

Thank you to NRCM for this recognition. I am honored and humbled.

Thank you to all the NRCM members, partners in Maine's environmental community, citizens who show up time and again to support causes of climate mitigation, adaptation, and justice. You all have created the momentum that has moved Maine forward.

I am honored and lucky to have the opportunity to work with so many internationally recognized scientists that we are fortunate to have in Maine to allow us to develop a climate response based on sound science, to the many in state and local government who I know have worked on climate goals regardless of who is in the Blaine house.

That said, I am grateful for Governor Mills' leadership that catapulted Maine to the front of the pack in a science-based response to the climate crisis that gave us Maine Won't Wait, and not a minute too soon.

We really are living in a remarkable moment in human history and earth's history and what we do each day now is incredibly consequential for the kind of world we live in and leave our children. Children born today will experience 4X to 7X times the extreme events and heat exposure of those born in 1960.

Today, literally, we are watching Bomb cyclones impact both the West Coast and East Coast, fires, droughts and ticks are having a banner year, the August IPCC report is referred to as 'code red for humanity', and even if Glasgow is a major success it will not be near enough to limit warming to 1.5 C.

BUT...

From MWW to Build Back Better to Glasgow there is reason to believe the stars are aligning.

Just like we scientists report on accelerating indicators of a warming planet, I believe we also have the potential to see accelerating solutions as we engage in this work.

Change can happen fast. I used to have to give examples but we all just watched COVID change the world in a week in the winter of 2020.

We know what needs to be done.

It IS NOT a net cost, but a science informed climate response will pay back many times over.

So, I am deeply appreciative of this recognition and the work you all do on our climate response and I look forward to our continued work to meet the climate challenge in the days and years ahead.

Thank you.

Ivan Fernandez

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