

A Manifesto for the Earth

Introduction

We, the people of Earth, face the prospect of climate chaos and the accompanying threats of escalating inequality and injustice. We reject this future and choose instead to preserve our shared home, on a local and global scale. As a specific instance of this choice, we call for the setting up of a Global Climate Trust to operate a radically simple, fair and effective licensing system for fossil fuels, on behalf of all humanity. Many people are already calling for ‘action’; but here is a specific tool to do the job.

The mechanism

If fossil fuels are extracted from the ground, they will be burnt, causing emissions. So to control emissions, we must limit fossil fuel extraction to what is ‘safe’ (as for the rest, we must ‘keep it in the ground’). The Trust sets a cap (limit) on total global carbon emissions (which is reduced each year in a planned and predictable way, guided by the latest science), and each year the corresponding number of issues permits for fossil fuel extraction are issued. These are bought by corporations that want to extract fossil fuels from the Earth.

This system is operated on behalf of all humankind. So the money raised (from auctioning the permits) is shared out equally to the people of the world, as equal owners of the system. This automatically rewards low-carbon users the world over.

This approach, called Cap & Share, is a simple, fair and robust way of achieving the urgently needed reductions in carbon emissions. It is rooted in equity and is based, not on people ‘doing their bit’ in isolation, but on sharing in a collective global solution.

Our call

We call on our political leaders to establish or support this Trust, and to mandate compliance by fossil fuel corporations.

We call on prominent ‘elders’ to step forward and serve on this Trust if invited; or, failing action by governments, to show leadership by establishing the Trust independently on behalf of humanity.

We call on NGOs, scientists, faith leaders, civil society organisations, and public figures from all fields, to support this initiative, to recruit suitable ‘elders’, and to help muster popular support.

We call on our fellow citizens of the world to join in demanding this action on behalf of all humanity, in order to safeguard the global world we live in, and the planetary system of which we are part.

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