

***"WE HAVE REACHED A POINT OF PLANETARY EMERGENCY... Elements of a perfect storm, a global cataclysm, are assembled... the oft-stated goal to keep global warming less than +2 °C (+3.6 ° Fahrenheit) is a recipe for global disaster, not salvation."***  
~ [NASA's Dr. James Hansen, global warming testimony to Congress, June 23, 2008](#)

## CALL FOR DECLARATION of **GLOBAL CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

With respect and humility, [ecoSanity.org](#) calls on all environmental and social justice organizations worldwide, especially those participating in the crucial December UNFCCC 13<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties in Poznań, Poland, to:

Officially declare the climate crisis to be a planetary emergency based on what the most eminent experts now warn is the clear, present, unprecedented and accelerating threat of runaway global heating and risk of catastrophic global climate destabilization. We are long past the point of dangerous interference with the climate system, and we – our species and most others – cannot survive the extremes that are predicted to ensue within the lifetimes of today's children if we delay emergency action any longer.

***"It is clear the current level of interference is dangerous. The question is to avoid catastrophic interference."*** ~ [John Holdren, President of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science, UN General Assembly Thematic Debate on "Climate Change as a Global Challenge", 2007](#)

## CLIMATE **EMERGENCY** CAMPAIGN

Given the new possibilities that could result from the potential of U.S. President-elect, [Barack Obama](#), and ahead of the [U.N. Climate Change Conference in Poznań, Poland](#), and [international rallies](#) in December, [ecoSanity.org](#) has initiated a [Climate Emergency Campaign](#) - an ambitious, necessary and urgent effort to re-frame mainstream misinformation about 'global warming' (more accurately, global heating, global climate destabilization, global weather extreming, global mass extinction, global ecocide) as **the clear, present, unprecedented and accelerating threat that it has become to the survival of all people and most species [within the lifetimes of today's children](#).**

When this reporter pointed out that some scientists are writing books and saying in public that they believe this crisis is so serious that if humanity goes on with business as usual -- not significantly cutting overall greenhouse gas emissions -- **it could seriously lead to the collapse of civilization, even in the lifetime of today's children**, he (the U.N. Secretary General, [Ban Ki-moon](#)) replied:

*"I think that is a correct assessment. People say that action should have been taken yesterday. **If we take action today, it may not be too late.**"*

~ [ABC News interview with Ban Ki-moon by Bill Blakemore, NY, Sept. 24, 2007](#)

*"**This is an emergency** and for **emergency** situations we need **emergency** action."*

~ [Ban Ki-moon, Antarctic visit, Nov. 12, 2007](#)

## LATEST SCIENCE

1. [The Arctic is expected to be ice-free in the summer months in less than 5 years](#)
2. [Millions of tons of methane – a GHG 20 x more potent than CO2 – is being released into the atmosphere from permafrost and beneath the arctic sea bed \(The Methane Time Bomb, The Independent, Steve Connor, Sept. 23, 2008\)](#). Many scientists fear that its release could accelerate global warming in a **giant positive feedback**. At some locations, concentrations reached **100 x background levels**. These anomalies have been seen in the East Siberian Sea and Laptev Sea, **covering several tens of thousands of sq. km's** ([More on our website](#)).
3. [Greenland ice core data indicates that the climate system can suddenly flip +2 °C to +4 °C in 3 years](#). The record is roughly +6 °C in 1–3 years, +10-12 °C over 50 years (Steffensen, 2008).
4. [The +2 °C global average temperature increase target to, in theory, prevent catastrophic tipping points, is no longer achievable, nor was it ever a 'safe target'](#). In fact, if a global carbon emitting switch could be flicked off tomorrow, the atmosphere would continue to warm beyond +2 °C based on the inertia of the system. **This would lead to exponential increase and render the planet unlivable for most life by around +6 °C**, which could become a reality before the end of this century ([think 2080 – see this 2007 Hadley Centre graph](#)). With global emissions continuing to increase annually, and at an accelerating rate, [Hadley Centre researchers have just released new calculations that suggest a rise of up to +7 °C by 2100](#).

## EXTINCTIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL DECLINE

Over the last 35 years, [species populations have declined an average of 27%](#) (an extinction rate of 1% -- 50,000 species per year, up to 10,000 x the natural or 'background' rate). With the rapidly accelerating impacts of global heating, another 27% will be lost in far less time. Add to this that **most aspects of the Earth's natural environment are also in decline** ([4<sup>th</sup> UNEP GEO, 2007](#)) and both arctic melting and ocean acidification are decades ahead of [terminally flawed IPCC predictions](#) that have repeatedly been shown to be a dangerous and monumental underestimate of the state of world climate.

# CLIMATE EXTREMES

Climate extremes will have direct, negative impacts on people and the environment much sooner than average temperature timelines indicate (See page 2, "Latest Science", Item 4). World agriculture is already in decline, food production, distribution and general survival will become increasingly difficult and problematic long before these deadlines. Extreme [deforestation](#), [ocean acidification](#), [soil depletion](#), dwindling fresh [water](#) supplies, the threat of [mass extinctions](#), [resource wars](#), intangibles like the proliferation of disease(s) or something as unexpected as a massive [bee die-off](#) (pollination) are further examples.

**"...our world faces a true planetary emergency."**

~ [Al Gore, Global warming testimony to Congress, March 21, 2007](#)

*"Since we met here last year, the world has lost ground to the climate crisis. This is a rout. We are losing badly."*

~ [Al Gore, Clinton Global Initiative, Sept. 25, 2008](#)

*"...I believe we've reached the stage where it is time for civil disobedience."*

~ [Al Gore, Clinton Global Initiative, Sept. 25, 2008](#)

## CLIMATE CODE RED

### [The Case For A Sustainability Emergency](#)

Informed by the work of the world's most eminent climate authority, NASA's Dr. [James Hansen](#), the essential book [Climate Code Red](#) by Australia's [David Spratt](#) and [Philip Sutton](#) warns that **only emergency international action far beyond business and politics as usual has any hope of concurrently halting man made greenhouse gas emissions, removing excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere AND actively cooling the Earth to the extent necessary – and within the rapidly closing window of opportunity available – to prevent potentially irreversible global catastrophe.**

**"...unless we adopt the strongest measures -- emergency action -- it will be too late. It is no longer a matter of how much more we can heat the planet, but how quickly can we cool it."** ~ [David Spratt, Co-Author, Climate Code Red, Presentation in Australia, Oct. 10, 2008](#)

*"Climate policy is characterized by the habituation of low expectations and a culture of failure. There is an urgent need to understand global warming and the tipping points for dangerous impacts that **we have already crossed as a sustainability emergency** that takes us beyond the politics of failure-inducing compromise. **We are now in a race between climate tipping points and political tipping points.**"* ~ [David Spratt, Philip Sutton, Climate Code Red, Australia, Published July, 2008](#)

# THE PERILS OF **PLAYING NICE**

[Edited Excerpt From The Book, "Climate Code Red"](#)

[Ken Ward](#), an environmental and communications strategist and former deputy executive director of Greenpeace in the USA, believes that the people who lead environmental foundations and organizations play a critical part in reconstructing the issue as a **climate and sustainability emergency** - one that takes us beyond the politics of failure-inducing compromise.

With the rapid loss of the Arctic summer ice cover, Ward says that the opportunity for these leaders to adjust their position is narrow, and this is due, in some part, to **the deliberate decision, a decade ago, by environment organizations to downplay climate change risk.**

He says: "[They did so] in the interests of presenting a sober, optimistic image to potential donors, maintaining access to decision-makers, and operating within the constraints of private foundations, which has blown back on us. By emphasizing specific solutions and avoiding definitions that might appear alarmist, **we inadvertently fed a dumbed-down, Readers Digest version of climate change to our staff and environmentalist core. Now, as we scramble to keep up with climate scientists, we discover that we have paid a hefty price.**"

For those who have, in the past, downplayed the risks, changing position is now a matter of urgency, because what now needs to be done is not incrementally reasonable. The desperate measures required to advance a functional climate-change solution at this late date, says Ward, "can only be conceived and advanced by individuals who accept climate change realities and [who] take the less than 10-year timeframe seriously."

**"We are not acting like people and organizations who genuinely believe that the world is at risk. Therefore, we cannot take the measures required, nor can we be effective leaders."**

# THIS IS AN EMERGENCY

[From A Presentation By "Climate Code Red" Co-Author, David Spratt, Oct. 10, 2008](#)

For these and many other reasons, I can only conclude that a temperature cap of +2 – +2.4 °C, as proposed within the United Nations framework, would take the planet's climate beyond the temperature range of the last million years and into catastrophe. "Two degrees has the potential to lead to three or four degrees because of carbon-cycle feedbacks", says the University of Adelaide's Barry Brook. And so the conclusions we reached in November 2007 were:

- Because of the dangerous knock-on effects caused by its loss, **the Arctic sea ice must be restored to its normal extent as fast as possible.**
- **To get the Arctic sea ice back we need to cool the earth by about 0.3 °C. If we don't, we cannot avoid very dangerous climate impacts.** There is no third way. This is the new very inconvenient truth politicians seek to avoid.
- To cool the earth fast enough to get the Arctic sea-ice back quickly, **we need to move to zero greenhouse gas emissions as fast as the economy can be restructured, and is environmentally safe to do so, and take about 200 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide out of the air. We also need to find environmentally-safe mechanisms to actively cool the earth while navigating this transition.**
- Taken together this is a staggering task in terms of the necessary scale and speed of action, but **there is simply no alternative if we are to avoid catastrophic climate change.**

(Jumping to the end...)

**Sir Nicholas Stern said that climate impacts were likely to be greater than the two world wars and the Depression put together, and that's on the light side.** When profligacy wrecked the global finance markets in 2008, governments and central banks readily stumped up more than a trillion dollars to "bail out" the economy. But when profligate human carbon emissions threaten the planet, such a rescue plan is not even the subject of serious conversation.

Perhaps we may take solace in the thought that when global capital, at whose behest most governments rule, understand the new climate realism and conclude that they **can't build an economy on a dying planet**, then those who have sat on their hands at the global negotiating tables will miraculously find the political will to plan and build a zero-emissions economy at great speed.

**...the transformation to a sustainable society, and rebuilding our economy, is now an emergency.**

# IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

*"Our changing climate is placing our planet in peril."*  
~ [U.S. President-elect, Barack Obama, Campaign Speech, Lansing, MI, Aug. 4, 2008](#)

The stated Obama plan proposes a cap-and-trade system that aims for [80% emission reductions below 1990 levels by 2050](#).

[The United Kingdom has passed a bill \(law\) that requires 80% reductions below 1990 levels by 2050.](#)

*"We are going to have to move much, much faster. I think the game will be over long before 2050,"* ~ [Lester Brown, Plan 3.0: Calls for 80% below 1990 by 2020](#) ~ [Earth Policy Institute](#)

## CONCLUSION

Given President-elect, [Barack Obama](#)'s own declaration of the need to reduce emissions 80% below 1990 levels by 2050; given the solution green energy may provide to our present global market collapse ([Thomas Friedman – Hot, Flat, and Crowded](#), [Al Gore – Repower America](#), [Michael Shellenberger, Ted Nordhaus - A New Inconvenient Truth](#)); given [Sir Nicholas Stern's latest account of what he now admits was at least a 100% underestimation of the price of inaction](#) (and that is just to attempt to stay below 500ppm, where what is required is a reversal from [385ppm](#) now, to less than 350ppm); and with such a rapidly closing window of opportunity that, based on what we all know about [feedback and tipping point dynamics](#), requires as much action as possible as soon as possible because **what we may do later has much less, even negligible, impact on the overwhelming climate inertia that is already in motion...**

**Aggressive, scientifically up-to-date, solution-and-survival-based emergency responses must be implemented – FAST.**

We must not allow regression to the flawed, out-dated, dangerous and monumental underestimations of the political and policy-driven agendas that dictated the [2007 IPCC \(Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change\)](#) conclusions on which the richest, most powerful, most morally culpable governments of the world have wrongly based their [uniformly inadequate targets and inaction](#).

Incredibly, in the context of interference with the climate system, the position of ["Annex 1" countries \(industrialized nations\)](#), the [FCCC Secretariat](#) and the [IPCC](#) is that "dangerous" has not been defined. Yet it couldn't be clearer that "dangerous" HAS BEEN defined by the climate system itself, and **we are – all of us and most species – in clear, present, unprecedented and accelerating danger – RIGHT NOW.**

Without further attention to material of which you are already aware, and not wanting to risk offence to concerns you have long held:

## **CALL FOR DECLARATION of GLOBAL CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

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**Officially declare the climate crisis to be a planetary emergency based on what the most eminent experts now warn is the clear, present, unprecedented and accelerating threat of runaway global heating and risk of catastrophic global climate destabilization. We are long past the point of dangerous interference with the climate system, and we – our species and most others – cannot survive the extremes that are predicted to ensue within the lifetimes of today’s children if we delay emergency action any longer.**

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*“If there's no action before 2012, that's too late. What we do in the next two to three years will determine our future. This is the defining moment.”*

~ [Chair of the IPCC, Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, Valencia, Spain, Nov. 17, 2007](#)