

# CANARIES IN A FOSSIL FUEL MIND ?

## THREE DECADES OF DISCUSSION

28 Years ago, the UN's Brundtland Report set out an agenda for global 'sustainable development', a radical idea at the time. Nearly three decades on, 850 million people still live in abject poverty and the planet faces continuing degradation of its forests, oceans and other key ecosystems. Extinction rates are accelerating and topsoil is eroding at record rates. The definition of 'sustainability' that Brundtland laid out – *'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'* – has clearly still not been embraced.

17 Years ago, most of the world's governments signed the Kyoto Protocol, obliging rich countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There is now international consensus that average global temperature rise should not exceed 2°C.

For this year's climate conference in Paris to be considered successful, we will need a fundamental re-evaluation of many of our culturally ingrained concepts about mankind's relationship with the natural world. We will need to question our economic systems and our rather narrow definitions of prosperity, growth and progress, which in reality amount to little more than growing inequality.

## CLIMATE DECLARATION

*We are aghast that the Earth faces a potential 4 - 6°C global temperature rise as a result of current policies on burning coal, oil and gas;*

*We are terrified that because of the climate change this global warming is already producing, we will lose the ability to feed ourselves, run out of drinking water, increase conflict and war and challenge the very fabric of our civilisation;*

*We are devastated that our governments have not yet succeeded in slowing, let alone stopping, the flow of man-made greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, despite a quarter century of trying and in full knowledge of the risks involved;*

*We are aware that the UN Climate Summit due to be held in Paris in December 2015 may be the last chance we get to agree a treaty capable of saving this and future generations from the devastating effects of man-made climate change;*

*We understand that climate change is a complex cultural, social and economic challenge which requires us to convey the science and imagine politics in new and creative ways.*