

**The California Environmental Justice Movement's
Declaration on
Use of Carbon Trading Schemes to Address Climate Change**

1. **Whereas**, the climate system of the planet and the energy choices we make are inextricably linked to a looming ecological and social catastrophe; and
2. **Whereas**, the United States and all other countries of the world face a moment of great promise and great peril regarding our energy production and use including: 1) our overdependence on fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas, and coal; 2) the production and use of bio-fuels with dubious sustainability attributes; and 3) the resurgence of domestic and international nuclear power development; and
3. **Whereas**, low-income Asian, Black, Latino, and Native American communities in the United States, as well as indigenous and poor people around the world, disproportionately bear the negative economic, environmental, and health impacts of the fossil fuel economy at every stage of its life cycle including its exploration, extraction, production, refining, distribution, consumption, and disposal of its waste; and
4. **Whereas**, global climate change caused by burning fossil fuels, resulting in the release of carbon dioxide, other green house gases, and associated co-pollutants into our oceans, air, soil, and vegetation jeopardizes the planet's ability to maintain a livable climate and causes grave health problems in poor communities, communities of color, and indigenous communities around the world; and
5. **Whereas**, the international scientific community predicts that climate change will cause great human suffering, the brunt of which will be borne by the world's poor, developing nations, disenfranchised indigenous communities, the infirm, and peoples of color that have been historically discriminated against at global, national, and local levels; and
6. **Whereas**, the best available science indicates that the planet is warming more rapidly than we understood when the Kyoto Accord was ratified and that reductions in greenhouse gases must be undertaken more quickly and with greater urgency than previously recognized; and
7. **Whereas**, most of nations that ratified the Kyoto Accord – including Canada, Japan, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, and Austria – are failing to meet the treaty's requirements for greenhouse gas emission reductions; and
8. **Whereas**, the policy cornerstone of the Kyoto approach is a market-based system to allow nations to establish emissions "rights" and trading of "rights" to emit carbon, known as cap & trade under the European Union Emission Trading Scheme (EU- ETS); and
9. **Whereas**, the EU-ETS created transferable "rights" to dispose of carbon into the air, oceans, soil, and vegetation far in excess of the capacity of these systems to absorb it; and
10. **Whereas**, economic globalization steers international commodity markets to manufacture and privatize the "right" to dispose of green house gases and their co-pollutants into the air, oceans, soil, vegetation and human bodies and is in direct conflict with the true human rights of people and respect for our planet; and
11. **Whereas**, Phase 1 of the EU-ETS has been documented as giving billions of dollars worth of these "rights", free of charge, to the biggest corporate emitters of greenhouse gases who are responsible for causing the global warming crisis and thereby created one of the largest transfers of wealth from low- and middle-income people to private corporations in the modern industrial era; and
12. **Whereas**, carbon trading under Phase 1 of the EU-ETS benefited large fossil-fuel intensive corporations and stands in the way of the transition to clean renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency strategies that are critically necessary to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and
13. **Whereas**, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Accord, as well as voluntary private sector trading schemes, encourages industrialized countries and their corporations to finance or create carbon dumps in the Developing World as lucrative alternatives to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Developed Countries; and
14. **Whereas**, the EU-ETS and the CDM sanctions the continued exploration, extraction, refining, and burning of fossil fuels and finances projects such as private industrial tree plantations that appropriate land, water, and air needed to support the livelihoods of local communities in the Developing World as new carbon dumps for industries in the Developed World; and

15. **Whereas**, the EU-ETS and CDM fail to address and further deepens entrenched social inequalities, irresponsible development trends, inadequate hazard reduction policies, and are silent on confronting disaster vulnerability of populations worldwide; and
16. **Whereas**, carbon trading transactions and markets are undemocratic because they do not allow for full public participation by impacted communities and lack responsible governmental oversight as entrenched polluter interests determine whether and how to reduce greenhouse gases and co-pollutant emissions in vulnerable communities worldwide; and
17. **Whereas**, the political power of the major global polluters, particularly coal, petro-chemical, pulp & paper, cement, iron & steel multi-national corporations, has resulted in carbon trading schemes that include inadequate reporting systems, that are impossible for the public and regulatory agencies to monitor, allow gaming of the system by market participants, and lack meaningful penalties for failure to comply; and
18. **Whereas**, greenhouse gases will be substantially reduced only through a transition to greater energy efficiency and sustainable energy technologies, such as solar, wind, and geothermal that do not rely on fossil fuels; and
19. **Whereas**, capturing energy from the wind, sun, ocean, and heat stored within the Earth's crust builds the health and self-reliance of people and our communities, protects the planet, creates jobs, and expands the global economy; and
20. **Whereas**, global energy transformation is the politically unifying and inclusive principle that affirms the rights of all people--including the poor, women, rural and indigenous communities--to have access to affordable and sustainable energy and the enhanced quality of life that such access affords; and
21. **Whereas**, the EU-ETS, including the CDM, is often portrayed as the necessary first step toward establishing an effective international climate change regime and has been presented as a model for California's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

The California Environmental Justice Movement DECLARES that the EU-ETS, including the CDM, is a step in the wrong direction; and

The California Environmental Justice Movement FURTHER DECLARES that we will fight at every turn all efforts to establish a system of carbon trading and offset use in California; and

The California Environmental Justice Movement FURTHER DECLARES that our demands for real changes in the way we make and use energy will not be silenced by promises of money or token adjustments to the fundamentally flawed trading and offsets approach; so

BE IT THEREFORE, RESOLVED, that the California Environmental Justice Movement stands with communities around the world in opposition to carbon trading and offset use and the continued over reliance on fossil fuels; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the California Environmental Justice Movement will support conservation, regulation, and other measures to address greenhouse gases only if they directly and significantly reduce emissions, require the shift away from use of fossil fuels and nuclear power, and do not cause or exacerbate the pollution burden of poor communities of color in the United States and developing nations around the world; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the California Environmental Justice Movement will oppose efforts by our state government to create a carbon trading and offset program, because such a program will not reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the pace called for by the international scientific community, it will not result in a shift to clean sustainable energy sources, it will support and enrich the state's worst polluters, it will fail to address the existing and future inequitable burden of pollution, it will deprive communities of the ability to protect and enhance their communities, and because if our state joins regional or international trading schemes it will further create incentives for carbon offset programs that harm communities in California, the region, the country, and developing nations around the world.

THEREFORE, We, the undersigned organizations and individuals affirm our solidarity with the California Environmental Justice Movement, poor, and indigenous people around the world.