



THE JEWISH CLIMATE CHANGE CAMPAIGN

SMALL ACTIONS FOR BIG CHANGE

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Introduction

How can we live more lightly upon this planet? How can we protect the Earth's soil and air, its oceans, its living creatures and, most of all, its people, so that every human being can live with health and with dignity? Our children, and our children's children, depend upon us for our answers to this question, and for the choices we make in the coming years.

The Jewish Climate Change Campaign is intended to catalyze the Jewish people's response to this question so that by 2015 we will be at the forefront of efforts to create a healthier and more sustainable world for all.

Joining other faiths and peoples of the world in seeking to preserve and protect this planet and its inhabitants is powerfully consonant with Jewish tradition. This campaign, and the accompanying website and educational materials, has been developed by Hazon, working in association with Jewish Climate Initiative in Israel, and a wide number of Jewish and environmental organizations and leaders in the US, Israel and the UK. Between now and the end of this year we hope that 600,000 Jewish people, and countless organizations, will endorse it.

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What, then, do we propose? Jewish tradition teaches that three things are important for effecting change in the world.

First, we must be honest and clear-sighted about the dangers we face, yet never paralyzed by fear. We have repeatedly faced destruction in our history and yet emerged with *hope*, and the determination to create a better world for all; this is part of the Jewish people's gift to humankind.

Secondly, we need a large and clear vision to guide our path. In Jewish tradition the goal of *tikkun olam b'malikut shaddai*, perfecting the world as the divine realm, has acted as a guiding star.

Thirdly, we must begin with practical first steps that we can begin *today* to advance towards our largest goals. The Jewish concept of *halakha* (literally "the way") translates our highest hopes for the world into practical, everyday deeds.

Like Jewish tradition itself, this campaign argues that today we need three things: a guiding vision for ourselves and for the world; a determination, and a mechanism, to

take small-scale steps to bring that vision to fruition; and a framework for connecting the two.

First, a vision: that the Jewish community transform itself in relation to living healthily and sustainably by September 2015, at the end of the next *shmita* (sabbatical) year in Jewish time. For each organization and community: how, by then, will you change how you heat your buildings, how you travel, how you consume food and energy, how you educate, so that you're protecting and conserving God's creation in practical ways?

Secondly, a mechanism for change. We're calling this a "Green Team". You might prefer "Sustainability Commission" or "Environmental Committee". In an organization, it's just two or more people getting together and saying: "We're going to figure out how to be a more sustainable organization, and we're going to work steadily to make those changes."

And thirdly, a roadmap from here to there; a practical means of breaking a multi-year process of transformation into discrete steps, so that each person, each organization and each community can bring a medium-term vision steadily to fruition. We propose a three by three grid:

	Education	Action	Advocacy
Individual /family Institution			
Wider community			

By 2015 we need to have effected change in all nine boxes. But we can begin, this year, with just one or two.

We need to **learn** about our behaviors and choices, and their consequences; we need to learn, too, the wisdom of Jewish tradition as it applies to the world of today.

We need to **act**: to effect change in our daily lives, in ways small and large.

And we need to **advocate** – to speak-up – in our communities and in the wider world, for changing our priorities, our behaviors and our policies.

These three sorts of change must be effected in three realms in which we live: in our own **families**; in the **institutions** where we work, study, gather and pray; and in our **communities** and the wider world.

On the Campaign's website – www.jewishclimatecampaign.org – there are detailed proposals and ideas for change, from large scale to small. Today we have no Sanhedrin, no single body that legislates for all the Jewish people. The success of this work will hinge not on our being told what to do, but rather on tens of thousands of people and of countless organizations and communities freely choosing to make change in the world.

These are just a few of the proposals within the campaign:

- **Turn Israel into the first nation predominantly powered by renewable energy** – and make this a goal for the Jewish people world wide. In particular, we call for 10 per cent of Israel's energy needs to come from renewable sources by 2015, rising to 30 per cent by 2020;
- **Recover the ecological value of Shabbat and the festivals**, as a day to step back from the process of creation: manufacturing, shopping, flying, driving, and technological manipulation. The traditional restraints of Shabbat offer us a gift that is of inestimable value in the 21st century;
- **Green Jerusalem**, so that a city holy to many millions of people around the world, becomes a model sustainable city;
- Rally the resources of the Jewish people to **stand up for those around the world who are most affected by climate change**,
- **Cut communal meat intake by half**, by 2015. It's good for the world and good for us;
- **Reduce our energy consumption, travel and carbon output** – individually and collectively – by 10 per cent in 2010, and a further 20 per cent by 2015;
- Encourage Jewish institutions and individuals steadily to **apply environmental criteria in making investment decisions**.
- **Grow more of our own food**, and encourage individuals and institutions to eat local, eat organic, and support local food initiatives;
- Integrate **environmental education** into our rabbinical and education schools; by 2015 environmental education should be integrated into the entire Israeli school system, and in all Jewish schools and Hebrew schools around the world.

No short statement can encompass all that we need to do: to read and learn more, and to sign the Jewish Climate Campaign and to pass it on to others, go to www.jewishclimatecampaign.org.

The experience of the Jewish people is that challenges, no matter how great, can be, will be and must be faced and overcome. Change is possible. Jewish tradition teaches that you do not have to complete the task, but you are not free to desist from beginning it. If the messiah is heralded, and you're in the midst of planting a tree: first finish planting the tree, and then go to greet the messiah.

So start today. Pick something large; pick something small. Go to the website and sign the campaign. Add your own ideas. Speak to your friends and family. Make one change in your life, and call upon leaders in your community to do likewise, and to found a Green Team.

The Jewish Climate Change Campaign: *if not now, when?*

עושה שלום במרומיו הוא יעשה שלום עלינו ועל כל ישראל ועל כל יושבי תבל

*May the One who makes peace in the heavens
bring peace and wholeness to us, to all Israel, and to all the peoples of the world.*

There are over 13 million Jews worldwide, more than 5 million of whom live in Israel. Around 40 % live in the US.