




**Intercontinental Think Tank
Meeting
Sunday 18 June 2023,
6-7.30 pm UTC**

NOTES

1	<p><i>Welcome to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International and District Committee Chairs
2.	<p><i>Actions from the June meeting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up on surveys with ZI • Progress collated frameworks • Share draft leaflets.
3.	<p><i>Guest speaker</i></p>  <p>Dr Judith Ainsworth Convenor of the Canada Caucus Supporting Member Forming the ZC of Kanata in District 2.</p> <p>The link to the video and slides of her well-researched presentation may be found at https://zontasaysnow.org.au/intercontinental-think-tank/</p>
4.	<p><i>Points raised in discussion re: Judith's presentation.</i></p> <p>Judith covered the escalating climate change disasters in Canada (heat, flooding), the effects on indigenous communities and women, problematic greenhouse gas reduction policies in Canada, and decision-making and leadership. (See slides in presentation). Points raised in discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sequestration issues:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Peatlands are destroyed by mining and wetlands are being dug up. ○ Natural grasslands are being replaced by other crops. Indigenous communities harvest medicine plants, hunt and hold ceremonies – culture at risk. ○ Boreal forests store more carbon than the Amazon. Logging, forest fires and clearcutting are releasing carbon at an unprecedented rate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boreal forests are dominated by spruce, pine, and peatland-type plants and grow in cold environments. They need snow cover in the wintertime. ▪ Mountain Pine beetles are destroying the boreal forests reducing their sequestration capacity. (Swedish Zontians noted the beetle problem is increasing across the Arctic, as winters get shorter.) ▪ There is less snow, the forests are drying out. • <i>Wildfires:</i> fires are more damaging than previously.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recent wildfires have triggered very poor air quality across Canada and USA – stretching to Sweden. ○ Fine particulates trigger many health problems. ● Heat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Permafrost is melting – ghost fires. ○ Issue of heat in Canada and Bangladesh. The impacts on women’s health are enormous. Elderly women are dying alone in heat waves. Maternal health is compromised. Pregnant women already have a higher temperature and increased heat leads to babies’ lower birth weights. ○ Rivers are too warm for spawning salmon, and they die. Indigenous women are impacted as they rely on the salmon for their livelihoods. ○ Need more programs to insulate homes so they are cooler in heat extremes. ○ In the north, it is too warm for the roads to freeze and this causes problems for food transport. ● Pollution: Oil sand mining pollutes the lakes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In some areas, mechanical birds are placed on the toxic lakes to frighten the birds away. ● Hurricanes: Record-breaking number of hurricanes in Canada. ● Policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policies do not support overall emission reduction. ○ The cap-and-trade system to reduce emissions will only work if the cap level is continually pushed down ○ Where do we put housing, to avoid low-lying areas needed for biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration eg. wetlands and peatlands? ● Bangladesh: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Suffering from excess heat and floods. ○ In winter it is colder and people are not coping well. <p>Zonta actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need to raise awareness of these environmental issues and their impacts on carbon sequestration, health and livelihoods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with forest companies, indigenous groups and governments to sustain wetlands and forests. ○ Advocate to avoid building homes where they are impacted by floods and sea level rise. ○ Design homes so they are protected from increasing heat. ○ Raise awareness that heat problems are magnified by humidity –and how heat negatively impacts maternal health and elderly women. ● Women must raise their voices to counter the misinformation about climate change. <p>Feedback on Think Tank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Members enjoy the Think Tank meetings as they get first-hand information from around the world. ● Idea for the future: mix our speakers with external speakers.
5.	<p>Other business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Women Deliver 2023 – Conference 17-20 July in Kigali, Rwanda. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conference is held every 3 years –around 6,000 attendees in person and 200,000 online ○ Speakers include Sima Bahous (UN Women), Helen Clark (former Prime Minister of New Zealand), Malala Yousafzai, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka (UN Women) ● Beating Plastic Pollution Quiz, based on Beat Plastic Pollution Practical Guide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Share with clubs to raise awareness and promote Plastic Free July ● Sustainability schemes for hotels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Global Sustainable Tourism Council
6.	<p>Actions from the June meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Follow up with ZI on the progress of the three surveys and leaflets. ● Report on the progress of collated ideas from frameworks/discussions to date. ● Create quiz on Global Plastics Treaty.
7.	<p>Next meetings – please put these dates in your calendar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sunday 16 July 12 to 1.30 pm UTC ● Sunday 20 August 6 to 7.30 pm UTC