

## Motion on Climate Change

*Proposed by Ian A, Manchester*

1. Climate change is already having devastating effects from more frequent episodes of more extreme weather including flooding, failure of agriculture in Somaliland, the wildfires in California, rising sea levels, loss of Arctic ice to the destruction of coral reefs.
2. Even if countries implemented their pledges from the Paris Agreement, these are predicted to produce a 3C temperature rise rather than the 1.5C limit the IPCC says warming needs to be limited to. Those pledges are not being implemented – emissions continue to rise. A 3C rise would mean catastrophic consequences and be likely to trigger feedback mechanisms in the earth's climate system making warming even worse and reversal more difficult or impossible.
3. Temperatures will continue to rise even if there is decisive action now, so the effects will grow too.
4. The experiences of impacts of climate change will provoke a variety of struggles including over disaster defences, insurance and rehousing as a result of fires and floods; food price spikes; transport; migration; and healthcare in response to changing illness patterns.
5. Ruling class responses to climate change will try to dump the costs onto the working class, leading to struggles including over the cost of food, water, housing and energy; job losses as industries close, transform or relocate; campaigns against new infrastructure which damages local communities.
6. Disruption to production, including of food, may end the unusual period of price stability experienced by richer countries since the 1980s, making the continuation of the exceptionally low levels of industrial action in these countries less likely.
7. We can expect the intensification and broadening of campaigns demanding action to limit climate change.
8. The impact of climate change will be uneven, reflecting and reinforcing existing patterns of inequality and oppression including those structured along class, race and geographical lines. States adopt increasingly repressive policies to contain domestic resistance and control migration driven by climate change, and people are resisting this repression.
9. Without losing sight of the necessity of radically reducing emissions, we must also support the struggles of those facing impacts of climate breakdown and

environmental destruction that are already underway and that already constitute a deadly crisis for millions of people across the world. We live in a catastrophic present.

10. The struggle against climate breakdown must be a revolutionary struggle; this takes the form of involvement in struggle for concrete demands and immediate reforms, pushing them towards confrontation with the system as a whole.

11. The climate crisis will interact with the economic, imperialist, political and workplace dimensions of the situation which will be shaped by and shape the climate crisis.

12. We are in the historically unusual position of knowing in advance what the central issue in politics is going to be for the next decades. Rulers in all countries will be forced to respond in ways that destabilise their existing methods of rule, and this is coming to a head within most of our lifetimes.

13. Responses to climate change will be politically contested, including repression, market "solutions", social democratic responses such as Green New Deal, and demands for system change (egalitarian and cooperative, without the obstruction of the profit motive and state warmongering).

14. We are opposed to nuclear power, which is dangerous and unnecessary.

15. The nature of the crisis demands collective action, the socialisation of risk, and political action rather than market anarchy and capital accumulation.

16. The climate crisis will reshape all aspects of our politics including social reproduction, work, oppression, unions, political representation and imperialism.

17. Successful resolution of the climate crisis will require prioritising prevention over coping; a connection of immediate struggles to a systemic challenge; a central role for the working class; emphasis on just transition, climate justice and climate jobs; and organisation encompassing social movements, workplaces and parties.

18. Success will not depend on environmental activism alone, but on power, political understanding and organisation built on other terrains.

### **Proposals:**

19. rs21 will ensure that environmental issues, and climate change in particular, become woven wherever possible into our aims and perspectives as well as our work as revolutionary socialists within workplaces, community activism and wider organising. This will involve reviewing and fleshing out our ideas in all areas. This does not mean abandoning other areas of work but learning to build on them by

relating and connecting them to the questions of climate breakdown and ecological crisis.

20. In stressing the intersectional nature of a present and worsening crisis and in anticipating increased human flight from climate- and war-blighted regions, socialists have to factor in centrally an internationalist analysis that demands solidarity with the victims of climate chaos, imperialist conflict and poverty.

21. We must engage with struggles and learn from them. We support initiatives such as One Million Climate Jobs and Scot.E3 working on how to achieve a swift and just transition, as well as campaigns including those over fracking, divestment and decolonisation.

22. In order to make a practical contribution, clarify our own ideas and influence the movement from a Marxist perspective, we will increase our engagement with individuals and organisations thinking and acting on climate change, for example by actions, meetings, and carrying reviews, interviews and reports on our website. This joint work can help generate a meaningful left-green narrative to influence the environmental and labour movement mainstream.

23. We will create a volunteer team of rs21 members to organise a conference on climate change later in 2019, with budget and plans subject to approval from the rs21 Steering Group, and future National Meetings where possible.

24. We will consider producing a pamphlet on the climate crisis.