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Farming

Russia warms to Kyoto, opening way to a world law

Oct 12 2004

Sally Williams, Western Mail

THE Russian government's support for the 1997 Kyoto Protocol clears the way for the treaty to combat global warming to become international law, says WWF Cymru.

It is the world's only international agreement to reduce emissions of CO2 - the main greenhouse gas responsible for climate change and global warming.

Morgan Parry, head of WWF Cymru, said,

"Climate change is a reality and is impacting on people's lives in Wales and across the world. There is a greater need than ever before to have a binding multilateral agreement to combat climate change through reducing our carbon emissions."

The Welsh Assembly Government has welcomed a new report prepared by the Consumer Council for Wales and Friends of the Earth Cymru which shows most people in Wales are worried about climate change and its future impact.

It is the first Wales-wide survey of consumers' attitudes towards climate change.

Mr Parry added, "Climate change is no longer a concept only understood by scientists. It is viewed as a real concern and a serious threat to people's lives in Wales as the Consumer Council's report demonstrates

"While we are pleased that governments are signing up to the Kyoto Protocol, industrialised countries including the UK now need to start implementing it."

WWF Cymru is leading research into consumption and has calculated that each person in Wales is responsible for 12.7 tonnes of carbon emissions a year.

The source of these emissions vary from lifestyle choices such as the cars people drive to purchasing goods and services which cause emissions of greenhouse gases.

A first step to combat global warming, the Kyoto Protocol commits 38 industrialised countries to cut their emissions of greenhouse gases by 2012 to levels that are about 5% below 1990 levels.

Quick Vote



Are the Welsh too nice to be successful?

Yes

31.68%

No

68.32%

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The protocol can only enter into force once 55 countries have ratified, including enough industrialised countries to account for at least 55% of total CO2 emissions from industrialised countries in 1990.

So far, 125 countries have so far ratified the Kyoto Protocol, far more than the 55 countries needed. However, these countries do not yet represent 55% of industrialised-country CO2 emissions. The US - the world's largest emitter of CO2 - declared it will not seek ratification in 2001, making Russia the pivotal country whose ratification makes the Kyoto Protocol become international law.

The report called Climate Concern: Attitudes to Climate Changes and Windfarms in Wales, funded by the Countryside Council for Wales, highlights the following:

Two-thirds of people are worried about climate change and think it could have serious consequences for our way of life in Wales;

Most people think that humans are contributing to climate change but when asked to identify which everyday activities can contribute to climate change, many are unable to do so;

Only one-third are aware that air travel causes climate change, and only just over half know that driving the car causes climate change;

More people are in favour of onshore and offshore windfarms than are opposed to them - but up to 40% are undecided.

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