ZONTA INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 23
EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

ZONTA SAYS NOW

To gender equality and climate action

Zonta Says NOW News - OCTOBER 2021



Stepping up for a net zero future with COP26

It has been six years since 196 countries and the EU signed the historic Paris Climate Agreement. All nations agreed to limit global warming to well below two degrees, with each pledging to reduce emissions. The pledges would not be enough to stop global warming, but it was a start - and all countries agreed to come back in five years with more ambitious plans.

COVID-19 delayed the return meeting, and the 26th Convention of the Parties (COP26) meets for two weeks in Glasgow from 31 October. We are nearly one-tenth through the 'decisive decade' for humanity, and it is crunch time. Will countries step up? Will their combined 'nationally determined contributions' be enough to stop runaway global warming? Or will short term interests win?

This newsletter focuses on COP26 and what we can do individually and in our clubs to reflect its goals.

Let's step up!

Carole
Carole Theobald
District 23 Futurist/Leadership Coordinator



District 23's lead up to COP26

In District 23, we have been leading the way in the Zonta world on gender equality and climate action.

Our District 23 Conference was held online in September. It included a Gender Equality and Climate Action panel hosted by Claire Flanagan-Smith from RMCG environmental consultants who were a conference sponsor, with Carole Theobald, District 23 Futurist, Natalie Isaacs from 1 Million Women, and Ginny Tan from Sisterworks.

Carole joined the dots between climate change and gender equality using the image of a runaway train. She explained that rising greenhouse gas emissions had triggered global warming, which caused extreme weather events that led to the societal disruption that magnified existing inequalities. The gains we have made in gender equality in the last one hundred years are at risk. To slow the train, we must advocate stopping greenhouse gas emissions and slowing down global warming. We also must ramp up all of our Zonta activities today to close the gender gap before increasing climate-induced social disruption makes it impossible to do so.

Natalie Isaacs is the CEO and Founder of 1 Million Women that has over one million members worldwide. Natalie shared her journey and passion for empowering women to take practical action to fight climate change by changing the way they live. We often feature 1 Million Women's initiatives in our newsletters – especially their phone app, campaigns, and LoveEarth Marketplace - so it was lovely to speak to Natalie directly.

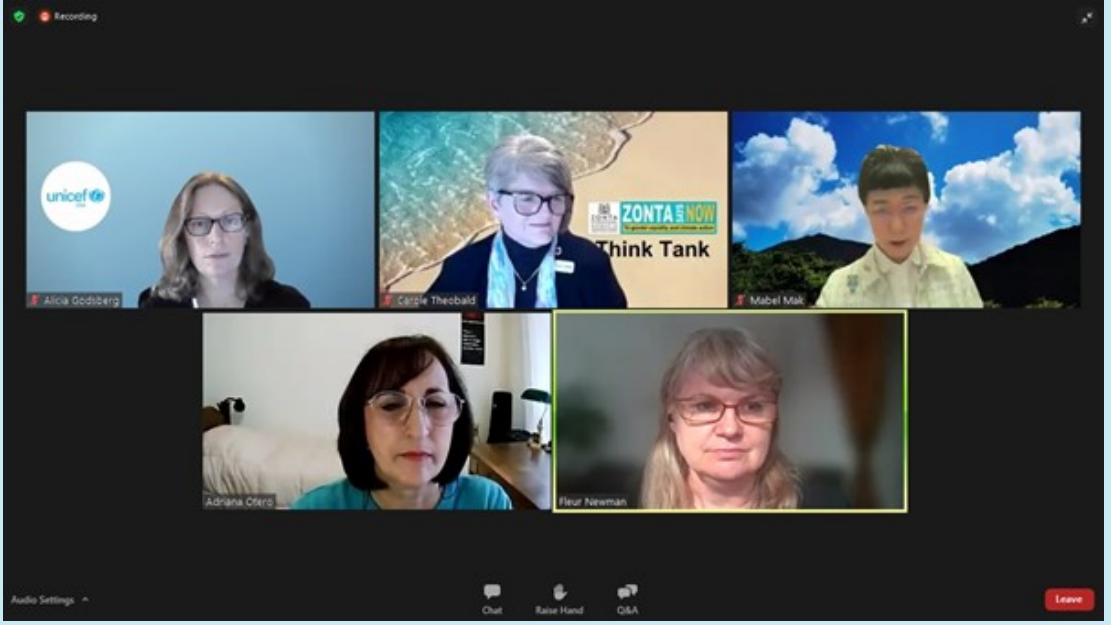
1 Million Women's latest campaign asks women to sign an open letter to the Prime Minister of Australia, Scott Morrison. The letter asks the Prime Minister to go to COP26 with ambitious emissions reduction targets and concrete plans to meet them. It recognises that the science is clear – and the Australian Government must devise a strategy and enact policy to cut emissions by a minimum of 50 per cent by 2030. As individuals, please consider supporting this campaign – every email counts.

Ginny Tan is from Sisterworks in Bendigo. This organisation enables asylum seekers, migrant and refugee women to meet, learn, and earn a living. Sisterworks runs courses in English, food handling, sewing, and crafts. Women make sustainable, ethical products that are sold online as corporate gifts and in local markets. Sisterworks is a great model that shows how service and sustainability can work together to empower women. Ginny is happy to share Sisterworks' experience with other community groups.

If you missed the Conference, you could view the presentations on the Conference YouTube Channel. Look out for the frank presentation by Mary Crooks, the Executive Director of the Victorian Women's Trust. As she puts it, *if we don't stop the planet from burning, we can forget about gender equality.*

Actions:

- *Consider signing 1 Million Women's online open letter to the Prime Minister*
- *Catch up on any District 23 conference presentations that you may have missed.*



ZI Women and Climate Change Webinar

Immediately after the District 23 Conference, Zonta Says NOW featured on Zonta International's Women and Climate Change Panel.

Zontian Adriana Otero from Uruguay facilitated this event. She introduced ZI President Sharon Langenbeck and panellists Fleur Newman from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change based in Bonn, Alicia Godsberg from UNICEF in the USA, Mabel Mak, an environmental consultant/Zontian based in Hong Kong and our own Carole Theobald based in Australia.

The panel discussed:

- how to embed gender equality in UNFCCC activities;
- how climate change is negatively impacting Zonta's education projects in Madagascar;
- how community groups are taking climate action in Hong Kong; and
- what we can do to progress gender equality and climate action through Zonta Says NOW.

After the event, we received many enquiries from other clubs and districts wanting to learn more about Zonta Says NOW. This truly international event streamed at midnight AEST, so many members may have slept through it!

Action: *Have a look at the video to see what you missed.*



Assessment Report 6 and the Sustainable Development Goals

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change releases assessment reports in seven-year cycles. The Sixth Assessment cycle began in 2015 and will produce eight publications, including three reports prepared by three key Working Groups.

The first Working Group report was released in August and focused on the physical science of climate change. The two other Working Groups will release reports in 2022 that focus on impacts, adaptation and vulnerabilities related to climate change; and climate change mitigation. At the end of the Sixth Assessment Cycle, in September 20222, the IPCC will synthesise all reports. This video describes the process and introduces an Interactive Atlas so you can see how the changing climate will impact the world under various scenarios.

Recently Professor Lesley Hughes from the Climate Council gave a presentation on the AR6 findings and their meaning to Australia. In this, she pointed out that in the Sustainable Development Report 2021, Australia ranked 35th overall out of 165 countries. However, on SDG 13 Climate Action, Australia ranks last. This ranking has severe implications for trade, as the EU recently voted to introduce a carbon levy on products from countries, such as Australia, that lack serious emission reduction programs.

Currently, Australia aims to reduce emissions by 26-28% by 2030, based on 2005 levels. The *Climate Transparency Report* 2020 indicates that Australia is not on track for a 1.5°C world with fossil fuel emissions increasing with no plan to stop. It notes that while states and territories have net zero targets, the national Government does not.

The Climate Council's *Aim High, Go Fast* report estimated that Australia's fair share to reduce global warming would mean reducing emissions by 75 per cent by 2030, based on 2005 levels, and reaching net zero by 2035.

The scene is set for the nations attending COP 26 to pressure Australia to lift its game.

Actions:

- *Watch Professor Lesley Hughes presentation. You will not see a more straightforward explanation of AR 6 and what it means to Australia.*
- *Examine Australia's Scorecard on our performance against the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The results will surprise you as we currently only meet one goal: SDG3 good health and well-being.*



COP26 - what is it?

Did you know that Zonta International has observer status at COP26?

The UK and Italian Governments are co-hosting COP 26. The meeting held in Glasgow, Scotland, for 12 days from 31 October marks the culmination of many major conferences and negotiations that started with the Climate Ambition Summit in December 2020.

This year meetings have included the Leaders' Summit on Climate in April, the G7 Leaders Summit in June and the approval and release of Assessment Report 6 in August. In September, activities increased with the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly, the Youth4Climate meeting in Milan, the UN Food Systems Summit, the Global Climate Strike, and Pre-COP26 meetings and negotiations.

In October, there will be World Bank Group and International Monetary Funds meetings and the G20 Leaders' Summit in Rome two days before COP 26.

Before COP 26 begins, countries must submit their pledges for future emission reduction (called Nationally Determined Contributions) and most areas of agreement and disagreement will have been identified.

COP26 aims to achieve four goals:

- **Secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach.** This goal involves having ambitious 2030 emissions targets that include phasing out coal, stopping deforestation, speeding up the switch to electric vehicles and encouraging investment in renewables.
- **Adapt to protect communities and natural habitats.** This goal involves countries working together to protect and restore ecosystems and building defences, warning systems and resilient infrastructure and agriculture to avoid loss of homes, livelihoods, and lives.
- **Mobilise finance.** Countries will need to make good on their promises to mobilise at least $100bn in climate finance per year by 2020 – and financial institutions will need to unleash private and public sector finance required to secure global net zero.
- **Work together to deliver.** This goal involves finalising the rules that make the Paris Agreement operational and accelerating action to tackle the climate crisis through collaboration between governments, businesses, and civil society.

Negotiators at COP26 will have a hard time as a UNFCCC report reveals that the NDCs submitted by mid-September will result in a 16% increase in emissions by 2030, compared to 2010 – nowhere near the halving of emissions required to prevent runaway global warming.

When the UK announced an all-male COP26 leadership team for Glasgow, there was a public outcry. The team is now 45 per cent women – but men make up most of the senior public-facing roles.

However, the UN Secretariat supporting COP26 helps to counter this imbalance. Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa a former diplomat from Mexico, leads this team of 450 people. Ms Espinosa took over from Christiana Figueres in 2016.

One day of COP26 debates is devoted to gender issues and discussing the gender action plan (GAP). The GAP seeks to advance gender balance and integrate gender considerations into the COP process. The aim is to achieve gender-responsive climate policy and action. Fleur Newman, a lawyer, leads the gender equality work for the UN Climate Change, and she outlined the GAP process in the recent ZI Panel on Women and Climate Change. Fleur's team reports on gender composition in the COP process and finds that the trend towards more gender-balanced bodies in recent years has reversed. In 2020 females made up, on average, one-third of members of bodies established under the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

The week before COP26, TED hosts a Countdown Summit for 1,000 leaders in Edinburgh for four days of inspiring talks, collaboration, connections and commitments to plan for a net-zero future. TED will share the Summit plan at a live stream event on 30 October.

Actions:

- *Read this summary from the Climate Council on what COP26 means to Australia.*
- *Plan to be energised by watching the TED Countdown live stream event on 30 October.*



How can we get moving to support the COP26 goals

Most of our actions relate to goals 1 and 2.

Goal 1: Secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach.

Phase-out coal – in our last newsletter, we highlighted how the Sharma case found that Hon Sussan Ley, the Federal Minister for the Environment, has a duty of care to protect young people from the impacts of climate change. Her response? She has approved three new coal mine developments in the last three months.

Stop deforestation – the good news is that in Western Australia, logging in native forests will be banned from 2024, but logging continues elsewhere. Do you know what is happening in your state?

Speed up the switch to electric vehicles - Australia is one of only six countries in the OECD without any vehicle-emission standards, and we sell fuel to standards banned in Europe ten years ago. We cannot import the most fuel-efficient vehicles as our fuel is too dirty to use in them! With a quarter of Australian homes having rooftop solar, it would be possible to power up EVs at home. As most driving is in and around our cities, it would make sense to switch to EVs. Many states have introduced incentives for EVs – has yours? A National Electric Vehicle Policy and improved fuel standards will also help stimulate the EV market.

Encourage Investment in renewables? The Clean Energy Council saw a window of opportunity to stimulate the economy post-COVID through a clean energy transition. Over a quarter of Australia's energy came from renewable sources in 2020, with Tasmania achieving 100 per cent renewable energy. However, in 2019-20 gas provided 27 per cent of Australia's energy mix (a rise of 4% on the previous year). The Federal Government has focused investments on more gas-fired power stations to transition from coal to renewable energy. The International Energy Agency's roadmap to net zero by 2050 indicates that from 2021, we should not be approving any new oil and gas fields, coal mines or mine extensions. It looks like Australia may have a lot of stranded assets in years to come.

Goal 2: Adapt to protect communities and natural habitats.

Find out about your State and local councils climate adaptation plans? What are the critical climate risks in your region? Can you participate in local environmental consultation groups?

Actions:

- *Lobby your Federal MPs to support the reintroduction of the revised draft of the Climate Bill on 18 October, the development of a national EV Policy and improved fuel standards.*
- *Lobby your State MPS to find out how they stand on deforestation and providing electric vehicle incentives.*

- *Contact your local councillors to find out how prepared your area is for high-risk climate events.*



Comedian takes a stand at COP2

On a lighter note, advocacy can take many forms – but Comedian Dan Ilic has taken a very novel approach that can't help but raise a smile.

Mr Illic wanted to raise awareness of Australia's poor climate ambition and produced two satirical designs to put on giant billboards. He booked the billboards, shared the project on social media and in just a few days, raised over $60,000 in a crowdfunding campaign to pay for them.

The billboards are located near the COP 26 meeting venues in Glasgow and are bound to catch the eye of international media and negotiators.

***Action**: Smile.*



Food Systems Summit

Humanity needs all nations at COP26 to increase their climate ambition as there is a lot at stake.

Today around 800 million people are hungry, the majority of these are women, and the gender gap for food insecurity is growing. Conflict, Climate, and Covid are three triggers for hunger, and unless COP26 produces results, there may be more hungry people in the world. The latest Hunger Virus media brief from Oxfam points out that ending hunger is possible. How? Governments need to focus on forging peace, reducing armaments, and rebuilding fairer and more sustainable global economies as they recover from the

pandemic. They also need to build more sustainable food systems and narrow the gap between rich and poor people.

The 2021 Food Systems Summit, held online in September, was led by UN Special Envoy Dr Agnes Kalibata, a former Minister for Agriculture and Animal Resources for Rwanda. The Summit was the culmination of two years of consultation that involved 100,000 participants from 147 countries. The Summit looked at the actual costs of food and how they relate to the Sustainable Development Goals. Too often, total food costs do not include those associated with malnutrition (caused by too little or too much food) and environmental degradation.

Women play a crucial role in creating sustainable food systems, with many projects featuring women farmers leading their communities. Over 200 initiatives came out of the Summit, including Making Food Systems Work for Women and Girls, showing women and girls' instrumental roles in creating a more sustainable world.

Action:
Follow CSIRO's three tips to reduce your diet's environmental impact:
1. Know your serving size and stick to it.
2. Eat according to your needs.
3. Reduce food waste and only buy as many groceries as you need!



What is your Present for the Future?

Zonta Says NOW aims to create a gender-equal, sustainable world by educating girls, advocating for women's rights and inspiring more female leaders.

We can achieve this through our service and education programs. The Zonta Foundation for Women relies on your donations to fund our programs that make the world a better place for everyone. With your donations to the Endowment Fund, it will be possible to sustainably double and treble our International projects in this decisive decade for gender equality.

Action: *You can celebrate a birthday or special event by giving a Present for the Future to support Zonta's Endowment Fund and send a colourful e-card to acknowledge the occasion.*

Zonta Says NOW
www.zontasaysnow.org.au
zontasaysnow@gmail.com

This email was sent to {{ contact.EMAIL }}
You received this email because you are registered with Zonta Says NOW

Unsubscribe here

Sent by sendinblue

© 2021 Zonta Says NOW, Zonta International District 23