes, CPI designs and delivers world-class learning programmes nationally and internationally, based upon a well-researched understanding of how people learn. It also provides strategic consultation based upon the application of its expertise in personal learning, leadership and organisational change.

HRH The Prince of Wales's Business & the Environment Programme (BEP)

BEP is the premier executive learning programme on sustainable business. The aim of the Programme is to help organisations integrate the concepts of sustainable development into their business thinking and practice. Senior Executives' Seminars run four times a year in different parts of the world, and have helped almost 1000 business leaders understand both the challenges and opportunities of sustainable development. The Programme's active alumni network comprises some of the most senior decision makers in business and civil society worldwide and through its activities provides further inspiration, encouragement, support and advice to those wishing to help their organisations take a lead on sustainability issues.

Business & the Environment Programme Directors

Polly Courtice, University of Cambridge Programme for Industry

Jonathon Porritt CBE, Forum for The Future

Business & the Environment Programme Management Committee

Sir Nick Scheele KCMG, Ford Motor Company (Chairman)

Professor Rod Aspinwall OBE, Sustainable Development Forum for Wales

Helen Boaden, BBC

Elizabeth Buchanan, HRH The Prince of Wales's Office

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