

How to Write an Op-ed about the Climate and Ecological Crises

What is an op-ed?

Op-ed Guidelines Op-eds are opinion pieces written by members of the public that typically are published in a news outlet's editorial section. Newspapers, magazines and other news publications regularly run **op-eds** to ensure they present diverse opinions on topics of importance to readers.

[Here are some tips for your Op-ed](#)

1. Choose which outlet you would like to submit to (larger papers like the NYT and the Globe are harder to get published - your local town paper may be your best bet.)
2. Figure out the word count that your Op-ed for that publication can be (usually around 700 words)
3. Craft your op-ed. Here are [more tips](#) from Smith College.
4. Be sure to include your name, the title or affiliation that substantiates your expertise on the issue, and your phone number. You don't need to have any fancy affiliation, you can submit as a concerned citizen, concerned parent, or climate activist.
5. Submit your op-ed through email or through the online form.

Messaging Suggestions

Use words that suggest urgency and emergency: 2050 is too late, 7 years left to reach net zero emissions, hothouse Earth, tipping points, feedback loops, emergency, urgent action

1. **Net Zero Emissions by 2050 is too late.** According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), humanity has under seven years to limit human-caused global warming to a 1.5 degree Celsius increase in temperature, beyond which planetary conditions will become catastrophic. Numerous climate scientists believe that we have already depleted this budget. Scientific consensus is clear that waiting until 2050 to reach net zero emissions will be too late to avoid widespread climate catastrophe.
2. **Governor Baker.** Baker gets press for strong climate leadership, but actively blocked the passage of The Climate Roadmap Bill S.9 using pocket vetoes and many rounds of

comments that would have weakened the bill. Before Baker's suggested changes, Climate Bill S.9 was already too weak to protect the constituents of Massachusetts and people around the world from climate and ecological catastrophe. Members of Extinction Rebellion Boston demand that Governor Baker declare a Climate Emergency and commit to net-zero emissions within 7 years.

3. **President Biden.** 33 years ago, Dr. James Hansen of NOAA told Congress that human-created climate change is a real and existential threat. (5) Finally, after 30+ years of our government's failure to take urgent action on the climate and ecological crises, the Biden administration recently announced targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. While we acknowledge this progress, his stated targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are not urgent enough to avoid climate, ecological, and the resulting social collapse. According to climate scientists, Earth is hurtling towards what they coin an 'uninhabitable hothouse Earth.' Earth's tipping points, which are being reached more quickly than scientists originally projected, risk setting the Earth on a dangerous trajectory that can no longer be stopped or controlled by human behavior. Humanity must stop burning fossil fuels and rapidly transition to renewable energy before the 2050 goal that many governments have set as their target. Several countries have committed to net zero by 2030 or 2040, and the United States must take more aggressive action if we wish to ensure that we hand down a safe and habitable Earth to our children
4. **Existential Threat.** Wealthy countries that emit the most greenhouse gases have entered a non-binding agreement, The Paris Agreement, aspiring to a 50% greenhouse gas reduction by 2030 and Net Zero by 2050. This target condemns billions of people around the world to misery, disaster, and forced climate migration which will overwhelm our borders. Climate migration has already begun, and will only worsen in the decades to come. The countries that have done the least to cause the climate and ecological crises already are and will continue to suffer the most. For decades, political and business leaders in the United States and around the world have known that human civilization is degrading Earth's ecosystems and destabilizing the climate, causing millions of plant and animal species to go extinct. Their inaction on climate is nothing short of criminal.
5. **Our Children and Future Generations.** Right now, in the U.S. and around the world, children's lives are under threat due to climate change. Nearly 710 million children are currently living in countries at the highest risk of suffering the impact of the climate crisis. However, every child will inherit a planet with more frequent extreme weather events than ever before. Extreme events, including **wildfires**, floods and hurricanes, have become a frightening new normal. Hotter temperatures, air pollution and **violent storms** are leading to immediate, life-threatening dangers for children, including difficulty breathing, **malnutrition** and higher risk of infectious diseases.

6. **Local Action.** Towns and cities can take action on their own without waiting for state or national government to implement laws. Check out Extinction Rebellion Boston's Emergency Everywhere Campaign. We are working to have towns around Massachusetts declare a Climate Emergency and commit to net zero emissions within 7 years.
7. **Citations**

Examples

- **Paragraph Samples**
- **Op-Ed: Climate Change Is in Our Lane — Mitigating the crisis is not only good for the Earth, but also the health of our patients**