# Tony Blair criticises current climate policies and calls for pragmatic overhaul



Former Prime Minister Tony Blair has issued a significant critique of current Western approaches to tackling global climate change, describing them as “failing” and calling for a radical overhaul of existing policies. This intervention comes as the UK faces imminent local elections and marks a notable challenge to both the Labour government under Sir Keir Starmer and Energy Secretary Ed Miliband’s commitment to advancing renewable energy.

In the foreword to a new paper published by the Tony Blair Institute (TBI), titled The Climate Paradox: Why We Need to Reset Action on Climate Change, Sir Tony underlines a growing credibility gap between climate policies and public acceptance. He highlights the difficulty of persuading voters to accept financial sacrifices and lifestyle changes when their personal impact on global carbon emissions is minimal. The paper, authored by Lindy Fursman, director of climate and energy policy at TBI, asserts that the international COP (Conference of the Parties) process is no longer delivering climate action at the necessary pace and scale.

Sir Tony Blair states: “Activists have shifted the political centre of gravity on climate, but the movement now needs a public mandate - attainable only through a shift from protest to pragmatic policy.” He explains that while the debate around climate change has successfully raised awareness, it has also become “riven with irrationality,” causing political leaders to be cautious about addressing this reality for fear of being labelled “climate deniers.” This hesitancy has, according to Sir Tony, created a disconnect between policy promises and tangible climate outcomes.

The paper points to several global trends that complicate existing climate strategies. Fossil fuel use is expected to increase until at least 2030, airline travel is predicted to double in the next two decades, and by 2030, nearly two-thirds of global emissions will originate from China, India, and Southeast Asia. Sir Tony describes these as “inconvenient facts,” declaring that “any strategy based on either ‘phasing out’ fossil fuels in the short term or limiting consumption is a strategy doomed to fail.”

While acknowledging the role of COP conferences in setting international ambition, Sir Tony argues their frequency and approach do not match the urgency required: “The great gathering of all the nations has its place - though probably not every year. But the reality is it is the decisions of the large countries, and the policy direction they give towards the technology and the financial flows, which can in truth solve the climate issue.”

The proposed solution by the TBI paper involves creating a new model focused on global cooperation for technological advances. It calls for prioritising investments in carbon capture technologies that trap emissions before they reach the atmosphere, including innovations like direct air capture that remove carbon permanently. The paper suggests that these approaches, rather than simply focusing on eliminating emissions through green energy and electric vehicles, could accelerate progress towards net zero.

Additionally, the report emphasises the potential transformative impact of artificial intelligence (AI) in improving energy efficiency, optimising energy grids, and lowering energy consumption. It argues that harnessing AI could dramatically reduce energy demand and associated emissions.

The paper further advocates increased investment in frontier energy solutions such as new-generation nuclear power and fusion technologies. It highlights the promise of small modular reactors as a way to provide abundant low-pollution energy, create jobs, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels, provided they are effectively integrated into the broader energy strategy.

Nature-based approaches also feature prominently in the report’s recommendations. These include scaling up efforts to plant forests and develop carbon-smart agricultural crops, emphasising the importance of combining natural solutions with scientific innovation.

This intervention from Sir Tony Blair and the Tony Blair Institute presents a clear challenge to current climate policy frameworks, urging a shift from protest-driven activism towards pragmatic policies that align better with political and economic realities. The timing of this critique is significant, as the Labour government prepares for local elections that will test public support for its energy and climate agenda.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://institute.global/insights/climate-and-energy/the-climate-paradox-why-we-need-to-reset-action-on-climate-change> - This URL supports Tony Blair's critique of current climate policies, highlighting the need for a new approach in climate action, focusing on technological solutions and global cooperation.
* <https://institute.global/insights/climate-and-energy/reimagining-the-uks-net-zero-strategy> - This report from the Tony Blair Institute reflects on the UK's net-zero strategy, emphasizing the need for an updated approach to achieve climate goals effectively.
* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/07/27/spare-public-huge-burden-of-net-zero-says-tony-blair/> - This article highlights Tony Blair's concerns about placing significant burdens on the public to tackle climate change, emphasizing that British efforts alone cannot solve global warming.
* <https://climatebarometer.org/tony-blair-institute-survey-on-perceptions-of-net-zero/> - This survey reflects public perceptions of net-zero goals, showing firm support for achieving net zero by 2050, but also notes limited faith in current policies and leadership.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/tony-blair-climate-crisis-andrew-marr-b2382989.html> - This article provides insights into Tony Blair's views on the climate crisis, comparing its urgency with other global issues and emphasizing the role of major emitting countries like China.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This URL is mentioned as the source for the article itself, but does not specifically support any claim without additional context. However, it is the baseline reference for the critique of current climate policies by Tony Blair.
* <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMimwFBVV95cUxPZE5PN3RmcklyeGZnYUc2WkkxdUJaYmRIZHBXV0k0T3hrM2Y0bjNkdll6TW12ZzM0UGJpc25kZFVOYTFtM1JRNy1BVVBMMzh1ZGZ1b0RCWGYxTmRVRnROZUllOWNCUVVMOFBSem1FSm1SWDB2VHF6eXhxWFZyVWMzdjZST0pjZXhCM2NVZVBvSnVhemVPdjU5Q3FsWQ?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data