

# The Climate Crisis: When 'doing good' is actually DOING HARM



1.5°C

**AVOIDING THE CATASTROPHIC IMPACTS OF WARMING OVER 1.5° C REQUIRES A MORATORIUM ON FOSSIL FUEL DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT IN CARBON SEQUESTRATION STRATEGIES.**

Philanthropy can't afford to do what it's always done. That is, rely on top-down, market-driven strategies to solve climate change.



**FUNDING FOR FALSE PROMISES IS GROWING. FALSE PROMISES ARE STRATEGIES THAT:**



Reinforce the principles and practices of the dominant, extractive economic system



Concentrate power and decision-making among those that are largely responsible for the climate crisis and now stand to benefit from the climate crisis<sup>1</sup>



Prioritize results in only one sector or issue over long-term systemic change



Commodify nature and treat the earth's resources as an opportunity for profit



Are often cost-prohibitive to implement at the scale needed for impact and/or are often unproven to curb global warming



Perpetuate pollution in marginalized communities and exploit people and land



Are misleading, attracting investment to activities that are not cutting emissions at their source



Lack community accountability and ownership



Feed the profits of influential corporations that are actively lobbying against climate policy<sup>2</sup>

**EXAMPLES OF FALSE PROMISES**



forest carbon offsets and REDD+



cap and trade



carbon taxes<sup>3</sup>



climate-smart agriculture



GMOs



geoengineering



"nature-based solutions"<sup>4</sup>

**Climate solutions exist, and are coming from grassroots movements globally. They are increasing community well-being, protecting bio and cultural diversity, and mitigating carbon emissions:<sup>5</sup>**



**Agroecology** could mitigate carbon dioxide equivalent to what China produces from now till 2050



**Community-controlled renewables** could mitigate carbon dioxide equivalent to what the amount produced globally over 9 years



**Strengthening Indigenous Peoples rights** could mitigate carbon dioxide equivalent to what the U.S. produces from now till 2050



**Direct resistance of extractive industries** could mitigate carbon dioxide equivalent to the amount held in the world's forests

**THE MAJORITY OF CLIMATE FUNDING IS GOING TO TOP-DOWN, MARKET-BASED STRATEGIES**

1%



**Only 1% of international funding goes to local organizations.** Yet, they are producing the ambitious, creative, and evidence-proven plans for saving the planet.<sup>6</sup>

**To reflect on whether a strategy is a 'false promise' of climate action, consider these 4 questions<sup>8</sup>**

Adapted from It Takes Roots



**Who benefits?** Does the strategy reach the people most impacted by resource and labor extraction? Will the solution return wealth, land, and power to people who have been marginalized?



**Who makes the decisions?**

The people closest to the problems will know best what the solutions should look like. How does this solution decentralize how resources are allocated?



**Not just climate-focused?**

Long-lasting change sticks when we work across silos such as alternative energy, women's rights, or food security. Does this climate solution address the various issues communities face?



**How will this build or shift power?**

Effective climate action requires political action that holds those in power to account. How does this solution challenge the status quo and address power imbalances?



**CLIMA Fund**  
RESOURCING GRASSROOTS CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

**To learn more about investing in high-impact, grassroots organizing globally, visit [www.climasolutions.org](http://www.climasolutions.org)**

<sup>1</sup> For example, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) found that \$5.2 trillion was spent globally on fossil fuel subsidies in 2017. The equivalent of over 6.5% of global GDP of that year. This continues to give social license to polluters, and maintain their economic viability despite plummeting profits. International Monetary Fund, "Global Fossil Fuel Subsidies Remain Large: An Update Based on Country-Level Estimates" 2019. <sup>2</sup> 71% of emissions come from just 100 corporations and they are using their profits to stymie climate action. For example, 35 of the 50 most influential corporations are actively lobbying against climate policy. Climate Accountability Institute, "The Carbon Majors Database" 2017, The Influence Map, 2017. <https://influencemap.org/>. <sup>3</sup> Climate Justice Alliance and Indigenous Environmental Network, "Carbon Pricing: A Critical Perspective for Community Resistance" 2017. <sup>4</sup> Nnimmo Bassey, 2019, "The Next Green Colonialism" <https://www.globalafricanworker.com/content/coming-green-colonialism>. <sup>5</sup> California Environmental Associates, 2019, Soil to Sky: Climate Solutions That Work. <https://climatesolutions.org/resource/soil-to-sky/>. <sup>6</sup> Ibid. <sup>7</sup> The Urban Institute, National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) Core File (Public Charities, circa 2009), 2011. <http://ncesdataweb.urban.org/>. <sup>8</sup> The People's Solutions Lens: It Takes Roots, 2018. <http://ittakesroots.org/peopleorientation/> and JusticeFunders, 2018. <http://justicefunders.org/the-peoples-solutions-lens-for-philanthropy/>