

# LET'S SAVE THE PLANET



**TULSI TANTI**



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Turning the challenge of climate change into an opportunity for long-term sustainable prosperity will require a transformation in the way we produce and consume energy – a Clean Revolution that enables us to meet the needs of the world’s population while conserving the very planet that allows us to survive.

“Let’s Save the Planet” lays out clearly the challenge we face and the steps we must take to meet it. Unlike the many reports that highlight the threat of climate change, but sadly conclude that the necessary steps to cut emissions and mitigate climate change cannot – or will not – be taken, “Let’s Save the Planet” shows the steps we need to take in the short-term are in fact relatively modest, and well within our grasp, but also that many of the actions needed bring a wealth of other benefits – improved local environments, health, security, jobs and increased productivity, to name but a few.

Achieving this Clean Revolution will in turn require inspired leadership not only from politicians, but equally importantly from entrepreneurs and captains of business and industry. The fact that this pamphlet is written by a businessman – rather than a politician or NGO official – is something we should draw encouragement from. Politicians need to provide strong leadership in this area, and work energetically to agree a replacement for Kyoto. But it is the private sector which needs to grab the opportunity to innovate and develop practical solutions that address this challenge and pave a stronger road to growth.

Tulsi Tanti and Suzlon have shown that this leadership can come from all corners of the planet and, through concrete action, that fighting climate change can be a true business opportunity, an example that should inspire and catalyse others to act. The Climate Group is proud to have Tulsi Tanti as a member of our International Leadership Council and to work with him and Suzlon to further our shared goals.

**Mark Kenber**  
CEO, The Climate Group

Does our planet need saving?



Perhaps not. Planet Earth will be around long after we are gone. It is us – all seven billion of us – that need saving. Our progeny needs saving, we need to leave behind a ‘livable’ planet for them.

*"My daughter and the rest of Generation Hot have been given a life sentence for a crime they didn't commit," says author Mark Hertsgaard. "The reality is that we're locked in to at least 50 more years of rising temperatures and the harsher climate impacts they bring. Thus the young people of Generation Hot are condemned to spend the rest of their lives coping with a climate that will be hotter and more volatile than ever before in our civilization's history."*

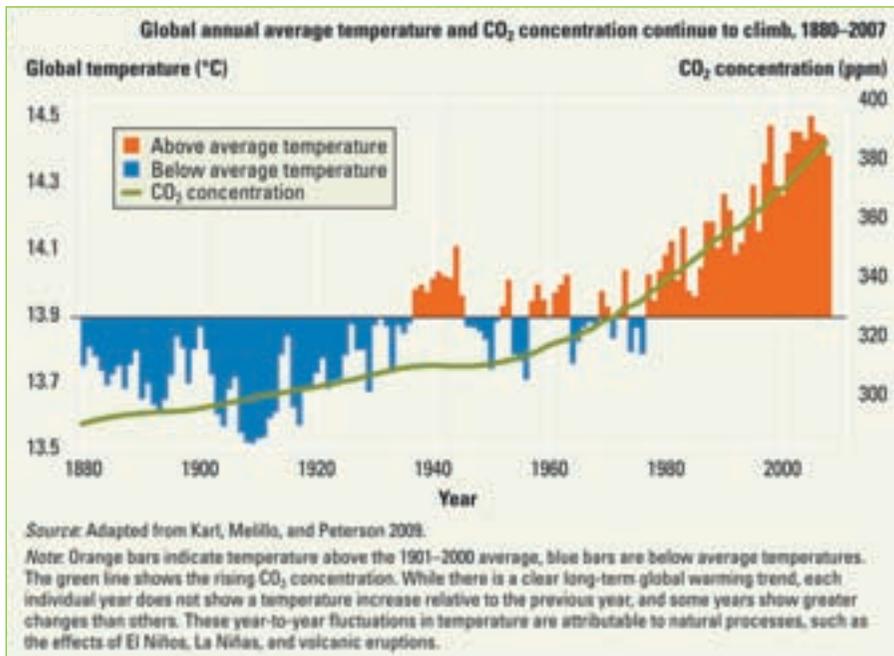
***Mark puts the official start of Generation Hot at June 23, 1988, when climate scientist James Hansen first testified to Congress about climate change***

‘Generation Hot’ may have only been born relatively recently, but we have been creating this change for much longer. Global atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub>, the most important greenhouse gas, ranged between 200 and 300 parts per million (ppm) for 800,000 years, but have shot up to about 391 ppm over the past 150 years, mainly because of the burning of fossil fuels.

*"I believe that the long-term future of the human race must be in space."*

***Stephen Hawking argues that it is nearly impossible for Earth to avoid disaster within the next few hundred years, and therefore the human race should expand to other planets***

The average temperature on Earth has already warmed by close to 1°C since the beginning of the industrial period, and if we continue on the same path we will breach the threshold beyond which a 2°C increase will become unavoidable by 2020. The consequences of this are already being felt across the world; extreme weather fluctuations, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising sea levels.



### The grim reality: climate change affects “me”

If we are unable to cap the temperature rise to 2°C, we will – and so will future generations – eventually be left with a skeletal planet, stripped of its capability to sustain the human race and millions of other species. The disruption in the food-water-energy nexus would leave humanity struggling with the basics of survival. At the current rate of emissions, we will soon breach the threshold beyond which a 2°C increase becomes unavoidable and even more extreme scenarios become likely. We need change, and we need it now.

## Regional Impacts of Climate Change

### Africa

- By 2020, between 75 and 250 million of people are projected to be exposed to increased water stress due to climate change.
- By 2020, in some countries, yields from rain-fed agriculture could be reduced by up to 50%. Agricultural production, including access to food, in many African countries is projected to be severely compromised. This would further adversely affect food security and exacerbate malnutrition.
- Towards the end of the 21st century, projected sea level rise will affect low-lying coastal areas with large populations. The cost of adaptation could amount to at least 5 to 10% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

### Asia

- By 2080, an increase of 5 to 8% of arid and semi-arid land in Africa is projected under a range of climate scenarios (TS).
- By the 2050s, freshwater availability in Central, South, East and South-East Asia, particularly in large river basins, is projected to decrease.
- Coastal areas, especially heavily populated megadelta regions in South, East and South-East Asia, will be at greatest risk due to increased flooding from the sea and, in some megadeltas, flooding from the rivers.
- Climate change is projected to compound the pressures on natural resources and the environment associated with rapid urbanisation, industrialisation and economic development.
- Endemic morbidity and mortality due to diarrhoeal disease primarily associated with floods and droughts are expected to rise in East, South and South-East Asia due to projected changes in the hydrological cycle.

### Australia and New Zealand

- By 2020, significant loss of biodiversity is projected to occur in some ecologically rich sites, including the New Zealand Great Barrier Reef and Queensland Wet Tropics.
- By 2030, water security problems are projected to intensify in southern and eastern Australia and, in New Zealand, in Northland and some eastern regions.
- By 2030, production from agriculture and forestry is projected to decline over much of southern and eastern Australia, and over parts of eastern New Zealand, due to increased drought and fire. However, in New Zealand, initial benefits are projected in some other regions.
- By 2050, ongoing coastal development and population growth in some areas of Australia and New Zealand are projected to exacerbate risks from sea level rise and increases in the severity and frequency of storms and coastal flooding.

### Europe

- Climate change is expected to magnify regional differences in Europe's natural resources and assets.
- Negative impacts will include increased risk of inland flash floods and more frequent coastal flooding and increased erosion (due to storminess and sea level rise).
- Mountainous areas will face glacier retreat, reduced snow cover and winter tourism, and extensive species losses (in some areas up to 60% under high emissions scenarios by 2080).
- In southern Europe, climate change is projected to worsen conditions (high temperatures and drought) in a region already vulnerable to climate variability, and to reduce water availability, hydropower potential, summer tourism and, in general, crop productivity.
- Climate change is also projected to increase the health risks due to heat waves and the frequency of wildfires.

### Latin America

- By mid-century, increases in temperature and associated decreases in soil water are projected to lead to gradual replacement of tropical forest by savanna in eastern Amazonia. Semi-arid vegetation will tend to be replaced by arid-land vegetation.
- There is a risk of significant biodiversity loss through species extinction in many areas of tropical Latin America.
- Productivity of some important crops is projected to decrease and livestock productivity to decline, with adverse consequences for food security. In temperate zones, soybean yields are projected to increase.
- Overall, the number of people at risk of hunger is projected to increase (TS; medium confidence).
- Changes in precipitation patterns and the disappearance of glaciers are projected to significantly affect water availability for human consumption, agriculture and energy generation.

*"As we stand we're only a few meters away from saying goodbye to the 2°C target."*

**Faith Birol, Chief Economist, International Energy Agency (IEA)**

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