

# PARLIAMMENTARY ROUNDTABLE ON THE CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY

20 October 2022

Presentation by the Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG)

Society's relationship with the natural environment is inextricably linked to our relationships with each other, making sustainable development impossible without environmental, economic and social justice.



Climate Change threatens ecosystems around the world and the extinction of many species, including our own but once we are gone the Earth will continue to exist.

It is OUR survival that depends on us limiting the increase in global temperatures, protecting our ecosystems and learning to live in harmony with nature.



Climate Change is both an environmental and socio-economic issue, which requires no less than the reorganisation of society in a way that puts people and planet first

We have to work with those who are the most marginalised because it is them who are going to bear the brunt.



Environmental  
Monitoring Group

Has Parliament done enough to respond to the climate emergency?

The answer is NO!

To answer yes would mean that every policy and every law being written is being written and implemented with the deliberate intention of addressing both the mitigation of, and resilience to Climate Change and even that may not be enough.



- To effectively mainstream the issue, we have to see it as a socio-economic issue as much as it is an environmental one.
- Protecting the environment and reducing emissions alone is not enough, we have to build a resilient society in our country
- We have to build global solidarity because this is a global challenge.
- We cannot do it alone as a country and Parliament cannot do it alone as a Legislature.
- Every single portfolio has a role to play as does every Minister and Department, all the policies have to align with a single vision.
- This vision cannot be one that is developed top-down, it needs to be one that includes the voices of everyone, especially the marginalized in our society.



- In the most unequal country in the world disasters like the April floods in Kwa-Zulu Natal worsen inequality, have a disproportionality negative impact on the poor, exacerbate gender inequality and worsen racial inequality.
- When we talk of resilience to climate change we have to understand that those with resources are more resilient than those without.
- Climate Change will impact us all but it will not impact us all equally.



- Government policies must be developed with climate change at the heart of any plan across the board
- We have to double our efforts to reduce poverty and inequality.
- It cannot be business as usual.
- We have to listen to science when it tells us that large scale industrial farming is bad for biodiversity and soil retention and less resilient to droughts, floods and disease.
- Water is precious and must be protected at all costs we have to fix our aging infrastructure and find ways to conserve this precious resource.
- We need to understand that all fossil fuel driven energy is bad energy
- Interventions like Karpowerships will impact the livelihoods of fishers and reduce their resilience to Climate Change.
- We have to look for solutions that protect the environment and the most vulnerable first and foremost, not solutions that reinforce the status quo.





- EMG works with communities who are already preparing for Climate Change
- In the areas of Agroecology and water, in the context of climate change we work with communities and schools to understand their specific challenges and try to find ways to collectively overcome these, but people cannot do this on their own.
- We must listen to small scale farmers in rural areas when they call for support to implement Agro ecological farming techniques which are more resilient to climate change.
- We need to support access to markets, land and water so that they are economically resilient to droughts and floods.
- We have to ensure that we understand the impact of changes to policy around water, including tariffs or meters and how this impacts the poor before we develop policies that ultimately deny their right to access to water.
- Our response to Climate Change has to be grounded at a grassroots level, designed by the people, for people AND the environment.



Climate Change can only be fought if everyone is able to fight it, our job is to mitigate emissions as much as possible and create an equal society where everyone has what they need for the struggle to come.



Thank you for listening!

To learn more about  
our work visit:

[www.emg.org.za](http://www.emg.org.za)

