

Declan Waugh
Opening Remarks



Let me begin by saying thanks to all of you who've travelled here today, for giving of your time to this event.

We all made this journey for a reason.

By being here today you have shown that you are concerned about our future, perhaps wishing to learn more about climate change and how each of us may work individually and together to tackle the enormous challenges that lie ahead.

That's the journey we are on today.

I organized this conference motivated by a single, simple powerful idea, that I might play a small part in building a better future. We are all our future has to work with, each of us here today will play a part in deciding that future. It is up to us.

Never before was so much knowledge available to so many capable of understanding and acting. We are the most prosperous educated generation ever sustained by our planet.

Now science has presented us with a profound message, it is a imminent reality that can bring about the destruction of humanity.

Together we bear the biggest responsibility ever borne in our history.

We are the generation that can decide the faith of billions of people, the faith of our species and the natural world which sustains all life on this planet rest's on our shoulders. It is an extraordinary responsibility.



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Our time will be regarded as the most important opportunity for humanity to prove its intellect and resolve.

We must ask, do we realise this?

In the past two years the world has reached an unprecedented level of awareness on climate change yet it appears the public are not moved to react.

It is critical that we begin to engage reality. We still have an opportunity to act and to minimize the level of devastation that climate change will bring about.

The promise of a green technological and industrial revolution is at hand; a new age of green economics and truly sustainable development.

The possibility of a shift to renewable sources of energy is now available to us along with more efficient public transport, energy conservation and sustainable development.

It will require political leadership supported by an informed public.

The shift to a greener economy needs urgent assistance; we cannot wait for the economic conditions to improve as the costs of inaction – in ecological, human and financial terms – will far exceed the costs of action now.

Are we willing to deal with the challenge?

As a society we are distracted from reality and encouraged to go on living unsustainable lives as if climate change was science fiction, its time to wake up.



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You may not know it but we live in a society where we are considered to be amongst the top 1% of the world's population.

We as a society are one of the largest contributors of greenhouse gas emissions per capita of any nation on the world.

As a nation and individually we have a long and difficult path to take and it won't be easy, we'll have to make hard choices and although Governments will play a crucial role in bringing about the changes we need, each of us here today, in our own lives will have to accept responsibility for educating the wider community in which we live, sharing our knowledge and together help change the way society views the world.

We don't have much time.

I believe we can transform our society, we can transform our nation, we can turn this crisis of climate change into a moment of opportunity for innovation and job creation and an incentive for business. This conference must be a vehicle to push us forward to a common purpose. That is the purpose here today for me. If you see, as I see, an alternative future, a more sustainable way of living, you must believe that you can make a difference.

I myself like many of you here today was influenced by distinguished scientists such as our esteemed colleagues here today Professor Robert Devoy and Professor Colin Woodroffe who were lead authors and contributors to the UN IPCC Climate Change 4th Assessment report which received the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize.



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I thank sincerely Dr Pachauri who received that price on behalf of the IPCC team for taking time to make his address for us here in Cork today, and to all the other distinguished participants in particular Dr James Hansen for his live presentation later today from the USA, and to Minister John Gormley for taking time out of his busy schedule to open this conference, I would like to acknowledge their work and dedication to which we all owe a great debt of gratitude.

We have today some of the most distinguished scientists, experts and civic leaders on climate change in the world addressing this event. I am immensely proud and honored that they have all willingly given of their time to share their knowledge and experience with each of us here today. For me this is the most significant climate change educational event yet to have occurred in this country.

This would not have happened without the support and generosity of our main sponsors, EnviroManagement Services and Bord Gais. For that I would like to thank John Mullins the CEO of Bord Gais and oddly myself as Enviromanagement Services. To add to the uniqueness of this remarkable event is the generous third level and second level sponsor programme's we have facilitated.

No conference on climate change is effective without the inclusion of the most important generation. To the student delegates here today representing secondary school's in Cork city and county I am grateful to your sponsors the Change campaign, SWS natural resources and Arups Consulting



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Engineers for their generous support and providing much needed financial assistance to the running cost of this event. As this is science week it is remarkable and encouraging that we are sponsoring so many schools and universities to attend this event. To all the third level students from around Ireland I thank you for coming and your sponsor NTR for their key sponsorship. Last but not least to our other key sponsors that have made this day possible, SWS Group, Musgrave Group, Trocaire, the EPA and BT for further reducing our carbon footprint and providing the technology for live video conference today without which some of our speakers would not be able to participate.

A vital aspect of the conference is not just about raising awareness here but assisting communities in developing countries. I hope through this conference and your attendance here today that Partnership for change can be able to provide a solar power initiative for a entire community that has no access to electricity, in addition to benefiting other charities and environmental organizations.

For some of you here today this will be your first experience of such an event, I hope that we do not disappoint. I know that here today we will witness the seeds of new vision and leadership for the next generation. We are all part of the problem of climate change and global warming. Today you are part of the solution.

Declan Waugh
Chairman Partnership for Change



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