

[DATE]

President Joseph R. Biden
46th President of the United States of America

Dear President Biden,

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to commit to attending the Climate Ambition Summit hosted by United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on September 20, 2023, in New York City. Your presence would provide essential leadership, trust building, and commitment to solutions at a time when ambition on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and delivering climate justice is more essential than ever.

The climate crisis is here. Rising global temperatures and more frequent extreme weather and climate events are impacting us all. July 2023 was Earth's hottest month in recorded history with a global average temperature 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels for the first time. And the records just keep coming.ⁱ

These increasing extremes are costing us all. The heat is costing lives, as you have pointed out several times recently.ⁱⁱ Nearly 150 people in the United States have died from extreme heat this summer in just five counties, with many hundreds more having perished across the country.ⁱⁱⁱ The American economy is also suffering. In 2021, exposure to extreme heat cost the United States an estimated 470 billion labor hours.^{iv}

The impacts are even worse in developing countries, where some 90% of global deaths from worsening extreme weather occur. Workers in the world's poorest countries lose nearly 5% of their pay on a day with extreme heat, and \$4.3 trillion of economic loss has already been realized over the past 50 years due to extreme weather, leading to even more loss of life and livelihoods.^v

We have just solutions to change the future for our children and grandchildren, but it will require action to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030. Secretary-General Guterres has asked that countries come prepared to show action on items outlined in his proposed Acceleration Agenda, which includes credible plans for:^{vi}

- Achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 for developed countries like the United States.
- Shifting fossil fuel subsidies to renewable energies.
- Ending all licensing and funding (public and private) of new coal, oil, and gas development.
- Ending expansion of existing oil and gas reserves.
- Doubling adaptation finance by 2025 to make good on the US\$100 billion annual promise to developing countries.

- Reforming the international financial architecture so developing countries have the support to complete a just transition to clean energy and build resilience to climate change.
- Operationalizing the new Loss and Damage Fund this year.

The United States remains the preeminent global power and is responsible for more historical greenhouse gas emissions than any other nation. Your presence at the Climate Ambition Summit will encourage other world leaders to attend, including those from other nations who are failing to implement their commitments.^{vii} Beyond attendance, it is essential that you signal the United States' willingness to lead the international community toward reducing emissions enough to limit global warming to no more than 1.5° C. Signing into law the Inflation Reduction Act, the world's most ambitious investment in fighting the climate crisis, sets the standard on which world leaders can build.

We must also be clear – the United States needs to do more to fulfill current emissions and financial commitments and has a responsibility to increase ambition beyond those commitments.^{viii} By attending the Climate Ambition Summit, you can show a renewed commitment to solving the climate crisis and build trust from our most strategic Global South allies. Your presence can solidify alliances and initiatives for implementing the Acceleration Agenda and help ensure success at COP 28.

We hope to see you in New York on September 20.

Signed by:

The Climate Reality Project
[Organizations to be added]

ⁱ <https://public.wmo.int/en/media/news/copernicus-confirms-july-2023-was-hottest-month-ever-recorded>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/27/us/politics/biden-heat-climate-change.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/07/us/extreme-heat-death-toll-underestimate-climate/index.html>

^{iv} <https://www.lancetcountdown.org/data-platform/health-hazards-exposures-and-impacts/1-1-health-and-heat/1-1-4-change-in-labour-capacity>

^v <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/22/climate-change-causes-2m-deaths-in-50-years-poor-suffer-most-un>
^{un} <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2023/05/extreme-weather-caused-two-million-deaths-cost-4-trillion-over-last-50-years>

^{vi} https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un_sgs_acceleration_agenda.pdf

^{vii} <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/jul/31/rishi-sunak-approval-100-new-north-sea-oil-and-gas-licences-fossil-fuel-climate-crisis>

^{viii} <https://rhg.com/research/taking-stock-2023/>