

## RECONSTRUCTIONIST RABBINICAL ASSOCIATION

# RESOLUTION ON THE GLOBAL CLIMATE CRISIS

Submitted by Rabbi Jeff Sultar Adopted March 25, 2008

WHEREAS the global community is facing a climate crisis that requires immediate action; and

WHEREAS the urgency of such action has been dramatically substantiated during the past year by the international scientific community (U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007); and

WHEREAS this call to action must have as its central emphasis the reduction of carbon emissions and the lowering of our carbon footprint; and

WHEREAS the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association already supports COEJL's Climate Change Campaign; and

WHEREAS the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation's Sustainable Synagogue Initiative and the 1990 JRF resolution on the environment has already infused a wide-range of its *tikkun olam* efforts with an awareness of the environmental crisis we face; and

WHEREAS the U.S. Senate will soon be considering the Lieberman-Warner "America's Climate Security Act," in recognition of the United States' disproportionate responsibility for the global climate crisis; and

WHEREAS the global community looks to the United States to take bold leadership to address this crisis; and

WHEREAS, due to this disproportionate responsibility and leadership role, the United States is in a unique position to make a dramatic difference; and

WHEREAS the voice of religious communities is essential in order to keep the issue of environmental justice as a part of strategies developed in response to the global climate crisis;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association strongly encourages its members to make as many of the following commitments as possible:

- I. To get an energy audit; to calculate the carbon footprint in our institutions; and to devise a plan for energy conservation and the use of renewable energy, and/or carbon offsets, with a goal of attempting to achieve a 50% reduction in carbon emissions within a five year period.
- II. To educate and advocate for carbon neutrality in our institutions and to encourage and to help facilitate carbon reduction strategies in the homes of those in our communities.
- III. To switch our institutions' building(s) to, and to educate and advocate for individual constituent households to switch to, wind or other renewable sources of energy in those states where such an option is offered by electrical utility companies. The average household switching to wind or other renewable sources of electricity results in a carbon emission reduction equal to not driving 20,000 miles annually in a car.

- IV. To support legislative efforts at the local, state, national and international levels that promote the shift from high-carbon to low-carbon energy production, such as CAFÉ (Corporate Average Fuel Economy) standards and public policies that promote the development and use of renewable sources of energy, and to advocate vigorously for the strengthening of such legislation.
- V. To raise our religious voice to ensure that concern for environmental justice helps shape local, state, national and international policies.
- VI. To undertake a special campaign to encourage all our constituents to plant trees and support habitat preservation and reforestation efforts worldwide.
- VII. To examine our current investment policies with the aim of enhancing our socially responsible portfolio to support businesses and communities that share our environmental goals.
- VIII. To urge those who work in our institutions to reduce energy use and carbon output in transportation by using public transit and/or purchasing high mileage per gallon or hybrid vehicles.