

## BUILD THE MOVEMENT

The green movement's political clout grows every time you contribute to and/or volunteer with an environmental organization. Here are some of the many great groups that can use your support:

- **The Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life** ([www.coejl.org](http://www.coejl.org))

COEJL works nationally and locally to create "a distinctively Jewish programmatic and policy response to the environmental crisis."

- **Rainforest Action Network**

([www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org)) RAN's media-savvy campaigns have helped change policy at some of the world's largest corporations, including Home Depot, Citicorp and Goldman Sachs.

- **The Sierra Club**

([www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)) With chapters nationwide, the Sierra Club is one of the nation's most effective environmental organizations.

- **Sustainable South Bronx**

([www.ssbx.org](http://www.ssbx.org)) SSBX addresses land use, energy policy, transportation and water issues to advance the environmental and economic rebirth of the South Bronx and to inspire solutions nationwide.

- **Transportation Alternatives**

([www.transportationalternatives.org](http://www.transportationalternatives.org)) A NYC activist group made up of walkers, cyclists and straphangers, TA advocates for environmentally sensible transportation.

## SAMPLE PLEDGES

- **I pledge to reduce my use of bottled water this year.**

Bottled water is so quick, so convenient, so bad for the planet. Transporting all that water around the globe burns lots of fossil fuels, contributing to global warming. Moreover, for every gallon of bottled water that's produced, two gallons are wasted in the production process. Then there's the problem of the bottles themselves: last year Americans tossed 22 billion of them in the trash.

Tap water, which is great as it is and even more delicious filtered, is available in our homes, offices and restaurants and comes at little cost to the environment or to your budget.

- **I pledge to bring reusable bags to the store when I can, and not use a disposable bag when I don't need one.**

Bringing your own bags to the store is a common practice in virtually every country but our own. Here, even an orange is likely to be consigned to a plastic sack. Bringing a reusable bag to the store, and declining a plastic bag when you don't really need one, helps reduce solid waste and save the lives of hundreds of thousands of aquatic animals who often die after ingesting plastic bags mistaken for food.

- **I pledge to increase the percentage of recycled paper products that I buy.**

Using recycled paper and paper products saves trees, saves water and creates far fewer greenhouse gases than paper made from virgin timber. In fact, a pound of recycled office paper saves four pounds of carbon dioxide, the major greenhouse gas.

- **I pledge to recycle more.**

Recycling might seem so, well, old school. But it's actually a great way to fight global warming. A can made of recycled aluminum requires 95 percent less energy than a can made of new material. Newspapers and glass offer a 40 percent energy savings; recycling plastic saves 70 percent.

So, why not carry that soda bottle or newspaper home to recycle, rather than throwing it in the trash?

- **I pledge that whenever I buy something big or expensive—a car, a refrigerator, an air conditioner, a home—I'll research the product to make sure it's energy-efficient.**

Over its lifetime, a big-ticket item's energy consumption can make a large impact. So look for "Energy Star" ratings on appliances, computers, TVs and even homes. Make sure your new or used vehicle gets high marks for fuel efficiency. Buying energy-efficient big-ticket items will encourage manufacturers to make their products more efficient overall.

- **I pledge to increase the percentage of earth-friendly cleaning products I buy this year.**

Most conventional detergents release harmful chemicals into the environment on their way down the drain. Plant-based products clean as effectively while reducing global warming and the flow of harmful chemicals into the environment. Instead of chlorine bleach, try hydrogen peroxide, or any of the "oxy" cleaners that are readily available at your local supermarket.

- **I pledge to stop the junk mail that comes to my home.**

Every year, 100 million trees and 28 billion gallons of water are used to create junk mail, the vast majority of which goes right into the landfill.

For a one-time fee of \$15, [www.greendimes.com](http://www.greendimes.com) will stop your junk mail for good.

## VOTE GREEN!

The laws and regulations that govern things like automobile fuel efficiency and the renewable energy mix of our electric grid have the potential to radically transform Americans' impact on the earth. Imagine: all of the nation's electricity generated from renewable sources. We have the technology. We just need federal, state and local incentives to make it happen.

So the next time you go to the polls, pull the lever for a pro-environment candidate. The League of Conservation Voters ([www.lcv.org](http://www.lcv.org)) and its state affiliates ([www.nylcv.org](http://www.nylcv.org), [www.ctlcv.org](http://www.ctlcv.org), [www.fscvl.org](http://www.fscvl.org)) can tell you which polls are most supportive of legislation that will stop global warming, clean the air and protect our ecosystems.



"If not now,  
when?"

—Rabbi Hillel, *Pirkei Avot* 1:14

ברית אדמה—ברית תקווה

Brit Adamah—Brit Tikvah

A COVENANT WITH THE EARTH  
A COVENANT OF HOPE

An Invitation to Make the  
Earth a Safer, Healthier Place

CBST • an open door

קהל"ה קדושה בית שמחת תורה

Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum · Rabbi Ayelet S. Cohen  
Cantor David Berger · Eric Rosenbaum, President  
Ilene Sameth, Executive Director

CBST • an open door

קהל"ה קדושה בית שמחת תורה

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**CBST invites you** to participate in a most important project: Brit Adamah—Brit Tikvah is our Covenant with the Earth, our Covenant of Hope.

The Days of Awe, the Jewish High Holidays, are the time our tradition has set aside for contemplating how we live, for correcting missteps and for recommitting to a path of righteousness.

And perhaps nowhere are our missteps more visible than in our relationship with the natural world; every day brings more bad environmental news.

In this New Year 5768, please join us in making a pledge to reduce your negative impacts on the environment and think, as well, about how you can extend your positive impacts.

To help you understand some of the best ways to do this, we've provided an environmental primer. Please read through the many opportunities for creating positive changes in the environment, then fill out the enclosed *Brit Adamah—Brit Tikvah* pledge card. Here you can tell us about your plans to make the earth a more habitable place, and also about your motivations.

We will then take your collective planned actions, your *mitzvot*, and work with an artist to turn them into a statement about the changes we are making together, an expression of our communal Covenant with the Earth. We'll also follow up with you, if you like, to see how your new year is going.

You might wonder whether your seemingly small actions can have much impact. Rest assured, small steps by large numbers of people can result in great changes. Collectively, as a community, we can help shift the tide.

**Please join us.**

*L'Shana Tova.*

### Here are some ways you can increase your positive impact on the environment:

- If you're a school teacher, start an environmental project with your classroom.
- If you're an architect, learn green building techniques and incorporate them into your work.
- If you're involved with a family foundation, use some of your resources to help fight climate change.

### USE THE POWER OF YOUR WALLET

According to the Union of Concerned Scientists, an environmental advocacy group, about 80% of the damage we do to the environment is concentrated in three areas: transportation; heating, cooling and powering buildings; and, food. (Transportation and buildings account for about a third of the damage each; food accounts for a sixth.) Here are simple ways to reduce your impact in each of them:

#### ☀ **Switch to Green Power**

Residents and business owners in the Tri-State area can buy electricity generated from renewable sources such as wind farms or low-impact hydroelectric systems, rather than from fossil-fuel-burning power plants. The power still comes through the same lines and is still serviced by your local electric company.

To switch to Green Power in NYC, Westchester, Rockland and Orange counties, contact Con Ed Solutions ([www.conedsolutions.com](http://www.conedsolutions.com)). On Long Island, LIPA offers the Green Choice program ([www.lipower.org/residential/green.html](http://www.lipower.org/residential/green.html)) and other clean energy initiatives. In New Jersey, visit [www.njcleanenergy.com](http://www.njcleanenergy.com). And in Connecticut, check out [www.ctcleanenergyoptions.com](http://www.ctcleanenergyoptions.com). (Because switching electric suppliers can be a little complicated, call your local Green Power provider and have them walk you through the process.)

☀ **Recycle Your Electronics** Consumer electronics—computers, stereos, iPods, cellphones—are full of toxic substances that seep out of landfills and into the surrounding groundwater and soil. To find out more about how and where to recycle your electronics, visit [www.nyc.gov/html/nycwasteless](http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycwasteless) or [www.eiae.org](http://www.eiae.org).

#### ☀ **Buy Locally Produced and/or Organic Food**

The average food item in an American meal travels 1500 miles before arriving on the plate. Transporting, warehousing and refrigerating that food requires lots of greenhouse-gas-emitting fossil fuels. Buying as much locally-raised and processed food as you can will help reduce emissions and get you fresher, more flavorful grub. Luckily, NYC is blessed with more than 40 **Green Markets**, where local farmers sell their wares. To find a Green Market near you, visit: [www.cenyc.org/site/pages/GMKT/map2007.pdf](http://www.cenyc.org/site/pages/GMKT/map2007.pdf).

Another great way to eat local is to purchase a share in the harvest of a nearby farm; that produce is delivered weekly. (This process is called **Community Supported Agriculture**.) Who knew? There are even Jewish CSAs. To find a CSA program in your area, visit [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org); Tuv Ha'aretz, the Jewish CSA program, can be found at [www.hazon.org/go.php?q=/food/CSA/aboutTuvHaAretz.html](http://www.hazon.org/go.php?q=/food/CSA/aboutTuvHaAretz.html).

☀ **Buy the Right Fish** Scientists predict that if commercial fishing continues at current rates, our oceans will be almost entirely empty of fish within 40 to 50 years. The good news is that guides, like the one included in this packet, can help you choose fish that you can enjoy without depleting the fragile fish population and exposing yourself to toxic chemicals such as mercury and PCBs. For more info on how to help our oceans, visit [www.blueocean.org](http://www.blueocean.org) and [www.oceansalive.org](http://www.oceansalive.org).

☀ **Have an Energy Audit** Burning fossil fuels to power and heat buildings releases the greenhouse gases that cause global warming. So save money and help the environment by having an energy audit that will show you how to cut your energy use without sacrificing comfort. In New York City or state, visit [www.getenergysmart.org](http://www.getenergysmart.org) and [www.nyserda.org](http://www.nyserda.org) for information on how to set up an audit. In New Jersey, check out [www.njcleanenergy.com](http://www.njcleanenergy.com), and in Connecticut try [www.ct-p.com/clmres/energy/energy\\_solutions.asp](http://www.ct-p.com/clmres/energy/energy_solutions.asp).

☀ **Fly Less** Here's a sad truth: Air travel is one of the most polluting activities around. One cross-country flight can create as many greenhouse gases as a year of driving. So take the train instead of the shuttle; schedule your next vacation closer to home. And if you do fly, take a non-stop flight during the daytime; taking off and landing create the most emissions, and the contrails plane exhaust produces during daylight hours reflect some of the sun's heat back out of the atmosphere. Then, offset your air travel through a group like **Native Energy** ([www.nativeenergy.com](http://www.nativeenergy.com)) or **Terrapass** ([www.terrapass.com](http://www.terrapass.com)).

#### ☀ **Offset Your Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

You can compensate for the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions you create by cutting down on GHG production in other parts of our economy. This process is called **offsetting**. (Of course, try to reduce your GHG emissions first. That way, you'll have fewer emissions to offset.) Al Gore offsets the GHGs his work generates through a group called **Native Energy** ([www.nativeenergy.com](http://www.nativeenergy.com)) which uses tax-free donations to build wind farms and other renewable energy facilities. These facilities reduce the amount of coal-fired electricity we produce as a nation and thereby reduce our country's greenhouse gas emissions. Another group that provides tax-free offset services is **The Climate Trust** ([www.climatestrust.org](http://www.climatestrust.org)).

#### ☀ **Purchase Recycled Paper Products, and Recycle Paper, Too**

The paper industry is the third largest industrial emitter of global warming pollution. Chlorine bleaching of paper results in the production of dioxin and other cancer-causing chemicals. So recycle as much paper and cardboard as you can. And buy paper and paper products made with high levels of post-consumer waste. (That's the stuff you put in the recycling bin, rather than scraps from the paper production process, which is called pre-consumer waste.)

Companies such as **Marcal**, **Seventh Generation** and **Whole Foods** offer chlorine-free paper napkins, towels, toilet paper and tissues made of recycled paper. A large number of office supply stores now carry chlorine-free, recycled paper, envelopes, file folders and other recycled products. For more information, visit [www.nrdc.org/cities/living/paper/default.asp](http://www.nrdc.org/cities/living/paper/default.asp).

#### ☀ **Take Public Transportation, or, Better Yet, Hoof It!**

Taking subways, buses and trains uses only one-third the energy that driving does. Walking and cycling are good for the planet and your waistline.

For more ideas about how you can better your impact on the environment, visit: [www.nrdc.org/greenliving](http://www.nrdc.org/greenliving) and [www.thegreenguide.com](http://www.thegreenguide.com).