



AMERICAN CLIMATE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Washington, D.C. | September 14-15, 2016

Recommendations Report

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ecoAmerica would like to thank the following partners for their collaboration and support, both intellectually and financially, for the 2016 American Climate Leadership Summit.

PARTNERS



The Nature Conservancy is the leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people.



The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supports creative people, effective institutions, and influential networks building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world.



The Climate Reality Project exists to catalyze a global solution to the climate crisis by making urgent action a necessity across every level of society.

A special thank you to the following people and organizations, who provided financial support for the Summit:

Bonwood Social Investments

Paul Junger Witt

Outrider Foundation

George Washington University, Milken Institute School of Public Health & Lynn Goldman, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.

Adele Simmons



Dear Climate Leaders,

More than 200 diverse CEO-level organizational and thought leaders from business, health, faith, higher education, communities, government, culture, philanthropy, and climate gathered in Washington D.C. on September 14-15, 2016 for the annual American Climate Leadership Summit. These days of inspiration and collaboration broadened and elevated climate leadership in America, while focusing on climate solutions and their impacts.

For the world to have a sustainable, healthy, and just future we need broader public support and political will for climate solutions. **Polls indicate that Americans are becoming ever more aware and concerned about climate change, and not simply urging the government to take action, but taking action themselves.** The American Climate Leadership Summit was designed as an opportunity for leaders from a variety of sectors and backgrounds to engage with one another and learn from their peers, as well as from the leading environmental organizations in America.

This report captures the information shared by individuals and working groups over those two days, including the outputs from structured and collaborative sector-specific planning sessions. **The report provides specific, prioritized, and actionable recommendations for new initiatives and cross-sector collaborations to accelerate climate solutions.**

We would like to thank all of the speakers and participants for their insights and contributions. Without your participation this event would not have been such an immense success, and we look forward to continued collaboration as we help move America toward effective, sustainable, and just solutions to climate change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Bob Perkowitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Bob Perkowitz
President, ecoAmerica

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“Thank you for the opportunity to focus on the future of the planet and life for future generations. An added bonus is the possibility of making life better for us, too.”

– Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker, Director, AME Social Action Commission, The African Methodist Episcopal Church

“Thank you for gathering us. As faith communities, we talk to each other quite a bit, but opportunities to interact with the health sector are so rare and important. I truly appreciated this... Also, the remarks from the two senators were particularly EXCELLENT.”

– Shantha Ready Alonso, Creation Justice Ministries

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The theme of the American Climate Leadership Summit 2016 was “Climate Solutions,” and we explored that question from a number of perspectives. Here are the key highlights from the two days of inspiring speakers, panel discussions, working groups, and strategy sessions.

Our featured speakers galvanized us with words of hope, encouragement, and personal insights. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) encouraged us to **step up our lobbying efforts to encourage Congress to address climate change**. Faith, health, corporate, NGOs and all other organizations should make climate a part of the discussion on their visits to Congress, in DC, the states, and districts.

Mark Tercek, President and CEO of The Nature Conservancy, outlined a major shift in TNC’s priorities to **scale up climate work using conservation as a key solution and motivator of public support for solutions**.

Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI) explained **ten ways in which we are collectively winning on climate**, and remind us that effective climate leadership can come from anywhere.

Day 1 morning sessions featured scientists and climate leaders sharing ideas on what we need to do to safeguard our future and better engage society on solutions. Priorities included the need to **communicate the benefits of action, consider natural climate solutions, and let Congress and the media know that there is broad support for climate action**.

In the afternoon sessions, CEOs from faith, health, business, and local communities identified strategies for making climate change a public interest. These included creating **paths for people to participate in climate action, working with institutional leadership, and connecting solutions with common values**. Additional priorities included **mobilizing voters, using regional partnerships to break down barriers, and broadening the climate movement to include children, women, and people of color**.

On Day 2 of the Summit, faith, health, and communities leaders gathered with their peers to address ways engage both their sectors and society on climate. Key recommendations include **collaborating across sectors, using storytelling to create personal relevance, and leveraging local wins** to build momentum and scope.

This report contains more information on each of the sessions and speakers. ecoAmerica will be incorporating the synergies, insights, and actionable proposals from the Summit to inspire and empower our climate leadership in the upcoming months – and your organization can too!



OPENING REMARKS

THANK YOU TO OUR EMCEES



Vanessa Hauc
Correspondent
Noticiero Telemundo



Meighen Speiser
Chief Engagement Officer
ecoAmerica

SUMMIT OPENING REMARKS



Lynn Goldman
M.D., M.P.H., M.S., *Dean of the Milken Institute School of Public Health*

Environmental protection is a public health issue, and this is particularly true of climate change. Climate change affects our health and the health of our unborn children with issues such as hay fever, pollen count, and diseases like the Zika virus and Dengue. We are doing research on climate change, and in cities where leaders are open to talking about the issue, local community organizations can make a difference. We cannot face this challenge without global participation.



Bob Perkowitz
President, *ecoAmerica*; Director, *Bonwood Social Investments*

We are all climate leaders, from all walks of life. The earth is getting warmer very quickly now. We are setting new temperature records each month. We are here today to stop that trend. So, the theme of this summit is solutions. We are just some of the many people around the world working on climate solutions. **The thing we all need most, the thing we all should be working on most, is greater public support and political will for unambiguous climate solutions.** The organizations represented in this room touch millions of Americans. We can still achieve those solutions by moving our own organizations, our sectors, our society, and especially ourselves toward climate action. If we succeed, we can have a beautiful future on a beautiful planet. If not... the consequences are almost unimaginable. We have the solutions at hand. Let's all redouble our efforts to get the support and the legislation we need to implement them.

MORNING KEYNOTE

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse

Senator, Rhode Island, *United States Senate*

As a member of Congress, I want to share with you that hope is not inappropriate. There is a path for significant climate progress.

We know the barriers: climate change masquerades as a partisan issue in the U.S. Congress, because the folks who profit from the status quo have created a campaign of threats to silence opposition. Citizens United brought brand new political artillery onto the political field of combat. The threats to silence Republicans and mask climate change as a political issue have grown much more powerful – but **there are Republican Senators who are ready to move on this issue.** I know this because I have talked to them. Why are they not taking action? Because they are not getting any help. The American corporate community is missing from the conversation, even though the absence of lobbying by major companies that are leading in sustainability is adverse to their own corporate practices.

This year, 154 corporations signed up to back the President in the Paris agreement. If half of those companies lobbied their legislators and showed they were supportive of climate action, it would change the world. There is a lot of agreement about the substance of what must be done to reach our climate goals. Everyone who completes a climate analysis comes to the same place: there must be a revenue-neutral, border-adjustable price on carbon. The National Academy of Science says there needs to be economic motivation on a large scale to make this happen; all of the brilliant things companies do on their own is not going to get us there.

American corporate community, you could solve this problem in a week if you put your mind to it.

That is my situation report from Congress. I hope it gives you a path to optimism.

“This year, 154 corporations signed up to back the President in the Paris Agreement. If half of those companies lobbied their legislators and showed they were supportive of climate action, it would change the world.”



SESSION ONE

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS – CAN WE DO IT, AND HOW?

America’s most renowned scientists and experts offered thoughts on what we need to do to have a safe future.

Moderated by Frank Loy
Chair of the Board, *ecoAmerica*



Michael E. Mann
Distinguished Professor and Director, *Earth System Science Center, Penn State U*

There’s no debate over whether climate change is real, human caused, or a present threat. We see the impacts playing out in front of us. They are no longer subtle. Yet climate change denial has set us back and keeps evolving. The main message used to be that it is not happening or not due to humans. Now they’re saying it is too late to do anything about it. But that opposition is becoming increasingly irrelevant. We are moving on. The commitments made in Paris get us on the path, but they are not enough. There is only one meaningful path forward, and that’s action. Our response should not be grounded in just science and economics. It should be grounded in ethics and the moral obligation to leave behind a world that’s not irreparably damaged by climate change. We face a stark choice.



Betsy Taylor
President, *Breakthrough Strategies and Solutions*

The commitments made in Paris, executed perfectly, are still insufficient to get CO₂ levels in the atmosphere to a safe level. We need more. We should focus on agricultural solutions. Plants pull carbon dioxide out of the air and exude oxygen. Carbon can also be held in the soil by building its quality. Many ranchers in the U.S. and Africa are building soil by migrating herds and managing animals. There are many co-benefits associated with this technique, including water management and increased soil fertility. Our vision must be a huge land restoration effort. We are in a global war on carbon, and to be successful we must mobilize globally. We must end fossil fuel dependence in our lifetime.



Bronson Griscom
Director, Forest Carbon Science, *The Nature Conservancy*

A problem like this tends to focus on specific and technical solutions. But how much can nature (through plants), and plants (through their own tissue), contribute to climate mitigation? There are three types of actions we can take to enable nature to store more carbon: protect ecosystems, restore ecosystems, and improve land management. We’ve analyzed these three actions within the Earth’s three biomes – forests, grasslands, and wetlands – and identified 32 potential steps to take. Reforestation and avoiding the conversion of forests for other land uses are two of the biggest pathways to reducing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. There are a variety of other co-benefits associated with these actions, such as economic benefits and increased water availability. It’s clear that there is a social imperative to re-greening the planet.

Bill Ritter Jr.

Director, Center for the New Energy Economy, *Colorado State University*

There is no silver bullet; the solution involves policy and the interplay between policy and finance, on all levels. Let's look at what can be done at the state level. If all states embraced an energy-efficiency agenda, there would be a tremendous value to consumers and a tremendous ability to reduce emissions. But while it's important to focus on the clean energy revolution at the federal, state, and local levels, we must also understand that this disruption will have a devastating effect on communities around the country that have made commitments to fossil fuels. These communities have made huge investments to powering this country and developing a middle class. We owe them something. They have enabled us to become an industrial power, and as we disrupt their economic situation, justice requires that we manage the transition for them and include them in the clean energy revolution.

**Joe Romm**

Chief Science Advisor, *Years of Living Dangerously*

What will happen to people in the next five years because of climate change is as significant as the impact the internet has had over the last 25 years. Avoiding catastrophic climate change will soon become the organizing principle for all humanity. Clean energy costs have fallen, which is a game changer, and the variability of supply has not proven to be a barrier to deep penetration of renewables in the energy mix. The technology keeps getting better in wind and solar, and according to the IEA (International Energy Agency), renewables will be the primary source of our power by 2030. But we must cut indoor carbon dioxide levels as well. The single biggest public health risk to our kids is that carbon dioxide levels affect human brain cognition.



SESSION TWO

SUPPORT FOR SOLUTIONS – SUCCESS FACTORS

CEOs from America’s leading climate organizations offered thoughts on mobilizing organizations and better engaging society in addressing climate change.

Moderated by Bob Perkowitz

President, *ecoAmerica*; Director, *Bonwood Social Investments*



Fred Krupp

President, *Environmental Defense Fund*

The Environmental Defense Fund believes in using science, economics, and a bipartisan approach to build an alliance to form solutions that allow nature and people to prosper. How can we leverage this three-pronged approach to generate the most results, and how can we align on what needs to be done? As it turns out, incentives influence human behavior. As long as it is cost-free to pollute, we will create a lot of pollution – we must demand that Congress put a price on carbon. Americans want cleaner air, cleaner energy, and a better future for their children. We need to depolarize climate change and lift it above the partisanship that has kept Congress from passing legislation. Every major environmental legislation has been formed in a bipartisan way, so the environmental community must be willing to praise Republicans who lead on the issue.



May Boeve

Executive Director, *350.org*

We are in a serious fight against a powerful adversary. But unlike ten years ago, we are united in this fight. It is growing, it is surging. We need a movement big enough to matter and capture the public imagination. We must make a case to the world that we must learn to value different things, build a different society, and change our economic practices. One of the things that we must understand is that everyone has different needs. We can only understand a message from someone who is speaking our language. What messaging will it take to get everyone pushing in the same direction?



Mark Reynolds

Executive Director, *Citizens' Climate Lobby*

When you give people a “doom and gloom” message, it hurts more than it helps, but when you introduce a solution, they believe that you understand the issue. To build a movement, we must focus on all that can be done. We need public support for this movement, and we need to make sure the money generated from solutions goes back to the public. There is a lot of enthusiasm for that amongst Republicans. We need to make sure Congressional leaders know there is support back home for climate solutions. This is not the most partisan of partisan issues. Both parties are working together on it, and we expect to see more of that in the next Congress.

**Kenneth Berlin**

President and CEO, *The Climate Reality Project*

Americans want action on climate change, but Congress is more interested in how many people are voting on climate. We need climate leaders to speak to their peers and build public support. Climate change threatens to overwhelm the progress we've made and our ability to have a just and healthy society. Everyone must be made aware of this. We have to show people that solving climate change can be done in a way that benefits all. We must convey the message so that people understand they can deal with this now.



LUNCHTIME KEYNOTE

Mark Tercek

President and CEO, *The Nature Conservancy*

At The Nature Conservancy, we view **climate change as the biggest threat to earth and the biggest challenge to fulfilling our mission**. I'm here to tell you why and how addressing climate change became our number one priority. And I want to argue that each and every person and each and every organization in this room has the opportunity to make a significant impact in addressing this challenge.

Our work is firmly rooted in science, collaboration, and boots on the ground to protect and restore important lands and waters. Through this approach we pioneered the land trust movement, acquiring more than 7 million acres in the U.S. alone. But as the threats to nature became more complex, we came to realize that buying land to protect nature would only get us so far. Science is once again guiding us on the next big step in our evolution: addressing the climate challenge. **As a science-based organization, I can tell you that the science here is crystal clear: we must tackle climate change with urgency and bold action.** The reality is that climate change threatens all of our work going forward. It also threatens to undo much of what TNC has accomplished over the last 65 years. Each of you in this room probably has your own tangible example of how climate is impacting the mission of your organization, business, or community. These changes are real. They are happening now.

Let me tell you a little about three areas where we concluded TNC can build on our strengths to make a big and positive difference on climate. First, it turns out that protecting ecosystems is a central pillar of tackling the climate challenge. Our scientists have determined that [protecting, restoring, and changing how we manage forests and other ecosystems could contribute more than a third of the greenhouse gas reductions needed to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement](#). These natural climate solutions are not only cost-effective, they also deliver a number of important co-benefits. Realizing the full potential of these natural climate solutions will take great levels of collaboration. Progress here will also need new and larger sources of funding. We are structuring more and more conservation projects in ways that generate financial returns alongside environmental and social returns.

"... I believe we can accelerate progress in a significant way. We're a diverse group of organizations ready to make a very big and very positive difference on climate."



Our second big area of focus is to build on our ability to advocate for smart policy at the local, state, and federal levels. Each one of our state chapters has a clear and thoughtful strategy to pursue action on climate in their state. Using our local knowledge, experience, expertise, and relationships, we're pushing for practical solutions to the climate challenge. We're sharing information on best practices and policies to accelerate implementation of renewable energy in a way that makes economic sense. **Combining our strengths allows us to get more done more quickly and on a greater scale than we could by ourselves.**

Finally, the third climate strategy where we think TNC can make an outsized impact is to help others be smarter and faster at renewable energy siting. At TNC, we have expertise in identifying places where these renewable resources can be located to minimize conflicts with wildlife and other users of the land. We also determine how to offset unavoidable impacts through preservation and restoration of other lands with high conservation value. We call this strategy Development by Design. By using our science to avoid conflict over land use, we can actually help accelerate the permitting process for renewable energy.

I'd like to leave you with three ideas that guide our work at TNC—ideas that I think any organization could use for mapping out their own climate strategies.

1. We pursue solutions that will endure. For instance, the broader the support, the more likely it is that the policy solution will stick. To make this happen, it helps to put ideology aside and instead try to find common ground. It means forming partnerships with unconventional allies. And it means tapping into shared values to find policy and other climate solutions that create win-win opportunities.
2. It's important that policies be cost-effective and economically sensible. That's why we're in favor of a price on carbon. While we're doing everything we can at the federal level, we're also working hard to support the great progress we're seeing in the states.
3. Organizations are most effective when they play to their core strengths. So I urge each of you to think hard about how you can leverage your organization's strengths to most effectively address the climate challenge. And let's support one another and learn from each other. **The challenge is too great and the time too short to worry if any one action or organization is doing it exactly right. The more strategies the better. We need all hands on earth to pull this off.**

At TNC, we have this great and proud history. Each time we've faced a significant challenge in our 65-year history, we've asked ourselves, "How can TNC make the biggest difference?" That's what we're trying to do now in climate. We're not straying from our core mission. We're drawing on our core strengths to maximize our impact. That's my advice to you today—think about how you can put your organizations' core strengths to work on climate. If we seek enduring solutions, focus on cost-effective policies, and leverage our own organizational strengths, **I believe we can accelerate progress in a significant way. We're a diverse group of organizations ready to make a very big and very positive difference on climate. Let's get to work. There's no time to waste.**

SESSION THREE

MAKING CLIMATE A PUBLIC INTEREST

Prominent leaders from faith, health, business, and local communities identified strategies for making climate change a public interest.

Moderated by Lisa Renstrom
Chair, *Interfaith Power & Light*



Mayor Jackie Biskupski
35th Mayor, *Salt Lake City*

By serving as a state legislator, I was able to gain an understanding of my colleagues and learn how to get things done. Talking about climate change can create resistance, but when you break down the issues related to climate change, the buy-in is there. For instance, to improve air quality we set a goal to provide 100% renewable energy to our community by 2032. We made sure that goal was realistic and that we had measurable benchmarks along the way. I know that the people I represent are committed to climate solutions, so we are creating a path for them to participate as individuals, such as giving them tax credits for electric cars. My advice: work to broaden the base by looking to people in your city and community.



Kathy Gerwig
VP Employee Safety, Health and Wellness and Environmental Stewardship Officer, *Kaiser Permanente*

We can broaden the base of support in healthcare by considering a few things. Firstly, the healthcare sector is culpable in climate change, as it accounts for 8% of the greenhouse gas emissions in this country. Secondly, healthcare is on the front lines, as it absorbs the cost and the needs of those affected by climate change. Thirdly, healthcare is in a unique position to find solutions for its own sector as well as to be an example to the broader economy. We can prove that it is possible to provide affordable healthcare and be on the leading edge of climate. Kaiser Permanente has adopted a goal to be carbon neutral by 2020, as we believe that anything less than this is not commensurate with the health threat climate change presents. We must find a broader base of people who can support these types of efforts. Right now is an opportune time to engage with the health sector, since the Affordable Care Act now requires nonprofit hospitals in this country to do community health needs assessments.



Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker
Director, AME Social Action Commission, *The African Methodist Episcopal Church*

I have often been in a place where I have the desire to meet a need, but not the resources. Although we may not have the time or the resources to contribute, we know that if we are not at the table, our voice is not heard. If we are not willing to lead on climate change, then we are not willing to lead a world that is the best for our children. For the African Methodist Episcopal Church as well as some of the other historically black congregations, we understand and believe our voices should be at the table. We may make you uncomfortable, because we come with a different perspective, but we need to speak because this is a global movement. We will find – wherever God has planted us – that we are there to make a difference, and it is no accident we are all in the same place.

Dr. Antonio Flores

President and CEO, *Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities*

Higher education institutions are incubators of the leadership of society – this is where most of the leaders come from. We have a responsibility to make sure that the new generations of leaders coming out of our institutions are committed to climate change solutions. They can push the envelope and affect the fabric of our society. Another way to accelerate climate solutions is to mobilize Latinos. They need to be in leadership roles to enhance the work that we can do. *Juntos podemos: together we can do it!*

**Jerry Taylor**

President, *Niskanen Center*

How one feels about individual liberty and the free market economy should have nothing to do with how one feels about atmospheric physics. Having been a prominent climate skeptic, I helped write a lot of the arguments I am now trying to dismantle. I know the arguments, what is at stake, and who the actors are. It is important to realize how my old world thinks. They do not like the messengers because they do not like environmentalists, whom they associate with the shock troops of the American political left. They do not like the message that they must intervene in the economy to get rid of fossil fuels. Conservatives want to know that you care about the free market and quality of life. At times the environmental movement presents a message that seems designed to be contested by conservatives.



SESSION FOUR

COLLABORATING FOR SUCCESS

Leaders from across sectors collaborated on opportunities and priorities to accelerate progress in 2017 and beyond. Their ideas are synthesized below.

1. Share personal stories

Personal stories allow people to publicly grieve climate change and to put a human face on the issue by utilizing methods such as humor, letter-writing, or the arts. Leaders need to lead by example and invite people to engage directly in personal sustainability and climate actions.

2. Local action, leaders, and standards

Local wins build ambition, demonstrate success, and dispel concerns about changing energy sources. We should advocate local policies to rapidly implement clean energy, and implement strategic efforts to create successful, high-quality public spaces to help people appreciate the outdoors.

3. Make climate inclusive and broaden the movement

We should work with the business, agricultural, and healthcare sectors and focus on local and regional collaborations and partnerships to break down silos between sectors. We also need to communicate inclusively by making climate solutions patriotic, emphasizing co-benefits and economic returns, and involving children and people of color.

4. Price on carbon

Putting a price on fossil fuels is the best way to drive down demand for them. This is why carbon tax is necessary, and why we need to elect leaders committed to action on this.

5. Mobilize voters

We need to exercise political will to win elections and focus on a strongly devoted voter block which will not accept “no” for an answer. We must build that identity in people and ask them to take action and talk to their legislators.



DINNER KEYNOTE

The Honorable Brian Schatz

Senator, Hawaii, *United States Senate*

I would like to offer **ten reasons why we are winning on climate.**

Firstly, because of **U.S. Leadership**. The reason the U.S. must lead is because the rest of the world will follow – we develop momentum. Secondly, after U.S. leadership comes **global leadership**. In Asia and South America, there is a willingness to take on this problem on a global scale. Thirdly, **clean energy is getting cheaper** – and the cost keeps dropping. Fourthly, **emissions and economic growth** are decoupling. There are still consumer issues and microeconomic issues at a community level, but increasingly we see an opportunity to drive down emissions and drive up growth.

Outside of Congress, **climate change is becoming less partisan**. This is no longer a left-right question. Additionally, **real change, especially in the U.S., is driven by young people**. Young people today understand the need for action on a bipartisan level, and this is a vote mover. Furthermore, **climate change has become a moral issue**, and there is increasingly a recognition, indicated by events such as the papal visit, that we have an obligation to our children. We see **increasing business leadership**, though this is an area where we could improve as well. Business leadership leads all the way up to the doors of Congress and then stops. We need to ask more from the business community than simply improving supply chains and recycling.

Another way we are winning is through **local leadership**. All of our eggs should not be put in Congress' basket. We can already see states as successful case studies. Finally, **people like you give me hope**. There are organizations who are doing extraordinary work in their pockets of the world. People know that this is our only planet, and it is our moral obligation to save it.

“...climate change is a moral issue, and there is increasingly a recognition, indicated by events such as the papal visit, that we have an obligation to our children.”



DAY TWO SESSION:

HEALTH LEADERSHIP CIRCLE STRATEGY

The Climate for Health Leadership Circle Strategy Meeting on September 15 is presented with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation President's Grant Fund of the Princeton Area Community Foundation.

As trusted messengers with a track record of demonstrable influence on health issues, health and medical professionals have a unique and vital role to play in positioning climate change as a health priority. **Because climate-related health impacts and their solutions carry significant risks and opportunities for business, education, faith, and communities, public health provides a compelling framework and an overarching goal that touches every major sector.**

Framing climate change as a national health priority is gathering speed, and health organizations have begun sharing information about climate-related health risks and opportunities. Health-sector climate education and engagement is key to protecting the vulnerable, preserving the health gains of this past century, and ensuring that all have access to the health benefits of the clean energy economy.

The health sector must work together to leverage their credibility and communicate with a unified voice within, across, and beyond their profession, to the public and to policymakers, that broad-scale climate solutions are a mission-critical health priority, and that climate-related health impacts will play a significant role in either advancing or undermining economic growth and prosperity, social and moral justice, education-driven innovation, and livable, thriving communities.



Key Opportunities for Expanding, Accelerating, and Increasing the Impact of Health Leadership on Climate:

How can the health sector be engaged with climate solutions?

- 1. Bring climate change to the mainstream**
Ensure all health professionals configure their work through a lens of climate solutions, environmental health, and sustainability.
- 2. Increase climate and health literacy**
Provide professional education on climate and health impacts, how best to engage others, specific actions to lead by example, and the health co-benefits of climate solutions.
- 3. Increase funding and promote the need for more climate change and health research**
More evidence-based data is needed to document, project, and better communicate health impacts.
- 4. Elevate the need for research documenting how climate change exacerbates health equity issues**
Research is particularly needed on disproportionate health impacts, to better highlight the deep health equity issues embedded within climate challenges.
- 5. Engage next-generation health leadership on climate**
Ensure schools integrate climate education into their curriculum and that young health professionals are supported, mentored, and engaged in climate leadership.
- 6. Utilize the Affordable Care Act provision for the Community Health Needs Assessment as a portal for climate and health (CHNA.org)**
Health leaders should advocate for applying a “climate lens” to nonprofit hospitals’ community strategic plans.
- 7. Provide more education about how healthy ecosystems play a role in climate/health**
Supply health leaders with research findings and implications around the link between health, climate, and restorative ecosystems.

How can the health sector engage society with climate solutions?

- 1. Focus on the upcoming elections**
Health leadership must inform the world that climate change is a critical, game-changing issue for the health and well-being of current and future generations. One possibility is a letter endorsed by all major organizations and published in major newspapers.

2. Hold the next President accountable

The health sector should produce a health and climate transition memo with specific asks and a strategy to ensure the next President understands that the health community views climate as a national health imperative and will keep pushing for solutions.

3. Make climate-related health impacts personal with storytelling and first-hand accounts

Create a multimedia public campaign sharing how healthcare providers are already confronting climate-related health issues, and how climate solutions have health benefits for patients.

4. Organize for collective impact on policy

Influence policy by disseminating research, promoting climate legislation, educating policymakers, highlighting a prevention framework and the associated cost savings, engaging on the “Lancet Countdown,” and weighing in on policies with indirect climate consequences, such as transportation.

How can ecoAmerica help health leaders engage with society on climate solutions?

- 1. Provide messaging and communications resources and leadership training**
Support health leaders to learn, practice, and deploy effective communication to promote climate and health solutions, and provide opportunities for health leaders to speak out.
- 2. Develop a listserv or other ongoing leader communication method**
Provide a platform for Climate for Health leaders and partners to engage in ongoing dialogue.
- 3. Coordinate leaders to develop collective action**
Provide a forum for further development of the strategies identified above and support the pursuit of shared goals, collective action, and engagement within and across sectors.
- 4. Support development of health-sector-wide public communication strategy or campaign**
Develop a national communication strategy to elevate climate as a public health imperative.
- 5. Facilitate cross-sector collaboration**
Provide structured opportunities for the health sector to explore strategic collaboration with ecoAmerica’s leaders and partners from other sectors.

DAY TWO SESSION:

FAITH LEADERSHIP CIRCLE STRATEGY

The impacts of global warming have already begun in America and around the world, and the vulnerable are suffering the most. **The faithful have a long tradition of ministering to and seeking justice for the most vulnerable and providing the hope, inspiration, and action we need to achieve a more just and healthy world.** As such, solving climate change is part of what it means to be a person of faith today.

Through their work and witness, the faithful have had an outsize impact on our most important climate achievements this year. The visible leadership of Pope Francis, Patriarch Bartholomew, and many other faith leaders helped secure the Paris climate agreement and build support for the Green Climate Fund, which will help developing countries reduce their pollution and become more resilient to climate impacts.

At the national level, climate leadership from the African Methodist Episcopal Church and many others is generating political support for national policies to reduce carbon pollution by making the links between climate and justice and emphasizing our moral responsibility to create a better future for our families and communities. The faithful at Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are seeing and sharing the plight of those who suffered through the devastating floods in Louisiana this summer. The United Methodist Church is raising awareness of farmers in the Philippines whose crops are failing due to drought and who are being arrested by the government when they protest their reduction in food subsidies. The Episcopal Church is advocating for the Gwitch'in people in Alaska, who are more than 90% Episcopalian and who are facing food insecurity as a warming Arctic threatens their subsistence on Porcupine caribou.

The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism is guiding the greening of congregations and translating the spiritual urgency of climate change into political power by increasing advocates and organizers. Many more faith leaders are divesting from fossil fuels, blocking pipelines, converting to renewable energy, teaching, preaching, and partnering together.

With a shared commitment to accelerate the climate solutions we need to protect our families, communities, and the natural world, over 50 prominent faith leaders gathered to address how faith leaders can engage all their members and congregations, amplify the sector's impact in engaging society, and how ecoAmerica can help. The discussion was facilitated by a distinguished panel of Blessed Tomorrow Leadership Circle members.



Key Opportunities for Expanding, Accelerating, and Increasing the Impact of Faith Leadership on Climate:

How can faith communities be engaged with climate solutions?

- 1. Connect climate to core faith values**
Make it a norm to be engaged on climate as a person of faith by connecting climate to core values (justice, love of God and neighbor, care for creation), scriptures, and texts of our respective faith traditions.
- 2. Employ hope, inspiration, and stories**
People of faith must hear the stories of injustice of those already impacted by climate change and be inspired to address the suffering and achieve a better world. Use language of optimism and commitment.
- 3. Transform our congregations and families**
Reduce our impact and inspire our communities by doing energy audits, converting to renewable energy, greening our transportation, planting trees and gardens, and divesting from fossil fuels.
- 4. Become climate literate**
Commit to developing an understanding of core values, impacts, how best to engage others, specific actions, and solutions we need.
- 5. Reintroduce a love of creation**
People preserve what they love. We need to inspire a love of creation in every prayer, poem, and litany.

How can faith communities engage society with climate solutions?

- 1. Connect climate to America's issues today**
Connect climate impacts and opportunities to the issues Americans care most about today, such as justice and race.
- 2. Make climate personal with real-world examples**
By telling stories of those impacted, faith leaders will make climate "more than just a statistic," more personally relevant and inspire many others to act.

- 3. Make climate a moral responsibility**
Faith leaders have a unique vantage point as moral messengers in society to highlight climate action as an ethical responsibility for our communities, the vulnerable, future generations, and the planet on which we all depend.
- 4. Organize for collective impact**
Develop shared goals for climate solutions to provide a baseline of understanding and leverage for the greatest collective impact.
- 5. Translate spiritual urgency into political power**
If we challenged all of our people to put pressure on their elected officials, we would have enormous influence.

How can ecoAmerica help faith communities engage with society on climate solutions?

- 1. Provide messaging and communications resources**
Provide a research-based guidance to improve the effectiveness of messaging and support faith leaders' engagement.
- 2. Gather leaders and partners for collective action**
Provide a platform for development of shared goals and collective action, and engagement within and across sectors.
- 3. Support partnerships**
Support faith partners in elevating their visible national leadership and integrating climate engagement throughout their institutions.
- 4. Build faith climate literacy**
Provide trainings, webinars, and refresher courses on climate impacts, actions, solutions and engagement.
- 5. Provide surveys to engage all congregations**
Provide member surveys to establish basis for action, and communications needs and strategy development for climate solutions.

DAY TWO SESSION:

COMMUNITIES LEADERSHIP CIRCLE STRATEGY

Local communities across America are natural and promising places to inspire and empower visible public leadership for finding climate solutions. **As impacts from climate change increasingly begin to manifest themselves in communities on a street-by-street, neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis through extreme weather events, citizens and leaders are beginning to confront climate change as a local issue, not a global one.** This emerging reality underscores the need for personal and political action on the community level and for local solutions that will require both personal choice and political will.

Politically, local communities continue to be among the most promising places for positive change in climate action. As increasing numbers of communities enact climate policies and programs, these measures will help shape the choices and behaviors of increasing numbers of American citizens. Thousands of U.S. cities are confronting climate impacts through preparedness planning. More than 200 communities have formalized their embrace of sustainability through the establishment of sustainability offices and the hiring of dedicated staff. However, despite the many promising developments that are occurring in so many communities, too many have yet to begin enacting local climate solutions.

Truly solving climate change, on the national and global scales, will hinge on amplifying the numbers of local leaders working in greater numbers of communities, and magnifying the impacts of advancements being made in towns and cities around the world — driven by the visible leadership of elected and community leaders, and embraced and supported by pluralities of ordinary citizens — that can bring a number of unique qualities to the national climate conversation.



Key Opportunities for Expanding, Accelerating, and Increasing the Impact of Community Leadership on Climate:

How can communities be engaged with climate solutions?

- 1. Balance large policy goals with campaign-oriented engagement efforts**
 A broadly drawn engagement campaign will thrive when it is underpinned by on-the-ground issue campaigning strategies.
- 2. Bridge the relationships between visible leaders and grassroots activists more effectively**
 Local issues activists can be engaged more effectively in the broader climate discussion when their concerns are connected with those of broader community climate solutions.
- 3. Employ “unusual voices” as spokespeople, recruiters, and validators**
 From sportsmen and women, to weather forecasters, to health and faith leaders, multiple voices from diverse perspectives will add validity and heft to the imperative to lead on local climate solutions.
- 4. Break down silos within local governments**
 Within local governments there are many leaders and staff who aren't yet engaged in the community climate campaign, but should be. Connecting them with each other, community leaders, and citizens will broaden the base.
- 5. “Downscale” the big policy end-goals around climate, and connect these goals to specific local concerns**
 Use engagement and leadership around smaller issues to leverage the big wins.

How can communities engage society with climate solutions?

- 1. Find and engage more local climate messengers who will make climate a community-wide issue of broad concern**
 Citizens can be brought into common cause with each other if leaders show how their concerns are related and how solutions provide mutual co-benefits.
- 2. Convert big ideas and programs to a specific set of campaign tools for each community**
 Brands and large scale goals are often less relevant or appealing to ordinary people than small, tangible victories and solutions, so campaign for even the small successes.

- 3. Go for the low hanging fruit to build buy-in, participation, and proof of concept**
 Select easy opportunities when devising local solutions strategies, as success engenders more participation and engagement, and results in even more successes.
- 4. Use the executive powers of local elected officials to initiate and support local engagement programs**
 There are many elected leaders with the power and the desire to elevate local solutions and engage communities, so broaden outreach to these potent leaders.
- 5. Empower local leaders and use local progress as levers to push for state and national action**
 We talk about the transformative power of local leadership, so let's use that power to transform state and national efforts and provide the impetus for even more action locally.

How can ecoAmerica help community leaders engage with society on climate solutions?

- 1. Build and support local engagement campaigns**
 Move from the large scale and theoretical to a specific set of tools and resources for local leaders to plug into, deploy, and refine.
- 2. Support cross-sector partnerships**
 Support diverse community-based partners, elevate their visible local leadership, and campaign to integrate climate engagement within their institutions.
- 3. Gather leaders and partners for collective action**
 Provide platforms for development of shared goals and collective action, and engagement within and across sectors.
- 4. Build community climate literacy**
 Provide trainings, webinars, and refresher courses on climate impacts, actions, solutions and engagement.
- 5. Provide surveys to engage all citizens**
 Conduct community surveys to establish basis for action, and communications needs.



THANK YOU TO ALL
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