

Artists for Climate Awareness

Climate Action Toolkit

I am just one person. What can I do about climate change?

Here is a guide to positive action YOU can take to sustain the earth

You are now accepting the inevitability of climate change. Unfortunately, that awareness comes with anxiety, resignation, and denial.

Not all of us can donate large amounts or attend public demonstrations. It's great when we can. However, the most important actions you can take are those which you can actually do NOW—conserve resources where you are able and TALK TO PEOPLE. Knowledge and passion is contagious.

YOU can act now in so many ways. This Climate Action Toolkit outlines what YOU can do to help sustain the earth, expressed in five levels depending on your personal ability to act.

Level 1: Conserve

We can all help to prevent further climate damage by doing simple things in our everyday lives. See our guide to living more sustainably.

Level 3: Donate

There are many, many organizations that need financial help to work toward promoting environmental stewardship and climate mitigation. See our list of organizations to support.

Level 2: Communicate

We need to spread the word about the importance of climate change. Everyone must pitch in and work toward a healthier earth. It may seem that there are some people who are not willing to listen, but there are proven ways we can communicate with everyone. See our guide to communication.

Level 4: Participate

You may feel it's time to gather with like-minded people to participate in events that will affect climate change. See our recommendations.

Level 5: Organize

You may want to aggressively tackle the governmental, economic, and political systems that contribute to climate change. Look here for ways to bring people together and communally make change happen.

Introduction

Given the past year of adverse weather events and increased media attention, most people are now aware of climate change and most admit that we have a problem. Very few have any idea of the scope of it or what to do about it, though.

Studies show that “creative activism” is more effective in changing behavior than conventional forms of activism. Artists for Climate Awareness Corporation uses the creativity model to convey to people the necessity of acting to stop or reverse the destruction of climate change, while expressing their own experiences in the form of art. In our workshops and exhibitions, we carry a message of urgency and healing. In all our events, we give people information about how to be personally responsible for the environment, and how to communicate that message to others.

Did you know?

- Over recent decades, global warming has already harmed the world's food production and has driven up food prices by as much as 20%.
- Heat waves have already become more frequent and intense, causing increased energy consumption due to air conditioning.
- Arctic melting has disturbed the circular pattern of winds known as the polar vortex. This has already allowed colder winter weather to flow down to the US, notably in the Texas cold wave in February of 2021.
- The oceans have already absorbed more than 90 percent of the global warming created by humans since the 1970s. Had that heat gone into the atmosphere, global average temperatures would have jumped by almost 100 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Changing ocean currents already show major implications worldwide, including changes in rainfall. With more rain in some areas and much less in others and fluctuating air temperatures, These changes are already affecting countless species.

You can help!

- Following are the ways you can change the course of climate change, in levels of activities from simple and personal to public and vocal.

...“think of every conversation as being three conversations at once: about facts, feelings, and identity.”

—Peter Boghossian and James Lindsay, How to Have Impossible Conversations

Level 1: Conserve

Buy sustainably

- ▶ Buy sustainable household products: <https://www.ewg.org/consumer-guides>
- ▶ Reduce your meat and dairy consumption; celebrate the small changes in personal and institutional behavior that result in a significant difference in the world. <https://www.reducetararian.org/>
- ▶ Increase support of plant-based meat: <https://climate-calculator.climatehero.me/>
- ▶ Buy used or sustainable clothing: <https://www.naturalclothing.com/directory/>

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

- ▶ Find out where you can recycle everything: <https://search.earth911.com/>
- ▶ Buy used items of all sorts: <https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/5-sites-craigslist-buy-sell-stuff/>
- ▶ Reflect on the “life well lived,” and how it can be lived in a sustainable way: <https://www.sustainablejungle.com/sustainable-living/what-is-sustainable-living/>

Live Lightly

- ▶ Calculate your carbon footprint: <https://climate-calculator.climatehero.me/>
- ▶ Give your home a climate overhaul: <https://www.audubon.org/magazine/fall-2019/give-your-home-climate-overhaul>

Level 2: Communicate

Talk to people

- ▶ **A few guidelines:**
 - Be curious and listen
 - Find common ground
 - Talk about what is happening locally
 - Talk about what is happening now
 - Respect differences
 - Use imagery, metaphor, and experiences
 - Balance scientific stories with personal stories
 - For skeptics, talk “environment” instead of “climate”
 - Engage mutually trusted people in group settings
- ▶ Read why communication is critical to tackling the climate crisis: <https://www.siliconrepublic.com/innovation/katharine-hayhoe-climate-crisis>
- ▶ Learn how to effectively communicate with people about climate change: <https://empower.agency/how-to-effectively-communicate-about-climate-change/>
- ▶ Get the Goodside ebook of talking points: <https://www.joingoodside.com/guides/more-climate-action>
- ▶ Act locally: Green your town: <https://www.audubon.org/magazine/fall-2019/how-help-green-your-town>
- ▶ Politely post your thoughts and findings on social media
- ▶ Get the Livingroom Conversation Guide to Climate change: https://livingroomconversations.org/topics/climate_change/
- ▶ Read more proven approaches for talking about climate change: <https://belfastlibrary.org/dialogue-101/>

Level 3: Donate

"You must take action. You must do the impossible. Because giving up is never an option."

—Greta Thunberg to US Congress, September, 2019

There are many organizations that can use your help. Here are a few:

Union of Concerned Scientists: We use science to make change happen: <https://www.ucsusa.org/>

The Nature Conservancy: Deploying innovative solutions that maximize nature's ability to fight climate change: <https://www.nature.org/en-us/>

Environmental Defense Fund: EDF is one of the world's leading environmental organizations. We've been driving results for more than 50 years. <https://www.edf.org/>

National Audubon Society: We protect birds and the places they need. <https://www.audubon.org>

Center for International Environmental Law: Using the power of law to protect the environment, promote human rights, and ensure a just and sustainable society. <https://www.ciel.org>

Climate Central: Scientists and journalists researching and reporting the facts about our changing climate and its impact on the public. <https://www.climatecentral.org/>

Sierra Club Foundation: Together, we can help deepen the movement for a liveable planet, safe communities, and a democracy that works for everyone. <https://www.sierraclub.org/>

Earthjustice: We go to court for the future of our planet. <https://earthjustice.org>

The Climate Reality Project: Join the millions using their voices and everyday choices to tackle the climate crisis. <https://www.climate realityproject.org/>

350.org: We believe in a safe climate and a better future — a just, prosperous, and equitable world built with the power of ordinary people. <https://350.org/>

Natural Resources Defense Council: Join us to defend healthy air and water, support clean energy jobs, fight climate change and protect wild places. <https://www.nrdcactionfund.org/>

Greenpeace Fund: Around the globe, we are standing up for our communities, and we are holding governments and corporations accountable. <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/act/>

Friends of the Earth: Together we speak truth to power and expose those who endanger the health of people and the planet for corporate profit. <https://foe.org/>

As You Sow: We harness corporate responsibility and shareholder power to create lasting change: gender inequalities, workplace equity, environmental health, and more. <https://www.asyousow.org>

Earth Day Network: Now is the time for the unstoppable courage to preserve and protect our health, our families, and our livelihoods. <https://www.earthday.org>

Amazon Conservation Association: Uniting science, people, and innovation for a thriving Amazon <https://www.amazonconservation.org/>

Rainforest Trust: Fighting deforestation and climate change, building better economic and working conditions for rural people. <https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/>

Oceana: Dedicated to protecting and restoring the world's oceans on a global scale. <https://oceana.org/>

Coral Reef Alliance: Millions of people and species of wildlife depend on coral reefs. While climate change threatens their future, science shows that corals can adapt and survive if we keep them

healthy. <https://coral.org/en/>

Waterkeeper Alliance: We're the largest and fastest growing nonprofit solely focused on clean water worldwide. <https://waterkeeper.org/>

National Forest Foundation: We work on behalf of the American public to inspire personal and meaningful connections to our National Forests. <https://www.nationalforests.org/>

Tree Sisters: Rapidly accelerating tropical reforestation by inspiring and channeling women's Nature-Based Feminine Leadership into global action. <https://treesisters.org/>

Wild Earth Allies: Protecting the Planet Begins with People. Each day, we fight to protect wildlife and habitats by partnering with the communities that live closest to them. <https://wildearthallies.org/>

The Wetlands Initiative: Envisioning a world with plentiful healthy wetlands improving water quality, climate, biodiversity, and human well-being. <http://www.wetlands-initiative.org/>

Conservation Lands Foundation: Channeling local passion to conserve the public lands we love and need. <https://www.conservationlands.org/>

National Park Foundation: Working to protect wildlife and park lands, preserve history and culture, educate and engage youth, and connect people everywhere to the wonder of parks. <https://www.nationalparks.org>

Conservation International: Through cutting-edge science, innovative policy and global reach, we work to protect the nature that we rely on for food, fresh water and livelihoods. <https://www.conservation.org/>

WE ACT for Environmental Justice: Building healthy communities by ensuring that people of color and/or low income residents participate in the creation of fair environmental health and protection policies. <https://www.weact.org>

Communities for a Better Environment: Building community power to achieve environmental justice, clean energy and healthy communities <https://www.cbecal.org/>

"The environment is where we all meet, where we all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share. It is not only a mirror of ourselves, but a focusing lens on what we can become."

— Lady Bird Johnson

Environmental Health Coalition: Defending the right to live in healthy and sustainable communities. We empower people, organize communities and achieve justice. <https://www.environmentalhealth.org/>

Coming Clean: We are about innovative, creative, truly collaborative strategies that help people live safer, healthier lives. <https://comingcleaninc.org/>

Environmental Working Group: To empower you with breakthrough research to make informed choices and live a healthy life in a healthy environment. <https://www.ewg.org/>

North American Association for Environmental Education: NAAEE can help educators develop and reach climate literacy goals. <https://naaee.org/>

Earth Force: Together, let's transform environmental education. <https://earthforce.org/>

Captain Planet Foundation: Working collaboratively to engage and empower young people to be problem solvers for the planet. <https://captainplanetfoundation.org/>

National Environmental Education Foundation: Cultivating an Environmentally Conscious and Responsible Public <https://www.neefusa.org/>

Center for Ecoliteracy: Lessons, articles, and principles to further ecological teaching and learning <https://www.ecoliteracy.org/>

Donate to Artists for Climate Awareness: <http://artistsforclimateawareness.org>

Level 4: Participate

There are a number of organizations that encourage people like you to gather with like-minded people to participate in events that will affect climate change:

- ▶ Get involved in virtual town halls, meetings, and events with **Defend our Future**. See the organizational values and sign up now at: <https://defendourfuture.org/our-values/>
- ▶ **Citizens' Climate Lobby** is a grassroots advocacy climate change organization focused on national policies to address the climate movement. By building upon shared values rather than partisan divides and empowering our supporters to work in keeping with the concerns of their local communities, we work toward the adoption of fair, effective, and sustainable climate change solutions. <https://citizensclimatelobby.org/>
- ▶ **Speak up and shout out** with the **Sierra Club**, at <https://www.sierraclub.org/take-action>

Level 5: Organize

If you feel ready to really start making an impact, it's time to tackle the systems and political stagnation that contribute to climate change at all governmental levels. Here, we need to advocate for forward-thinking climate policies and institutional reform.

"...bad-news warnings are more likely to make people check out than change our behavior."

—Katharine Hayhoe, *Saving Us*

- ▶ **Write letter to the editor.** It's more productive than a Facebook rant.
How to Write a Letter to the Editor, from <https://www.audubon.org/climate-action-guide>:
 - **Pick Your Newspaper** if you want to influence a specific decision maker, choose a paper they read. A local or regional print publication is a good bet.
 - **Get to the Point** Make one point in your letter, and make it well. Keep it between 150 and 200 words.
 - **Make It Personal** Tell your climate story to emphasize why you care. Include no more than the one fact needed to support your main point.
 - **Don't Hold Back** Tell readers what you want to get done or them to do. Be precise and aggressive.
 - **But Don't Be Too Aggressive** Do not attack individuals or groups of people. Stick to your point.
 - **Find a Proofreader** before submitting your letter, have a friend or trusted colleague read it for clarity and errors.
- ▶ **Contact your legislators:** <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials> and use the points above.
- ▶ **Get others to join your cause:** See <https://www.audubon.org/news/how-strategically-organize-cause>

"The climate crisis has already been solved. We already have all the facts and solutions. All we have to do is to wake up and change."

— Greta Thunberg, *TEDx Stockholm, December 2018*

My Climate Action Worksheet

Notes:



Access this leaflet on your personal device.

"The future we collectively face will be forged by our own actions. Climate change stands between us and a breathtaking, exhilarating future. We cannot afford to be paralyzed by fear or shame. We must act, with power, love and a sound mind. Together, we can save ourselves."

— Katharine Hayhoe, *Saving Us*



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