

Ideas for donating to fight global warming

Friends of Five Creeks compiled this list to give you a range of ideas for donating to curb climate change – a worldwide threat likely to severely affect many other fields of charity, including human health, disasters such as storms and floods, incomes and food for the poor, water supplies, political stability, and biodiversity.

Our list starts with small and local organizations, works up to international, and circles back to helping the poor worldwide – the people who may be the most vulnerable to the damages of climate change. **The local organizations mentioned work in F5C's area, in the central East Bay. There are others wherever you live!**

This list is far from complete, and we are not recommending. Investigate before you donate. Look beyond glossy mailers, heart-warming stories, and gorgeous click-to-donate web pages. Dig into web sites and reports for actual achievement. For large organizations, check ratings like those of [Guide Star](#) and [Charity Navigator](#). These may be less helpful for small local groups, including highly effective ones. **Please email us at F5creeks@gmail.com with ideas for organizations that should be on this list!**

Groups focused on East Bay disadvantaged communities

- [Asian Pacific Environmental Network](#) works with immigrant Asian and Pacific Island communities on projects from weatherproofing and “green” job training to keeping coal and oil trains out of low-income areas.
- [Communities for a Better Environment](#) campaigns on clean energy and toxics in Oakland and Richmond.
- [Grid Alternatives](#) organizes no- and low-cost solar power and weatherization for low-income families, along with green jobs training.
- [Urban Relief](#) plants trees, mostly in low-income areas of Oakland. [Richmond Trees](#) does this in Richmond.

Other East Bay ...

- [Berkeley Ecology Center](#): This pioneer local organization hosts free and low-cost workshops on personal and policy methods of lowering carbon emissions. It also powers the [Berkeley Climate Action Coalition](#), working on community-choice energy, non-car transportation, and other issues.
- Kyoto USA's [Helios Project](#) helps local schools install cost-efficient solar energy.
- [Transition Albany](#) and [Transition Berkeley](#), local affiliates an international effort, offer a wide variety of events focused on local sustainability, resilience, and community building.
- Local watershed groups such as [Alameda Creek Alliance](#), [Friends of Five Creeks](#), [Friends of Sausal Creek](#), and [The Watershed Project](#) teach and involve citizen volunteers in nature's role in resilience, as do local chapters of national organizations such as the Audubon Society and Sierra Club.

... and Bay-Area-wide organizations

- The [Bay Institute](#) promotes the “horizontal levee” response to sea-level rise
- [Greenbelt Alliance](#) advocates for so-called "smart growth" and against sprawl. Dense development and efficient transit can reduce emissions.
- [Point Blue](#), grown out of the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, has broadened into research and planning tools for climate change and sea-level rise.
- [Save the Bay](#) focuses on wetland restoration, an important buffer against sea-level rise. Efforts range from volunteer plantings to major funding.

Youth education

Two California-based organizations focus on teaching school kids about climate change:

- [Cool the Earth](#) offers free, fun programs for grade-school students. [Alliance for Climate Education](#) (ACE) offers assemblies, videos, and fellowships for high-school students.

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Planting and protecting forests

Planting and protecting forests is not the only way to sequester carbon, thus taking greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere. Standards to measure carbon stored in marshes have just been approved, for example. But trees offer lots of opportunities, local to international. Check carefully.

- [Save the Redwoods League](#) protects and restores California's magnificent redwood forests.
- [National Forest Foundation](#) is a government-sponsored nonprofit helping conservation, including tree planting, in national forests.
- [Nature Conservancy](#) has a [Plant A Billion Trees campaign](#) in addition to major work protecting land and as a think tank.
- [Rainforest Action Network](#) pressures businesses and governments to curb tropical deforestation. [Rainforest Alliance](#) takes a different approach, working with businesses on environmental certification for products.
- Global Giving and Kiva, described below, offer many third-world, grassroots opportunities.

Research, advocacy, law

- [350.org](#): This international organization with local chapters is the nation's most active in citizen and lobbying campaigns and direction action.
- [Citizens Climate Lobby](#): National with local chapters, this group campaigns for a specific plan for pricing greenhouse-gas emissions and returning the payments to citizens.
- The [Environmental Defense Fund](#) takes an economics-based approach, often working with government or industry. [Union of Concerned Scientists](#) researches and promotes science-based efforts. Both are top-ranked climate “[think tanks](#).”
- [Center for Biological Diversity](#), [Earthjustice](#), and the [Natural Resources Defense Council](#) lean heavily on lawsuits. [Greenpeace](#) adds direct action.
- Virtually all large, established national and international environmental organizations do work involving global warming. The [Sierra Club's “Beyond Coal”](#) promotes clean energy. Also consider Friends of the Earth, Ocean Conservancy, National Wildlife Federation, and World Wildlife Fund.
- [Population Connection](#) (former Zero Population Growth) offers information on population growth and campaigns for family planning worldwide. [Going vegetarian](#) significantly cuts carbon emissions, but we found no obvious leaders.

Low-carbon fuels for the poor worldwide

This list ends as it began, with ways to help the most vulnerable. In poor areas worldwide, burning kerosene, dung, and wood for cooking, heat, light, and water purification harms human health, devastates local plants and animals, and adds to greenhouse gases. Biogas, solar lights and refrigerators, more-efficient stoves and the like can save lives, increase incomes, enable children to study, and more – all while reducing greenhouse-gas emissions worldwide.

- [Global Giving's](#) catalog-like web site lets you make US-deductible charitable donations to grassroots groups worldwide. Check out “climate change” opportunities. [Kiva](#) offers thousands of opportunities to make non-deductible small loans to help the poor worldwide. Check “green” opportunities. You can lend money to projects at low or no interest through the Calvert Community Investment Note. These sites vet opportunities, giving you some protection.
- [Impact Carbon](#) and [Potential Energy](#) both grew out of initiatives at UC Berkeley and Berkeley Labs; they work to distribute water filtration (saving fuel), efficient stoves, and solar lighting in low-income, off-the-grid areas. Projects and efforts change as these and similar young organizations cope with complex challenges. Check recent and current efforts.
- The [Solar Electric Light Fund](#) helps provide small-scale solar power for medical equipment and water supply and is working on village-scale grids – an important step up from individual solar installations. Also check [Solar Sister](#), [Solar Cookers International](#), and others.