

"Net-Zero" Is A Dangerous Distraction

October 27, 2021

As the climate crisis worsens and demand grows for governments and companies to increase climate ambition, Big Oil, Big Agriculture, Big Banks, other polluting corporations, and governments have lined up to proclaim one "net-zero by 2050" pledge after another. This is a dangerous greenwashing gimmick. It is the latest scheme by polluters — and their financial and political backers — to promote a facade of talking about climate action while actually exacerbating the crisis to protect their profits and power. "Net-zero" is premised on unjust offsetting schemes and removals of massive quantities of carbon from the atmosphere through unproven technologies, large-scale land grabs, and/or interference in the Earth's climate system via geoengineering. "Net-zero emissions" is not the same as "zero emissions," and 2050 is too little, too late.

Net-zero-by-2050 pledges by corporations and governments are:

- **Ineffective and dangerous.** Echoing scientists who wrote [Climate scientists: concept of net zero is a dangerous trap](#) — "*The idea of net zero has licensed a recklessly cavalier 'burn now, pay later' approach which has seen carbon emissions continue to soar. It has also hastened the destruction of the natural world by increasing deforestation today, and greatly increases the risk of further devastation in the future.*"
- **Unjust.** Net-zero schemes perpetuate environmental racism and injustice, including maintenance of pollution hotspots in BIPOC and low wealth communities.
- **Inequitable.** As the largest historical carbon polluter and among the world's wealthiest countries, the U.S. must decarbonize much sooner than 2050. The U.S. must do its fair share¹ of the global effort to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C through drastic domestic emissions reductions without offsets and robust provision of international finance for developing countries.
- **Greenwashing.** Polluting corporations, their political acolytes, and their financial backers continue business as usual, doing little-to-nothing to actually reduce their own climate pollution, while touting industry scams like carbon offsets, ineffective or even non-existent negative emissions technologies like carbon capture and storage or direct air capture, and geoengineering.

We call on government policymakers at all levels — from the Biden Administration to Congress to state and local governments — to say no to the "net." The United States must drastically reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 through absolute reductions. Laws and regulations must keep fossil fuels in the ground; eliminate sources of non-fossil-based climate pollution, including industrial wood biomass and emissions-intensive agricultural practices like factory farming; and facilitate a Just Transition² to clean, renewable energy and regenerative farming rooted in principles and methods of agroecology. The United States must also transfer funds and technical assistance to developing countries to enable global climate action.

¹ www.usfairshare.org

² Climate Justice Alliance, Just Transition Principles: https://climatejusticealliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CJA_JustTransition_Principles_final_hi-rez.pdf

100 Grannies for a Livable Future
198 methods
350 Brooklyn
350 Butte County
350 Charlotte
350 Colorado
350 Conejo / San Fernando Valley
350 Eugene
350 Hawaii
350 Kishwaukee
350 New Hampshire
350 New Orleans
350 NYC
350 PDX
350 Pensacola
350 Seattle
350 Sonoma
350 Triangle
350.org
50by40
A Community Voice - Louisiana
Academic Pediatric Association
Action Center on Race and the Economy
ActionAid USA
Active San Gabriel Valley (ActiveSGV)
AFGE Local 704
Alabama Interfaith Power & Light
Alaska's Big Village Network
ALDF
All Our Energy
Alliance for the Wild Rockies
Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc
Animas Valley Institute
Anthropocene Alliance
Arizona Interfaith Power & Light
Atchafalaya Basinkeepe
Athens County's Future Action Network, acfan.org
Aytzim: Ecological Judaism
Azul
Ben & Jerry's Homemade, Inc.
Benson Memorial United Methodist Church, Church
& Society Committee
Bergen County Green Party
Berks Gas Truth
Better Path Coalition
Beyond Efficiency Inc
Beyond Extreme Energy
Biofuelwatch
Black Voters Matter Fund
Blacks In Green
Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project
Bold Alliance
Boston DSA's Ecosocialism Working Group

Breathe Project
Bronx Climate Justice North
Buckeye Environmental Network
Bucks Environmental Action
Businesses for a Livable Climate
CA Businesses for a Livable Climate
CA Dem Party Environmental Caucus
California River Watch
Call to Action Colorado
Campaign for Renewable Energy
Carolina Biodiesel, LLC
Catholic Divestment Network
Catholic Network US
Catskill Mountainkeeper
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Coalfield Justice
Center for Environmentally Recycled Building
Alternatives
Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)
CEO Pipe Organs/Golden Ponds Farm
Church Women United in New York State
Citizen Power, Inc
Citizens Action Coalition
Clean Energy Action
Clean Energy Now Texas
CleanAirNow
Climate Crisis Policy
Climate Hawks Vote
Climate Health Now
Climate Justice Alliance
Climate Justice at Boston College
ClimateMama
CO Businesses for a Livable Climate
Coalition Against Pilgrim Pipeline
Coalition of Community Organizations
Coastal Plain Conservation Group
CODEPINK
Collins Grazing
Columbus Community Bill of Rights
Concerned Health Professionals of New York
Conejo Climate Coalition
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Cooperative Energy Futures
Corporate Accountability
CWA Local 1081
Daily Acts
DC Environmental Network
Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Department of Environmental Studies, SUNY
Potsdam
Divest LA
Do It Right Computers, Inc.
Dogwood Alliance

Don't Gas the Meadowlands Coalition
 Don't Waste Arizona
 Earth Action, Inc.
 Earthkeeper Health Resources
 Eat with B the RD, LLC
 EcoEquity
 EcoHealth Network
 Eco-Poetry.org
 Education, Economics, Environmental, Climate and Health Organization (EEECHO)
 EGG 350.org
 Electric Auto Assn of Central Coast CA
 Empower our Future - Colorado
 Endangered Habitats League
 Endangered Species Coalition
 Environmental Action Coalition
 Environmental Justice Ministry Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church
 Environmental Protection Information Center- EPIC
 Extinction Rebellion New Orleans
 Extinction Rebellion San Francisco Bay Area
 Factory Farming Awareness Coalition
 Fair Start Movement
 Fair World Project
 Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition
 Family Farm Defenders
 Farm Forward
 Fayetteville Police Accountability Community Taskforce
 Florida Student Power Network
 Food & Water Action
 Food & Water Watch
 Fossil Free California
 Fossil Free Tompkins
 Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard
 FrackBustersNY
 FracTracker Alliance
 Fresh Water Accountability Project
 Friends of the Earth U.S.
 Fuerza Mundial Global
 Future Coalition
 Gas Free Seneca
 GASP
 Gender Action
 Georgia Conservation Voters
 Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives
 Global Justice Ecology Project
 Global Witness
 Government Accountability Project
 Government Accountability Project Food Integrity Campaign
 Grassroots Environmental Education
 Grassroots Global Justice Alliance
 Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association
 Great Old Broads for Wilderness
 Great Plains Action Society
 Green Delaware
 Green Education and Legal Fund
 Green Newton
 Green State Solutions
 GreenFaith
 GreenLatinos
 Greenpeace US
 GreenRoots
 Greenvest
 Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy
 Heartwood
 Hilton Head for Peace
<http://thewei.com>
 I-70/Vasquez Blvd. Superfund CAG
 Idle No More SF Bay
 In the Shadow of the Wolf
 Indian Point Safe Energy Coalition
 Indigenous Environmental Network
 Indivisible Ambassadors
 Indivisible Pittsfield
 Indivisible San Jose
 Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
 Institute for Policy Studies Climate Policy Program
 Institute for Social Ecology
 Interfaith Earthkeepers
 International Indigenous Youth Council Los Angeles
 Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement
 Jewish Climate Action Network
 John Muir Project of Earth Island Institute
 Keely Wood-EnvironmentalLEE
 Klamath Forest Alliance
 Labor Network for Sustainability
 Land and Leadership Initiative
 LandStream
 LaPlaca and Associates LLC
 Lean and Green Kids
 Long Beach Alliance for Clean Energy
 Long Island Progressive Coalition
 Los Padres ForestWatch
 MADRE
 Maryknoll Sisters, Eastern Region, USA
 Massachusetts Forest Watch
 Mazaska Talks
 Mid-Missouri Peaceworks
 Milwaukee Riverkeeper
 Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light
 Mission Blue / Sylvia Earle Alliance
 MIT Divest
 Montbello Neighborhood Improvement Association
 Mothers Out Front Tompkins
 MoveOn.org Hoboken
 Nancy E Anderson Associates
 Nassau Hiking & Outdoor Club
 National Family Farm Coalition

Native Movement
 Nature Rhythms
 NC Climate Justice Collective
 NC Council of Churches
 NC Interfaith Power & Light
 Nevada Nuclear Waste Task Force
 New Jersey Tenants Organization
 New York Climate Action Group
 New York Communities for Change
 New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
 New York Youth Climate Leaders
 Ní Btháska Stand Collective
 NJ State Industrial Union Council
 Nobody Leaves Mid-Hudson
 Non Toxic Communities
 North American Climate, Conservation and Environment(NACCE)
 North Bronx Racial Justice
 North Range Concerned Citizens
 Northeast Organic Farming Association - Interstate Council
 Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire (NOFA-NH)
 Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York
 Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT)
 Northeast Organic Farming Association, Mass. Chapter
 Northern Michigan Environmental Action Council
 Nuclear Information and Resource Service
 NY Climate Advocacy Project
 NYC H2O
 Occupy Bergen County
 Ocean Conservation Research
 Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association
 Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (OVEC)
 Oil and Gas Action Network
 Our Climate
 Our Revolution Michigan
 Pacific Environment
 Partnership for Policy Integrity
 Pax Christi USA, New Orleans
 Peace Action WI
 Peak plastic foundation
 People of Albany United for Safe Energy, PAUSE
 People's Justice Council
 Peoples Climate Movement-NY
 Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles
 PlantPure Communities
 Plastic Pollution Coalition
 PlasticFreeRestaurants.org
 Ponca Nation
 Preserve Wild Santee
 Princeton Student Climate Initiative
 Progressive Democrats of America
 Protect All Children's Environment
 Public Citizen
 Public Justice
 Pueblo Action Alliance
 Rachel Carson Council
 RadiationTruth.org
 Rainforest Action Network
 RapidShift Network
 Recycle Brevard
 RedTailed Hawk Collective
 Reedsburg Area Concerned Citizens
 Residents Allied for the Future of Tioga (RAFT)
 Resource Renewal Institute
 Revolution LA
 Rio Grande Valley Broadband
 River Guardian Foundation
 Rogue Climate
 RootsAction.org
 San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility
 Sanford-Oquaga Area Concerned Citizens (S-OACC)
 Santa Barbara Standing Rock Coalition
 SASD
 Save RGV from LNG
 SAVE THE FROGS!
 Seeds for the Sol
 Seneca Lake Guardian
 Sequoia ForestKeeper®
 Seventh Generation
 Shenandoah Energy Services
 Sierra Club Long Island Group, Energy Chair
 Sisters of Charity Federation
 Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Office of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation
 Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership
 Sisters of Charity of New York
 Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York
 Small Business Alliance
 Social Eco Education (SEE-LA)
 Socially Responsible Agriculture Project
 Soil Carbon Coalition
 SolidarityINFOService
 Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCoCAN!)
 Soul Fire Farm
 South Shore Audubon Society
 Southwestern Indiana Citizens for Quality of Life
 Spirit of the Sun
 Spottswoode Winery, Inc.
 Spruill Farm Conservation Project
 Stand.earth
 Stone Quarry House
 Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion
 Stop WMA Biomass

Strategies for Ethical and Environmental
Development, Inc., SEED
Sunflower Alliance
Sustainable Tompkins
System Change Not Climate Change
Texas Campaign for the Environment
The Climate Mobilization
The Descendants Project
The Earth Bill Network
The Enviro Show
The Forest Foundation, Inc.
The Green House Connection Center
The Last Plastic Straw
The People's Justice Council
The Planetary Health Collective
The Raven Corps
The River Project
Thrive At Life: Working Solutions
TIAA Divest!
Toxic Free NC
Toxics Information Project (TIP)
Transformative Change
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Unitarian Universalist Mass Action
Unite North Metro Denver
United for Action
United Plant Savers
Valley Watch
VeganZine
Verde
Vermont Yankee Decommissioning Alliance
Wall of Women
Wallingford Indivisible
Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility
Washtenaw 350
WATCH, INC
Waterspirit
Western Rural and Plains States (WRAPS) Project
WildEarth Guardians
Win Without War
Wisconsin Creation Care Ambassadors
Women's Earth and Climate Action Network
(WECAN) International
Women's Environment & Development Organization
(WEDO)
World Animal Protection
Youth United For Climate Crisis Action
Zero Hour