**IFLRY Position Paper on Climate Change**

The work towards a sustainable future originates from the liberal view that my freedom ends where your freedom begins. The burning of fossil fuels has made a lot of nations wealthy and has made energy accessible to many, but at a cost to many others. It has also caused degradation to the environment and our natural ecosystem, as well as increased health risks. Our recognition of freedom does not imply the abuse of others fundamental rights, including a sustainable environment.

As humans change the concentration of the atmosphere, by taking large amounts of CO2 out of its natural cycle, the climate changes with it. Some countries will see both the most dramatic changes, as well as be least prepared to face those changes. There is an underlying and inherent inequity. Thus, we are of the view that it is liberal to fight climate change.

A recently published report from the World Bank, *Turn Down the Heat: Confronting the New Climate Normal*, shows that the world is locked into a temperature increase of 1.5°C, by past and predicted greenhouse gas emissions. This calls for urgent action towards reducing the burning of fossil fuels, as the timeframe for limiting the temperature increase to 1.5°C is rapidly closing.

A liberal is progressive, and always in search of new and better solutions. These should be a result of knowledge and research. Even though the world faces big changes, these changes are necessary if we shall avoid dramatic consequences of climate change. Change can be difficult, but as research tells us, business as usual is not an option.

But how can we fight climate change in a liberal way?

1. Use market-based and government incentives to promote environmentally friendly options

*One way, that will not reduce freedom, but rather change people’s habits and actions, is through incentives. By incentivising the environmentally friendly options, rather than prohibit the options that harm the environment, we can use the market to create a green shift. By making the environmentally friendly option more economical and better, we can create a solution that will benefit not only the people using it, but also the society and the environment.*

1. Put a price on carbon

*Another way of reducing emissions, and thereby climate change, is to put a price on carbon. It should never be an economic incentive to pollute. Today, unfortunately, it is often cheap, or even free, to emit greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere. This market failure must be corrected, by putting a price on emissions of greenhouse gases, measured in CO2-equivalents. Through a carbon price, we can make it profitable for companies and private persons to be environmentally friendly. Several jurisdictions have now implemented, successfully, a form of carbon price.*

1. Developed nations should offer developing countries monetary and technological support to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

*An important part of liberal climate policies is to help those that already are facing consequences of the burning of fossil fuels. Climate change is happening now. We have to limit the consequences so that they won’t be worse than they already are, and help people who are suffering from the consequences to adapt. It is also essential to further develop sustainable solutions, such as renewable energy that can replace the non-renewable energy. For developed countries, such knowledge could both be used to reduce their own emissions, but also to help poorer countries reduce theirs, without having to reduce their standard of living. Renewable energy is available all over the world, in different forms, unlike fossil fuels. Making renewable energy and sustainable solutions available for all, is not just better for the planet and for people by reducing dangerous consequences, it can also make the world fairer.*

1. Empower indigenous populations with instruments such as enhanced property rights, co-operative management and joint stewardship

*A growing body of evidence demonstrates that climate change is better mitigated by indigenous peoples, particularly when their well being is tied to the land. Most notably, studies indicate that with forests in particular - global governments have an untapped opportunity to decrease the pace of deforestation and forest degradation, while reducing overall emissions. Forests are a key element of climate change mitigation as they act as carbon sinks, alleviating the greenhouse effect. Because indigenous peoples, not governments, are the day-to-day stewards of most of the globe’s forests it is imperative their land and resource rights are strengthened. Such recognition has been empirically shown to maintain or even improve the carbon storage capacity of existing forests. There is a clear correlation between rights-granting and carbon dioxide emission reduction.*

1. Nations should increase investment in Research and Development (R&D) that will allow for more environmentally friendly technologies.

*Allocating more budgetary funds towards Research & Development on (trans-)national levels is critical, both to promote innovation to make fossil fuel technologies less harmful, but also to further increase the capacity of sustainable energy and environmentally friendly technologies. Public, private, and public-private partnership solutions should all be encouraged.*

Adoption of these principles on a global scale would be effective in mitigating and reducing the impact of climate change on future generations. IFLRY encourages its member organizations to abide by these principles and policies. As an international organization, IFLRY has the possibility to directly impact policies globally, and by working for implementation of the above principles, we can move towards a sustainable future for all.