



# CLIMATE

## ACTIVIST GUIDE

BUILDING A LOCAL MOVEMENT FOR CLIMATE ACTION IN 2009 AND BEYOND

350.org

**Thanks for picking up this guide!  
Right now you might be wondering  
what this 350 thing is all about. Here's  
the idea: On the 24th of October, we  
will stand together as one planet and  
call for a fair global climate treaty that  
lowers Carbon Dioxide levels below 350  
parts per million - the safe upper limit  
in our atmosphere. United by a common  
call to action, we'll make it clear: world  
leaders must create a fair international  
agreement that meets the latest science  
and stops the climate crisis.**

**This movement has just begun,  
and we need your help.**

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This guide is designed to help you build momentum locally for climate action, and specifically to organize an event near you for the 350 International Day of Climate Action on the 24th of October. We'll outline how to make the biggest impact with your organizing, whether you're a professional activist or you've never organized before. Hopefully this information will be useful far beyond 2009 too - this year is really important, but we know we'll have to keep working to stop climate change. Let's get started!

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### TAKE ACTION

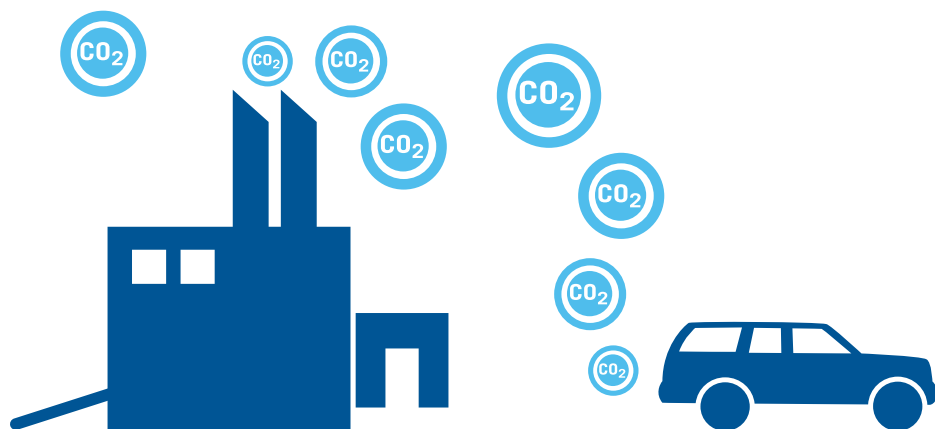
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# The Facts

While it's important to be knowledgeable as an organizer, don't feel like you have to be an expert climate scientist before getting started – you'll learn as you go. To get you started, here is a short primer on the science and politics of climate change. For more reading, check out the Resources section of this guide and the 350 website.

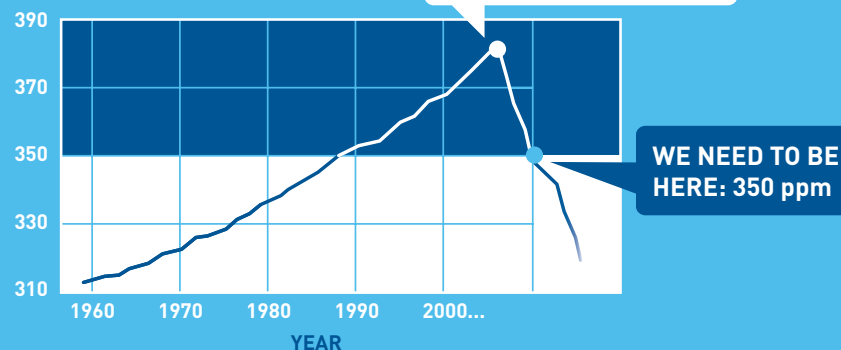
There are three simple numbers you need to really understand global warming. From the beginning of humanity until 200 years ago, our atmosphere contained 275 parts per million of carbon dioxide (parts per million is the ratio of the number of carbon dioxide molecules per million other molecules in the atmosphere). This is the first number. That level of CO<sub>2</sub> is necessary— without it the earth would be uninhabitable, like space. We need carbon in the atmosphere; the question is, how much? In the 18th century, humans started to burn coal, gas and oil to produce energy and goods. The amount of carbon in the atmosphere began to rise, at first slowly and now more quickly. Many of the daily activities we do, like turning lights on, cooking food and heating or cooling our homes rely on energy sources like coal and oil that emit carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases into the atmosphere.



350.ORG

## CO<sub>2</sub> IN THE ATMOSPHERE

Measured at Mauna Loa, Hawaii



The second number that you have to remember is 387. Right now, the atmosphere has 387 parts per million CO<sub>2</sub> and this number is rising by 2 parts per million every year. Scientists are saying that's too much – 387 ppm is higher than any time in the recorded history of our planet. We're already beginning to see disastrous impacts on people and places all over the world. Glaciers that are a source of drinking water for hundreds of millions of people are melting fast. Mosquitoes, who like a warmer world, are spreading to new populated places, and bringing malaria and dengue fever with them. Drought is becoming much more common, making food harder to grow in many places. There has been a ten year drought in Australia. Sea levels have begun to rise, and recognized scientists warn that they could go up to several meters this century. If that happens, many of the world's cities, island nations, and farmland will be underwater. Combined, these impacts exacerbate conflicts and security issues in already resource-strapped regions. The Arctic is sending us perhaps the clearest message that climate change is occurring much more quickly than scientists previously thought. In the summer of 2007, the arctic ice cap's total area decreased by 40%. Many scientists now believe the Arctic will be completely ice free in the summertime between 2011 and 2015, some 80 years ahead of what scientists had predicted just a few years ago.

Propelled by the news of these accelerating impacts, some of the world's leading climate scientists have now revised the highest safe level of CO<sub>2</sub> to 350 parts per million: the last and most important number in our CO<sub>2</sub> trilogy. It's the safety level for planet Earth. The first scientist to warn leaders about global warming more than two decades ago was James Hansen, from America's National Aeronautics and Space Administration. To quote him on the number 350, "If humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed... evidence and ongoing climate change suggest that CO<sub>2</sub> will need to be reduced from its current 385 ppm to at most 350 ppm." That's a hard task but is not impossible. As a whole, we need to stop taking carbon out of the ground and burning it. Above all, that means we need to stop burning so much coal—and start using solar and wind energy and other such sources of renewable energy –while ensuring countries in the Global South a fair

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chance to develop. If we do, then the earth will slowly cycle some of that extra carbon out of the atmosphere, and eventually we'll return to a safe level. By decreasing use of other fossil fuels, and improving agricultural and forestry practices around the world, we could get back to 350 by mid-century. But the longer we remain in the danger zone—above 350—the more likely that we will see disastrous and irreversible climate impacts.

## 24 October Action Spotlight

**In Spain, Monolo and his friends from a local solar energy company will be cooking 350 delicious paellas in solar ovens, and creating a video of 350 seconds all about the project.**

4 This year, we have a unique opportunity to set a new course to 350 and below. Every year since 1992, the United Nations hosts a two-week long conference for world leaders to meet and discuss what to do to about the global threat of climate change. This process is called the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and includes a major meeting each year in December, and several smaller meetings throughout the year. In December 2009, the meeting will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark. There, delegates, non-governmental organizations, and businesses from every nation will meet to forge a new global climate change agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol. The UNFCCC's founding charter states that its ultimate goal is to stabilize global levels of CO<sub>2</sub> at a level that prevents 'dangerous interference' with our climate. Yet the global CO<sub>2</sub> targets currently in discussion range between 450ppm and 550ppm, which scientists are now saying are far outside of the safe zone, and ensure disaster for our planet's future. It's no small task, but we need to let our world leaders know that 350ppm is the safe target that can ensure an equitable future and save us from climate catastrophe.

With your help, we can spread the word to our friends, families and neighbors, and convince our leaders to take action in Copenhagen this year! For more information, visit [350.org/science](http://350.org/science)



350.ORG

# Our Story

The most important job of a climate organizer is telling a compelling story that will motivate people to take action, so here's a little story about how we got started!

## Who are we?

5 The central coordinating team for 350 is a small team of youth from around the world, and author and environmentalist Bill McKibben – check out more about each of us at [350.org/our-team](http://350.org/our-team). A few years ago, after graduating from university, where we ran a handful of environmental campaigns on our campus in Vermont, USA, our group of college friends decided to try and spark the climate movement in the U.S. We linked up with Bill McKibben, and in early 2007, pulled together the largest day of environmental protest in a generation. During that year, we coordinated over 2000 events in all 50 states, calling on the U.S. Congress to "Step It Up" and cut carbon emissions 80% by 2050. We used online tools to stimulate offline actions, and unite a grassroots movement around the U.S. which continues today. At the end of 2007, we traveled to Bali for the UNFCCC climate negotiations, and spent two weeks talking to delegates, civil society representatives and young climate activists from around the world who had gathered there. We found that it seemed like our style of organizing just might work on the international level, and soon after we got back to the US, we got to work and launched 350.org.

But 350 would never be possible with just the small team of young people who got it started. It's made possible by a network of hundreds of partner organizations, university groups, local activists, and community leaders who have taken this idea, adapted it, and made it part of their local movement for change. We like to think that our central team provides the tools, information, and facilitation to empower a global movement to stop the climate crisis. We hope that after reading this guide, you'll be ready to create your own local 350 movement!

## What's different about what we do?

For one, we focus on supporting grassroots climate organizers around the world to spread our message through visual actions because, as they say, a picture is worth a thousand words. A display of global solidarity will engage the media and political leaders, which in turn will

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have an effect on the United Nations negotiations. We also like telling stories. Personal stories and compelling narratives have significant impact on the pace and scope of UN climate meetings. That's why it's vital that previously overlooked voices are brought into the process of international policy development. We hope to really shine a spotlight on the communities around the world that are being hit by the worst effects of climate change and showcase the solutions that communities rely on. Finally, we are constantly redefining what's achievable with online organizing on a truly global scale. With the increasing number of new web tools, the barriers to collaboration, group formation, and collective actions have collapsed over the last few years. We like to say that the internet was invented for this kind of work!



## The Basics

**It's really quite simple - the plan is to organize a 350 action for 24 October at an iconic place in your community and upload a photo of your event to 350.org. But you don't have to just stop there...**

On 24 October, images of actions from around the world will stream in to the 350.org website, and together we will deliver them to the media and world leaders. We will show our world and it's decision-makers just how big, beautiful, and unified our movement really is. Here's how the 24th of October international day of climate action will make an impact. It will:

- Spark thousands of creative actions around the world;
- Inspire millions of people to join the movement for climate solutions;
- Unify this global movement with a common call to action: 350;
- Demonstrate to world leaders that people in every country on Earth want climate action;
- Convince these leaders they must create an international climate treaty that lowers Carbon Dioxide below 350 parts per million;
- Celebrate the diversity, creativity, and power of the human spirit.

350.org is an open-source campaign: it's your ideas, input, and energy that will make 24 October and this movement for change a success. Have something to contribute? Let us know at [350.org/contact](mailto:350.org/contact) or write us here:



**2150 Allston Way, Suite 340  
Berkeley, CA 94704 USA**



### 24 October Action Spotlight

**In Amsterdam, Anna will organize her swing dancing class to gather 350 friends for a dance in the city square to a live swing band.**

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# The 9-Step Plan ✓

Whether you are a seasoned activist or a first-time organizer, here is a simple guide to get you started. Go through the steps one by one, and you'll be on your way to planning a creative, engaging, and powerful action in your community for 24 October.

## 1. Start an Action

Time to dive in! The first step to getting started is choosing a location for your action, what you'll do at your action, and registering the details on the 350.org website so that others can find out about what you're doing. No need to have everything finalized - you'll be able to edit your plans on the website later on, but it's good to register as soon as possible.

## 2. Get People Involved

Invite your friends, neighbors, and local organizations to assist in sponsoring and organizing the action. Think outside the box about who to reach out to - maybe the local church, mosque, synagogue, labor union, sports team, university, or arts cooperative would be interested in getting involved. This is when it gets fun!

## 3. Work Out the Details

Take care of logistical details as soon as you can (this is why you want friends to help you out). Important things to consider include the timing of the action, directions, transportation, bathrooms, sound system, permits for use of public spaces, sponsorships, etc. Be sure to update your event on the 350.org website so people know what's happening.

## 4. Build the Buzz

Send out emails, write editorials for local newspapers, get on the local radio station, ask organizations to include the action information in newsletters and bulletins, put up posters all over town, spread the word through SMS. Build momentum locally by giving presentations, participating in Earth Day or other events, and reaching out to diverse types of organizations.

## 5. Engage Your Officials

If we want 24 October to have as big an impact as possible, it's essential that we reach out to our local, regional, and national leaders. Depending on where you live, and what access you have to your government, invite your local mayor, representative, member of parliament, governor, climate change negotiator, or even environment minister. You never know who might be willing to show up and be a climate champion if you don't try to engage them!

## 6. Make a Banner

Each action on 24 October will have a banner, or some way to communicate its support for 350 ppm. Some communities will hold big 350 banners, others will spell out 350 with their bodies, still others may create a mural together that displays the number 350. Be creative! Exciting visuals will be important for the next step: media.

## 7. Get Media Attention

As 24 October nears, you will want to contact local, state, and national media to make sure they report on 350 actions in your area. Think about what newspapers, radio, television, and online reporters you will want to cover your event, and start getting in touch!

## 8. Take Action!

The details of your action are up to you, but at some point be sure to take a picture with everyone present with your 350 banner displayed front and center. Pass around a sign-up sheet so that you can stay in touch with people who come to your event, and keep the momentum going locally. Have a fun and meaningful day, knowing that you're forming a very important part of a giant global movement to fight climate change!

## 9. Follow Up

This part is very important: as soon as your action is over, be sure to select your best photo and upload it to the 350 website. We'll need your picture to be able to deliver the strongest possible message to the media and to the world's decision-makers leading up to the UN climate negotiations in Copenhagen soon after 24 October. Also be sure to follow up with the media and your government officials to let them know what happened at your event, so you can make sure it has a big impact. Then start planning your next action...

**Thanks for being a part of this important movement for a just and safe climate!**  
**Read on for more in-depth information about each organizing step.**



# 1. Start an Action

**Time to dive in! The first step to getting started is choosing a location for your action, what you'll do at your action, and registering the details on the 350.org website so that others can find out about what you're doing. No need to have everything finalized - you'll be able to edit your plans on the website later on, but it's good to register as soon as possible. Here are some key things to think about to start an action:**

## What will you do at your action?

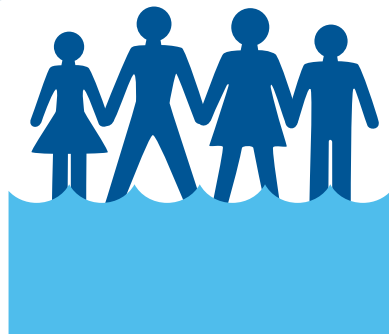
In short, the options are wide open. Think about what kind of event will resonate in your community - what kind of public events and activities do people enjoy participating in? What would surprise people and capture the media's attention? What can you pull off with the people and resources around you? Whatever you choose to do just remember to plan a time for taking an action photo with everyone in attendance that visibly displays the number 350 - the rest of the details are up to you! Here are a few ideas to get you started:

### Walk, March, or Rally:

Visibly walking through your community shows movement and solidarity with the cause. Ending at an iconic site (a monument, mountain, hill, river, temple, park - you know what's best for your place) with speakers and musicians is a great way to spread the word while having a good time.

### Show the Tide Line:

In coastal areas, rising sea levels caused by melting sea ice may flood many iconic and meaningful places. Standing on or marking potential tide lines could be a powerful image and educational experience for your community.



### Teach-In:

24 October will be an excellent teaching

opportunity! Do some online research about global warming and invite your participants to learn more about the issue and discuss why 350 is such a critical benchmark for international action on this issue.

## 24 October Action Spotlight

**On Waikiki Beach, Michael is organizing 50 people to meditate in a 350 formation.**

### Support Better Foods:

Have a feast or a potluck in your best local spot. This is an easy way to get everyone participating and highlight local and/or organic foods.

### Faith Celebrations:

Connections between the world's diverse religions and the issue of global warming are numerous and strike a strong moral chord. This is a great way to gather people together who already have a community in which they discuss the big questions - now is the chance to add global warming to the list.

### Invite Government Officials:

24 October will be a great day to directly engage government officials and call for real action on climate change. Who in your country has influence on climate policy? Consider inviting your mayor, environment minister, representatives, or perhaps even prime minister or president. Whoever you try to invite, just be sure to give them plenty of advanced notice, be polite, call back if you are not hearing from them, and maybe even visit their office to demonstrate how much you care about their participation.

### Biking Action:

Biking, like a march or walk, is a great way to get out and be visible in your community. It can also demonstrate the need for improved infrastructure for our alternative modes of transportation.



### Campus Action:

College campuses have a huge role to play in any social movement. Push the creativity and tech-savvy contributions that youth can provide, and give a strong base of energy for our elders.

### Trash Clean Up:

Sadly, some of our iconic places aren't as pristine as we'd like. Why not leave the place better than you found it?



### Service Actions:

Spend part of your day actively creating a more just, sustainable world by helping weatherize buildings in your community, constructing new pedestrian or cycle paths, or running whatever sorts of service projects you can come up with to work towards getting CO2 back below 350 ppm.

### Art Installation:

Provide art supplies and invite your participants to create art—maybe something that speaks of the importance of your iconic place.

### Sports:

Bring a ball to “shoot for 350!” or host a running race back to the 350 target.



### Music:

Perhaps you know some local musicians who might want to join the effort. Or, you could invite participants to bring instruments themselves and create music.

## Organizing Tips

The following are just a few important key lessons for continuing to build excitement, staying flexible, and multiplying your impact:

**Make it cheap:** At some point in your organizing, you’ll be asking yourself the following question: “Who’s going to pay for all this?” The important things to remember are to keep expenses low, think creatively, and reach out to members of your community who may be able to help out with a donation of their time or otherwise.

**Get hip:** When doing this kind of work, it’s helpful to be up on the trends, or to have others around that can help you out so as to get your message to spread faster. The first and best people to ask are young people: kids, the high school, the college nearby. Young people are tapped into novelty in a profound way, and they know the newest tools that everyone is using to connect with one another.

**Just say ‘yes’:** One of the things we’ve learned is how much less time it takes to say yes than to say no, and that sometimes the wildest ideas are the ones that really catch on. Instead of being stuck justifying your decision and wasting time and momentum in debates, give in and move on.

**Be creative:** Creativity and fun are great low-cost solutions to getting the message out about climate change. There are a number of ways to tap into creativity; engaging musicians, artists, creating collaborative or aerial art, bike rides, extreme sports, or dancing are some of the many fun ways to involve people and show your commitment to the cause. In the end, we need to be creative because, in the face of a pretty grim subject, we’ve got to keep this movement fun for ourselves and everyone else to stay inspired.

### Letter writing:

Encourage your participants to sign and/or write letters to government officials to formally adopt the 350 ppm CO2 target.

### Variations on the 350 theme:

Ring your church bells 350 times, get together 350 runners to organize a running race, or have speakers and musicians perform for 350 seconds each – get creative!

## 24 October Action Spotlight

Off the coast of Florida, 350 Scuba divers will swim in formation of the Florida Keys – to promote the protection of coral reefs, of course!



### Where will you hold your action?

If possible, choose an iconic or meaningful location for your action – a place you wish to protect from climate change or one that represents what matters to you and your community. This will help illustrate exactly what’s at stake for everyone participating, and for your officials and the media. Think coastal areas, coral reefs, mountaintops, farmland, your local water source, the new wind turbines at the edge of town – places that demonstrate the impacts and solutions to climate change locally.





## 2. Get People Involved

14 **What's even more fun and effective than climate organizing? Climate organizing with friends, family and neighbors! You can keep yourself from going crazy and get more done in less time by getting other people on board, and forming a group to work together. Start out by having a planning meeting well ahead of time. Invite all people who might be interested to get involved in the planning of your 24 October event, and brainstorm what kind of action you may want to host. Oftentimes an event can be a great focal point for bringing diverse groups and individuals together to collaborate. Here are some tips on getting people involved:**

### **Make it personal:**

You can find interested folks by sending emails or text messages to your friends, talking to people in your workplace, school or place of worship, making announcements at meetings of related groups, or putting up posters in key places with meeting information. By far the best way to get somebody to come to a meeting is to ask them personally: a one-on-one conversation is more effective than a group email or putting up lots of posters (though those help, too).

### **Unlikely Allies:**

Reach out to the usual suspects to get involved - your local environmental or conservation group - but also think about faith groups, sports leagues, schools, civic societies, labor unions, and other organized groups in your communities that may want to get involved. They'll bring new people into the process, and new and valuable perspectives.

### **Run a good meeting:**

There's nothing worse than sitting through a meeting where one person talks the whole time and nothing gets done. Make sure to have an agenda, someone to run the meeting (a facilitator), and a note-taker to write everything down and distribute the notes to the group. Make sure everyone goes home with something to do - and be sure to follow up with those people who were assigned a task.

### **Be equal:**

You may have heard about 24 October first, and called the first meeting, but make sure that you treat your fellow organizers as equals. Each person in your group has talents or skills that will be critical to the effort; let them take responsibility for parts of the planning process and make sure to include everybody.

## 24 October Action Spotlight

**In Chile, Carlos is planning planning 350 events at 350 schools throughout the longest, skinniest country on the planet.**

### **Make it fun:**

Fun is probably our number one strategy. People are much more apt to be a part of the effort if they're likely to have a good time doing it. Good ways to keep morale up are to work with others, bring food and beverages to meetings, be positive and creative about your planning (no idea is too crazy!), hold meetings outside, and try opening or closing meetings with a song or game!

## 3. Work Out the Details

15 **Once you have a group together, now is the time to work out the details of your action. Here's a short checklist of logistics to consider:**

### **Timing and location:**

What will the schedule be for your event? Where will it start and end - will you march from one place to another? What will the route be? Be sure to settle these logistical details early so you can publicize your event and everyone knows what's happening.



### Transportation:

Figure out how people will get to your event via public transit, walking, biking or driving, and publish the directions in your promotional materials and online.



### Permits:

Make sure you check in about whether you need a permit for the space where you plan to hold your action. Sometimes you may need a local organization to put their name on a permit form - they're likely to be willing to help if you just ask!



### Funding:

Sometimes we think that organizing will cost a lot of money, but it doesn't need to be expensive - be creative! Think about who you can borrow a stage from, what local business might donate food and beverages, and ask your local government if they'll waive permitting fees. You're doing something for a good cause, so people are likely to pitch in if you ask.



### Speakers:

This will be a great opportunity to educate your local community about climate change and the local issues you're working on. Think about some local experts who could speak to bring awareness to the cause, and serve as spokespeople to the media. A few ideas include university professors, authors, government officials, activists, youth, and people who may already be experiencing the impacts of climate change such as farmers or fishermen.



### Roles:

Think through who on your organizing team will be responsible for each aspect of the event. It's important to have one or two people who have a birds-eye view of all the logistics. A few additional roles to consider include a photographer, emcee, media liaison, videographer, and volunteer coordinator.



### Materials and Equipment:

Equipment you may need includes a camera, video camera, a megaphone, and sound equipment (and a place to plug it in!). Ask around your community to see if you can borrow these. Consider what materials (posters, fliers, stickers, sign-up sheets, educational pamphlets, art supplies, etc.) you will need to spread the word about the event, and for the day itself. You can find many digital materials on the 350.org website, or just design your own.



### Update your action details:

As you figure out the logistics and plans for your action, make sure to log back into the 350.org site to update the details so people in your community can find out what's happening easily.



## 4. Build the Buzz

To make sure as many people as possible hear about the event you are planning, get started early building a buzz. Spreading the word early will help get more people involved, as well as lay the groundwork for a lasting movement. Here are a few ideas for making sure climate change is a top issue in your community, and that 350 is on everyone's lips by the end of this year:

### Get a coalition together

Oftentimes an event can be a great focal point to bring together a wide variety of organizations. Don't just think about environmental groups - reach out to your local Rotary Club, youth groups, faith group, or labor union - you never know who might want to get involved.

### Show solidarity

Supporting and participating in other organizations' events and campaigns is a great way to show support, and build local solidarity between different organizations and causes - and spread the word about your group! Check out the list of international events this year, and think about participating as a way to build momentum towards the 24th of October.

## 24 October Action Spotlight

In Panama, Franco and friends from Panama Verde are creating art out of recyclable materials to educate about global warming and waste reduction.

### Recruit volunteers

Finding others to help is perhaps the best way to generate excitement and multiply your impact. Just be sure to keep people engaged by giving them ownership over a part of organizing.

These are just a few key international dates and events to participate in that may be useful for building momentum locally towards your big action on 24 October:

22 April	Earth Day
24-26 April	Global Youth Service Day
5 June	World Environment Day
1-12 June	UNFCCC meeting in Bonn
8-10 July	G8 meetings in Italy
12 August	International Youth Day
19 September	International Coastal Clean-up
20-23 September	UN General Assembly meeting
28 Sept - 4 Oct	UNFCCC meeting in Bangkok
24 October	<b>350 International Day of Action</b>
30 November	Mobilization for Climate Justice (North America and Europe)
7-18 December	COP15 in Copenhagen, Denmark
12 December	Global Climate Campaign Day of Action - follow up your 24 October action with a big event during Copenhagen!



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### Give presentations

Go to schools, places of worship, other organizations' meetings and get on the soapbox about climate change and the event you're organizing. Visit [350.org/resources](http://350.org/resources) for a downloadable presentation you can modify and use.

### Champion the cause

Get on the local radio, flier every bulletin board in town, and talk it up every chance you get!

### Organize On-line

While there's nothing more important than meeting up and taking action face to face with other people, connecting and showcasing your work online is a very important part of activism today. Be sure to post all your action reports, photos, and videos at [350.org](http://350.org) to share your action with the world. If you're using Youtube, Flickr, twitter, digg or other websites where you can tag content, make sure to use "350ppm" as the tag.



First of all, make sure your event is registered at [my.350.org](http://my.350.org). Use those tools to unite your community around climate change and connect your efforts to a global movement. With [my.350.org](http://my.350.org), you can:

- Find or start a local group and a 24 October event.
- Create e-mail lists and discussion boards.
- Share photos and files and more.
- Connect with allies and build a strong local climate action group.

It only takes a minute to join, so get started right away!

Remember, it's easy to get so caught up working on the web; creating beautiful images and linking to magnificent sources of information that you forget to organize. Being wired is not a substitute for actually making contact with people face to face, it's one more tool for making it easier. Use it wisely.



Here are a few tools to help multiply your impact:

**Blogs:** You have a lot of options when it comes to blogging. The tool that is easiest to set up (but also the least customizable) is Blogger ([www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)), which can get you up and running in a matter of minutes. If you need more functionality and flexibility, check out WordPress ([www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)) and TypePad ([www.sixapart.com/typepad](http://www.sixapart.com/typepad)).

**Photo sharing:** Web sites like Flickr ([www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)) allow you to create a centralized online repository of a large number of digital photos and contribute photos to public "pools," or groups of photos around an event, a theme, a city, a neighborhood, or anything else you can think of. Using flickr you can easily embed photos into other Web sites and blogs. Make sure that you tag your 24 October photos "350ppm" and upload the best ones to [350.org](http://350.org) as soon as your event is over.

**Video sharing:** There are only a few big players in the game of online video, with the most dominant being YouTube ([www.YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com)). After registering on their site, you can easily upload videos and embed any video in your web page or blog. Make sure to tag your videos 350. If you want a higher file size limit, we suggest Vimeo ([www.vimeo.com](http://www.vimeo.com)) or BlipTV ([www.blip.tv](http://www.blip.tv)).

**List Managers:** If you're trying to communicate with large numbers of people, using regular email might not cut it. When your list gets bigger than a few dozen people, your messages can get flagged as spam or junk email. Listservs come in a few different flavors – unless you are emailing thousands of people regularly, a free, Web-based service will do. We

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recommend Google's list manager, Google Groups (<http://groups.google.com>). Remember that once people have signed up to attend your event at 350.org, you can email them all at once by logging into your my.350.org account.

**Social Networking:** Registering your local 350 action or joining a 350.org group on websites like MySpace and Facebook is yet another way to let your friends, and their friends, know what you're up to. Also check out other sites like Orkut, Hi5, Friendster, SkyRock and LiveJournal to connect with even more 350 fans around the world.

**Make the Local, Global**  
Joining 350.org is an opportunity to take action locally and globally, at the same time. 24 October is a great chance to connect with another community in a different country. Try contacting your city's sister city, a town you pick off the map, or a foreign friend you haven't seen for a while, and ask them to do an event with you. Make sure to wave to each other in your action photos!

## Creative Ideas

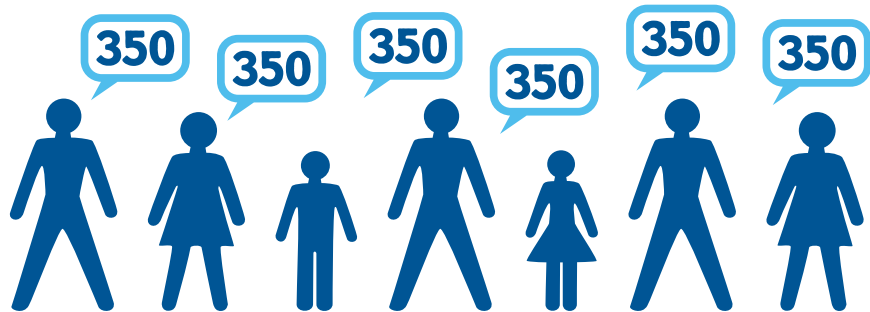
Often, the best ways to get people's attention are quirky, creative, and completely different - here are just a few fun ideas for building the buzz about 350 where you live. (350.org does not advocate any illegal graffiti or other defacement of private property)

**Sidewalk chalk:** ask 'what is 350?' in sidewalk chalk all down Main Street and get people thinking.

**Poster the town:** print out posters or make your own, and then head to local coffee shops, bulletin boards, and anywhere else you can put up posters in town.

**Fun with stencils:** Rip off the back cover of this guide and use scissors or an exacto knife (please be careful!) to cut out the stencil. Grab some paint and create your own 350 materials! Good things to stencil include bags, t-shirts, hats, and signs.

**Public art:** if there's a way to incorporate 350 into a public piece of art such as a mural, this can be a great way to inspire and spread the word.



350.ORG

# 5. Engage Your Officials

We have the technology and solutions to solve the climate crisis. What we lack is the political will. Taking action to reduce your own carbon emissions is important, and so is celebrating with friends, family and neighbors on 24 October. But to make the change that we need, and ensure a fair global treaty in Copenhagen that gets us on the road to 350, we're going to need more than new lightbulbs and citizen engagement: we're going to need political leadership. That's why it's important that we invite our elected officials to become part part of the conversation. Here are a few tips to help you engage them:

## Create a relationship

Your elected officials work for you. Seriously: think about that for a minute. It's their job to reflect your concerns, and so why wouldn't concerned citizens like us take advantage of that? You can start a relationship with your elected officials by making an appointment to meet with them next time they are in your area. It's easy to set up an appointment - all you need to do is find out what the official's office or personal phone number is, and call him or her. Introduce yourself, talk about your personal story, why climate change matters to you, and why you think it's a significant issue for your community.

## Educate

Elected officials often don't rank climate change as a top concern simply for lack of information. There are lots of competing issues for them to pay attention to: the budget, infrastructure in their district, and sometimes their own pocketbooks. We have to consistently remind them, and educate them, about the significance of climate change in their district. You can use resources like news articles, polls, and personal stories to do this. You can even invite them, or their district staff, to a local educational event or meeting about climate change.

## Build power

If you've created a successful relationship with your elected officials, and educated them to pay close attention to developments related to climate change, you have built some power.

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To maintain that power, it's important to stay in touch with your elected official. Call them or their office when an important matter is being debated at the local, regional or national level. Call them when a new company opens in your town that's in the clean technology industry. Maintain a voice in the local media, because elected officials track it closely: You can write letters to the editor, call in to local radio shows, and submit op-eds. Be sure and show that you're not alone – that you have your community and an entire global movement behind you.

### Support

We need to applaud our politicians when they've been progressive on climate change (and pressure them when they haven't). In particular, delegates from some of the most vulnerable nations to climate change have been very progressive in calling for ambitious CO2 targets and adaptation policies, yet often have the lowest capacity to pursue these positions. Express your support, and see if your organizing expertise can be of any help! Check out the UNFCCC website to find out information about your country's position at the negotiations.

## 24 October Action Spotlight

**In Stratford, Canada, they're aiming to collect 3500 pieces of writing from kids, seniors, writers, poets, environmental activists – in other words, from anybody! – with the topic of urging 350 as the target for December's climate talks in Copenhagen. The letters, poems, haikus, whatever, will be sent to political leaders and decision-makers on or before 24 October, when they will hold a celebration and a reading.**

### Invite

Now that your elected officials know who you are, and associate you with helping them get informed about climate change, you're primed to invite them to your 24 October event. See if they will speak, even for just 5 minutes, about what they've done about climate change. Be sure and flatter them (but not too much!) When they speak publicly, it goes on the 'official record,' so public events are great ways to hold your elected officials accountable.

If they do commit to come to your event, follow up a few times to make sure they can still do it, as their schedules change frequently, and send a thank you note once it's done. Then the cycle of following up and checking in continues. While elected officials are often responsive, don't expect their positions to change very quickly. If you follow the steps outlined above and build power in your community over time, they will eventually follow your lead.

## 6. Make a Banner

**Sitting down with your elected officials is important, but it won't make for a great photo. So it's time to think visually! What will spread your message, capture the media's attention, and get the number 350 into your action photo? Think banners, posters, art, and more! While getting a banner professionally printed is great, it's even more important for each action to have its own home-made, local flavor, and yet to all have a common, unifying message. Whatever you create, make sure it's large and legible. Get local artists, friends and volunteers together ahead of time, grab your paints and fabrics, and get creative! Check out the Art into Action section at [350.org](http://350.org) for more ideas, or follow these simple steps:**

### How to Show 350:

- Make a banner
- Spell out 350 with your bodies
- Draw a big 350 in the sand
- Form a 350 out of bicycles
- Spell out 350 with candles at night



### Banner-making tips:

Making a banner is likely the easiest way to incorporate the 350 message into your action, and any other messages important to your local community. A few sample banner messages include simply, "350", "Delhi (or your local city) for 350", "Go 350", "Pass a 350 treaty" - it's completely up to you!

### Materials:

- Old sheets, long pieces of fabric, or even large pieces of cardboard. Depending on where you are, you might need to think about the various weather conditions your banner might need to withstand – choose accordingly. Canvas and nylon are good options for harsher conditions. Keep in mind the composition of your pictures and the size of your rally, and try to create a banner large enough to be legible.

- Pencils for sketching out the words.
- Non-water based paint in the colors of your choosing.

### How to do it:

For high quality, large banners: Gain access to a projector, and create a transparency of the text for the banner. Stretch your banner material across a wall, positioned so that you can project the banner text onto the material. Project the text onto the banner. Make sure the text is positioned correctly, and start tracing the text by pencil. Once the text is traced onto the banner, start filling in letters and numbers with color.

By hand: Lay the banner materials out on the ground. Trace the numbers and letters first, so as to measure out spaces, and fill in with color. Be sure to let the banner dry before rolling it up, and storing it for the 24th of October.

### Using your banner:

Do your best to keep the banner taut, and positioned front-and-center so that spectators and photographers can read the message.

After you take your picture, be sure to get to a computer as soon as possible and upload your picture to 350.org.

## Other visuals for your action

Beyond a banner, think about getting creative with other visuals for your action:

Placards  
Stencils  
T-shirts  
Costumes



### Make some news!

Newspapers and other media love covering news (surprise, surprise). Think about what makes your 24 October event unique and exciting. We've found that this often makes the event more fun as well - we've all signed petitions and heard speeches before but have you seen people dive underwater with a banner or a polar bear dressed in a bikini? We hope to soon! Check out 350.org/action-ideas for more creative ways to catch the media's eye.

### Get a hook

Reporters and an audience love a narrative; a story line that lets them understand why something is new and different. Putting a person's face to an event makes all the difference. Think about using a superlative when you make your pitch, is your event the "biggest," or the "first" of its kind. Try playing into the old "David vs. Goliath" story. There's no need to try and appear slick, emphasize that your event is somewhat homemade and you'll probably get more coverage. And finally, think about using the "strange bedfellows" angle: by bringing together unlikely allies, you're creating a story in itself.

## 24 October Action Spotlight

Trevor is 10 and has committed himself to 350 hours of environmental community service hours between now and when he reaches 5th grade – sometime around the 24th of October.

### Create relationships:

#### Three weeks before the event:

Once you've got your story line down, it's time to turn to the care and feeding of your reporter list. Two to three weeks before your event, give your local newspaper or TV station a call and ask to set up a ten minute meeting or call with the editor. Look for their number online, in the phonebook, or in the newspaper. When you talk with him or her, act friendly, give them a short pitch on your story, and tell them you'll keep in touch.

Start creating some buzz about your local event. Try getting on local blogs, give the community radio station a call, write a Letter to the Editor, and get in touch with the locally owned papers in your community to see if they will help you spread the word about your event. Keep a contact list for media, and another for important people involved with your event – you never know what kind of expert a reporter might ask to talk with on 24 October. When the big day comes, you'll know who to call for the final coverage!

#### A few days before your event:

Build last minute buzz: write a media advisory and make sure to send it out and give your

# 7. Get Media Attention

Getting press coverage is worth the effort since it can multiply the effects of your hard work and gives everyone involved a nice boost. And it's a lot of fun! Here are four steps to help you get noticed:



pitch to reporters over the phone. Remember to emphasize the creativity and unique angle of your event. On 24 October, designate one person on your organizing team (maybe a spouse, child, or friend) to be the media contact for that day – it will be their responsibility to give every newspaper, radio or TV station a final call, and be on hand for interviews. Make sure you have this person’s contact information and mobile number listed at the bottom of the press release.

## 350.org Talking Points:

Talking to the media can be intimidating if you’ve never done it before.

A “talking point” is a key idea you want to get across to the media at your event. Memorizing a few talking points is a good way to make sure you get your message across. No matter what, remember to stay relaxed and be yourself!

1. We’ve joined 350.org to call for a fair international climate treaty that lowers carbon dioxide below 350 parts per million, the safe upper limit according to the latest science.
2. Our event is one of thousands of actions happening simultaneously around the world - from the Taj Mahal to the Great Barrier Reef - united by a common call for 350.
3. Getting back to 350 parts per million is a huge challenge and a major opportunity. We need an international agreement that moves our world away from fossil fuels and towards a clean energy future.
4. 350.org is supported by hundreds of organizations around the world, including environmental groups, students, labor, people of faith, businesses, and more.
5. The 350 parts per million target was originally set by Dr. James Hansen of NASA, one of the world’s premier climate scientists, in 2007 and is now supported by scientists, governments, and citizens around the world.



Make sure to include your own talking points about the effects of climate change on your community, and what you’re doing about it. Keep them concise, easy to understand and relevant. For more in-depth information about the 350ppm target and our strategy, check out [350.org/understanding-350](http://350.org/understanding-350).

# 8. Take Action!

This is the day you’ve been working hard for!

Confirm details and speakers ahead of time, get volunteers to help out the day of, and have fun! Hopefully, there will be lots of people there that will be excited to join your local movement for change, so be sure to pass around some sign-up sheets. Know that your local action is forming an important part of a powerful global movement to put our planet back on track.

## The Action Photo

A picture says a thousand words, or in this case, just one number...

Your action photo is KEY, and here’s why: on 24 October, a cascade of photographs from diverse and beautiful actions in every corner of the planet, will come together on the web to reflect how big this global climate movement really is. Taking a great action photo that incorporates the number 350, and submitting it to the 350.org website is one of the best ways to show the world the powerful work your community is doing on climate change, and to link it with other efforts around the globe. Here are just a few tips:

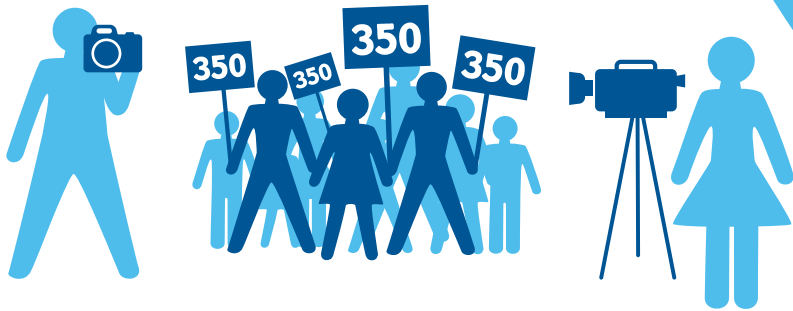
- **Designate a photographer:** it could be a professional, a volunteer, a friend – whoever you can find that can take a good photo and make sure to be reliable. Don’t have a camera? Fortunately they’re becoming more accessible than ever these days, so look around for a local university, library, or friend that might have one you could borrow.
- **Put it on the agenda:** make some time in your event schedule to get everyone together to take a photo. Nothing’s worse than realizing everyone’s gone home before you can take a photo to remember it. Some questions to ask yourself: Will you have a lot of people? Where could you take the photo from to get a shot of the whole crowd? How can you capture the backdrop of your iconic location in the photo?
- **Upload the photo ASAP!** Get to your computer or an internet cafe right away to upload your best action photos at 350.org. The sooner you do that, the more you’ll be able to help the coordinating team get the message out to the media about the amazing actions that



happened all around the globe on 24 October. Once they're online send them to your local media and participants too!

## 24 October Action Spotlight

On the 24th of October, youth from Australia, Africa, and other parts of the world will begin an overland journey to Copenhagen, demonstrating their commitment to low carbon travel.



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### Video

Digital story-telling is now more accessible than ever, with the advent of YouTube and cheap video cameras. Consider taking video as a compelling way to get the word out before your event, document your action, and amplify your impact. Here are just a few tips to keep in mind to make your video stand out:

- Avoid the talking head. There's nothing less interesting than watching 3 minutes—or even 30 seconds—of a person talking at their desktop computer's webcam.
- Take steady, easy-to-watch shots that can be spliced with other video using quick cuts in your editing software
- Don't have a camera? Record audio — particularly if you can include music — and create a podcast (audio file) that can be shared on the web or sent to your local radio station as a public service announcement.
- Focus on what's fun, funny, or what you'd want to watch. That's what makes a video go viral.
- Upload the video. YouTube is a great first choice. For higher-quality or longer videos, use Vimeo.com or blip.tv. Make sure to include the video in your report-back at 350.org as soon as you can.

# 9. Follow Up

**Report back!** The single most important thing you must do as soon as possible after your event is to log onto 350.org and report back from your action. Include your action photo, a description of what happened, how many people came and what it felt like. The more the better - if you can, include other interesting tidbits, stories, photos and videos from the event.

### Celebrate

Take a breath and pat yourself on the back for job well done. Take a minute to browse through the photos and reports from around the world at 350.org, and allow yourself to feel inspired and hopeful. Eat, drink, sing and dance with your friends, neighbors and families, and recognize that you've just taken part in something larger than the sum of its parts.

### Thank

Make sure to thank all the people who made your event possible, from local business leaders to volunteers to officials who came to speak. Saying thank you to everybody at the event, and sending out personalized thank-you notes will ensure that everybody leaves on a positive note. If you collected email addresses at the event, send out a thank-you email to those people.

### Deliver

Just because 24 October was huge, it doesn't mean we've solved climate change once and for all. Now it's time to leverage your people powered movement and ask your elected



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officials to take action on climate change. Print out a bunch of copies of the best photo from your action and set up a meeting with your elected officials. Figure out what your ask will be, and explain to him/her that the people who attended your event support strong action on climate change that gets us on the path to 350. Ask your official to pass that information to those delegates from your country who will be attending the Copenhagen climate talks.

## 24 October Action Spotlight

**In Beirut, Lebanon, IndyACT is planning a big concert - taking action on climate change can be fun, and have an impact too!**

### Make it public

Hopefully local reporters came to your event and covered it in papers, on the radio and TV – call up reporters who came to the event and thank them for coming. The public will also want to hear from you, the event organizer. Write a reflective letter to the editor and/or blog post and submit it. Make sure to keep it positive, and let people know how they can continue to stay involved.

### 30 Keep it rolling

Whether or not you consider yourself a leader, you are. People will look to you for continuing ways to stay involved, so take some time to discuss your local 350 group's next steps, and then go for it! Let us know what you're up to, and check 350.org often for updates and other actions you can take part in.



# Resources

This guide just scratches the surface in terms of organizing and building a movement - to keep learning, check out some of the resources below. We've compiled a short list of organizing guides on topics from online organizing to education. Have one to add? Contact us.

### Climate Change (global warming science, policy, and basic information)

- Target Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>: Where Should Humanity Aim?: Jim Hansen's paper about 350: [www.columbia.edu/~jeh1/](http://www.columbia.edu/~jeh1/)
- Greenhouse Development Rights: a possible framework for an equitable treaty: [www.ecoequity.org/GDRs](http://www.ecoequity.org/GDRs)
- UNFCCC: the UN Climate Negotiations official website: [unfccc.int](http://unfccc.int)
- IPCC: in-depth climate science: [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch)
- UN Green Jobs Report: a report on the potential for 'decent work in a low carbon world': [www.une.org/labour\\_environment/features/greenjobs.asp](http://www.une.org/labour_environment/features/greenjobs.asp)

### Media and On-line Advocacy

- Media Tutorials: from the SPIN Project: [www.spinproject.org](http://www.spinproject.org)
- The Quick 'n' Easy Guide to On-line Advocacy: <http://onlineadvocacy.tacticaltech.org>
- The Environmental Justice Foundation's Video Advocacy Guide: [www.ejfoundation.org/page192.html](http://www.ejfoundation.org/page192.html)

### Education

- Climate Change Education: [www.climatechangeeducation.org](http://www.climatechangeeducation.org)
- WattzOn: get to know your impact, personally: [www.wattzon.com](http://www.wattzon.com)
- The Climate Project: a presenter's network on climate change in the U.S., India, Spain and more: [www.theclimateproject.org/](http://www.theclimateproject.org/)
- Awakening the Dreamer: another presenter's network on sustainability, worldwide: [www.awakeningthedreamer.org](http://www.awakeningthedreamer.org)
- Climate Change Testimonies: the human face of climate change: [www.foei.org/en/publications/pdfs/climate-testimonies](http://www.foei.org/en/publications/pdfs/climate-testimonies)





**Thanks for  
picking this  
guide up and  
joining in a  
worldwide  
movement  
to stop the  
climate crisis  
and remake  
our world.  
Please stay  
in touch and  
let us know  
about your  
local efforts!**

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