



BBC Governors
Media Centre,
Media Village,
201 Wood Lane,
London W12 7TQ.

OPEN LETTER TO THE GOVERNORS OF THE BBC

12th March 2006

Dear BBC Governors,

Global warming is a real and present danger. Leading scientists agree that the increase in world temperature is caused by the burning of fossil fuels, and that this is leading to climate change on an unprecedented scale.

The future is not encouraging. Recently, James Lovelock suggested that we were already 'past the point of no return.' It is difficult to know if this is true. But as feedback mechanisms start to accelerate the warming process, the true scale of our challenge and predicament will become clear.

No individual alone can be expected to resolve this situation. Society as a whole needs to change. This places a huge responsibility on governments the world over to bring about permanent changes in the way people live their lives, and it calls for international cooperation on a scale never seen before.

We need not look abroad to realise that too little is being done to address the situation. UK emissions have continued to increase steadily the last three years and the government's policy on energy efficiency has failed to deliver the expected cuts in greenhouse gases because the vast majority of the population do not fully appreciate the severity of the situation and often fail to connect global warming with the choices we make every day.

The fact is that without engaging the public in the debate and making each of us part of the solution, we will never see the lasting changes required to turn the planet's and our own dwindling fortunes around.



This very point was highlighted by a 2004 MORI poll, which showed that “There appears to be a lack of engagement with the public on the issue of climate change.” The survey found that only 8% of the population believe that the Government provide “all relevant information about climate change to the public”, while nearly 80% had never heard of The Carbon Trust.

Established environmental organisations and new NGO’s are working hard to take on the responsibility of the UK Government. Through our campaigns and online resources, we continue to call for urgent individual and political action. It is however, important to realise that the green movement, no matter the level of effort, is able to reach and influence only a small percentage of the entire population each day.

And now to the reason for this letter. Due to the lack of effective Government action, there is an urgent need and opportunity for other organisations, not directly associated with the green movement, to get involved. One objective of such involvement would be to help remedy the failures of the Government by effectively educating and mobilising the UK population on the matter of global warming and climate change.

Due to its unique position in UK society, the BBC is one such organisation. The BBC is already an established information provider able to reach 98% of all UK households and is also widely trusted and watched abroad. With the recent launch of ‘Ethical Man’, the BBC is already contributing to the debate.

Having read this letter and bearing in mind its serious content, it is very much hoped that you, the Governors of the BBC, will consider how the BBC in the near future may be able to further utilise its broadcasting power and resources to help combat a worldwide problem, which threatens to bring unpredictable climate changes to our nation.

Appendix A contains a short list of suggestions on how the BBC may consider getting involved.

With deepest respect and gratitude for your time

Flemming Bermann
Chairman



Appendix - A

- In line with the weather update, provide a regular Climate Change report, which highlight and track figures like:
 - Atmospheric CO2 levels
 - World temperature
 - Strength of the Gulf Stream
 - Area of arctic sea ice melted
 - Sea level rises
- Include more climate news and research in daily news bulletins. Expand the range of topics covered and broadcasting time allocated.
- Produce a new series on Global Warming. Could cover what it is, the causes and connecting this with everyday life. Objective would be to link financial gains with reduced CO2 emissions and a healthier planet.
- Produce a series where an 'energy doctor' visit a UK home and suggests energy savings measures. The objective being to significantly reduced household energy bill and achieve CO2 saving.
- Create story lines for existing entertainment programs (weekly soaps), which incorporates a range of global warming and climate change topics affecting people living in London and the rest of the country.