

Global Climate Satyagraha Framework

A practical framework for a worldwide nonviolent movement for climate justice

1. The Core Idea

Satyagraha Against Climate Injustice is a decentralized global movement connecting people and communities who seek climate justice through truth, nonviolence, self-restraint, solidarity and constructive action.

It is not intended to become a single centralized organization.

Instead:

One principle. Many peoples. Many places. Many actions.

Each community determines its own priorities and methods while adhering to a common set of principles.

2. The Five Pillars

Every Climate Satyagraha initiative should contain five elements.

I. SATYA — Truth

Identify and communicate the truth about a particular climate injustice.

Examples:

- Who is affected?
- What is causing the harm?
- Who benefits?
- Who bears the cost?
- What does the scientific evidence show?
- What alternatives exist?

The campaign should begin with **investigation rather than accusation**.

II. AHIMSA — Nonviolence

All actions must be designed to avoid violence and dehumanization.

Participants should receive basic nonviolence training before direct action.

The principle is:

Firm against injustice, compassionate toward people.

III. TAPASYA — Willingness to Sacrifice

A Satyagraha campaign asks participants to bear a proportionate burden themselves rather than transferring suffering to others.

This might mean:

- walking instead of driving;
- reducing consumption;
- accepting inconvenience;
- participating in peaceful civil disobedience;
- undertaking a voluntary fast where medically appropriate;
- giving time or resources to affected communities.

The purpose is not self-punishment.

It is **moral witness**.

IV. SWARAJ — Self-Transformation

The movement must examine its own behaviour.

A Climate Satyagrahi asks:

“What change am I demanding from society that I am unwilling to consider in my own life?”

This could involve energy, transportation, food, consumption, waste or investment.

V. CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

Every campaign should seek to build something positive.

For example:

Against fossil fuels → renewable-energy cooperatives

Against food insecurity → regenerative/community agriculture

Against deforestation → forest restoration

Against waste → circular-economy initiatives

Against climate exclusion → community resilience programmes

Resistance and reconstruction should proceed together.

3. The Campaign Cycle

A local Climate Satyagraha can follow an eight-stage process.

Stage 1 — Listen

Begin with the communities experiencing the problem.

Do not arrive with a predetermined campaign.

Ask:

“What injustice are you experiencing, and what change do you want?”

Particular care should be taken when working with indigenous peoples and communities whose knowledge, land or culture is at stake.

Stage 2 — Investigate

Establish the facts.

Bring together:

- community knowledge;
- climate science;
- environmental data;
- economic information;
- legal research;
- historical evidence.

Create a simple **Climate Justice Dossier** documenting the issue.

Stage 3 — Define the Injustice

Write the campaign's central truth in one sentence.

For example:

“This community contributes very little to climate change but faces repeated flooding because climate adaptation funding has not reached the people most at risk.”

The campaign should be specific enough that the public can understand the injustice.

Stage 4 — Make the Constructive Demand

Do not campaign only against something.

Identify what should replace it.

A demand should ideally be:

Specific + measurable + achievable + just.

For example:

“Allocate 30% of local climate-adaptation funding directly to the most vulnerable neighborhoods.”

Stage 5 — Seek Dialogue

Before escalation, approach the relevant decisionmakers.

Explain:

- the evidence;
- the injustice;
- the demand;
- the proposed solution;
- the willingness to cooperate.

Give the other side a genuine opportunity to respond.

This is essential to Satyagraha.

The opponent is not the enemy.

Stage 6 — Non-Cooperation

If dialogue fails, participants may withdraw cooperation from the unjust practice.

Depending on the circumstances, this could include:

- boycotts;
- peaceful demonstrations;
- consumer campaigns;
- divestment;
- petitions;
- symbolic occupations where lawful;
- coordinated days of action;
- refusal to participate in environmentally harmful practices.

Stage 7 — Nonviolent Direct Action

If necessary, a campaign may escalate to peaceful civil disobedience.

Actions should be:

- carefully planned;
- transparent;
- proportionate;
- nonviolent;
- legally informed;
- inclusive;
- prepared for de-escalation.

The purpose is to **create moral and democratic pressure**, not fear.

Stage 8 — Reconciliation and Reconstruction

If the campaign succeeds, the work does not end.

Participants should help implement the solution.

The goal is not:

“We defeated them.”

It is:

“We changed the situation together.”

4. The Climate Satyagrahi Code

Every participant should agree to a simple code:

I will not use violence.

I will not deliberately humiliate or dehumanize another person.

I will verify claims before spreading them.

I will listen to affected communities.

I will accept reasonable personal sacrifice.

I will respect the autonomy of communities with whom I work.

I will not claim to speak for another community without its consent.

I will distinguish fact from opinion.

I will disclose relevant financial or organizational interests.

I will seek dialogue before escalation.

I will protect children and vulnerable participants.

I will leave an action rather than allow it to become violent.

5. Local Climate Satyagraha Circles

The basic organizational unit should be the:

Climate Satyagraha Circle

A Circle could consist of approximately 5–50 people.

It should be:

- locally rooted;
- autonomous;
- nonviolent;

- transparent;
- inclusive;
- connected to the wider global movement.

A Circle might meet once a month and undertake one major campaign or constructive project each year.

There should be **no requirement for centralized leadership**.

6. The Global Network

Local Circles can voluntarily connect through regional and global networks.

Local Circle

↓

City / District Network

↓

National Network

↓

Continental Network

↓

Global Climate Satyagraha Assembly

The global level should primarily:

- share knowledge;
- connect communities;
- provide training;
- document campaigns;
- facilitate international solidarity;
- develop educational resources;
- organize global days of action.

It should **not dictate local campaigns**.

7. The Global Climate Satyagraha Assembly

Once sufficient local groups exist, establish an annual **Global Climate Satyagraha Assembly**.

Representation should prioritize:

1. frontline communities;

2. indigenous peoples;
3. youth;
4. small farmers and rural communities;
5. workers affected by the energy transition;
6. women and marginalized communities;
7. climate scientists and educators;
8. Gandhian and nonviolent movements.

The Assembly would not function as a conventional political party.

Its role would be to develop **shared principles, shared knowledge and shared solidarity.**

8. Global Days of Action

The movement could establish several recurring forms of action.

Global Climate Truth Day

Communities publicly document a climate injustice in their locality.

Global Satyagraha Day

People undertake coordinated nonviolent actions around the world.

Earth Swaraj Day

Participants demonstrate practical alternatives through:

- renewable energy;
- sustainable food;
- repair;
- conservation;
- low-consumption lifestyles;
- ecological restoration.

Intergenerational Climate Dialogue

Young people meet with older generations to discuss responsibility, sacrifice and the future.

9. A Common Campaign Symbol

A simple visual identity could help connect otherwise independent groups.

One possibility:



The Earth + the open hand

The open hand represents:

- nonviolence;
- truth;
- restraint;
- solidarity;
- willingness to act.

A possible motto:

Truth. Nonviolence. Justice. Swaraj.

Or:

Resist Injustice. Restore the Earth.

10. How a Person Becomes a Climate Satyagrahi

There should be no complicated membership process.

A person could become a Climate Satyagrahi by:

1.

Learning about climate change and climate justice.

2.

Taking the Climate Satyagrahi Pledge.

3.

Participating in a local Circle or forming one.

4.

Undertaking one personal act of ecological self-restraint.

5.

Participating in one constructive community action.

6.

Supporting or joining a nonviolent campaign for climate justice.

Thus, the movement begins not with an organization.

It begins with a person.
