



THE CLIMATE  
MOBILIZATION

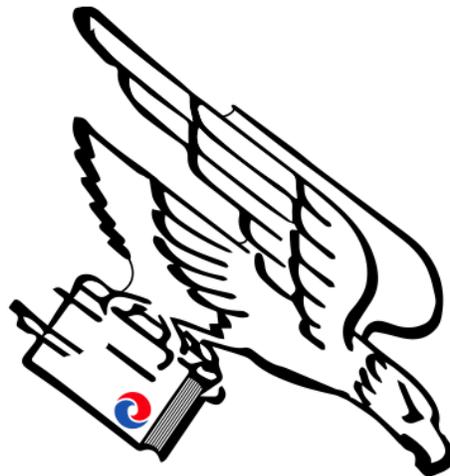
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# VICTORY PLAN

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*Executive Summary*

(1st Edition)



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## **What is a Climate Mobilization?**

The [Victory Plan](#) (2016), drafted by Climate Mobilization co-founder Ezra Silk, proposes a World War II-scale mobilization to restore a safe climate and healthy environment. Our current trajectory of abruptly rising global temperatures and intensifying extreme weather events shows the catastrophic consequences of greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, the latest climate science shows that humanity has already overheated the earth. To date, domestic and global efforts have fallen woefully short of effectively confronting the greatest threat humanity has ever faced, with incremental agreements and policies failing to address the magnitude of the true threat facing our world. If we do not act immediately and on a scope and scale commensurate to this emergency, runaway global warming and ecological decline could cause the collapse of civilization.

*“We face a series of time-sensitive existential emergencies that can only be overcome successfully with a drastic transformation of the entire economy...accomplished at wartime speed.”*

— The Climate Mobilization Victory Plan, p. 10

America’s home front mobilization during World War II provides an essential roadmap to rapidly transforming our economy in the face of this existential crisis. In addition to subsidizing a historic production miracle to address the war emergency, the mobilization of the 1940s encouraged widespread conservation to the point of critical resource rationing. Extensive efforts to gather, preserve, and carefully coordinate resources facilitated the extraordinarily successful war effort. Wasteful consumption was understood as antithetical to this effort—placing our troops abroad at risk, and jeopardizing the future of humanity. Popular media and posters declared that not supporting these collective goals gave aid to the Axis Powers.

The concept of economic mobilization can therefore be described as a society-wide project that steers private industry and the citizenry at large toward a singular national purpose. It employs powerful deficit spending, increased taxation to combat inflation, and strong government controls over the distribution of raw materials and basic goods. It is also identified with increased equality, full employment and *victory* over a clear and present danger to national security.

There are many sectors that must be transformed to overcome the ecological crisis, including energy, industry, agriculture, forest management, water use, and transportation. To address the severity of the climate emergency and create a future worth living, we must cast a wide net for solutions in all sectors of society, from the personal to the systemic.

The Victory Plan lays out in detail what has to be done and how to do it. It is inspired by the plan requested by President Roosevelt in July 1941 and delivered two months later as the Victory Program that guided the mobilization of our economy for World War II. As a comprehensive policy framework, the Victory Plan is intended to be a complementary, living document: to broadly incorporate the best ideas across many sectors of society, and to update and augment



them as mobilization progresses. This executive summary provides a quick overview of the plan. For a detailed explanation of the rationale and steps to be taken, please refer to the Victory Plan, itself.

## **Objectives for Victory**

To achieve Victory, we must restore a safe and stable climate that supports the continuation of an organized human community. Restoration requires cooling the planet from its present levels of approximately  $\sim 1.2^{\circ}\text{C}$  above pre-industrial (1750) temperatures back to roughly  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  above such levels. Humanity must also reverse ecological overshoot by shrinking the ecological footprint of the global economy from 1.6 planets to approximately half a planet. Additionally, the 6<sup>th</sup> mass extinction of species must be stopped by returning species extinction rates from the current highly elevated rate of 10-100 extinctions per million species per year, to the pre-industrial baseline background rate of approximately one extinction per million species per year. Finally, we must de-acidify the oceans and realize the Four Freedoms of the 21st Century (see below).

## **Front One: Restore a Safe & Stable Climate**

In order to restore a safe, stable, and supportive climate for human civilization and all life, humanity must drive the economy to net zero greenhouse gas emissions as rapidly as possible using emergency economic measures. The U.S. must reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by no later than 2025, and the entire world community must do so no later than 2030. Annual global greenhouse gas emissions should be drastically slashed—immediately. Additionally, we must mount a large-scale greenhouse gas drawdown (or *sequestration*) effort immediately to restore pre-industrial greenhouse gas concentrations and to eventually cool the planet back to safe levels. Drawdown efforts could take decades or even centuries to cool the planet, depending on their scale and scope. For that reason, the government should research humane methods to limit warming or to cool the planet in the near-term in order to prevent uncontrollable global warming driven by greenhouse gas sources such as thawing Arctic permafrost.

### **I. Kick-Start the Mobilization**

#### **1. Declare a National Climate & Sustainability Emergency**

The President should make plain to all U.S. inhabitants that we face a global emergency that will only intensify until we overcome the tremendous menaces of global warming and overshoot.

#### **2. Set Pre-Industrial Greenhouse Gas Air Quality Standards**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) should immediately add all 15 greenhouse gases to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards established under authority of the Clean Air Act. The standards should target safe, pre-industrial (1750) tropospheric concentrations for all greenhouse gases.

#### **3. Order Zero Emissions Plans from Large & Middle-Market Firms**



A newly established Climate Mobilization Board should require plans from businesses and organizations with total annual revenue greater than \$10 million showing how each entity will end the growth of their firm's lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions within one year, and cut them to net zero by 2025. In sectors where individual firms cannot develop zero emissions plans—such as aviation and steel—the CMB should work with them to develop whole-of-sector zero emissions plans.

#### **4. State of the Union Championing the Four Freedoms of the 21st Century**

The President should give a State of the Union address invoking FDR's Four Freedoms speech of 1941, to reaffirm the validity and unfulfilled promise of the Four Freedoms of the 20th Century and to champion the Four Freedoms of the 21st:

1. Right to a healthy and stable global environment.
2. Right to healthy food, clean air and clean drinking water.
3. Right to life-affirming work at a living wage.
4. Right to full democratic participation in government and at the workplace.

## **II. Mobilize the Federal Reserve**

The Federal Reserve, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Treasury, should mobilize its considerable financing powers to make ample funds available for all aspects of the Climate Mobilization effort, as it did in World War II. This would include creating and executing financing plans for mobilization projects, purchasing bonds to regulate interest rates, quantitative easing (money creation), and a variety of other methods to maximize employment, stabilize prices, and moderate long-term interest rates, using environmental sustainability as a new governing mandate.

## **III. Establish New Federal Government Agencies**

During World War II, 158 wartime agencies were established to coordinate mobilization. The Victory Plan calls for 12 new federal government agencies and institutions to coordinate the rapid restructuring of the U.S. economy. These agencies must operate on a transparent, inclusive, and fair basis. For example, the Climate Mobilization Board (CMB), staffed by leading environmental analysts, engineers, scientists, CEOs, and labor leaders from across ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds would conduct technical assessments, enforce production goals, and coordinate all agency-level mobilization activities.

A Mobilization Labor Board (MLB) would convene labor, corporate, and federal representatives to monitor and manage labor relations to ensure an active and healthy workforce in the transition of the economy. An Environmental Impact Accounting Service (EIAS) would also be created to administer a greenhouse gas rationing system and employ climate scientists, economists, and



ecologists to conduct consumption-based emissions accounting and to chart the overall progress of reducing the United States' carbon footprint.

#### **IV. Fair Shares Greenhouse Gas Emissions Rationing**

The federal government, in partnership with state and local governments, should institute a rationing system in which all products and services that emit greenhouse gases are rationed using electronic cards (similar to credit or debit cards) and regular, equal greenhouse gas emissions allowances issued to all citizens. Citizens would be able to sell their unused rations back to the government for cash. The government would then permanently retire the unused rations.

#### **V. Energy & Electricity**

An accelerated abandonment of fossil fuels is a central component of the Victory Plan. This transition will not be cheap or easy, as fossil fuel-sourced power generation and the use of fossil fuels in industrial activities will need to be completely replaced. The Plan cites the book, *Our Renewable Future: Laying Out the Path for One Hundred Percent Clean Energy* (2016), in which authors David Fridley and Richard Heinberg argue that a global transition to renewable energy will cost approximately \$200 trillion dollars. The most feasible transition strategy is an enormous build-out of solar and wind energy. The use of nuclear power as a replacement source is not advisable due to safety and economic concerns post-Fukushima, and for this reason, the Victory Plan does not advocate the development of additional nuclear power. Fortunately, the amount of energy resources available from renewable sources for generation can meet the needs of a modern society. It will require a massive, mandatory program to decarbonize the energy supply in the shrinking window of time available.

In addition to energy generation replacement needs, structural impacts associated with this transformation must be addressed. These impacts are a result of the intermittent supply and geographically distributed nature of renewable energy sources. The shift to a 100% renewable energy economy will require technological advancement in energy storage capacity, and this will result in changes to current electric power grid designs that will allow for more distributed power sources. To replace the nation's energy demand needs currently supplied from fossil fuels, the Victory Plan advocates for the building of a continental renewable energy "super-smart" power grid (SSG), combining both super-grid and smart-grid technologies. This new power transmission and distribution infrastructure will have the capacity to transport renewably-sourced power generation from remotely sourced solar and wind farms located in less-populated states as well as to manage locally sited distributed energy generation, energy storage and electric vehicle-to-grid (V2G) applications. This new infrastructure would be built via a federal works program on a scope and scale similar to the Rural Electrification Act of 1936.

The Climate Mobilization Victory Plan proposes that this process begin immediately. The interim target goals of phasing out all U.S. fossil fuel use by 2025 and an ultimate 80% cut in economy-wide total end use energy consumption will be accomplished through specific, targeted measures and policy shifts. These measures include the elimination of fossil fuel subsidies, the end of fossil fuel exploration, a ban on all new fossil fuel infrastructure investments (including



extraction, transport, export and domestic power generation infrastructure construction), and the decommissioning of all fossil fuel infrastructure and uses by 2025.

## **VI. Transport Mobilization**

The implementation strategy of The Climate Mobilization Victory Plan to decarbonize the U.S. transportation sector follows closely with the successful efforts implemented in World War II. These efforts were characterized by the retrofitting of carmakers to supply the war effort, strict rationing of gasoline for ‘pleasure driving’, and a national “Victory Speed” limit of 35 miles per hour. Rideshare programs were set up in regional locations and effectively encouraged through public education efforts and rationing regimes. Public transportation use increased by over 75% for bus usage, 215% for inter-city bus travel and by over 300% for inter-city light-rail travel. Meanwhile, the use of heavy-rail for freight shipping increased by 9%.

The Climate Mobilization Victory Plan calls for a rapid phase-out of the use of the internal combustion engine and the replacement of its use by zero emissions substitutes. This includes the development and implementation of electrified transportation, both public and private, for personal and freight transport. It also calls for technically innovative solutions for liquid fuel demand needs for shipping and air transport, including sail technology for marine transportation.

To rapidly transform the U.S. domestic transportation sector to zero emissions, The Victory Plan advocates for the creation of a Transportation Redesign Administration (TRA). This agency will utilize industry and stakeholder inputs and could be largely staffed and funded by Department of Transportation resources. Transformative policies would include an accelerated phasing out of the manufacture and sale of fossil fuel-sourced transportation modes in the U.S. To repurpose our current transportation fleet, a program based on the Car Allowance Rebate System, also known as “cash for clunkers” would be implemented. This rebate system would include cash payments and alternative transportation structures and be implemented with the express goal of instituting a ban on fossil fuel-powered transportation by 2025.

Alternative electrified transportation systems will need to be manufactured and installed throughout all urban and rural transport corridors. These alternate transport options will include high-speed rail, electric light rail and electrified vehicle transport systems, including comprehensive and high-density implementation of Solar-Bus Rapid Transit.

*“Americans should have the right to travel to work and move around their cities and towns without being forced to use expensive, dangerous, stressful, and climate-heating combustion vehicles...The Car-Free Cities Act will...facilitate the transformation of America’s cities from car-centric concrete jungles into beautiful, human-scale, citizen-centered environments designed to guarantee the right to travel and enjoy life without car ownership.”*

— The Climate Mobilization Victory Plan, p. 61



Urban transportation will be similarly transformed through the implementation of “car-free cities” policies, inspired by current European efforts, but greatly expanded. These empowerment strategies will work to greatly facilitate the shift from fossil-fueled personal vehicles to easy and safe bicycle and pedestrian options as well as bus, light rail and commuter rail solutions.

## **VII. Transform the Food System**

By one estimate, the food system as a whole is responsible for about half of global greenhouse gas emissions: agricultural production contributing 11-15% of global greenhouse gas emissions; processing, packaging, refrigeration, and retailing food contributing 15-20%; and food waste 2-4%. Additionally, food production contributes substantially to global deforestation, and the production of meat and biofuels adds significantly to the environmental impacts from this vital sector of the domestic economy. To realize effective climate mitigation strategies in food production, a fundamental shift away from conventional industrial agriculture must be developed. This process begins with the establishment of the U.S. Department of Food, Health and Well-Being, an agency that will coordinate regionally sourced material, training, resources and labor for the implementation of rural and urban “Victory Gardens”, similar to the WWII effort. Activities developed in parallel with this effort will be the shift to carbon farming and perennial crops that sequester carbon dioxide while providing generally high yields of healthy foods as well as materials, chemicals, and energy. This shift toward climate-resilient agroecology will also include the implementation of a \$150/ton carbon-sequestration subsidy benefit to local economies, and the phasing out of factory farms and the Corn Ethanol Mandate established by the Renewable Fuels Standard. Finally, increased health and well-being will emerge as changes in diet, a cap on livestock production, a reduction in meat-based consumption, and a “Vegan for Victory” public service campaign are established.

## **VIII. Overhaul the Built Environment**

A set of government programs will need to drive a shift toward residential energy efficiency. Assistance should be offered to homeowners to make the switch, as well as incentives and regulations that ensure landlords follow suit. We must encourage a shift to public transit-oriented development (TOD). Standards for new buildings, renovations and retrofits should be based on energy efficiency and renewable sources.

## **IX. Full Employment Job Guarantee & WWII-Style Tax Fairness**

To ensure a just mobilization for all Americans, a system must be implemented that provides economic security for working individuals and families and protects them from the burden of transition costs. After declaring a climate emergency, the President must create a federally funded, locally organized Job Guarantee program to provide full employment (or 0% unemployment) in the U.S.A. A salary cap should also be established on income above \$500,000 for the duration of the mobilization, in order to ensure relative equality of sacrifice and social solidarity.



## **X. Mobilize the Department of Defense to Fight Climate Change & Ecological Overshoot**

The Department of Defense should aim for zero emissions by 2020. Research and development (R&D) funding should be shifted to environmental defense: renewable energy, energy efficiency, energy storage, plant-based substitutes for meat and dairy, and other environmentally critical areas. U.S. Military bases abroad should be transformed to Climate Rescue bases that distribute emergency food and water supplies to impoverished people and environmental refugees. The DOD should subsidize the conversion of as much industrial capacity as feasible to the Climate Mobilization effort while also maintaining sufficient munitions production to protect the U.S. and our allies amid the ongoing and intensifying geopolitical turbulence.

## **XI. Launch an Emergency Global Forest Management Effort**

Plants on land absorb some 20-30% of global carbon dioxide emissions every year. A global forest management program to preserve old-growth forests—combined with a world-wide effort to grow new forests on previously forested lands—will immediately draw down significant greenhouse gases and curtail deforestation emissions. Public lands in the United States include national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and wilderness areas. These public, federally managed ecosystems have the innate power to help restore a safe climate and halt the 6th mass extinction. Accordingly, the Department of the Interior, USDA, and Department of Defense must phase out commercial logging, fossil fuel development, mineral extraction, and livestock grazing on these public lands to maximize their natural carbon sequestration capacity. These lands should also be used to accommodate ecosystem-sensitive development of renewable energy technologies to combat abrupt global warming. First Nations / Native Americans and other nearby residents must be consulted and respected in developing long-term and appropriate transition plans. This will lay the groundwork for a concerted global effort of preservation and reforestation to avert the destruction of the biosphere and all life on earth.

## **XII. Research Program on Near-Term Cooling Approaches**

Given the very real prospect of global warming feeding back upon itself uncontrollably, it is possible that “merely” ending net global greenhouse gas emissions at wartime speed and instigating a massive greenhouse gas drawdown effort simultaneously will not cool the planet quickly enough to protect civilization and the natural world. Solar radiation management and other near-term cooling approaches include potentially extraordinarily high consequences, which must be weighed by an informed public. The Victory Plan does not advocate the use of these technologies—only the transparent, comprehensive research to investigate their impacts in order to educate the global public. Lower risk approaches, such as the global restoration of water cycles, should be studied, as well. Near-term cooling interventions should *only* be considered as a method of last resort within a comprehensive climate mobilization that eliminates net greenhouse gas emissions as rapidly as possible and initiates a massive carbon dioxide removal effort.



### **XIII. Drawdown Research & Development Program**

A variety of approaches meant to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere are known, but in many cases, their cost, ecological and social impacts, and scalability are not clear. There is significant potential in biological carbon drawdown methods such as reforestation; the proven and safe methods must be pursued with great haste on a global scale. Meanwhile, the federal government should initiate a major research and development program into both biological and chemical carbon dioxide (and other greenhouse gas) drawdown methods.

#### **Front Two: Reverse Ecological Overshoot**

In order to reverse overshoot and stop the 6th mass extinction of species, humanity must:

- Slow down and reverse global population growth
- Phase out consumerism and planned obsolescence
- Considerably shrink the physical resource consumption levels of the global economy, and drastically increase efficiencies of production
- Set aside at least half the Earth's land surface and oceans for preservation
- Halt the further expansion of agricultural land and restore degraded lands

#### **I. Half-Earth Conservation to Halt the 6th Mass Extinction**

Humanity's overshoot of planetary limits has initiated another mass extinction of species, the 6th extinction. If allowed to unfold, it could take roughly 10 million years for life to fully recover. Meanwhile, accelerating global warming is wreaking havoc on planet Earth, causing wholesale migrations of species and ecosystems in a geological instant.

A Half-Earth conservation campaign—setting aside 50% of the planet's surface as a chain of inviolable reserves—will be needed to provide safety for humanity and all of the life forms with which we share the planet (and on which we rely). Only 15% of Earth's land area and 2.8% of its ocean area are currently protected. Further conservation-oriented management of the biosphere has the potential to maintain many local and regional ecosystems' functions as carbon sinks, preventing them from deteriorating and converting into greenhouse gas sources that accelerate global warming. Accordingly, federal conservation spending for National Resources and Environment (Function 300) must increase, wildland and national parks must expand—including the establishment of a North American Wildland Corridors Network that connects and reserves habitats stretching across the continent—and both national and international oversight must work to ensure biodiversity is understood and protected.

#### **II. Restore the Oceans**



As discussed throughout the Victory Plan, many of the drivers of ocean devastation must be addressed, including nitrogen fertilizer runoff from agriculture, plastic pollution from industry, offshore oil and gas extraction in the energy sector, and carbon dioxide emissions in the electricity and transportation sector. The devastation of the oceans, which are the primary protein source for 1 billion people, is not only a moral catastrophe—it is a threat to global security. To restore the health of the oceans, substantial preservation efforts are required, and industrial-scale fishing will need to be substantially curbed.

### **III. Slow Down & Reverse Global Population Growth**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services should run a large-scale and long-lasting campaign in media across the country urging U.S. inhabitants to consider the catastrophic effects of global population growth when they make decisions about how many children to have. The voluntary campaign should encourage parents to have either one or two children at most. Contraception must be made widely available, affordable, and over-the-counter for global accessibility through massively expanded federal funding to USAID.

## **Conclusion**

This executive summary provides a brief synopsis of the Climate Mobilization Victory Plan—it is not a substitute for reading the entire work. It is intended to give the reader an overall sense and orientation toward a proposal to save the only world we have. The historical, scientific, and policy details are provided throughout the complete Victory Plan, and readers are encouraged to engage the full text.

The Victory Plan is an enormous undertaking and will no doubt change as The Climate Mobilization receives more feedback, and as policy and technology options evolve. Some may argue that we cannot succeed in delivering such a federal government climate mobilization, but the truth is that such an effort is our only hope for a livable future. In its current state, the Victory Plan is the first draft of the first of its kind: a comprehensive, society-wide policy proposal to save human civilization and the biodiversity of the Earth.

The enactment of the Victory Plan will require the massive support of the people of the United States, and international support. Elements of the Plan can be applied to fit the needs of states and cities for local and regional execution, and other policy proposals may be incorporated into updated versions of the Victory Plan, as they become available in each sector of society. Because local and state mobilizations provide a foundation for national and international action, policy makers, U.S. activists and empowered readers across the globe are encouraged to implement this Plan in their own contexts while generating support for global climate mobilization. We hope the truth of our call to full-scale mobilization will prevail before accumulated environmental cataclysms force a generalized acceptance of what we already know. We need not wait for a climate “Pearl Harbor” to move us to action: We must mobilize *now*.