

Climate Change & Sustainability Action List: Examples and Case Studies

All suggestions listed below have been co-created by participating Member Federation delegates to the 2025 UIAA Climate Summit, held as part of the General Assembly in Peja, Kosovo. Suggestions as to where example actions might be implemented are also supplied, but they are only suggestions. If a federation is doing (or considering doing) one or more of these examples, but not in a suggested area, please, keep forging ahead!

Suggestions are color coded and arranged for those Member Federations who are starting out, those on the way, and those leading the way.

Federations Starting Out	Federations On The Way	Federations Leading the Way
--------------------------	------------------------	-----------------------------

Expect this list of suggestions and examples to grow: In the coming months, the UIAA Climate Change Task Force will be reaching out to the entire UIAA family looking for even more input. All Member Federations will be able to contribute.

Commit

This pillar is about taking the **first steps**. It's less about paperwork and more about showing that your federation cares.

Federations Starting Out	Federations On The Way	Federations Leading the Way
--------------------------	------------------------	-----------------------------

<i>What</i>	<i>Example</i>
Decide on a few simple climate goals for your federation and share them with your members.	- Set a goal to reduce car travel to events by promoting carpooling or public transport (Europe, North America) - Encourage members to bring reusable water bottles and avoid single-use plastics - Promote low-impact hiking practices like staying on trails and minimizing waste
Put "climate action" on the agenda of your next General Assembly.	- Add a 30-minute climate panel to the annual meeting (any federation with regular meetings) - Host a virtual climate roundtable if in-person meetings are not feasible (conflict zones, remote regions) - Organize a trip to a nearby area where the effects of climate change are visible and tangible
Ask your members: <i>what climate-friendly practices do you already use when climbing or hiking?</i> Collect and share these ideas.	- Use a simple online form or Google Sheet to gather member input (low-resource federations) - Host a community discussion or storytelling session on eco-practices - Share collected ideas via newsletter or social media (any federation with digital access)
Appoint someone in your federation to coordinate climate and sustainability topics (this can be part-time or voluntary).	- Assign a volunteer or board member to lead these efforts (small federations) - Create a youth ambassador role for sustainability - Hire a part-time sustainability coordinator (well-funded federations)
Work with members to agree on 2–3 practical actions to take over the next year or two.	Launch a carpooling initiative using free apps like BlaBlaCar or WhatsApp groups (Europe, Latin America, North America)

	• Eliminate plastic waste at events by switching to bulk water stations and reusable cups • Run an annual awareness campaign on climate-friendly mountaineering (global, scalable) or any other relevant climate-related topic.
Make a short public statement (website, newsletter, social media) that your federation supports climate-friendly mountaineering.	• Post a climate commitment on your website or Facebook page (any federation with internet access) • Share a video message from your president or board (well-resourced federations, or any federation with social media accounts) • Print a statement in your annual bulletin or member handbook (offline federations)
Publish a “roadmap for climate action” and report progress annually.	• Create a 3-year climate strategy with goals and metrics (Europe, North America) • Use free tools like Canva or Google Docs to publish a roadmap (low-resource federations) • Share annual progress via blog posts or community meetings (global, scalable)
Act as a role model in your region by becoming a UIAA “Champion of Climate Action” and supporting neighboring federations with advice and experience.	• Host regional webinars or workshops on climate action • Translate UIAA or other good climate materials into local languages and share them (Africa, Latin America) • Offer mentorship or peer support to nearby federations (any federation with experience)

Case Studies

- German Alpine Club commits to [being carbon neutral by 2030](#);
- Mountain Club of South Africa [publishes its stance on climate change](#).
- Italian Alpine Club committed its 101 Congress to the theme of [Mountains in the Age of Climate](#).
- 1 euro per member for environment actions – [FFCAM](#).
- American Alpine Club commits to climate change action through [political advocacy, scientific research, and sustainable resource development](#).
- British Mountaineering Council commits to [The Climate Project](#) - nature-based solutions to address the climate and biodiversity crisis.
- UIAA publishes new [Declaration on Hiking, Climbing, and Mountaineering](#).

Mitigate

This pillar focuses on **reducing the environmental footprint** of federation activities and events, while also **promoting positive action**.

Federations Starting Out	Federations On The Way	Federations Leading the Way
--------------------------	------------------------	-----------------------------

<i>What</i>	<i>Example</i>
Start measuring the emissions from federation activities (e.g. travel to events, huts, offices).	• Use free online carbon calculators to estimate travel emissions (applicable in low-resource federations) • Track electricity and heating use in federation offices or huts (Europe, North America) • Ask event participants to self-report travel modes for basic data collection
Encourage ride-sharing and public transport for events or introduce “slow travel days” where possible.	• Create WhatsApp or Signal groups for carpool coordination (Latin America, Eastern Europe)

	• Offer incentives for using trains or buses to reach events (Western Europe, Japan) • - Designate one “no-fly” event per year to promote local participation (global, scalable)
Offer vegetarian/low-carbon catering at events.	• Serve plant-based meals at federation gatherings • Partner with local vegetarian caterers or community kitchens (urban areas worldwide) • Use seasonal, locally sourced food to reduce transport emissions (Alpine regions)
Set targets to reduce emissions in your federation’s infrastructure (e.g. huts, offices, training courses).	• Aim to cut electricity use in your offices by 20% over 3 years (urban federations) • Reduce fossil fuel use in mountain huts by switching to solar or biomass (Alps, Rockies, Andes) • Integrate sustainability modules into instructor training (global training programs)
Update huts or other facilities with climate-friendly upgrades (renewables, water recycling, waste reduction).	• Install solar panels or micro-hydro systems in remote huts • Add greywater recycling systems for showers and sinks • Replace diesel generators with battery storage or hybrid systems
Introduce a policy that climate impact is one factor when choosing suppliers and contractors.	• Add sustainability criteria to procurement checklists (Europe, North America, Austral-Asia) • Prioritize local suppliers to reduce transport emissions (Americas, Southeast Asia) • Choose gear and apparel partners with environmental certifications (global federations)
Create a system to recognize or certify clean-up and restoration efforts led by members or clubs.	• Issue digital badges or certificates for trail clean-up participation (Europe, North America) • Partner with local schools or youth groups to run recognized eco-volunteer programs • Use social media to spotlight clubs or individuals who contribute to restoration efforts
Create a plan to make key federation activities climate-neutral – or even climate-positive.	• Offset unavoidable emissions (only!) through verified carbon credits (North America, Europe) • Transition to fully renewable energy for all federation buildings • Integrate carbon budgeting into annual planning (advanced federations globally)
Support large-scale renewable energy, water-saving or waste management initiatives in your facilities.	• Co-invest in solar cooperatives or community wind projects • Install composting toilets and rainwater harvesting systems in huts • Launch a federation-wide waste audit and reduction program (any region with multiple facilities)
Share your results publicly as examples for other federations.	• Publish annual sustainability reports on your website • Present case studies at regional or global UIAA meetings • Use social media to highlight climate milestones and lessons learned (global, scalable)

Collaborate with government agencies, military units, or NGOs to support large-scale waste removal and infrastructure restoration in mountain areas.	• Coordinate with national parks and army units for high-altitude waste collection expeditions (Nepal, Pakistan) • Partner with environmental NGOs to restore degraded trails and install sustainable infrastructure • Launch joint campaigns with tourism boards and conservation groups to clean up popular climbing zones
<i>Case Studies</i>	
• Mountain Wilderness France presents "Changing your approach" awareness toolkit for transportation. • New Zealand Alpine Club has produced a climbing trip emissions calculator tool. • Nepal Mountaineering Association conducted a pre-feasibility study on replacing fossil fuels with solar and/or wind energy at Everest Base Camp. • The Alpine Club of Canada is building a new sustainable hut in Mt Robson Provincial Park, BC, Canada. • UIAA publishes an annual Carbon Footprint Report for its meetings, Ice Climbing events, offices, and internal events.	

Adapt

This pillar is about **adjusting to the changing reality** of mountain environments and ensuring safety for members.

Federations Starting Out	Federations On The Way	Federations Leading the Way
--------------------------	------------------------	-----------------------------

<i>What</i>	<i>Example</i>
Ask: <i>How does climate change already affect our activities?</i> (e.g. dangerous trails, less snow, changing seasons).	• Conduct informal member interviews or surveys on observed changes (applicable in all regions) • Use free mapping tools to identify altered or hazardous routes • Host a discussion during club meetings on seasonal shifts and trail conditions
Remind members of "leave no trace" principles and promote clean-up activities on trails.	• Organize monthly or seasonal trail clean-ups • Share "leave no trace" guidelines via posters or social media (global, scalable) • Partner with schools or youth groups for eco-hikes
Review risks at events and outings considering climate change (heatwaves, rockfall, floods).	• Add climate-related risk checks to trip planning forms • Train trip leaders to recognize and respond to extreme weather events (global, scalable) • Adjust event timing to avoid high-risk seasons
Renovate, relocate, or close huts and trails that are unsafe due to climate impacts (melting permafrost, landslides, flooding).	• Close or reroute trails affected by landslides or erosion (Nepal, Peru, Europe) • Reinforce hut foundations in permafrost zones (Circumpolar) • Use community labor for trail restoration
Adapt mountaineering and climbing training to reflect changing conditions and new risks.	• Update training curricula to include climate-related hazards • Include modules on heat stress, unstable terrain, and weather unpredictability • Use local case studies to teach adaptive techniques (global, scalable)

Partner with researchers or citizen science projects to monitor environmental changes (glaciers, biodiversity, erosion).	• Join glacier monitoring programs with universities • Launch biodiversity tracking with mobile apps like iNaturalist • Collaborate with national parks or conservation NGOs (global, scalable)
Help members understand how to make safe decisions when facing unpredictable mountain conditions caused by climate change.	• Run a free workshop with local guides on how to assess unstable terrain and changing weather patterns • Include a module on climate-related hazards in basic mountaineering training • Share decision-making checklists via WhatsApp or printed flyers for trip leaders (low-resource federations globally) • Use community radio or local meetups to discuss safety strategies during extreme weather seasons
Launch or join ecosystem restoration projects (reforestation, trail restoration, biodiversity protection).	• Organize reforestation drives with local communities (India, Kenya) • Restore degraded trails using sustainable materials (Europe, North America) • Protect alpine biodiversity through habitat mapping
Systematically assess long-term risks to federation activities and infrastructure and prepare responses.	• Conduct climate vulnerability assessments for huts and routes (Alps, Rockies) • Develop contingency plans for extreme weather disruptions • Use GIS tools to model future risks (advanced federations globally)
Become a regional leader in resilience, sharing knowledge with clubs facing similar challenges.	• Host regional workshops on climate adaptation • Translate and distribute adaptation toolkits (Africa, Asia, Latin America) • Mentor smaller federations on risk planning and infrastructure upgrades (global, scalable)
Use digital tools to visualize and communicate alpine risks, including seasonal and hazard-based trail mapping.	• Use GIS platforms like QGIS or ArcGIS to map rockfall zones and seasonal closures • Develop mobile apps or web dashboards showing trail conditions and climate-related hazards • Partner with universities or tech NGOs to create interactive risk maps using open-source tools • Share color-coded trail risk updates via social media or federation websites during peak seasons

Case Studies

- Parks Canada and the Alpine Club of Canada [removed the Abbot Pass Hut](#) due to significant ice receding.
- Heritage [mapping of old multeer trails in Chile](#) is resurrecting sustainable routes in the Andes close to Los Huemules de Niblinto National Reserve.
- Gear Tips in Brazil trains outdoor guides, park rangers, and instructors in [Leave No Trace](#) travel.
- The Mountain Club of South Africa is [connecting and creating new conservation pathways](#) with Indigenous was of knowing and respecting the land.
- Using Indigenous knowledge as well as modern regenerative forest techniques, the University of The Philippines Mountaineers is building an [800+ km through-trail in the Sierra Madre](#).

Advocate / Educate

This pillar is about using the **voice of mountaineers** to inspire action and influence beyond the federation.

Federations Starting Out	Federations On The Way	Federations Leading the Way
--------------------------	------------------------	-----------------------------

<i>What</i>	<i>Example</i>
Share what your members are witnessing in the mountains through your federation's channels (website, social media, newsletters).	• Post photos and stories of glacial retreat or seasonal shifts on Instagram or Facebook (global, scalable) • Publish short member testimonials in newsletters • Use WhatsApp or SMS to share updates in low-connectivity regions (Africa, South Asia)
Organize small awareness sessions or talks for members about climate change impacts in the mountains.	• Host informal talks at local climbing gyms or huts • Invite local scientists or guides to speak on climate impacts • Use free online platforms like Zoom or Jitsi for virtual sessions (global, low-resource)
Join or support national clean-up days or public campaigns.	• Participate in World Cleanup Day or Earth Day events (global) • Partner with local municipalities for trail clean-ups • Mobilize youth groups for litter collection in parks and mountain areas
Create youth programmes that link mountain skills with climate and sustainability education.	• Organize eco-hiking camps with lessons on biodiversity and waste reduction • Integrate sustainability into junior climbing courses • Collaborate with schools for weekend nature clubs
Develop a group of volunteers or spokespersons who can talk to the media as "voices of the mountains."	• Train experienced climbers to speak on climate topics in interviews • Create a media toolkit with talking points and visuals (global, scalable) • Use community radio or local newspapers for outreach
Partner with local tourism organisations or outdoor groups for joint climate campaigns.	• Co-host eco-tourism workshops with regional tourism boards • Launch "green trails" initiatives with hiking clubs • Share climate messaging at outdoor festivals or expos

Use stories and observations from the mountains to help members understand how environmental changes are connected to climate change.	• Share member photos of retreating glaciers or dried-up streams with short climate explanations on social media • Publish blog posts or newsletter articles linking local environmental shifts to global climate trends • Host storytelling sessions where climbers describe changes they've seen over time • Create posters or infographics showing local changes and their climate connections for huts or community centers
Take part in national or regional policy conversations as the representative "voice of the mountains."	• Join national climate councils or advisory boards • Submit position papers on mountain conservation to government bodies • Advocate for protected status of vulnerable mountain zones
Work with well-known ambassadors (climbers, athletes, scientists) to bring visibility to climate issues.	• Collaborate with elite athletes for climate awareness campaigns (global, scalable) • Feature scientists in video interviews or podcasts • Use ambassador-led social media takeovers to reach youth audiences
Provide training for members on how to evaluate the climate impact of gear, suppliers, and activities.	• Host workshops on sustainable gear choices and lifecycle analysis • Share guides on eco-certifications and ethical brands (global, scalable) • Encourage gear-sharing and repair culture to reduce consumption
<i>Case Studies</i>	
• The American Alpine Club spoke as "An Imperfect Advocate", showing that everyone can have a voice for the climate. • The Swiss Alpine Club supports the Glacier Initiative, publicly and politically committing to climate change. • The Alpine Club of Canada publishes a yearly State of the Mountains Report. • The UIAA produces the Mountain Voices podcast on climate change. • Mountain guides in the Andes bear witness to shrinking glaciers. • Clean Hikers – a grassroots Korean mountain organization – promotes Leave Good Trace (leaving the mountain better than you found it) to educate and inform people of mountain protection issues.	