



The **Associated**

Jewish Federation of Baltimore

20
23

Climate
Action
Plan

Proud member of the



**Jewish Climate
Leadership Coalition**
POWERED BY ADAMAH

Call to Action

The global climate crisis is an historic inflection point for our planet, our communities, and our people.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UN body that assesses the science of climate change, estimates that we have fewer than seven years to take urgent and meaningful action to avoid locking in the most catastrophic effects of climate change.

Jewish tradition compels us to respond.

Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition

In spring of 2022, The Associated signed on as a founding partner to the Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition, along with twenty other national and international umbrella organizations of Jewish life.

Powered by Adamah, the Coalition is a network of Jewish community organizations who recognize the existential threat and moral urgency of climate change and commit to taking action.

Coalition members develop **Climate Action Plans** that outline our strategic priorities in terms of our climate work. Our Climate Action Plan both details action taken to-date and sets goals for both reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and mobilizing our networks around climate action in the year ahead.

Inspired by Jewish values, we are working to do the Jewish community's part to mitigate the worst effects of climate change and build a livable future together.

We invite Jewish community organizations everywhere to join us.

For more information about the Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition, watch the [Coalition launch video](#) or visit Adamah's [website](#).



The Associated strengthens and nurtures Jewish life by engaging and supporting community partners in Greater Baltimore, Israel and around the world.

The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore 2023 Climate Action Plan

Actions Taken To-Date

The Associated has already shown significant leadership on climate. We now power 50% of our entire operation through solar, using a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) to support an off-site solar array. We launched a Green Loan Fund that has lent out more than \$1 million in interest-free loans to Jewish organizations to engage in energy efficiency projects.



Top Priorities:

The Associated's Climate Action Plan for 2023 will focus on the following three areas:

- **All-in on solar.** We will begin the process of initiating a second PPA to power the other half of our electricity needs, with a goal to become the first Jewish federation entirely powered by solar. The previous PPA took over two years from start to finish; we anticipate another PPA going live sometime in calendar 2025.
- **Tree planting and nature-based solutions.** Planting new trees is an important way to mitigate climate change, and these trees are especially effective when planted in urban areas, where they also provide crucial shade to avoid heat-island effects. We will partner with the 1 Trillion Trees worldwide initiative and to assist the City of Baltimore and the State of Maryland to meet their goals of planting 500,000 and 5,000,000 trees over the next five years.
- **Scaling up the Green Loan Fund into the Climate Action Fund.** The Associated has already seen significant success with the Green Loan Fund. We will help scale the loan fund into a larger national Jewish Climate Action Fund and serve on an advisory group to maximize the scope and impact of that important financing tool for climate action across the Jewish world.

Additional Goals:

In addition to the priorities outlined above, The Associated commits to the following additional climate actions:

- **Primary energy use.** We have benchmarked buildings on our campus in the past; we will seek to standardize/update that benchmark for the year 2019 as a point from which to measure future success. We will also add a greenhouse gas benchmark for our food (see below) and transportation (see below), both of which are relatively straightforward to calculate and have meaningful impacts on our carbon footprint.

- **Transportation.** The Associated does not engage in much plane travel. We do have regular employee commutes, some of which will be shortened by our recent moving of our main offices to a different building. We also have developed experience through the coronavirus pandemic in using remote options, which we will seek to institutionalize these changes where we can and where they make sense. (For example, our offices are closed on Friday, which enables us to save on energy).

For other parts of our mission, travel is essential. For work-related travel that we do engage in, we commit to offsetting the climate impact of that travel through purchasing climate offsets.

- **Food.** We will use the resource guide being developed by Adamah along with Adamah staff support to mitigate the climate impact of our meals served at events, by choosing lower-impact foods. We are making an explicit commitment to reducing GHG from the food we serve by 10% annually, through participation with the Humane Society's new and free [ForwardFood](#) program.
- **Offsets.** Using our primary energy use benchmark (see above), we commit to an annual practice, starting by fall of 2023, to purchase carbon offsets to cover the greenhouse gas emissions produced from our primary energy use (electricity) as well as any fuel we burn (natural gas for cooking, for example). We will leverage Adamah's expertise and resources to understand more about reliable forms of carbon offsets.

Regarding carbon offsets for transportation, see above.

- **Education & Celebration.** The Associated will serve as leader for the field of Federations, demonstrating what is possible with time and commitment. Our work on solar and on the Green Loan Fund already represent that model. Using the framework of the Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition, we will encourage other Federations to similarly act.
- **Finance.** This is an area of climate impact we as a field have not explored in depth. It is clearly important, and ESG investing is growing in popularity as it becomes clear that it is possible to bring values and environmental concerns into investment decisions without sacrificing financial return. The Associated will commit to a learning process over the coming year on ESG investing. We will dedicate at least one board meeting to discussing where our current investment portfolio sits and exploring climate-smart options.

For more information about our climate work, visit our [website](#).