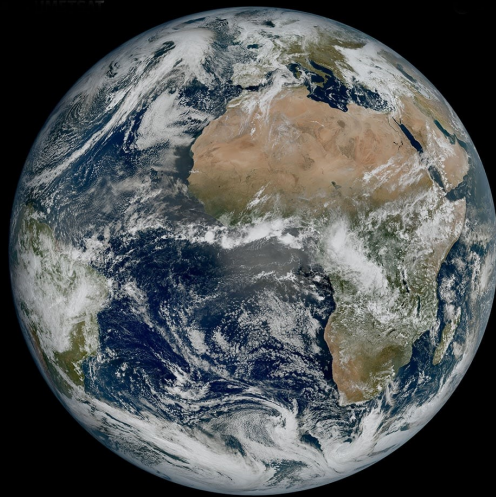


We got this

Strategic marketing ideas for
a global climate movement



Summary

Can we do this?

We all have days when we wonder if there's any hope. And then we realize that hope is what keeps us going, and we buckle down and get to work.

We have all the collective resources and brainpower we need to solve climate change. And yet, here we are. 2023 was the worst year ever for global warming and climate impacts, and it will only get worse unless we can change course.

The fundamental challenge is to be more effective in selling climate action. What images, messaging and action can best galvanize public support for political and business leadership?

This paper presents a series of ideas to enhance the power of a climate movement and overcome the resistance to climate action. The proposed approach is based on two key concepts:

1. movement-based social marketing (material that can be readily “adapted and adopted” by a wide range of players who share a common goal); and
2. strategic marketing (marketing geared to strategic objectives).

The ideas presented in this paper include:

- ❑ A strategic focus on three key goals for climate action
 1. net-zero emissions by 2050 at the latest;
 2. building climate resiliency; and
 3. a better future for all.

- ❑ A visual representation of the three goals: the climate arrows.
- ❑ A core campaign and target as a catalyst for climate leadership and action: “All in by 2025.”
- ❑ A series of activities and campaigns in support of a global climate movement:
 1. Engage people and build a climate majority and a clear social mandate for leadership;
 2. Support climate leadership by governments and corporations through peer networks, expert advice, and external standards and verification;
 3. Target the laggards;
 4. Organize communities; and
 5. Collaborate in developing and implementing climate solutions.

These ideas are all interconnected—from global to local and back to global; from mandate to leadership to action; and from linchpin campaigns to marketing solutions and individual action. They can be coordinated where possible, but can also be developed organically through individual action by each of us according to our capacity and area of expertise.

Everything in this paper is free for you to use. The images and ideas presented here will be made available online under a Creative Commons license for all to use. They are “foundation” materials for marketing climate action.

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The challenge

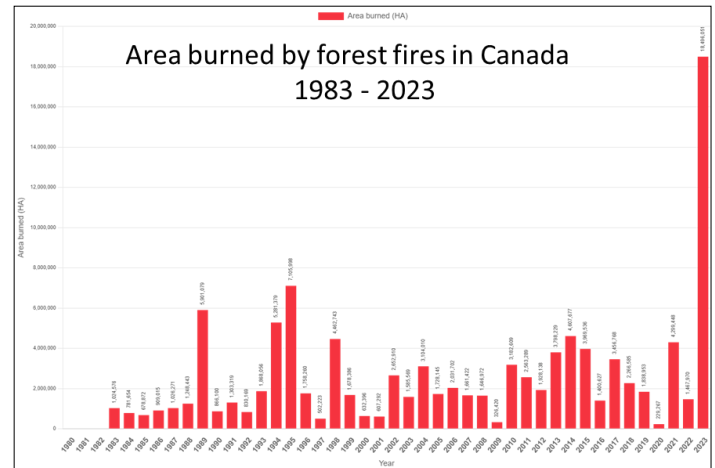
2023 has been a year like no other: floods, fires, heat, and drought. Awareness of climate change and extreme weather is increasing, yet still the commitment to leadership and meaningful climate action is slow to come.

Public concern is growing, and with each heatwave, drought, flood, or weather event, awareness of the human and economic cost rises, at least for the moment. But time is not on our side. We cannot wait patiently for enough people and politicians to personally feel the effect of climate extremes in order to understand why action is needed now. We cannot wait for the rate and scale of climate impacts to rise to a level of inescapable and unrecoverable damage.

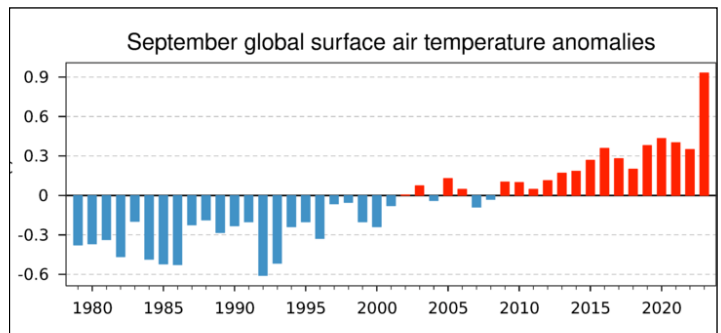
It's not that we don't have the resources or the answers. The climate movement has all the scientists, activists, policy advisors, experts and advocates we need to get the job done. The problem is that we are still fighting an uphill battle:

- The forces against climate action have always been effective in raising doubts, creating dissent, and creating roadblocks to action.
- The impacts are not immediate, unless you are caught up in an extreme event.
- Public concern and political will are fickle and can easily shift to other issues like jobs and the cost of living.

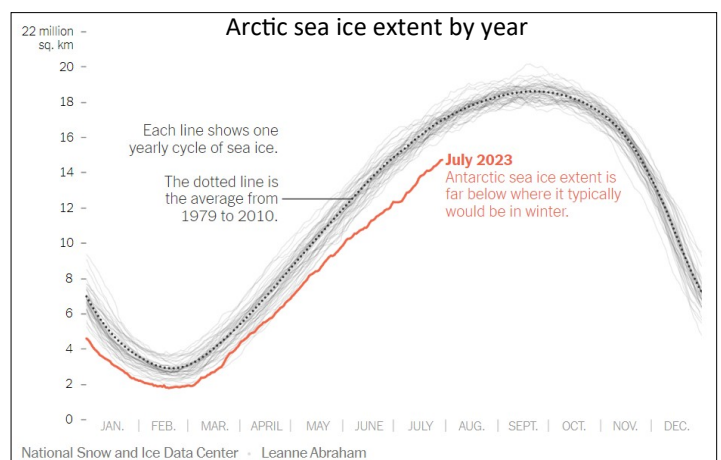
Our challenge is to find the images and messaging that flip the switch from off to on. We need to find ways to turn a concerned majority into an active majority.



<https://ciffc.net/statistics>



<https://climate.copernicus.eu/surface-air-temperature-september-2023>



<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/02/climate/antarctic-sea-ice-record-low.html>

How can we sell climate action?

What images and messaging can best galvanize public support for political and business leadership?

Strategic marketing opportunities

What is strategic marketing?

Strategic marketing is traditionally associated with business as a way to distinguish yourself from your competitors, and build market share. It involves analyzing market trends and consumer preferences to help increase brand awareness, attract customers, and influence public opinion in order to promote favourable policy.

Strategic marketing is a combination of strategic analysis and creative marketing. It's research meets art.

For business, strategic marketing is a way to increase profit—which is not exactly the driving force behind the climate movement. So how can strategic marketing help us break through the barriers to climate action? The process is actually very similar:

1. Understand our system
2. Define our goals
3. Identify the inflection points where change can occur
4. Identify the resources at our disposal
5. Develop actions that will be a catalyst for change

Figure 1 (next page) is an overview of the key steps to promoting climate leadership and action. This is the system we are working with, and it is mirrored at every level of governance or economy.

Our overall goal is to solve climate change, which we define in numerous ways, including 1.5°C, net-zero, and resilience. Specific goals

include fostering climate leadership which, in turn, will lead to climate action and results.

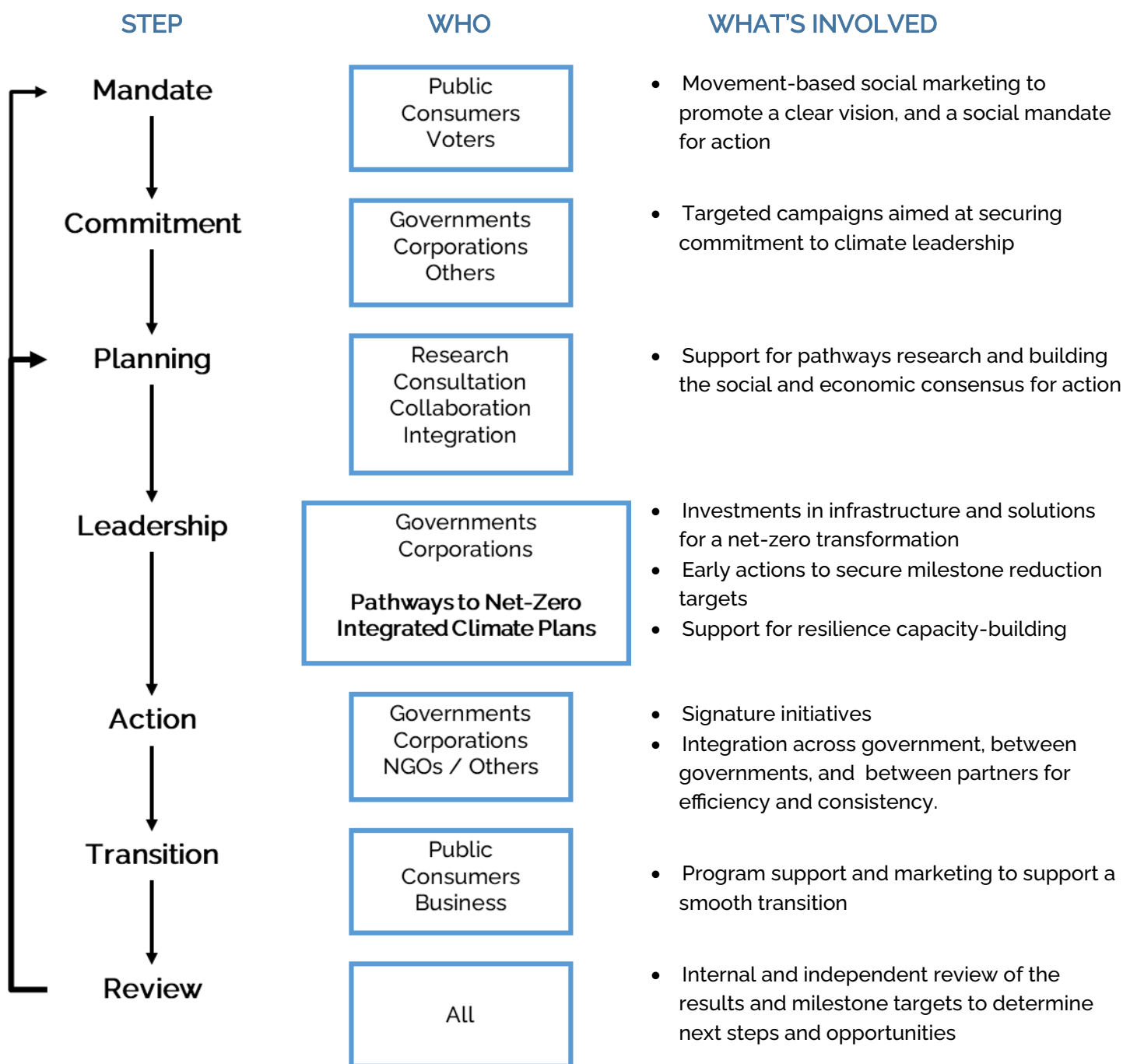
Each step along the path to effective climate action is a point where strategic marketing interventions can influence and improve our chances for success. For example:

- Social marketing can build the social mandate for leadership.
- United movement-based marketing can set global targets that spur leadership and action by governments and companies.
- Integrated people-focused solutions will generate support and reinforce a social mandate.

The resources we have at our disposal are massive. We have national to local organizations, scientists and policy experts and organizations, and leaders in both government and business. Together, we are unstoppable, which is why the key marketing challenge is to design material and ideas that support an entire movement.

This idea of “movement-based social marketing” is at the heart of a proposed climate action icon and related targets, campaigns, and engagement activities. To be successful, we need to be united in our messaging, laser-focused on where we can make a difference, and supportive of leadership and action wherever it occurs.

Figure 1: Building Climate Leadership and Action



Two Guiding Principles for Movement-Based Strategic Marketing

- **Think like a movement.** Work together and help each other in support of common goals. We should all see ourselves as being part of the climate movement.
- **Empower action.** Find the right messaging, campaigns, and solutions that make leadership and action easy, affordable, and desirable.

A climate icon

Can an icon show climate action?

First things first. Before we can design an image to symbolize climate action, we first need to know what it will stand for. Put simply, “climate action,” but it should also show what action is required.

For all its complexity, climate action can be distilled down to three main goals:

- **Net-Zero** - eliminating greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 or sooner.
- **Resilient** - helping people, communities, and countries prepare for, adapt to, and bounce back from climate impacts.
- **A better future for all** - a commitment to design climate solutions that will create a sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future for all.

Each component is a distinct action, but they are intimately connected:

- Getting to net-zero emissions will reduce the impact of future climate impacts, but it will not immediately eliminate or reverse the course of climate change.
- Building resilience will help us respond to climate impacts in ways that will strengthen communities and local economies.
- A commitment to a better future integrates climate action into solutions that address social benefit and a sustainable, prosperous economy, both locally and globally.

Taken together, they reflect both the urgency for action, and the commitment to helping people through climate action.

Other Eco-Icons

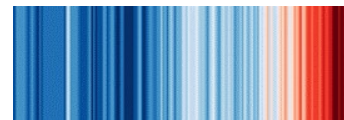


The 3Rs: The Granddaddy of Eco Logos

The 3Rs logo has become the best known environmental logo in existence.

It was designed by [Gary Anderson](#) in 1970 for a design competition sponsored by The Container Corporation of America. The logo became associated with the phrase, “reduce, reuse, and recycle” which reflected a strategic hierarchical approach to waste reduction.

What made the logo and phrase successful was the simplicity of the design, the strategic message, and ability for everyone (activist, government, or business) to use the logo to identify with the cause. It was owned by no one, used by all, and supported an entire movement.



Warming Stripes: The History of Global Warming

Warming stripes are the best known image of global warming.

The brainchild of [Professor Ed Hawkins](#) from the University of Reading, warming stripes have helped to visualize temperature data from over the past century and a half. They have been used to raise awareness about climate change and the need for action.

The stripes show what has happened. What we need is a similar image to show what can happen—an image that conveys hope and our common commitment to action.

Here is the recommended image and text to represent climate action:

This is Climate Action



Net-zero. Resilient. A better future for all

The design flows from the three core goals. The key criteria are that it is simple, can communicate the core messages, and that it can be easily adapted for different uses.

The resulting design combines elements of both the 3Rs icon and the warming stripes.

The three circles represent emissions (red), adaptation (green), and the future (blue).

The arrows represent our commitment to eliminate emissions, to help each other respond to climate impacts, and to create a better future for all.

This is the foundation image:



The climate arrows are registered under a Creative Commons license, which means they can be freely adapted and used to support public outreach, climate action campaigns, climate leadership, and marketing of climate solutions.

Much like the 3Rs logo, this foundation image may well evolve over time and be integrated into other designs. It cannot, and should not, be tightly regulated, however early action by lead organizations can solidify the goals and interpretation of the arrows consistent with the goals of a climate movement..

In the following sections, there are examples of how the design can be integrated into global to local campaigns and activities. These ideas, and the climate action arrows, can be used to help market climate action and support the work of all participants in the climate movement.

We Got This



Scientists for Climate Action
Researchers for Climate Action
Activists for Climate Action
Citizens for Climate Action
Students for Climate Action
Teachers for Climate Action
Politicians for Climate Action
Civil Servants for Climate Action
Planners for Climate Action
Developers for Climate Action
Entrepreneurs for Climate Action
Businesses for Climate Action
Workers for Climate Action
Retirees for Climate Action
Parents for Climate Action
Grandparents for Climate Action
Babies for Climate Action
Kids for Climate Action
Social Workers for Climate Action
Nurses for Climate Action
Doctors for Climate Action
Firefighters for Climate Action
Farmers for Climate Action
Nature Lovers for Climate Action
Faith for Climate Action
Cultures for Climate Action
Artists for Climate Action
Musicians for Climate Action
Actors for Climate Action
Athletes for Climate Action
Refugees for Climate Action
Communities for Climate Action
Everyone for Climate Action
How about you?

From image to action.

The beauty of an icon is that anyone can use it. There is a role for everyone and every organization in promoting climate action. Whatever your area of focus or expertise, see how you can use the climate arrows to show support for our common goals and to showcase your own contributions and goals.

The magic of an icon is when we all use it. The climate arrows and common messaging can be used at every step in the process of building commitment to implementing solutions.



Strategic marketing for climate action

The real challenge is to determine **what** we want to market.

For example, if we want to convey a sense of strength and commitment to solving climate change, "We got this" is a message that reinforces support for a climate movement.

However, the climate movement is also focused on leadership and results. We need to find the right messaging and campaigns that will be a catalyst for action.

And this leads us to the cornerstone campaign...

A cornerstone campaign

Finding the right target

Everyone understands round numbers, like 1.5°C and 2.5°C warming, a 50% reduction by 2030, and net-zero by 2050.

As a climate movement, our target needs a round number. But more than that:

- It needs to have a specific action that is both challenging and feasible.
- It needs to be a catalyst for climate leadership and action.
- It needs to work at a global level down to the local level.
- It needs to show that there is a climate majority that not only expects leadership, but is there to support climate leaders.

The right target can be a rallying call and catalyst for action.

The proposed target is for all governments and companies to have a net-zero pathway and an integrated climate plan by 2025. The campaign can be led by global climate groups, representing citizens, scientists, at-risk countries and peoples, and business and government leaders.

It can also be supported by national, sub-national and local campaigns and across all economic sectors to provide a strong social mandate and a target for climate leadership.

It's bold, focused, and will empower action and leadership across the breadth and depth of the climate movement.

All in by 2025.



Net-zero. Resilient. A better future for all.

By December 2025, every government and company will have a credible pathway to net-zero by 2050 or sooner, and an integrated climate plan to achieve milestone targets, build resilience, and support a better future for all.

What if we set the COP agenda?

Every year, the 198 signatories to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meet at a Conference of the Parties (COP) to review the global status of climate change and climate action.

Every year, civil society organizations and other observers turn up to participate in side events and press for stronger action. The frustration grows each year as climate commitments remain short of the requirements for net-zero emissions by 2050.

What if we used the climate arrows to reinforce our common goals of net-zero, resilience, and a better future for all? Can we focus the message on a key goal that will set the agenda for an entire movement?

“ALL IN BY 2025”

By COP30 in 2025, every government and company around the world must have a credible pathway to net-zero by 2050 or sooner, and an integrated climate plan to get to achieve milestone targets, build resilience, and support a better future for all.

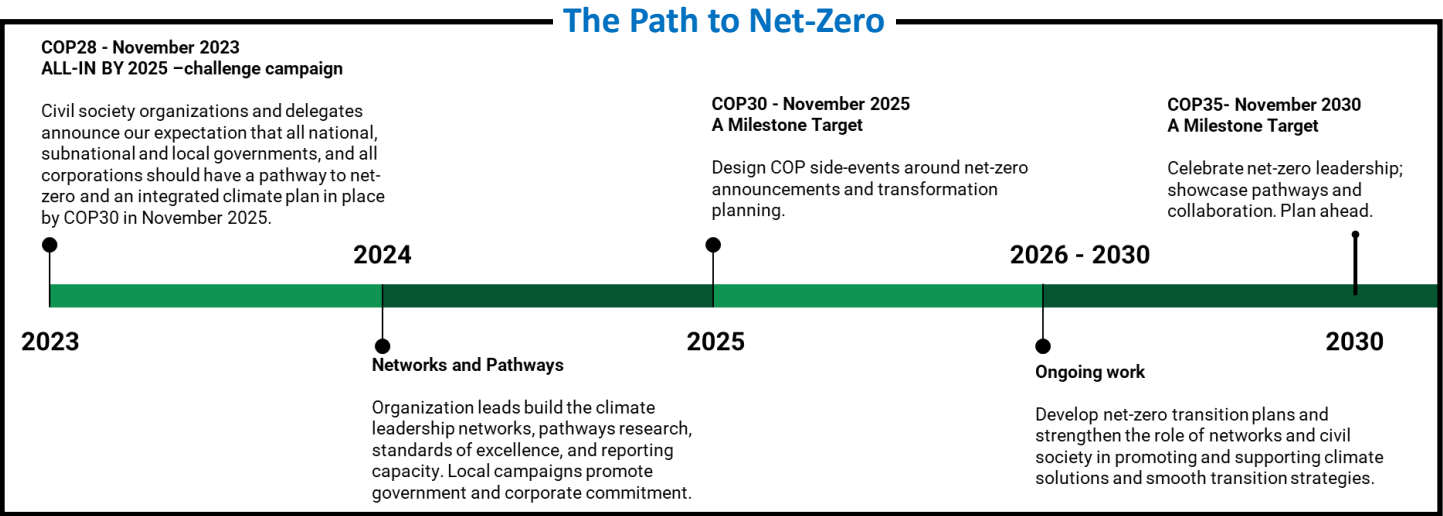
This is a simple yes/no commitment. Either you are committed to achieving a net-zero target, or you are not.

According to [Net-Zero Tracker](#), there are currently 151 out of 198 countries and 984 out of 1,980 companies they track that have at least a commitment to a net-zero target. Getting to 100% participation by 2025 will not be easy, but it is a target that sets the wheels in motion, internationally and at all levels of government and across all the major economic sectors.

If we set the target, it will set in motion a series of related campaigns to build commitment and collaboration among the participants, and to call out the laggards.

Looking beyond 2025, our common goal is a smooth transition to net-zero, which encompasses our goals for investing in community and economic resilience, a just transition for workers and businesses, social benefit and equitable solutions for people and communities, and a healthy environment for future generations. quality of life.

And this leads to a world of opportunities..



Other campaigns, projects and activities

1. Create a social mandate

The mandate for climate action comes from the people; all kinds of people, including activists, voters, shareholders, consumers, neighbours, youth, and our neighbours and friends.

We are the climate majority. Let's show it by putting the climate arrows in the hands of as many people as possible. The more groups, green businesses and governments that adopt the climate arrows into their engagement strategies, the more commonplace it will become, and the clearer our social mandate.

As a Creative Commons image, anyone can adopt the climate arrows to create awareness for climate action, including through:

- protest signs at climate marches with your preferred message;



A strong message can be used for protest marches, t-shirts, and lawn and windows signs.

- an everyday show of commitment, including t-shirt designs and slogans you will want to wear everyday; and
- signs of support from local businesses, organizations and governments that support climate action.

The climate arrows are both a call for action and a personal belief. Even if the words around it are different, the symbol stands for our common goal, and the message to our political and business leaders is crystal clear: “be a climate leader and we will support you.”

Soft Messaging

Turns out, the three arrows have a broader application as a life philosophy:

- *Live lightly*
- *Help each other*
- *Enjoy life*

Soft messaging can broaden our reach and help counter negative messaging



2. Support climate leaders

Yes, the focus is firmly on governments and corporations as the primary drivers of net zero. But that doesn't mean they have to do it on their own.

If the initial goal of the climate movement is to develop the social mandate that leads to government and corporate leadership, then the second goal has to be to provide the advice and logistical support to help governments and companies develop and implement transition plans.

Let's say a government or company makes a commitment to new net-zero. How can we ensure that their transition plan is robust and legitimate?

All governments and companies should be able to avail themselves of expert scientific, economic, and policy advice from a myriad of sources, internationally, nationally and locally. They include

- **government and business networks** that can play a lead role in defining best practices and codes to guide the development of climate plans
- **Scientists and science agencies** that can provide research on climate impacts and projections
- **Networks and independent research organizations** that can monitor progress according to best practices and climate targets
- **Researchers and think-tanks** with expertise in modelling and policy options
- **Non-government organizations and networks** that can assist with consultation and engagement

Principles of Climate Planning

Guiding principles for net-zero plans will reflect an awareness of the need for widespread involvement in planning and carrying out a transition plan. Examples include:

- **Sound Science:** following the best scientific advice
- **Sound research:** developing aggressive and achievable pathways to net-zero
- **Consultation and Collaboration:** ensuring broad participation in designing and implementing a plan
- **Smooth transition:** minimizing social and economic disruption and maximizing social benefit through climate action
- **Integration and efficiency:** ensuring consistency across departments, governments, and sectors

We support
Climate Action



Net-zero. Resilient. A better future for all.

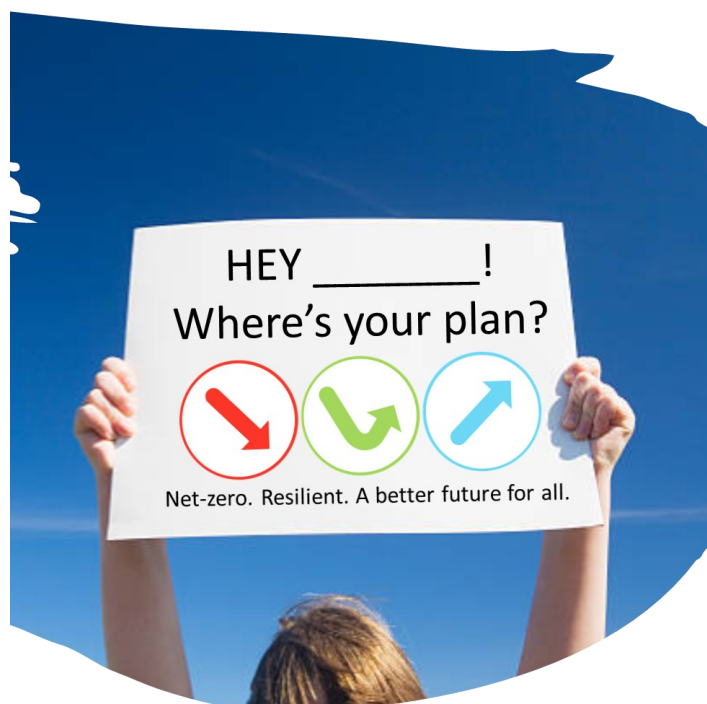
3. Target the laggards

No matter where we live, there will likely be both leaders and laggards, including:

- national, sub-national, and local governments;
- every political party and individual candidates; and
- each economic sector, globally, regionally and local

For the leaders, congratulate them on the commitment they have made. Feel free to suggest where they can improve, especially in ways that will build strong social support.

Call out the laggards. Ask them where is their climate plan. Help turn the laggards into leaders!



4. Organize communities

Communities and neighbourhoods are the front lines of climate change. They feel the impacts the hardest, they need to be resilient, and they are where climate solutions are integrated with local needs and priorities.

Community leads and networks help to identify local actions that address climate change, support local business, and improve the quality of life for all.

A community climate plan can outline priorities, potential projects, and what support is needed. These plans can help access government, foundation and corporate funding and support to convert ideas into on-the-ground projects.

Community Climate Plans

Imagine hundreds of communities empowered to take action on climate change, each according to their local priorities, and each drawing on the resources of a local network and regional climate funding.



5. Develop catalyst campaigns

How can a climate movement speed up the adoption of climate solutions, such as heat pumps, local renewable power, e-bikes and safe cycling, urban village design, remote work, and local food options?

Catalyst campaigns are collaborative campaigns that help to accelerate the adoption of climate solutions. They can bring NGOs, business, and government together to market climate solutions to the public.

1. Find solutions people want

Finding solutions people want is critical to long-term public support and a smooth transition to net-zero. The best solutions are ones that will have an impact on reducing emissions while building local resiliency and improving quality of life.

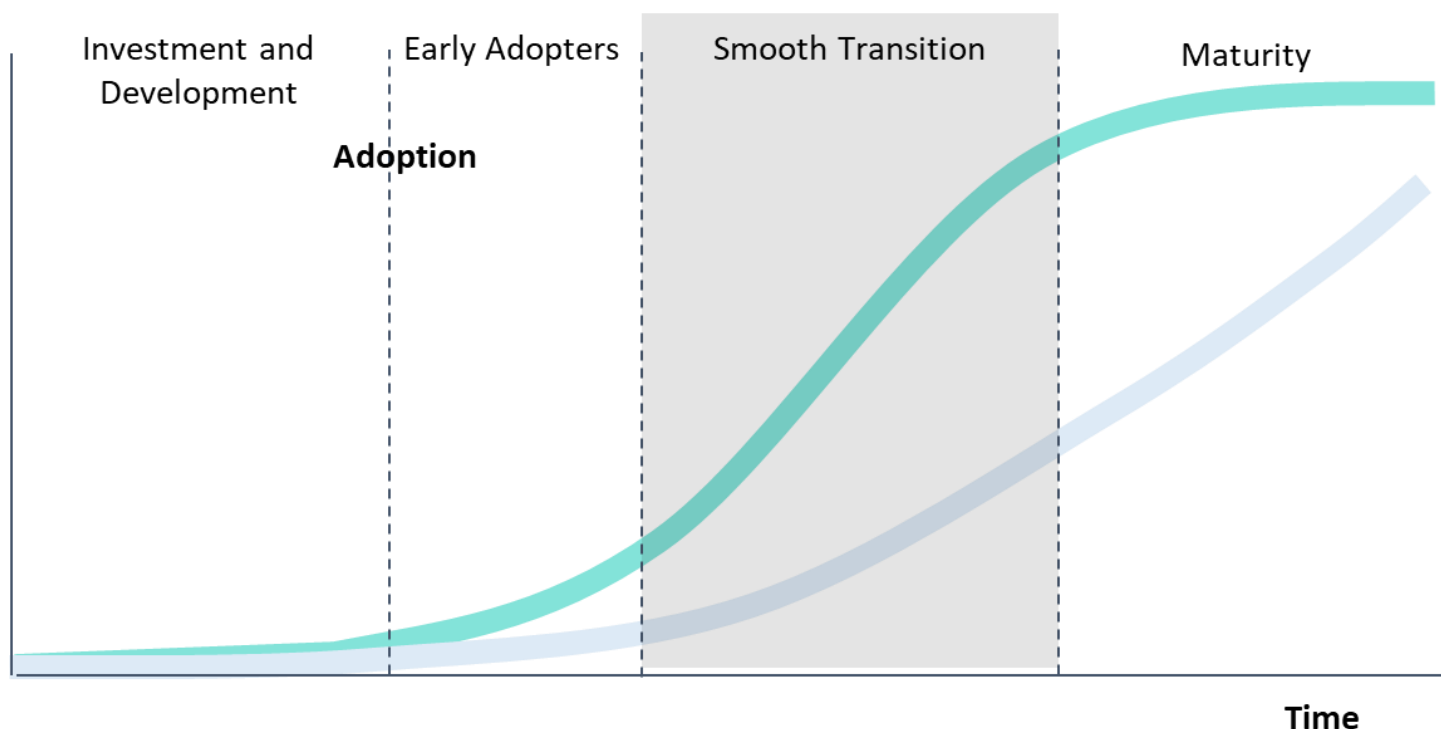
2. Invest in solutions and infrastructure

Good ideas don't happen without careful planning, strong networks and common goals. Ensure all the pieces are in place that will make it "easy, affordable, and desirable" for people to adopt new ideas and technology.

3. Speed up the transition

Focus on the transition phase, from early adopters to widespread change. Build a strong coalition across social and economic lines to market and provide support services to support a smooth transition.

Collaborative Marketing Campaigns and Transformation Curves



Let's make it work

climatearrows.net

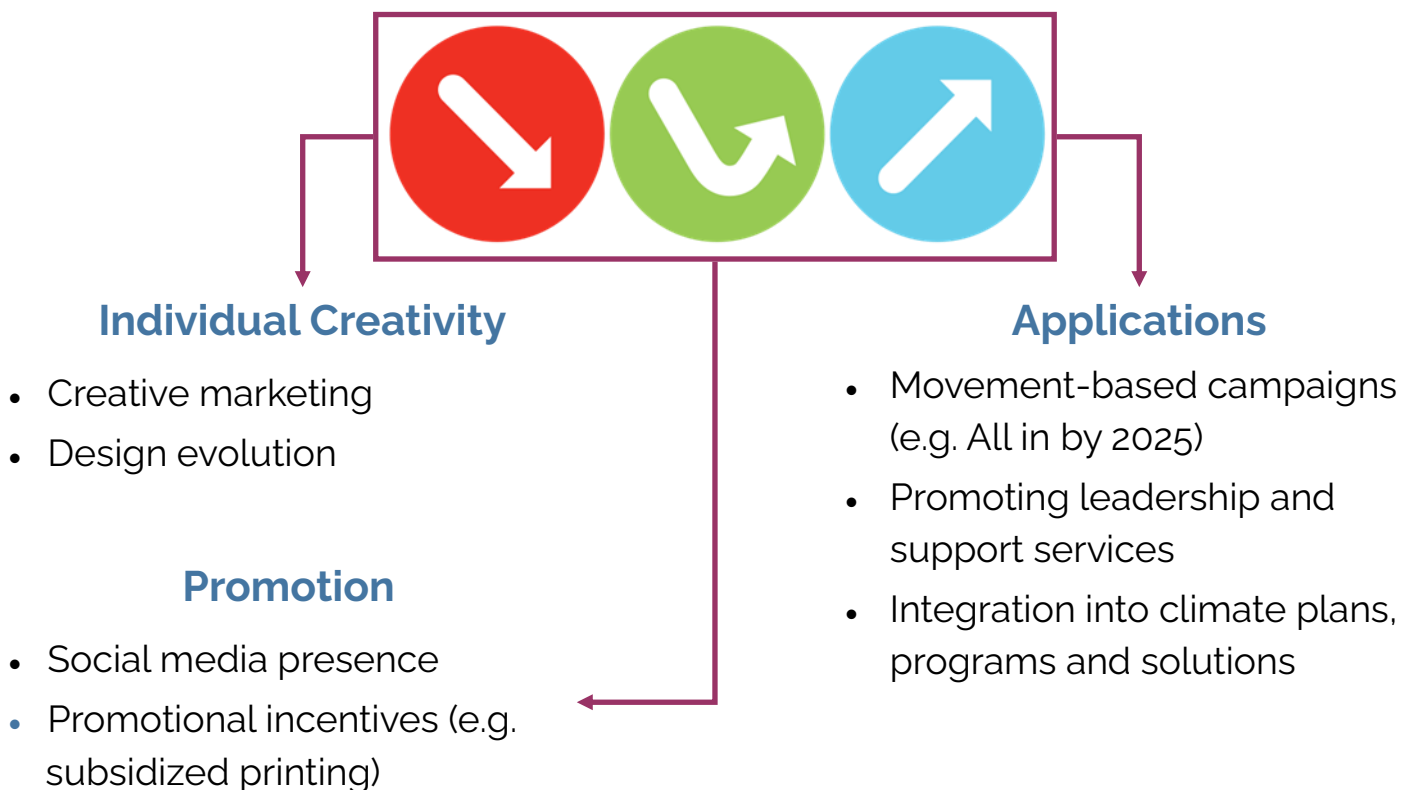
The artwork and outline will be available via a project website, climatearrows.net. The website will describe project goals and invite people, organizations, businesses, and governments to join together in support of our common goals.

Over time, the website will include a portfolio of applications, including design ideas, campaigns, and other applications that are consistent with the core objectives.

The success of the arrows depends on our ability to use the visual image to support the development of:

- a social mandate;
- climate leadership;
- transition pathways and integrated climate plans; and
- awareness and support for solutions

In short, the success of a climate action icon lies in our ability to use it to raise awareness and commitment to climate action



The bottom line

Do we need a climate icon?

Do we need movement-based marketing?

This shouldn't be necessary. But it is.

We need to convince people that climate action is needed, and that it can actually help them.

We need to show our politicians and business leaders that there is a climate majority and a clear mandate for leadership.

We need to show that people are keen for solutions that will improve their lives and strengthen our communities and economy.

We need to show that all of us working on climate change share, and are working towards, the same overall goals.

We need to turn denial and despair into hope and commitment.

If you have suggestions for ways to improve on the ideas in this paper, let us know.

If you can turn these ideas into action, please do.

Feel free to forward this paper to others.

Thank-you for all you are doing. Stay strong.

We got this.