

Motion proposed by: Tom Evans
Motion seconded by: Kier Ashcroft

The JCR notes

1. That the average temperature of the earth is rising.
2. That a search of peer-reviewed papers published between 1993 and 2003 on the subject of global warming reveals *no peer reviewed papers which deny that climate change is anthropogenic.*
3. That the burning of fossil fuels is the single biggest cause of global warming.
4. That the World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that climate change is already causing over 160,000 deaths per year.
5. That satellite data reveals the Arctic sea ice to have thinned by 40 per cent since the 1950s, and shows the Arctic sea ice to have melted more this year than ever before.
6. That both the British government and the EU have conceded that the atmospheric concentrations CO2 equivalent at which they aim to stabilise are inadequate to prevent the globe warming by two degrees compared to pre-industrial levels. The British stabilisation makes a three degree rise in temperature likely.
7. That if the climate warms by two degrees compared to pre-industrial levels:
 - i. 15-40% of species will face extinction.
 - ii. The ability of 'sinks' to absorb carbon dioxide will be damaged, leading to temperatures increasing far more rapidly and threatening devastating, irreversible change.
 - iii. The summer of 2003, in which 30,000 people died from the heat, would become an average European summer.
 - iv. The Greenland ice sheet could melt completely, causing sea levels to rise by seven metres. This would displace and kill millions and submerge countries like the Maldives.
 - v. Glaciers would disappear from the Andes and other mountain ranges, and rainfall decrease significantly in the Mediterranean and America, causing desertification and water shortages.
 - vi. Crop yields would be significantly reduced, especially in mid-America and sub-Saharan Africa, threatening mass starvation.
8. That UK flights emit the same amount of CO2 as the total emissions of the fifteen poorest countries in the world put together.
9. That at a conservative estimate, aviation already accounts for 13% of the UK's warming effect, and is the fastest growing source of greenhouse emissions.
10. That the aviation industry is protected by international agreements and so is not counted in the British government's (nor in any international) plans to stabilise emissions. Thus if aviation expands as expected, it will by 2050 account for 134% of the government's target for the entire country's output of greenhouse gases.
11. That whilst charities have a legal obligation to maximise returns, recent research by EIRIS (Ethical Investment Research Service) suggests that up to 20% of the market can be excluded from investment options without affecting financial performance.
12. That record highs in oil prices, chronic instability of energy resources and the willingness of some governments to offer assistance to green energy companies has made the renewable energy sector desirable to invest in, with investment in the sector reaching a record \$100 billion in 2006.

The JCR believes

1. That global warming is real and manmade and poses a significant threat to humanity.
2. That the policies of our government and the EU are inadequate and negligent and so necessitate action being taken at a lower level to combat climate change.
3. That investment in the green energy market is a promising alternative to investment in fossil fuel extraction and production.
4. That the exclusion of aviation from national policy and international treaties, coupled with the rapid expansion of aviation and its immense contribution to climate change, make divestment a from the sector a necessary limitation on the damage it can inflict.
5. That every effort has to be made to prevent further deforestation (i.e. the harvesting of natural rather than managed forests) in order to preserve the capacity of the earth to absorb CO2 and thus help prevent climate change.

The JCR resolves

1. To put pressure on the college authorities responsible for investment decisions to implement an Ethical Investment Policy that excludes
 - i. All companies involved in the extraction or production of fossil fuels
 - ii. The aviation industry
 - iii. All companies involved in deforestation