



# GREEN NEW DEAL

## LEARNING GOALS

- To gain a basic understanding of the wide-ranging, complex solutions for climate change.
- To appreciate the importance of international cooperation, especially over activism and political organizing.
- To consider why international issues and policies matter to a place as vulnerable as Hawaii, which is at the frontline of the climate crisis.

## ASSIGNMENT

Estimated Time: ~23 min

- Watch [“The Green New Deal, Explained”](#) (~7:30 min)
- Read [“A Global Comparison”](#) (~5 min)
- Read [“Could a Green New Deal Turn South Korea From Climate Villain to Model?”](#) (~4 min)
- Read [“To Rebuild the Economy, Focus on a Hawaii-Grown Infrastructure”](#) (~6 min)

## TERMINOLOGY

- **Climate Change** - The severe and drastic change in global climate caused by the emission of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) into the atmosphere. Human activities, such as the burning of fossil fuels, increase the rate of climate change. Earth has seen a massive spike in global temperatures since the Industrial Revolution.
- **Green New Deal** - A proposed agenda that would restructure the global economy in order to cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to zero. Advocates envision the expansion of renewable energy, green transportation, and sustainable agriculture. The Green New Deal also seeks to create a strong safety net, which includes universal healthcare and a federal jobs guarantee.
- **Fossil Fuels** - Energy sources that refer to oil, coal, natural gas, and petroleum.
- **Renewable Energy** - Energy sources that replenish themselves continually through natural processes. Examples include solar, wind, and geothermal power. It must be noted that biomass, which technically falls under the scope of renewable energy, still emits CO<sub>2</sub>. Hence, some renewable energy sources are more climate friendly than others.
- **ETS** - Stands for “emissions trade system,” or cap and trade. Under ETS, a governmental agency would issue a limited amount of permits that allow companies to emit CO<sub>2</sub> (“cap”). The more permits one has, the more CO<sub>2</sub> it can discharge without being taxed. If a firm wants more permits, it must purchase them from other firms (“trade”). Government, however, incrementally reduces permits each year, thereby making it more expensive to pollute. This market-driven approach will, at least theoretically, lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- **Carbon Tax** - Like cap and trade, a carbon tax harnesses free market incentives toward CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. Rather than cap CO<sub>2</sub> through a limited amount of permits, a carbon tax would simply tax companies who emit. Since the tax makes fossil fuels more expensive, the market has an incentive to use alternatives like renewable energy.
- **Greenwashing** - A practice whereby organizations manipulate information and misleadingly present themselves as environmentally “woke.”



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## KAHOOT QUIZ

- Go to Kahoot.it or use the Kahoot mobile app and enter the pin 03315143
- Or, use [this link](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is the Green New Deal, and why is its name significant?
- Do you support the Green New Deal? Why or why not?
  - ◊ Even if you support the Green New Deal, what counterarguments against it are strong?
  - ◊ According to the Vox video, what are some of the problems facing the Green New Deal? How does the Green New Deal address them?
- What do you think about the efforts to reduce emissions in other countries? What can we, as Americans, learn from their example?
  - ◊ What are some challenges other countries have encountered when trying to address climate change?
- Do you view nuclear power as a solution to reduce CO2 emissions, or an energy source we should avoid? Why or why not?
- Do you agree with the community voice article in Civil Beat? What parts do you support and what parts do you oppose?
- In the Guardian article, Soyoung Lee mentioned that Greta Thunberg inspired her, highlighting the importance of cross-border communication. How can the world promote international collaboration for the Climate Action?
- How will the COVID-19 pandemic affect efforts against climate change?
- What can Hawaii do to accomplish the goals espoused by the Green New Deal?
- Besides its focus on climate change, how else would a Green New Deal help Hawaii, especially in regards to self-sufficiency, agriculture, and economic development?
- What does the sheer number of signatories (aka the Just Transition Hawaii Coalition) to the Civil Beat article tell you about the Green New Deal and its versatile appeal?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [19 books every climate activist should read](#)  
If you like reading, check out this list compiled by the World Economic Forum.
- [Read Up on the Links Between Racism and the Environment](#)  
A changing climate also exacerbates other problems that afflict society. Racism is one of them, for communities of color suffer the most from pollution. *The New York Times* linked a bunch of neat articles, essays, and books to this page. What happened in Minneapolis should force us all to ponder the pursuit of justice, including environmental justice. Ask yourself: how can the Green New Deal contribute not only in the crusade against environmental injustice, but also in the march against racial injustice?



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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (continued)

- Here's an article more close to home: [Environmental Racism in Hawaii](#)
- [Alternative Views on Climate Change](#)  
This brief reviews the stances of those who question the need for aggressive climate action. It is important to be aware of the reasons driving climate skeptics. Effective advocacy and activism rely upon an understanding of various viewpoints, including ones you may or may not disagree with.

## IDEAS FOR ACTION

### Easier

- Read the [Original text of the Green New Deal Resolution](#)
- Prepare a class presentation that explains the Green New Deal to other students.
- Raise awareness on individual actions that would decrease carbon emissions, such as turning off unused lights, taking shorter showers, using sustainable utensils. Awareness starts from actions as simple as a conversation with family and friends. Indeed, government policies are necessary but not sufficient.
- Organize a PAAC movie night that features Al Gore's 2006 documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*, or another film related to climate change.

### Medium

- As student leaders, what can we do to raise awareness of the Green New Deal and, more broadly, climate change within our schools? Think of activities ranging from poster campaigns to a climate spirit week.
- In addition to having articles and webinars on the Green New Deal, this Sierra Club webpage also contains a petition and an email sign-up form for those interested in climate activism. Check this out if you want to get involved! [Sierra Club: Green New Deal](#)

### Hard

- Policy advocacy: testify in favor of bills that would advance the goals outlined in the Green New Deal and/or other climate justice initiatives. All politics is local, so the City Council and the State Legislature are good places to start.
- Fight against greenwashing by researching the environmental records of companies; focus on those who claim to be green friendly. If you do uncover evidence of hypocrisy, brainstorm methods to publicize the information in a way that pressures these companies to reform and live up to their own standards. Social media, legislative testimony, op-eds, and/or letters to the editor of the Star Advertiser can all help. It is never too early to conduct some "investigative journalism."

## HAWAII CORE STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES (HCSSS) LINKS

- Content Standard [SS.WH.8.7.2](#)
- Content Standard [SS.WH.8.12.1](#)
- Content Standard [SS.US.12.8.1](#)
- Content Standard [SS.US.12.16.2](#)
- Action Projects link to [SS.PID.5.7.1](#)

This lesson was created by Matthew Sohn.

Your feedback is important! Please share your thoughts with PAAC via this [short survey](#).

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