

# Putting Politics Aside, Can We All Come Together to Fight Climate Change?

By **Natalie Brown** - November 28, 2017



All the leaders of the world may have opposing views on a lot of things, but one thing they do have in common is they all have the power and the means to tackle climate change. World class scientists, philosophers, and religious leaders all met recently at a special event to discuss this very issue and how we can put politics aside and come together to support the fight in global warming.

The event was part of the 2017 European Capacity Building Initiative (ECBI) Oxford Seminar held at the Natural History Museum, University of Oxford, United Kingdom. Strategically named, 'We Meet Again!', the event was very reminiscent of the famous 'Oxford Evolution Debate' of 1860.

One of the key speakers of the event was the Rt. Revd. Dr. Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford. He talked about how faith-based communities could help in preventing climate change as well as how it's vital that those involved in making climate change decisions consider these different groups. "Faith communities know how to take action for change and how to mobilize others to achieve common goals," confirmed Croft. "These groups are places where small groups of thoughtful and committed citizens are found. They have significant influence, a natural compassion for the earth and a sense of being part of a global community."

Professor Sir Brian Hoskins, Director of the Grantham Institute for Climate Change at Imperial College London, was another of the event's key speakers and he talked about why scientists shouldn't be intimidated. "As scientists, we must continue to search for evidence-based answers and share the results of our work with a wide, diverse audience – not just our peers, opinion formers, or politicians but ordinary people, without either exaggeration or understatement," he commented. "We have to recognize that how these messages are received is directly influenced by the values and beliefs of the audience. As scientists, we must recognize that we are also influenced by our values and beliefs. We need to find common ground and a starting point for conversation. Then we must position the best science and research-led evidence at the fore-front of this climate change conversation."

Another important speaker was Professor Benito Muller, Director of the ECBI, and a member of the Oxford University Philosophy Faculty, speaking on behalf of philosophers and how they can help in the fight against climate change. He believes that philosophers have an important role to play when it comes to finding the truth among nonsense. "Academic thinkers and philosophers have a duty to stand up for critical thought and the truth, to counter the current tide of 'alternative facts' and 'post-truth' politics." Concluding the discussion was Director of the Natural History Museum, Professor Paul Smith. "In today's society, Arctic research is more valuable than ever. The reasons for this will vary from field to field, but climate change is currently at its most exaggerated in polar areas," said Smith. "We live in a time where the value of science is constantly being questioned and undercut, it has never been more important for us as scientists to perform our jobs well, deliver accurate research and clearly communicating the findings. The consequences of not doing so are catastrophic."

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