



## Climate Change: What Can We Do?

### WE CAN PLAY A KEY ROLE

**Decisions and actions taken in the next decade will determine if the planet is livable for thousands of years—even though some of the effects of these actions might not actually be seen for decades or centuries. We can play a key role.**

We can limit the increase in global temperature, restore the environment, and reduce further damage—but this means making some big changes right now. Worldwide, by 2025 we must drastically reduce the release of greenhouse gasses, especially CO<sub>2</sub> and methane, and other pollutants that cause climate change. We must eliminate them by 2050 in order to prevent the most catastrophic effects of climate change. This is a huge challenge—but we already have the technology, resources, and intelligence to do this.

Efforts by government and industry have fallen short. People throughout the world must work together and demand the needed changes. Only an inclusive, powerful, global movement, based on our common interests, can make governments, communities, industries, and others take immediate action to create a just transition to sustainable economies, equitable societies, and a livable planet.

The global climate crisis is one of several damaging consequences of the oppressive and exploitative system in which we live. We cannot solve this crisis without also addressing other phenomena connected to the economic system, such as oppression (including racism, classism, sexism), the exploitation of people and the land, capitalism, and war. This means ending profit as the driving force

in our economic system. It also means ending the divisions among people and nations and uniting to solve this crisis. We must find solutions that are in everyone's interests, solutions that do not harm any group for the benefit of another. Ending oppression and exploitation benefits everyone. We can reduce inequities and create economies and societies that give everyone everywhere a chance for good lives and a livable, flourishing planet.

The nations and people most vulnerable to climate extremes (frontline populations) are those that have been targeted with oppression, exploitation, war, and genocide. Global solutions to climate change depend on leadership by frontline populations, and inclusion of their thinking and perspectives. The broader population also needs to be educated about climate change—its causes, and its possible solutions. We must overcome the effects of decades of misinformation and lies spread by industries and governments. To be successful, we need everyone's informed thinking and involvement.

### KEY ACTIONS

**Below is our summary of key actions that we can take to secure a sustainable, safer future:**

#### Energy use and policy

- Rapidly end the exploration, extraction, and production of fossil fuels (including fracking); rapidly and drastically reduce the consumption of fossil fuels; and end the subsidies and investments that encourage their use, leaving much of it in the ground.
- Support a planned and coordinated transition from fossil fuel energy to a publicly-owned renewable energy system using sources such as wind, solar,

## WHAT IS HUMAN-CAUSED CLIMATE CHANGE?

Carbon dioxide, methane, and other gasses (greenhouse gasses) primarily produced by burning coal, oil, and gas (fossil fuels) are accumulating in the atmosphere and acting like the glass in a greenhouse—trapping heat around the Earth. Other primary causes include deforestation and most current agricultural practices. As a result, global temperatures are rising with world-wide impacts that include extreme heat, damage to our food and water supply, loss of many species, devastating storms, rising sea levels, increases in diseases, and more. Scientific data indicates that we must act to stop the temperature rise soon, by greatly reducing the activities that produce the accumulation of these gasses and the carbon they release into the atmosphere. Failing to address this problem now could cause unimaginable loss of life and harm to our societies.

geothermal, micro-hydro, and wave and tidal systems. Share technical energy knowledge and expertise globally.

- Reduce energy consumption to the level of rational need; make all energy use more efficient; convert fossil fuel-powered equipment, buildings, and appliances to electric power.
- Make electricity a common good for everyone.
- Decommission nuclear reactors only when they can be replaced by renewable sources of energy (not fossil fuels).
- Support the development of community-based and led energy projects.

### Agriculture, other land use, and food

- Adopt climate-friendly farming and livestock-raising techniques, and agroecological methods (agricultural practices, such as growing different types of crops together, that don't hurt people or sacrifice ecosystems) that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase storage of carbon in the soil and in perennial plants.



*Sustaining All Life* (SAL) is an international grassroots organization working to end the climate emergency within the context of ending all divisions among people. *United to End Racism* (UER) consists of a wide diversity of people in many different countries, who are dedicated to eliminating racism in the world and supporting the efforts of all other groups with this goal. UER and SAL are projects of and use the tools of Re-evaluation Counseling. Re-evaluation Counseling (RC) is a well-defined theory and practice that helps people of all ages and backgrounds exchange effective help with each other in order to free themselves from emotional harm resulting from oppression and other hurts. By taking turns listening to each other and encouraging the release of painful emotions, people can heal old hurts and become better able to think, to speak out, and to organize and lead others in building a world in which human beings and other life forms are valued and the environment is restored and preserved. Re-evaluation Counseling currently exists in 95 countries.



[SustainingAllLife.org](http://SustainingAllLife.org)



[UnitedToEndRacism.org](http://UnitedToEndRacism.org)



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- Protect and restore areas that absorb carbon from the atmosphere (such as oceans, forests, peat lands, and wetlands) with the engagement of the people who inhabit these places. End deforestation and restore both tropical and temperate forests.
- Increase plant-rich diets and, in the wealthy countries, reduce livestock and animal-product consumption to sustainable, healthy levels.
- Reduce and compost food waste.
- Place strong limits on the use of biofuels.

### **Resilient, sustainable communities**

- Make countries and communities resilient by providing everyone the resources they need to adapt to and reduce the impacts of climate change. This includes nutritious food, clean water, affordable housing, renewable electricity, health care, education, adequately paid work, and job training.
- Protect the Earth's fresh water and use it for sustaining all life.
- Encourage and support lifestyle changes, commercial changes, and zero-waste strategies that reduce consumption—especially in the wealthy countries and communities where consumption is the highest and most wasteful.
- Replace fossil fuel products, including plastics, with biodegradable materials.
- End war and support universal demilitarization; use military budgets to fund the transition to a sustainable, renewable, clean-energy future.
- Address over-population by providing education and self-determination for all girls and women, and making family planning services available to all who want them.

### **Transportation, buildings, and other sectors**

- Provide access to widespread, affordable public transportation that is powered by renewable energy.

- Replace gas-powered vehicles and equipment with electric-powered ones. Allocate sufficient resources to research and development of battery storage solutions that do not rely on exploitation of workers or fragile ecosystems.
- Reorganize our societies so that people rely less on travel and shipping, including by living and working in their local communities.
- Rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from refrigerants, manufacture of cement, intentional burning of forests, and other high-emission practices.
- Modify existing buildings to be energy efficient and use energy from renewable sources. Require new buildings to be near or net-zero energy.
- Work for zero waste industrial, construction, and production practices.

### **SUPPORT AND HEALING**

Everyone understandably has feelings about climate change—grief, fear, anger, despair. Painful emotions, as well as numbness and denial, can limit our ability to face the problem fully. It can also make it more difficult for us to think well. Rooted in the ways that oppression and other hurtful experiences have damaged us, they can affect our hope for the future as well as our ability to work together on solutions.

When people express negative feelings as they are listened to with caring and without judgment, the painful emotions can be released. The feelings become less of a barrier to effective thinking and collaboration. As people talk, cry, tremble, laugh, and express upset, they heal from the hurts of oppression and from feelings of powerlessness, despair, or denial. Supporting people to heal emotionally in this way will strengthen our efforts to address the climate emergency and enhance our chances of success.

## We need everyone

Both individual and collective actions are needed, from the local to the international level. Individual initiatives one could take include:

- Continue learning about the climate emergency, its effects everywhere (including in frontline communities), and how to take effective action.
- Talk with people everywhere about climate change—the causes and consequences, the larger impacts on low-income and frontline communities, and the solutions.
- Join organizations that are addressing these issues and bring these issues to organizations that you are already a part of.
- Find your voice and courage to speak out and take bigger and bolder actions than you have ever taken before to challenge this threat to us all.
- Continue to develop your understanding of and your ability to take action against all oppressions that mistreat and divide people.
- Lower your personal carbon footprint. There are many online resources for this.
- Create opportunities to listen and be listened to about worries and fears about the climate emergency so that we may all think more clearly, act more powerfully, and stay connected as the climate crisis progresses.
- Take time to notice, appreciate, and connect with the beauty and qualities of the natural world that supports us all.

## ORGANIZING WIDELY

Collectively, we must work across communities, nations, groups of all kinds. This will require organizing broadly, being inclusive and thoughtful of all people. We must do this as effectively and quickly as we can. To assist in our efforts we can:

- Support the sovereignty and leadership of Indigenous nations and tribal peoples.
- Support the leadership and involvement of frontline populations, youth, women, and workers and ensure that those most directly affected get to speak for themselves and are heard.
- Work for solutions (like those in this document) that benefit everyone. Oppose proposals that sacrifice any population—be watchful for “solutions” that benefit corporations or wealthy countries at the expense of poor nations and frontline communities.
- Build an inclusive global movement to end climate change and rid society of exploitation and oppression, creating a sustainable, equitable future for all humans that supports all life and the planet.
- Ensure that wealthy countries provide resources for global solutions to climate change and adaptation, providing other countries the technology and funds as needed for locally appropriate initiatives to adapt to and work to address human-caused climate change.
- Address oppression, exploitation, and inequality as we address climate change.
- Ensure a stable and just transition for workers in the fossil fuel and other impacted industries.
- Welcome everyone into our movement and help everyone see the connections between the climate emergency and their own lives and interests.
- Develop programs for people and businesses to reduce their carbon emissions—especially in the wealthy countries, where individual emissions have been the highest.



Sustaining All Life

**For more information, see:**

[www.sustainingalllife.org](http://www.sustainingalllife.org) or [www.unitedtoendracism.org](http://www.unitedtoendracism.org)  
or **write:** Sustaining All Life/United to End Racism  
19370 Firlands Way N, Shoreline, WA 98133-3925 USA  
Email: [sal@rc.org](mailto:sal@rc.org) • Tel: +1-206-284-0311

