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CLIMATE INSTITUTE



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HISTORY

In its more than 20 years in existence, the Climate Institute has been a catalyst in moving the world to address climate change in a cooperative manner. It has become the leading international NGO of scientists and policy leaders concerned with climate change and protection of the stratospheric ozone layer, and has organized conferences, symposia, and ministerial briefings in thirty nations.

The Climate Institute has registered many firsts - organizing the first broad scale climate change conference in North America in 1987, the first climate change symposium for UN missions in 1988, and the first major climate conference in the Middle East in 1989 in Cairo, Egypt. In 1991 and 1992 it organized climate change briefings for heads of state and Cabinet ministers in 22 nations and helped lay the groundwork for the signing of the Framework Convention on Climate Change in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. Over the next two years it coordinated a team of 60 experts from a dozen nations in carrying out studies of climate vulnerability and response options in eight Asian nations - Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam. This study caused President Fidel Ramos of the Philippines in 1995 to convene an Asia Pacific Leaders Summit on Climate Change of which the Institute was a co-organizer.

Later that same year the Institute published Environmental Exodus, the most comprehensive study to date of the emerging environmental refugee challenge.

At the request of the Asian Parliamentarians group co-convening the 1995 Manila Summit the Climate Institute developed a concept paper proposing an international public private partnership to promote "greenhouse benign energy." Drawing on the example of the computer and telecommunications revolutions, the Institute proposed an emphasis on scaling up markets for clean energy with special focus on the needs of two billion people lacking access to electricity. One practical application of this strategy is in small island states where the Climate Institute has been working with several such nations over the past three years to transform their energy systems to a non-carbon fuel base to lead the world by example.

In April 2000, the Institute was instrumental in the convening of a Summit in Seattle that pulled together pioneers in the computer, telecommunications and energy fields to see how a global clean energy revolution could adapt the models of these other high tech revolutions. The Seattle Summit also addressed ways the US Pacific Northwest and British Columbia might lead a clean energy revolution; signs of this regional leadership are already visible (www.climatesolutions.org). In July 2000 the G-8 embraced the notion of an international public private partnership to speed the emergence of renewable energy. It created a Renewable Energy Task Force at the initiative of British Prime Minister Tony Blair who championed an idea advanced to him by the Institute's Chairman since September 1990, Sir Crispin Tickell. A landmark report published by the Task Force in July 2001 provides a detailed blueprint for the partnership initially advanced in Manila in 1995.

With a sea change in emphasis by several major energy companies and the engagement of world leaders in practical measures to scale up renewables global energy systems may be on the verge of a change nearly as profound as what we have witnessed in computers and telecommunications. (link to video) The Institute is presently playing the role of a catalyst in energy policy discussions on energy efficiency and renewable energy, in line with these new developments.

For the past six years the Climate Institute has also championed the idea of coordinated strategies for climate and air quality. In September 1999 it convened a North American Symposium in Mexico City to map strategies for climate and air quality protection measures to be carried out in a harmonized manner. Mexico City has already begun to implement such a strategy and New Hampshire on May 9, 2002 became the first US state to enact such a law.

Since 1998 the Climate Institute has worked closely with a number of small island nations to enhance their capacity to respond to climate change. This effort has evolved into a [Global Sustainable Energy Islands Initiative \(GSEII\)](#) helping several island nations to transform their energy systems to less carbon-based and less expensive energy. In January 2006 at the Mauritius meeting of island state leaders the Institute announced that it was broadening this initiative to encompass work on coastal protection, adaptation and emergency preparedness. This [Endangered Islands Campaign](#) will seek to enhance the capacity of island states to transform their energy systems and become more resilient to withstand the adverse impacts of climate change, match them with expertise from institutions in North and South, and encourage religious and civic groups, colleges and universities in the US, Canada, Australia and the UK to provide carbon offsets and technical assistance to island nations and other developing countries pioneering in climate protection measures.

The Climate Institute has made appreciable progress toward its mission "to protect the balance between climate and life on earth."

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