

## SECTION IV

# TURN THE TIDE: NINE ACTIONS FOR THE PLANET

**W**ouldn't it be great if you could make very specific lifestyle changes and immediately know the impact of those changes? And better yet, if you knew that you weren't alone — that thousands of other people were taking the same actions — because you could see the result of everyone's collective work?

Well, now you can!

**W**e know we can have a significant positive impact on the environment if we can encourage many people to take small steps together. Of course, they have to make changes that matter — that conserve resources and protect the environment. We have to take actions that are specific and achievable within the constraints of our busy schedules, yet we must also incorporate broader changes in other aspects of our lives. Finally, enough people must participate to collectively make a large impact. Needless to say, the more we know about the results of our actions, the more we'll be motivated to keep going.

With this in mind, the Center created “Turn the Tide: Nine Actions for the Planet.” We asked leading scientists and environmental experts to recommend some steps that Americans could take that would have a significant positive environmental impact. Our goal was to select consumer actions that would save forests, protect endangered species and stem global warming, among many other environmental benefits.

We've compiled a list of powerful actions that most people can take without significant inconvenience. When these nine little actions are taken together by thousands of us, it will have a significant impact on our environment.

For example, if just 1,000 of us take these actions, over one year we will save a collective 48 million gallons of water, 170 trees, 12,250 pounds of sea life, and prevent the emission of four million pounds of climate-warming carbon dioxide!

## Counting Change

We ask you to join us in taking these steps over the coming year. Log onto [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org), set up your own personal workspace, and watch as our online calculator tallies the environmental impact of your reported actions. We'll also keep a running total of the combined savings of all Turn the Tide participants.

Of course, it's okay if you don't have web access — grab a calculator (or a pencil and paper) and use the next few pages as your workbook. Just be sure to report your action to us, so we can count your impact in our collective tally. You can do this by sending your results to: Center for a New American Dream, ATTN: Turn the Tide, 6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 900, Takoma Park, MD 20912. We'll calculate the impact of your action and keep you posted with periodic communications and through our quarterly newsletter, *Enough!*

Together, we can do more than dream. We can make a difference right here and now.

### THE POWER OF INDIVIDUAL ACTION

It's important to remember that these nine actions are important steps consumers can take in building a new American dream, but we will also need businesses to 'close the loop' and manufacture goods as cleanly and efficiently as possible. We will need governments to embrace green choices in their own institutional decision-making and eliminate policies that promote wasteful consumption. But it is also important to recognize the potential of individuals, in taking these and successive steps, to prod businesses and governments into doing their part.

## 4 ACTIONS FOR YOU...

### 1. Skip a car trip each week.

Since 1960, the American population has increased by 50 percent but the miles we travel each year have more than tripled. And 90 percent of our trips are in an automobile or light truck. Americans consume 40 percent of the world's gasoline and emit more climate-changing gases than China, Japan, and India combined! Transportation, overwhelmingly in automobiles, is responsible for about a third of American greenhouse gas emissions. The car culture is also a main driver of sprawl and the ensuing habitat loss. We can do better. By reducing your drive time and miles on the road, you can have an immediate positive impact on the environment.

Choose one trip you make on a weekly basis. Then decide how to get that task done without your car — whether it be by biking, taking public transportation, carpooling, telecommuting, or simply eliminating an expendable trip. Skipping a weekly 20 mile trip represents less than a 10 percent decrease



in the average American's driving and can reduce your weekly carbon dioxide emissions by more than 18 pounds. If only 1,000 of us take this action, we will prevent nearly a million pounds of carbon dioxide from being released into the atmosphere each year! Together we will give the climate a break and improve air quality while preventing traffic congestion, sprawl, and habitat loss.

- The weekly trip(s) I am skipping totals \_\_\_\_ miles per week. My car gets \_\_\_\_ miles per gallon (if you are unsure, enter the American average of 21.5 mpg).

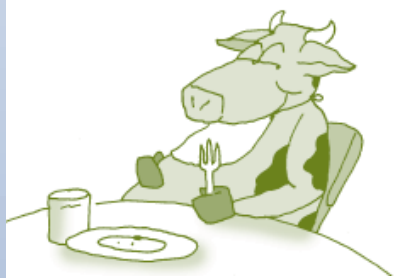
Enter the above numbers into your personal workspace at [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org) or, for those of you keeping score at home, use the following formula and record your results on the chart on page 79.

\_\_\_\_ miles skipped per week x 1,021 ÷ \_\_\_\_ car's mpg =  
\_\_\_\_ pounds of carbon dioxide saved each year

- I have not taken this action yet.
- I don't own a car and don't take any regular car trips. Congratulations! Not driving saves nearly 12,000 pounds of carbon dioxide per year compared to the average American.

## 2. Eat one less beef meal each week.

Meat production is extremely resource-intensive — livestock currently consume 70 percent of America's grain production! According to the Union of Concerned Scientists, grazing



accounts for 800 million acres (40 percent) of U.S. land, and 18 percent of all water consumption is devoted to producing feed for livestock.

Feedlot beef is particularly wasteful. Producing one pound of feedlot beef in California, for example, requires five pounds of grain and over 2,400 gallons of water. It also results in the erosion of five pounds of topsoil. To make matters worse, poultry, hog, and beef factory farms also lead to agricultural waste runoff — a major source of water pollution.

If you want to go vegetarian or switch to organic, free-range meat, great! But you can have a measurable impact by simply replacing one steak, plate of spaghetti and meatballs, beef lasagna or a trip to the local fast food joint with a nice vegetarian meal once a week. If only 1,000 of us take this action, we will save over 70,000 pounds of grain, 70,000 pounds of topsoil and 40 million gallons of water each year!

- ✦ Amount of grain we'll save if only 1,000 of us take this step:  
70,000 pounds per year
- ✦ Amount of grain eaten by 273 sub-Saharan Africans:  
70,000 pounds per year

In other words, if a family of four eats one grain-based vegetarian meal each week in place of a beef-based meal, they will save more grain than is eaten by the average person in sub-Saharan Africa in an entire year.

- I am replacing \_\_\_\_ meal(s) of beef with vegetarian meals each week.

Enter the above numbers into your personal workspace at [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org) or, for those of you keeping score at home, use the following formula and record your results on the chart on page 79.

\_\_\_\_ beef meals skipped x 40,200 =  
\_\_\_\_\_ gallons of water saved each year

\_\_\_\_ beef meals skipped x 300 =  
\_\_\_\_\_ pounds of carbon dioxide saved each year

\_\_\_\_ beef meals skipped x 70 =  
\_\_\_\_\_ pounds of grain saved each year

- I have not taken this action yet.
- I can't take the beef action because I'm already a vegetarian.
- I'm not a vegetarian but I can't take the beef action because I already eat virtually no beef.

Congratulations! Eating vegetarian meals instead of beef saves about 230,000 gallons of water and 375 pounds of grain each year.

### 3. Don't eat shrimp.

Today, nearly 70 percent of the world's fisheries are fully fished or overfished, and about 60 billion pounds of fish and seabirds die each year as "bycatch" — animals caught accidentally as a result of wasteful fishing techniques. Consider shrimp consumption, which in the U.S. has doubled over the last decade to the tune of 1 billion pounds per year. For every pound of shrimp caught, over five pounds of marine life is killed, including endangered sea turtles. And shrimp farms are no better, spilling pesticides into surrounding waterways and destroying over a quarter of the world's mangrove forests. If only 1,000 of us stop eating shrimp, we can save over 12,000 pounds of sea life this year alone. If we all do this and follow the recommendations of the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Guide (see [www.mbayaq.org](http://www.mbayaq.org)), we will help restore oceans and fisheries for future generations.

- I am giving up shrimp. I am saving 12 pounds of sea life per year, including endangered sea turtles, and helping protect the world's mangrove forests.

Enter the above numbers into your personal workspace at [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org) or into the chart on page 79.

- I haven't taken this action yet.
- I can't give up shrimp because I don't eat it to begin with.

Congratulations! Not eating shrimp saves 12 pounds of sea life per year, and protects endangered coastal habitats.



#### 4. Declare your independence from junk mail.

The world's forests are feeling the strain of unsustainable demand for wood and paper. By weight, paper products also comprise nearly one-third of all waste going into American landfills. Bulk mail, a substantial chunk of our paper waste, is especially troubling because it is often unsolicited and thus leaves citizens to dispose of materials they did not choose to consume in the first place. Catalogs and other direct mailings account for 5.2 million tons of waste each year and are recycled at a paltry rate of 19 percent, leaving over 4 million tons to clog landfills. That's 340,000 garbage trucks filled to the brim with nothing but bulk mail!

It doesn't have to be that way. You can call or write catalog houses to cancel unwanted or duplicate catalogs or to be placed on a restricted annual mailing list. You can also write to the mail preference services listed on page 69. Be sure to

do so not only for yourself but also for your home's past residents. If only 1,000 of us succeed in halving our personal bulk mail, we will save 170 trees, nearly 46 pounds of carbon dioxide, and 70,000 gallons of water each year.

- I am taking steps to halve my receipt of bulk mail.  
I am saving 1/6 of a tree, 46 pounds of carbon dioxide, and 70 gallons of water each year.

Enter the above number into your personal workspace at [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org) or into the chart on page 79.

- I have not taken this action yet.
- I've already taken the recommended steps to reduce bulk mail.  
Congratulations! Complete elimination of bulk mail saves 1/3 of a tree, 92 pounds of carbon dioxide, and 140 gallons of water each year.

## DECLARE YOUR INDEPENDENCE FROM JUNK MAIL

Our website features a form that will generate letters for you to print out, sign, and mail to marketing preference organizations. You can find this form at [www.newdream.org/junkmail/](http://www.newdream.org/junkmail/).

If you don't have easy access to the web, you can just write a short note to the following organizations:

Mail Preference Service	Polk "Opt-Out Program"
Direct Marketing Association	List Order Services
P. O. Box 9008	1621 Eighteenth Street
Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008	Denver, CO 80202

Make sure your letter or postcard contains the following:

1. a request to the effect of "Please take my name off all marketing lists. Here is the information you requested:"
2. your first, middle and last name, current mailing address, and your phone number
3. your signature

### OTHER TIPS

- ★ To eliminate all those unsolicited "pre-approved" credit card offers, call toll-free (800) 353-0809, select "remove name permanently," and leave required information.
- ★ Call unwanted catalogs and ask to be taken off their mailing lists.
- ★ Whenever you order a product or otherwise share your address, always remember to say, "Please do not sell, rent, or trade my name."

## ...AND 4 ACTIONS FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD...

### 5. Replace four standard light bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights (CFLs).

Electricity production is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S., and lighting accounts for about 25 percent of American electricity consumption. If only 1,000 of us each replace four standard bulbs with CFLs, we can prevent the emission of five million pounds of carbon dioxide and reduce our electricity bills by more than \$100,000 over the lives of those bulbs.

- My household is replacing \_\_\_\_ standard bulbs with CFLs because of Turn the Tide.

Enter the above numbers into your personal workspace at [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org) or, for those of you keeping score at home, use the following formula and record your results on the chart on page 79.

\_\_\_\_ CFLs x 262 =  
\_\_\_\_ pounds of carbon dioxide saved each year

- I haven't taken this action yet.
- I didn't take the CFL action because all the light fixtures in my household are already fitted with CFLs.
- My household already had \_\_\_\_ CFLs to begin with. Congratulations! Each CFL saves about 262 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.



## 6. Move the thermostat 3° F.

Heating and cooling represents the biggest chunk of our home energy consumption. Consider replacing your old furnace or air conditioner with a much more efficient new model. But if that isn't possible in the short term, do the obvious. Mellow out on the climate control! Just by turning the thermostat down three degrees in the winter and up three degrees in the summer, you can save an average of 7.7 million BTUs of energy and prevent the emission of nearly 1,100 pounds of carbon dioxide annually. If only 1,000 of us shift three degrees, we will prevent over a million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions each year!

- I am turning up my thermostat \_\_\_\_ °F in the summer because of Turn the Tide.
- I am turning down my thermostat \_\_\_\_ °F in the winter because of Turn the Tide.

Enter the above numbers into your personal workspace at [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org) or, for those of you keeping score at home, use the following formula and record your results on the chart on page 79.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{____} \text{ } ^\circ \text{ F up in summer} \times 203 \\
 + \text{____} \text{ } ^\circ \text{ F down in winter} \times 157 \\
 \hline
 \text{____} \text{ pounds of carbon dioxide saved each year}
 \end{array}$$

- I have not taken this action yet.
- I don't have air conditioning.

Congratulations! Each extra degree of heat you “put up with” saves 157 pounds of carbon dioxide each summer.

## 7. Eliminate lawn and garden pesticides.

Cancer rates are rising as pesticides and other toxins pervade our food, water, and bodies. The *Journal of Pesticide Reform* reports that forty percent of all pesticides used in the U.S. mimic hormones in our bodies, causing reproductive disorders and interfering with fetal development. We unintentionally promote pesticide use every time we buy conventionally produced food and clothing (more than 10 percent of the world's pesticides and nearly 25 percent of the world's insecticides are applied to cotton crops).

But Americans also directly apply 70 million pounds of pesticides to home lawns and gardens each year and, in so doing, pollute our precious water resources. If only 1,000 of us stop using pesticides on our gardens and lawns, we'll protect the environment from 950 pounds of toxins each year. If we're also mindful of the pesticide requirements of our other consumer choices, we will boost this figure into the thousands of pounds.



- I am eliminating my use of lawn and garden pesticides because of Turn the Tide. My household is saving 15 ounces of pesticides.\*

Enter the above number into your personal workspace at [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org) or into the chart on page 79.

- I have not taken this action yet.
- I didn't use lawn and garden pesticides to begin with.

Congratulations! Pesticide-free households save 15 ounces of toxins, enough to pollute billions of gallons of water.

\* This might not sound like much, but consider diazinon, one of the most commonly used home and garden pesticides. One ounce of diazinon is enough to exceed aquatic life guidelines for 94 million gallons of water. This residential chemical has also killed more birds in the last five years than any other pesticide.

## 8. Install an efficient showerhead and low flow faucet aerators.

Of all natural resources, water is the most essential. But available supply is diminishing rapidly as human populations swell and drain precious aquifers. Consider replacing your washing machine with an efficient front-loading washer, replacing an old toilet with a new ultra low-flow model, fixing leaks around the home (over 25 gallons per day in the



average household), and replacing your lawn with a grass species that doesn't require fertilizer or watering. In the short term, pick up faucet aerators for \$2-5 apiece and a high-efficiency showerhead for under \$20. (These devices give excellent showers and are not to be confused with primitive flow

### INSTALL FAUCET AERATORS

The 1.5 gallons per minute (gpm) model is more than sufficient for bathroom sinks but you may want to go up to the 2.2 gpm model for your kitchen sink.

restrictors that simply reduce flow). In less than a year, you'll make that money back through lower utility bills. By reducing demand for hot water, this action also reduces fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse emissions. If only 1,000 of us install faucet aerators and efficient showerheads, we can save nearly 8 million gallons of water and prevent over

450,000 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions each year!

- I am installing efficient showerheads and low flow faucet aerators throughout my house because of Turn the Tide. My household is saving 7800 gallons of water and 460 pounds of carbon dioxide each year.

Enter the above number into your personal workspace at [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org) or into the chart on page 79.

- I have not taken this action yet.
- I already had low flow faucet aerators and high-efficiency showerheads to begin with.

Congratulations! These gadgets save about 7800 gallons of water and 460 pounds of carbon dioxide per year in the average household.

## ...AND THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST.

This ninth action is worth more than the first eight combined!

### 9. Convince two friends.

There's an easy way for you to triple the positive impact you are making with these nine actions — convince two friends to join you in your effort! Just pass a copy of this list to receptive friends or tell them to get their own personal workspace at [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org).

Write the names of people to whom you are giving a copy of these ten workbook pages. Then check them off as they tell you that they are beginning to Turn the Tide.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

I have convinced \_\_\_\_\_ friends to Turn the Tide

\_\_\_\_\_ friends x 48,070 = \_\_\_\_\_ gallons of water saved

\_\_\_\_\_ friends x 3970 = \_\_\_\_\_ pounds of carbon dioxide saved

\_\_\_\_\_ friends x 170 = \_\_\_\_\_ trees saved

\_\_\_\_\_ friends x 12 \_ = \_\_\_\_\_ pounds of sea life saved

\_\_\_\_\_ friends x 15 = \_\_\_\_\_ ounces of toxins avoided

I am the first person in my household to report taking Turn the Tide actions.

At least one other person in my household has already reported taking Turn the Tide actions.

Action taken	CO2 saved	Water saved	Trees saved	Grain saved	Sea life saved	Toxins avoided
1. Skip a car trip each week.						
2. Eat one less beef meal each week.						
3. Don't eat shrimp.						
4. Declare your independence from junk mail.						
5. Replace four standard light bulbs with CFLs.						
6. Move the thermostat 3° F						
7. Eliminate lawn and garden pesticides.						
8. Install an efficient showerhead and low flow faucet aerators.						
9. Convince two friends.						
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>						

If you don't have web access to set up your personal workspace, please send a copy of pages 78 and 79 to us so we can calculate the collective impact of everyone Turning the Tide and keep you posted through updates in *Enough!*