

Declare a Climate & COVID Emergency: A Toolkit for Organizing around COVID

MAKE THE CONNECTIONS

There are many lessons to be learned from the coronavirus pandemic relevant to working to address the Climate Emergency. Here are a few to discuss with your campaign:

Coronavirus is deeply connected to the broader ecological crisis. Economic pressure for the exploitation of natural resources has forced humans to encroach on previously undisturbed ecosystems and expose themselves to yet unknown pathogens such as the novel coronavirus. The outbreaks of [Ebola and other coronaviruses such as MERS](#), were triggered by a jump from animal to human in disturbed natural habitats, which has been exacerbated by industrial agriculture and [mass-scale breeding](#) of exotic wild animals.

Individual action is not enough to address the climate emergency. Even with the world on lockdown and everyone staying home, annual global carbon emissions are only predicted to [decrease by 5.5%](#) as a result. Greenhouse gases created from electricity, manufacturing, agriculture, and other sectors of the economy are still being emitted, and only through structural change can we achieve zero emissions global economy we need to prevent climate catastrophe.

“Emergency mode” on climate is possible.

The rapid and effective response to COVID-19 in countries like South Korea and Australia demonstrates the remarkable capacity of societies to put a halt to "business-as-usual" simply by acting in the moment to rise to the challenge. It shows that we can take radical action to protect people if people and politicians truly want to.

We can rebuild a better world in the aftermath of the pandemic.

We need an emergency-speed climate mobilization which ensures the protection of the poor and most vulnerable, is integrated into our pandemic response, and builds a regenerative future for all. Cities are taking action to ensure a just and sustainable recovery: after experiencing a country-wide lockdown, Milan is planning to rapidly

transform over 20 miles of city streets to expand walking, cycling, and public transit infrastructure as part of a [sustainable, post-coronavirus vision](#) for the Italian city.

TAKE ACTION

There are several ways that you can take action to make the connections between the Climate Emergency and the coronavirus crisis in your campaigns, and make sure that your work stays relevant in this moment.

HOLD AN ONLINE DISCUSSION

One easy activity you can plan is an online discussion in your group, or with other people in your community.

If you have not held an online get-together before, get familiar with tools that you can use. We recommend using Zoom, which you can download onto a computer or phone for free at [Zoom.us](#). A [Zoom how-to guide](#) is available here.

Pick a day and time at least 1-2 weeks in the future, and decide who to invite to your get-together. You could decide to target the event at members of your group. Or, you could decide to use it to do outreach. In that case, the people you invite don't have to be close friends, but we suggest that starting with people you know -- whether acquaintances, coworkers, friends or relatives.

Invite people with emails, phone calls, and/or text messages. Let them know that you'd like them to join you in learning about and discussing the relationship of coronavirus to the Climate Emergency.

Remind people several times -- your initial invite, a week before the event, and the day before it happens.

Here is a sample agenda you can use:

- Begin by giving a brief welcome and facilitate introductions with everyone.
- Then, do an activity to get the conversation started. This can include watching a video such as [this](#), or another climate-focused video or clip.
- After the video, spend 1-2 minutes sharing the connections between the Climate Emergency and the COVID crisis using some of the material and points above.
- Get everyone talking. Start a conversation about the relationship between COVID and climate change, your fears and hopes.
- Share ways that participants can get involved with your Climate Emergency campaign. This can include joining a working group, writing city or county government, and inviting others to an online town hall or rally.

- Plan for follow up -- **this is the most important part of the event**. Send people whatever information they need to complete their follow-up steps, then send texts and make calls to make sure they actually follow through.
- After the event, make sure to invite them to your next online meeting, rally or town hall.

CONNECT WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The COVID pandemic is impacting almost every organization in almost every community. Many organizations have less capacity, but many are also working to figure out what their work looks like in this environment.

This could be a time to build relationships with organizations in your community. This might mean:

- Setting up a time to hold a one on one meeting by phone or video chat with other groups to learn about their work;
- Being on the lookout for ways you can show up to support other groups -- whether by joining in their emergency fundraisers, actions, and other calls for support that they put out, or asking directly how they're doing and what they are working on;
- Or even working with other groups to create a shared agenda around what a just coronavirus recovery and Climate Emergency response looks like, putting forward a local mobilization as part of a broader response to your area's needs.

SUPPORT OR START A MUTUAL AID GROUP

Around the world, mutual aid groups are forming to build community resilience and meet the direct needs that our economies and our governments are failing to provide for. These links offer resources for getting connected with others in your community.

- [COVID Mutual Aid & Advocacy Resources](#)
- [Pod-mapping for mutual aid](#)
- [Coronavirus Resource Kit](#)
- [COVID Mutual Aid Coordination National Slack Network](#)