

Nuclear: an important part of climate change mitigation says former Greenpeace UK

To mark Climate Week NYC taking place on 21-27 September 2015, FORATOM and the *Nuclear for Climate* initiative interviewed Stephen Tindale, CEO of the Alvin Weinberg Foundation, a pro-advanced nuclear group in the UK, and former Executive Director of Greenpeace UK. Mr Tindale explains why nuclear needs to be an important part of the climate change mitigation effort.



Watch [Stephen Tindale's interview](#) on Youtube

Stephen Tindale spent twenty years campaigning against nuclear, but in mid-2005 he began to realise that the climate crisis was so severe that environmentalists needed to rethink their opposition to low-carbon technologies like nuclear. The melting of the Siberian permafrost in the summer of 2005 was a tipping point for him: *"I thought this really is very serious and I then began questioning my opposition to nuclear. I was working for Greenpeace at the time and I couldn't have changed my line on nuclear while still working there. I*

left Greenpeace in 2007. So, after that I decided it was my obligation, having been reasonably prominent in the anti-nuclear camp, to say I now accept I was wrong and nuclear is a necessary part of the solution."

According to Stephen Tindale, the main question for mitigating climate change is 'which energy source should we phase out first'. Environmental activists usually say coal must be the first to go, before nuclear. *"Even if you want to be using 100% renewables, which not everyone does, it's going to take many decades to get there, probably sixty or seventy years at least. So, nuclear is an essential low-carbon bridge technology for those decades."* He adds that nuclear is not the whole answer and points out that *"technology tribalism for those concerned about mitigating climate change is one of the big failures."* All the low-carbon options are needed to address climate change: nuclear, renewables, carbon capture and storage, and energy efficiency. *"We must accept that it has to be an all of the above approach."*

Nuclear for Climate is an initiative of the French Nuclear Society (SFEN), the American Nuclear Society (ANS) and the European Nuclear Society (ENS), which is supported by FORATOM. It brings together over 50,000 scientists from all over the world represented by 40 regional, national and international associations. www.nuclearforclimate.org