

APPROVED NPYM MINUTE ON CLIMATE CHANGE
July, 2008

“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.”
--*Psalm 24:1*

The psalmist reminds us of the sacredness of the Earth and all its inhabitants. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) confirms climate change and its devastating impacts to the earth’s human and nonhuman inhabitants. Noting that global climate change is increased by human-produced greenhouse gases, we wish to bear witness against abuse of the earth and our environment.

Global climate change is an urgent moral and spiritual issue affecting all species on our planet. The rate and severity of climate change are the only unknowns. With its resulting weather extremes, habitat destruction, species extinction and human dislocation, we see the havoc climate change will wreak on the health and survival of present and future generations. Competition for resources aggravates the conditions that lead to war. We recognize that military production, research and development, training exercises and wars are major contributors to global warming. We will continue to work in practical ways to put an end to militarism and war. Our sense of urgency about global climate change is fueled by awareness that the impoverished will suffer the greatest hardships, and that the affluent are emitting the vast majority of greenhouse gases.

It is not enough for Friends to care. Our Quaker testimonies call us to become patterns and examples to our communities, illustrating by our actions our spiritual commitment to our earth and its threatened and limited resources. We are called as Friends to make this a standing priority and corporate witness in our Meetings and communities in the coming year. We urge Friends and others to take all possible measures to slow down climate change through reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases, seeking sustainable levels of human population, and more carefully stewarding earth’s finite resources.

We ask that the newly formed Peace and Social Concerns Committee of NPYM act as resource and communication conduit for meetings and worship groups in acting on this concern, encouraging faithfulness and accountability, and reporting back to Annual Session in 2009. Our challenge is to educate ourselves, and move beyond denial and inaction. We ask that each meeting and worship group, as well as the Yearly Meeting as a whole, commit to take specific action in the coming year. The queries from 1998 with a new emphasis on global climate change may be used to begin seasoning appropriate responses to this concern in our worship groups. The following are suggested steps¹² for meetings and individuals which may reduce the devastation of global climate change and move us toward more sustainable lifestyles:

- Engage in collective discernment in our Meetings to understand and adjust to climate change, allowing the Spirit to work among us.
- Reduce personal greenhouse gases in the coming year through decreased driving, flying, and home energy use, and through using efficient alternatives.
- Make conscious selections about food and water use that require fewer resources to produce, package and transport.

- Become a resource—encouraging and learning from others ways to reduce fossil-fuel consumption.
- Discern our personal responsibility for the negative effects of human over-population and over-consumption and be aware of their link to the inequitable sharing of earth's resources with our own and other species.
- Labor with those shaping public opinion and policy to support care of the earth. From local to state, national, and international levels, advocate measures to protect earth's resources.
- Through personal participation and public policy, work to promote environmental justice and assist the most impoverished and vulnerable, including the creation

¹We gratefully draw from Pacific Yearly Meetings' August, 2007 "Minute on Global Climate Change" for some of these steps.