



Who said it?

1. “Investing in new fossil fuels infrastructure is moral and economic madness. Climate activists are sometimes depicted as dangerous radicals. But the truly dangerous radicals are the countries that are increasing the production of fossil fuels.”
2. Globally, fossil fuel subsidies were \$5.9 trillion, or 6.8% of global GDP in 2020, and are expected to increase to 7.4% in 2025. [...] 8% of the 2020 subsidy reflects undercharging for supply costs (explicit subsidies) and 92% undercharging for environmental costs and forgone consumption taxes.
3. The international community is falling far short of the Paris goals, with no credible pathway to 1.5°C in place. Only an urgent system-wide transformation can avoid climate disaster.

Answers:

1. Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General, April 2022
2. The International Monetary Fund IMF, one of the pillars of financial orthodoxy, website page on Fossil Fuel Subsidies, 2022
3. The United Nations Emissions Gap Report, 2022.

We are mainstream!

So why do our national leaders and the leaders of commerce and banking fail to see this?

- ▶ Instead of paying a windfall tax on its colossal profits, Shell will invest them in new oil and gas exploration, to avoid paying tax. The UK government will allow this.
- ▶ With a windfall tax, UK could subsidise fuel costs. (Subsidise fossil fuels?) Or it could invest in renewables. Or pay to insulate homes. There are hard choices to be made. But some should be easy.
- ▶ The UK has completely failed to insulate its homes. The result is that households are spending on average £300 a year more that they need to to keep warm.

Why say all this when you already know it? To emphasise that we have a *political* problem. The problem is the unwillingness of governments to challenge the out-of-control money-making machines that are tearing the world to pieces.

How can we alter the mindset of government?

- ▶ By demanding that they should act.
- ▶ By keeping a close eye on what they do and what they don't do.
- ▶ By ensuring that everyone in the country is aware of the need for action, *and the obstacles to action.*

This means that at local level we need a united popular movement to demand government action. That works its utmost to inform everyone so that they understand the problem, and the solutions that exist.

We need to work hard on our local measures, but only government can decide on a windfall tax, or to pay for home insulation.

The diners' dilemma

Let's return to the contrast between the international perspective and the national.

Imagine that five colleagues go to a restaurant and agree that rather than keeping track of what each person consumes, they will simply split the bill at the end.

The result is that everyone reasons as follows:

if I have that extra glass of wine, the extra money I will pay is only one fifth of the cost of the wine, because the bill will be split between all five of us.

So bring me that extra glass! Everyone has an extra glass of wine. And chooses the fanciest main course. And has a dessert.

If you watch all this from the sidelines, you know what is going to happen. But the diners do not, and at the end are aghast at the bill each will have to pay.

The world's nations are the diners. The international organisations are the watchers from the sidelines. We have to get the diners to share their perspective. This means providing information and understanding to the voters.

Warwickshire Climate Alliance wants to be that united popular organisation, bringing all the groups together. Not telling them what to do – only saying, let's talk to each other and decide what form of activity is most effective, and then, sometimes, act together.

We have “partner organisations” who we can call on for a rally, and whose activities we can publicise widely, across the network we are building. Anyone who wants to can join our online meetings. Hopefully the partner organisations will feel it's worth attending.

Things we do:

- ▶ Constructively critique local government climate action plans. Meet with local councillors.
- ▶ Campaign for WCC to divest from fossil fuels (£94 million of its Pension Fund).
- ▶ Website listing local groups across the county, evaluating local plans and policies, giving info on climate science and climate action.
- ▶ Hustings at election time.
- ▶ School art competition
- ▶ Rally on November 12th!
- ▶ Column in local papers.
- ▶ Newsletter.
- ▶ Online Christmas Climate Quiz with MPs, councillors, council officials as quiz-masters for first hour, who then answer questions from the public in second hour. Tuesday Dec 20th, 7-9pm. Watch this space!

Please speak to me afterwards to become partners in WCA.

WCA Partner Organisations

- ▶ Action21
- ▶ Clean Air Warwickshire
- ▶ Transition Town Rugby
- ▶ Stratford Climate Action
- ▶ Friends of the Earth Stratford-upon-Avon
- ▶ Low Carbon Warwickshire Network
- ▶ Extinction Rebellion Warwick District
- ▶ Extinction Rebellion Rugby
- ▶ Napton Environmental Action Team NEAT
- ▶ Kenilworth Altogether Greener
- ▶ Cycleways
- ▶ ARC Achieving Results in Communities

