

## Anglais / discours 1

Réunion : Ted Talk. *This country isn't just carbon neutral. It's carbon negative.*

Date : 1/04/2016

Durée : 9.30

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Difficulté : niveau 1

Introduction : Bonjour et bienvenue au concours de recrutement d'interprètes de langue française. Vous allez à présent entendre le premier discours : il s'agit d'une intervention d'un représentant du Bhoutan.

Éléments à fournir :

GNH : Gross national happiness	Indice du bonheur national brut
Carbon neutral	Neutre en carbone
Carbon sink	Puits de carbone
Carbon offset	Compensation des émissions de carbone
COP	Conférence des parties

I have the honour of conveying to you the greetings and warm wishes of his Majesty the King of Bhutan.

Bhutan is a small country in the Himalayas.

The reality is that we are a small, underdeveloped country doing our best to survive. But we are doing OK. We are surviving. In fact, we are thriving, and the reason we are thriving is because we've been blessed with extraordinary kings.

Our enlightened monarchs have worked tirelessly to develop our country, balancing economic growth carefully with social development, environmental sustainability and cultural preservation, all within the framework of good governance. We call this holistic approach to development "Gross National Happiness", or GNH. Back in the 1970s, our fourth king famously pronounced that for Bhutan, Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product.

Ever since, all development in Bhutan is driven by GNH, a pioneering vision that aims to improve the happiness and well-being of our people.

But that's easier said than done, especially when you are one of the smallest economies in the world.

Our entire GDP is less than two billion dollars. I know that some of you here are worth more individually than the entire economy of my country.

So, our economy is small, but here is where it gets interesting. Education is completely free. All citizens are guaranteed free school education, and those that work hard are given free college education. Healthcare is also completely free. Medical consultation, medical treatment, medicines: they are all provided by the state. We manage this because we use our limited resources very

carefully, and because we stay faithful to the core mission of GNH, which is development with values. Our economy is small, and we must strengthen it. Economic growth is important, but that economic growth must not come from undermining our unique culture or our pristine environment.

Today, our culture is flourishing. We continue to celebrate our art and architecture, food and festivals, monks and monasteries.

So, our culture is flourishing, but so is our environment. 72 percent of my country is under forest cover. Our constitution demands that a minimum of 60 percent of Bhutan's total land shall remain under forest cover for all time.

Our constitution imposes forest cover on us. Incidentally, our king used this constitution to impose democracy on us. You see, we the people didn't want democracy. We didn't ask for it, we didn't demand it, and we certainly didn't fight for it. Instead, our king imposed democracy on us by insisting that he include it in the constitution. But he went further. He included provisions in the constitution that empower the people to impeach their kings and included provisions in here that require all our kings to retire at the age of 65.

Fact is, we already have a king in retirement: our previous king retired 10 years ago at the peak of his popularity.

So, as I was saying, 72 percent of our country is under forest cover, and all that forest is pristine. That's why we are one of the few remaining global biodiversity hotspots in the world, and that's why we are a carbon neutral country. In a world that is threatened with climate change, we are a carbon neutral country.

Actually, that's not quite accurate. Bhutan is not carbon neutral. Bhutan is carbon negative.

So, inside our country, we are a net carbon sink. Outside, we are offsetting carbon. And this is important stuff. You see, the world is getting warmer, and climate change is a reality. Climate change is affecting my country. Our glaciers are melting, caused flash floods and landslides, which in turn are causing disaster and widespread destruction in our country.

The point is this: my country and my people have done nothing to contribute to global warming, but we are already bearing the brunt of its consequences. And for a small, poor country, one that is landlocked and mountainous, it is very difficult. But we are not going to sit on our hands doing nothing. We will fight climate change. That's why we have promised to remain carbon neutral.

We first made this promise in 2009 during COP 15 in Copenhagen, but nobody noticed. Governments were so busy arguing with one another and blaming each other for causing climate change, that when a small country raised our hands and announced, "We promise to remain carbon neutral for all time", nobody heard us. Nobody cared.

Last December in Paris, at COP 21, we reiterated our promise to remain carbon neutral for all time to come. This time, we were heard. We were noticed, and everybody cared. What was different in Paris was that governments came around together to accept the realities of climate change and were willing to come together and act together and work together. All countries, from the very small to the very large, committed to reduce the greenhouse gases emissions.

It's crucial that all of us keep our commitments. As far as Bhutan is concerned, we will keep our promise to remain carbon neutral. Here are some of the ways we are doing it.

We are providing free electricity to our rural farmers. The idea is that, with free electricity, they will no longer have to use firewood to cook their food. We are investing in sustainable transport and subsidizing the purchase of electric vehicles.

But it is our protected areas that are at the core of our carbon neutral strategy. Our protected areas are our carbon sink. They are our lungs. Today, more than half our country is protected, as national parks, nature reserves and wildlife sanctuaries. But the beauty is that we've connected them all with one another. Isn't that awesome?

We must keep it that way. We must keep our parks awesome. So every year, we set aside resources to prevent poaching, hunting, mining and pollution in our parks, and resources to help communities who live in those parks manage their forests, adapt to climate change, and lead better lives while continuing to live in harmony with Mother Nature.

But that is expensive. Over the next few years, our small economy won't have the resources to cover all the costs that are required to protect our environment. In fact, when we run the numbers, it looks like it'll take us at least 15 years before we can fully finance all our conservation efforts. But neither Bhutan, nor the world can afford to spend 15 years going backwards.

I thank you for listening to our story, a story of how we are keeping our promise to remain carbon neutral, a story of how we are keeping our country pristine, for ourselves, our children, for your children and for the world.

Thank you very much.

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