

WHAT CAN WE DO TO PROTECT CORAL REEFS?

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- **Support coral research.** This ensures that the best evidence-based tools possible are used to inform coral conservation and management decisions to help optimize the probability of coral survival in the future. This will help corals in the short-term. However, the only long-term solution to saving coral reefs is to slow climate change.
- **Reduce CO₂ emissions.** This is necessary to slow the rate of warming and ocean acidification, providing more time for the corals that do not die to adapt/acclimate/evolve to cope with change ocean conditions.
- **Apply political pressure with your vote.** As individuals, we can dramatically influence laws, policies, and regulation through our vote. Electing legislators at all levels of government who are committed to enacting legislation to reduce CO₂ emissions is the most effective way for individuals to influence policy.
- **Activism.** This keeps the conversation about coral reefs and climate change in the media and on people's minds. In a world of competing sound-bites, activism through marches, letter writing, and public speaking helps to keep climate change at the forefront of the public discourse.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

As individuals, we can support research, do our part to reduce our carbon footprint, vote, and become more active. The list below, assembled by students from a seminar course I taught, gives more detailed examples of actions we can all take to protect coral reefs, reduce CO₂ emissions, and slow climate change.

- **Vote** at every local, regional, state, and federal election every year, every special election, and every off-cycle election
- **Write Actual Letters on Paper** (to congress, political leaders, business leaders, etc...)
- **Online Action**
 - *March for Science* – <https://www.marchforscience.com>
 - *MoveOn.org* - <http://www.moveon.org/>
 - *An Inconvenient Sequel Pledge and Actions* - <https://inconvenientsequel.tumblr.com/>
 - *Vote Solar* - <http://www.votesolar.org/>
 - *The Ohio Environmental Council* - <http://www.theoec.org>
- **Individual Actions**
 - *Use Compact Fluorescent Bulbs or LED bulbs* - Replace 3 frequently used light bulbs with CF or LED bulbs. Save 300 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$60 per year.
 - *Unplug Un-Used Electronics* - Even when electronic devices are turned off, they use energy. Save over 1,000 lbs of carbon dioxide and \$256 per year.
 - *Put on a Sweater* - Instead of turning up the heat in your home, wear more clothes Save 1,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$250 per year.
 - *Adjust Your Thermostat* - Move your heater thermostat down two degrees in winter and up two degrees in the summer. Save 2000 lbs of carbon dioxide and \$98 per year.
 - *Air Dry Your Clothes* - Line-dry your clothes in the spring and summer instead of using the dryer. Save 700 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$75 per year.
 - *Buy Organic Food* - The chemicals used in modern agriculture pollute the water supply, and require energy to produce.
 - *Bring Cloth Bags to the Market* - Using your own cloth bag instead of plastic or paper bags reduces waste and requires no additional energy.
 - *Buy Products Locally* - Buy locally and reduce the amount of energy required to drive your products to your store.
 - *Buy Minimally Packaged Goods* - Less packaging could reduce your garbage by about 10%. Save 1,200 pounds of carbon dioxide and \$1,000 per year.
 - *Use Recycled Paper* - Make sure your printer paper is 100% post-consumer recycled paper. Save 5 lbs. of carbon dioxide per ream of paper.
 - *Reduce Garbage* - Buy products with less packaging and recycle paper, plastic and glass. Save 1,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide per year.
 - *Fill the Dishwasher* - Run your dishwasher only with a full load. Save 100 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$40 per year.
 - *Take Shorter Showers* - Showers account for 2/3 of all water-heating costs. Save 350 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$99 per year.
 - *Install a Low-Flow Showerhead* - Using less water in the shower means less energy to heat the water. Save 350 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$150.
 - *Insulate Your Water Heater* - Keep your water heater insulated could save 1,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$40 per year.
 - *Check Your Water-heater* - Keep the thermostat no higher than 120°F. Save 550 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$30 per year