

# How to Solve Global Warming

Greenpeace is an independent campaigning organization that acts to expose global environmental problems and achieve solutions that are essential to a green and peaceful future. We have 3 million members worldwide.

## Energy Revolution

In the US, Greenpeace is working to pass science-driven federal climate legislation that will avert the most dangerous impacts of global warming, and to ensure the US rejoins the global community in a strong, binding international climate treaty. We educate and mobilize citizens who will ensure that Congress and our President do their part to stop global warming and launch a clean energy revolution. Our campaign, Project Hot Seat, is working across the country alongside national organizations, local organizations, and citizens in their own communities to make sure that candidates for Congress listen to their voters and commit themselves to solving global warming and giving Americans economic opportunities and energy security in the new clean energy economy. The American people are ready to do their part. It's time our members of Congress did theirs.

## GLOBAL WARMING PLATFORM

### AMERICA MUST ACT

Global warming is already impacting the planet. In 2007, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said warming of the climate system is unequivocal and directly linked to human activity, primarily the burning of fossil fuels. Global warming threatens America and the world with more frequent and more severe storms, new outbreaks of diseases and crop pests, and massive coastal flooding. Scientists have documented that Arctic sea ice is melting rapidly and the Western United States already may be in permanent drought. We cannot wait any longer to deal with global warming.

### PUT A LIMIT ON POLLUTION

Concentrations of greenhouse gas emissions are now the highest they have been in 650,000 years. It is clear we must immediately and drastically reduce our emissions to avoid catastrophic climate impacts. Our targets for emissions reductions must be determined by science not politics. Developed countries must reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 25percent below 1990 levels by 2020, and at least 80percent below 1990 levels by 2050. It is crucial that when these reductions are put into action, the Environmental Protection Agency is given the authority to regularly review developments in the best available science, assess the effectiveness of any national program to avoid dangerous climate change in light of that science, and use its regulatory authority to respond rapidly.

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## CAP, TRADE AND AUCTION:

To achieve science-based targets, the US needs an economy wide cap-and-trade system to limit and reduce our national greenhouse gas emissions. The industries that profit from pollution must pay for the right to do so. Polluters must buy 100percent of all permit allowances at public auctions managed by open and transparent bodies. Revenues from the auction must be used for public benefit, not for windfall profits to the fossil fuel industry. To ensure the US is taking responsibility for its own emissions, and that polluters are required to actually reduce their emissions, no offsets should be allowed in the plan.

## LET STATES GO FURTHER:

Climate legislation should support states' authority to go beyond federal standards to reduce global warming pollution. The crucial need for deep greenhouse gas emission reductions from every source will require that states and regions have the authority do all that they can, as soon as they can.

## ASSIST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES:

Because global warming crosses all borders, so, too, must the coming energy revolution. Assistance to developing countries to implement clean energy and avoid deforestation must achieve real reductions that are verifiable, permanent, enforceable and go beyond business as usual. In addition, in recognition of its disproportionate contribution to global warming, the US should provide assistance to the most vulnerable developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island states, to help them adapt to the unavoidable impacts of global warming. Because vulnerable and disproportionately impacted communities exist within our borders as well, domestic global warming policies must provide assistance to states and tribes to help these communities adapt to the unavoidable impacts of global warming and participate in the clean energy economy in an equitable manner.

## TRANSITION AMERICA TO A CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY:

Investments in clean energy technologies and green jobs ensure a bright future for the American economy and the American worker. Policies should promote and expand renewable energy development and deployment, economy-wide efficiency programs, and incentives for smart growth cities and public transit infrastructure. Policies should ensure a just transition that creates new jobs, retrains the workforce and supports affected workers and communities.

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## LEAD INTERNATIONALLY:

It is time that the US takes responsibility and takes the lead. The US needs to work through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to reach an international agreement to avoid catastrophic impacts of global warming and commit to the strong, science-based short- and long-term emissions reduction targets needed to keep global temperature rises below 2 degrees Celsius. In 2007, working through the Convention, the international community set a course to reach a new global agreement in 2009. The US must work constructively within this process throughout 2009, with the goal of ratifying the final agreement in 2010.

As part of this process, the US must also commit to provide funding to help those nations most affected by global warming. We must transfer clean energy technologies, which do not include coal or nuclear energy, to the developing world. We must support legitimate national approaches to avoid deforestation that supplement aggressive domestic emissions reductions. And we must provide financial assistance to help developing countries adapt to the impacts of global warming.

## USE ENERGY MORE EFFICIENTLY

To stabilize the climate, we need to do more with the energy we generate. We have the technology today to use less energy, reduce pollution and cut Americans' rising energy bills. It is time for Congress to set a clear national energy efficiency goal—a national energy efficiency resources standard of 20 percent by 2015—to drive up demand for clean energy products and services.

Transportation accounts for roughly 25 percent of global warming pollution in the US. It's time to dramatically improve our automobile fuel efficiency, invest in mass transit, and promote smart growth. For every \$5 the federal government currently spends on transportation, only \$1 goes to public transportation. Federal funding should be shifted to provide Americans with more affordable and low-polluting transportation options. Fuel efficiency standards should be set to drive new technological developments rather than follow them and should be regularly increased to mandate the most fuel-efficient technology possible. Doing this will save consumers money and reduce our dependence on oil.

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## INVEST IN CLEAN RENEWABLES, NOT DANGEROUS DISTRACTIONS

Our climate policy should support and reward accelerated public and private investment in clean renewable sources of energy. By increasing our use of energy from the sun, wind, sustainable crops and other renewable resources, we can reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and ensure a more secure energy future. A Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) would require utilities to gradually increase the amount of renewable energy they use to generate electricity each year. A RES of at least 25percent by 2025 will create quality jobs, save consumers money, and reduce global warming pollution.

## NO COAL OR INVESTMENT IN RISKY COAL TECHNOLOGIES:

Coal is the dirtiest of all fuels. A nationwide moratorium on the construction of new conventional coal plants should be immediately enacted.

Carbon capture and storage (CCS)—the process of trapping carbon dioxide from fossil fuel combustion and storing it underground—is a risky, expensive and unproven technology that will not deliver in time to avoid catastrophic global warming. New evidence shows that CCS could actually increase other forms of harmful pollution. Liquid coal a technology that converts coal into liquid fuel—releases almost twice the global warming emissions per gallon as regular gasoline, making a hybrid filled with liquid coal as dirty as a Hummer. Our government should not fund and/or mandate the production of liquid coal or CCS technology.

## NUCLEAR:

To adequately address global warming, US policy must encourage clean technologies that can be deployed quickly and affordably. This rules out nuclear power. Nuclear power is as dirty and dangerous as it has always been. Pursuing new nuclear reactors that won't produce electricity for at least another decade—at a cost of \$12 to \$24 billion per nuclear plant—creates opportunity costs that make stopping global warming even more difficult. By contrast, every dollar spent on energy efficiency and renewables like wind and solar goes up to ten times further in reducing global warming pollution than a dollar spent on nuclear power. The federal government should not be subsidizing this dangerous industry.

## BIOFUELS:

Some new biofuel technologies show promise as clean energy sources, but corn-based ethanol does not. Experts agree that corn-based ethanol offers only a marginal reduction (roughly 15 percent on average) in global warming pollution over conventional fuels. This is not enough. Investment in new fuels should focus on “second generation biofuels,” which significantly reduce global warming pollution and can be made from grass, agricultural waste, and forestry waste. US policy should boost sustainable production of US-grown, second-generation biofuels and eliminate biofuel imports from nations that do not have strict environmental criteria for their production.