



# NATIONAL LATINO CLIMATE LEADERSHIP FORUM

## RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

*June 17th, 2016 Washington, D.C.*



ecoAmerica  
building climate leadership



Hispanic Heritage  
FOUNDATION



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	<b>Letter From The Steering Committee</b> .....	3
II.	<b>Opening Remarks</b> .....	4
	Lou Leonard, <i>World Wildlife Fund</i> Bob Perkowitz, <i>ecoAmerica</i>	
III.	<b>Morning Keynote</b> .....	5
	Brent Wilkes, <i>League of United Latino American Citizens</i>	
IV.	<b>Session 1: Latinos and Climate: The Imperative and the Opportunity</b> .....	6
	Vanessa Cardenas, <i>World Wildlife Fund</i> Mar Muñoz Visoso, <i>U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops</i> José Calderón, <i>Hispanic Federation</i> Kimberly Wasserman Nieto, <i>Little Village Environmental Justice Organization</i> Edwin Luevanos, <i>Citizen Energy</i>	
V.	<b>Session 2: Building Leadership: Who, How, What's Needed</b> .....	8
	Stephanie A. Herrera, <i>Hispanic Heritage Foundation</i> Rev. Dr. Gabriel Salguero, <i>National Latino Evangelical Coalition</i> Dr. Antonio Flores, <i>Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities</i> Dr. Ruben Guerra, <i>Latin Business Association</i> Dr. Elena Rios, <i>National Hispanic Medical Association</i> Dr. Linda Rudolph, <i>Public Health Institute</i> <b>Session 2 Findings</b> .....	9
VI.	<b>Session 3: Let's Talk Climate: Effective Latino Climate Messaging</b> .....	10
VII.	<b>Lunch Keynote</b> .....	12
	Honorable Robert Menendez, <i>U.S. Senator, NJ</i>	
VIII.	<b>Session 4: What's Working: Collaboration for Collective Impact</b> .....	13
	Mark Magaña, <i>GreenLatinos</i> Pamela Rivera, <i>Voces Verdes</i> Javier Sierra, <i>Sierra Club</i> Jorge Madrid, <i>Environmental Defense Fund</i> <b>Session 4 Findings</b> .....	15
IX.	<b>Prioritized Opportunities for Accelerating Latino Climate Leadership</b> .....	16
X.	<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	17
XI.	<b>Attendee List</b> .....	18

*“Thank you for a **rigorous and thoughtful** session. We look forward to the results and opportunities to work together to **make our world a better place starting with local action.**”*

– Victor Griego, Founder, Diverse Strategies for Organizing, Inc.

## DEAR LATINO LEADERS,

More than 75 Latino leaders from all backgrounds—including faith, health, business, education, community, culture, government, and environment—gathered on June 17, 2016, in Washington, D.C., at the **National Latino Climate Leadership Forum** to focus on one of the most pressing issues facing Latinos today—climate change.

We need greater public support and political will if we are going to help put America on a path toward a more sustainable and just future. All Americans need to be involved in climate discussions and the solutions. This includes Latinos, who are poised to be game-changing voters in the 2016 elections and beyond. This leadership must continue to emerge from within—from Latino leaders whom Latinos trust and who can inspire action on climate. There are many Latino leaders who are and want to elevate their leadership on climate. But they could benefit from a relevant climate platform, along with resources and opportunities that support their efforts.

The National Latino Climate Leadership Forum was designed to be a platform for collaboration to advance Latino voices and leadership for climate action with major Latino institutions, leaders, and organizations that support these leaders. We shared knowledge and perspectives on the issue, including on the need for funding and capacity, ideated on solutions, and discussed ways for Latinos to collaborate for greater impact.

This report captures the information shared during the day, including the outputs from structured and collaborative working sessions. **The report provides specific, prioritized, and actionable recommendations for new initiatives and collaborations that put Latinos at the forefront of climate solutions.** We want to thank all the participants for their contributions. We look forward to further collaboration with you, to help to move America toward effective, sustainable, and just solutions to climate change.

Sincerely,

The National Latino Climate Leadership Forum Steering Committee

**Jennifer Allen**

*Chispa at League of Conservation Voters*

**Deborah Burke**

*Rockefeller Brothers Fund*

**José Calderón**

*Hispanic Federation*

**Vanessa Cardenas**

*World Wildlife Fund*

**Laura M. Esquivel**

*Hispanic Federation*

**Dr. Antonio Flores**

*Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities*

**Lucia Oliva Hennelly**

*Environmental Defense Fund*

**Stephanie A. Herrera**

*Hispanic Heritage Foundation*

**Jorge Madrid**

*Environmental Defense Fund*

**Mark Magaña**

*GreenLatinos*

**Adrianna Quintero**

*Voces Verdes*

**Rev. Dr. Gabriel Salguero**

*National Latino Evangelical Coalition*

**Javier Sierra**

*Sierra Club*

**Meighen Speiser**

*ecoAmerica*



## OPENING REMARKS

### THANK YOU TO OUR EMCEES



**Vanessa Hauc**  
Correspondent  
*Noticiero Telemundo*



**Meighen Speiser**  
Chief Engagement Officer  
*ecoAmerica*



**Lou Leonard**

Senior Vice President, Climate Change, *World Wildlife Fund*

Welcome. We are proud to co-host today's Forum to help further accelerate Latino climate leadership. Climate change is occurring faster than scientists thought. The good news is that people are beginning to respond, including many Latino leaders, who are responding around the world and in the US, and participating in the Paris Agreement. We have momentum, but we shouldn't be complacent. We need to continue to empower this energy, and encourage greater listening to and inclusion of the voices of communities affected.



**Bob Perkowitz**

President and Founder, *ecoAmerica*

Latinos are driving culture, politics, and business across America today—and Latino influence will only continue to grow in upcoming years and decades. It is not an exaggeration to say that we need Latino perspectives, support, and leadership if we're going to successfully address climate change. At the same time, Latinos are among the groups most impacted by and sensitive to climate change. The new energy economy presents unprecedented economic and social justice opportunities for Latinos. We need to listen to, learn from, share with, and support Latinos—take them in as full partners—in the quest for climate solutions and justice.



## MORNING KEYNOTE



**Brent Wilkes**

National Executive Director,  
*League of United Latino American Citizens (LULAC)*

No community stands to benefit more from climate solutions than Latino communities. And it's time we move beyond identifying problems to identifying solutions.

Latinos live in areas with many challenges, not the least of which are challenges to their health. Latino health is being impacted more than most, with higher rates of asthma, childhood obesity, and other illnesses.

Climate solutions are and can continue to benefit Latinos. Much of the solar and wind workforce is already Latino, and the growth of clean energy development, installation, and maintenance could provide needed growth in good, stable jobs.

There is a strong tradition of environmentalism in Latino communities. Many indigenous cultures and beliefs treat the environment as a sacred institution. Latino culture has always honored the environment.

LULAC has put out a formal declaration to stop climate change. It is going to take all of us to lead. Engagement that we (Latinos) are a part of has to be authentic, and action on climate must be truly inclusive of Latino leadership. Many traditional environmental groups lack Latino leadership, but there has been Latino leadership in fighting climate change. Latinos are 17% of the population and could be the majority by the turn of century. The loudest proponents of many Latino community issues are and can be the loudest proponents of climate solutions.

*"There is a **strong tradition of environmentalism in Latino** communities. Many indigenous cultures and beliefs **treat the environment as a sacred institution.**"*



## SESSION ONE

## LATINOS &amp; CLIMATE: THE IMPERATIVE &amp; THE OPPORTUNITY

In this session, speakers talked about the need, the opportunity, and the urgency for Latino climate leadership. They presented rationales for leadership, quantified and qualified the opportunity and goals, and discussed how Latinos have been and are leading successfully on an array of issues.



**Vanessa Cardenas** (Session Moderator)  
Director, Climático, *World Wildlife Fund*

There is a considerable connection between what Latinos experience in the US and what is happening in their home countries. We have the opportunity to connect climate change impacts, and action, to both.



**Mar Muñoz Visoso**  
Executive Director, *Secretariat of Cultural Diversity, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops*

Latinos have a very important connection with the climate issue. Climate change is not only a human issue; there are also moral, ethical, and spiritual dimensions. Christians, in particular, have a non-negotiable obligation. We believe God has entrusted Creation to our care, and we need to do a better job at that. We know we need to restore our relationships – with God, with one another, and certainly with Mother Earth. We need to promote solidarity for the common good. And there is motivation. In my local faith community, we had a call to support a wind energy initiative. On a 55-passenger bus we took to Annapolis, 51 people were Latinos. They are the ones who showed up to provide support. Latinos have a special role in solutions.



**José Calderón**  
President, *Hispanic Federation*

Environment is a social justice issue. We need to talk about clean air and clean water. Latino leadership has grown; however, it is critical to come together on this issue. We are all seeing Latinos disproportionately impacted, such as with Hurricane Sandy in New York. But we are fighting for turf all the time and are often left out of the climate change conversation. We need to form real partnerships with each other and with environmental groups, built on equity and trust, for just and effective climate solutions.



**Kimberly Wasserman Nieto**  
Organizing and Strategy Director, *Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO)*

Climate is impacting Latinos on a local level. In Chicago, there is flooding and extreme temperature changes. People can't afford to pay for heating and air conditioning, and it makes it harder to deal with climate change. Those who are working on climate change and those who are working on Latino issues aren't having the real conversations they need to have to properly address this problem.



**Edwin Luevanos**  
Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, *Citizen Energy*

This year, 80% of new electricity generation that is built in the U.S. will come from solar and wind, while about \$45 billion in clean energy investments will be deployed. Last year, the number of clean energy jobs surpassed oil and gas extraction jobs. The opportunity is evident, but why don't more Latinos have access to these jobs and business opportunities? Are there disconnects between skills transfer? Are Latinos not interacting with industry groups and clean energy staffing agencies? Studies show that there is a strong overlap between clean energy occupations and the top occupations that employ Latinos. Congress has reauthorized tax credits for renewables; however, to accelerate clean energy deployment and force utilities to participate, we need a bigger push to expand renewable portfolio standards at local and state levels.

## QUESTIONS FROM VANESSA CARDENAS, ANSWERS FROM PANEL

*What do we need to do to make sure those efforts are pushed forward and above so that they are visible?*

- **Kim Wasserman Nieto**

Not just talking about air, water, and land. We need to expand the dialogue, and also talk about transportation, open space, and more, including what it means to gentrify. When a community has open space and clean water, it is ripe for others to take over. We need to talk about the green economy. For example, now that a coal plant is closed, what else can we do with it? We need to have honest conversations with unions because the reality is we cannot unionize all jobs without looking at the immigration issues that make unionization difficult, including its history in our communities. We need educational attainment opportunities. And we need local training to meet community needs.

- **José Calderón**

We need to follow examples of success in our efforts. For instance, there were plans to build an incinerator in a Latino neighborhood in New York City. Latinos organized, protested, and shut down the Williamsburg Bridge every other day. We then started reaching out to the Orthodox Jew community in the area who had the same concerns and motivations. And together, we stopped the incinerator from being built. It's about people power, leadership, and being able to organize. It's about resources; leadership development takes resources. Many Latino organizations are not supported in the way that they need to be supported. They need money to develop infrastructure, but less than 1% of philanthropic dollars goes to Latino organizations, even less when we talk about Latino environmental organizations. It is important to address capacity issues.

- **Edwin Luevanos**

It is a question of resources. We need to follow where the money is coming from and pursue it. We need to build liaisons not only at the federal and state agency level but also with the private sector. We should seek not only government funding but also business investment and market-based solutions for Latinos to take the initiative and be entrepreneurial.

- **Mar Muñoz-Visoso**

Pope Francis has done a lot to bring visibility to the issue and move action forward with Laudato Si', which included calls to action on climate change. In the encyclical, he addresses everyone and widened the conversation beyond just water to include integral ecology. He called on us to look at all the different aspects, the planet, human ecology, and to treat them as interconnected. Evidence is so important and is all around us. We don't have time anymore. We must act now. We all need to be engaged. We are all in this together on an international scale.

*What do you want to see in the next 5 years?*

- **All panelists**

We want to see a real investment in Latino communities, including true partnerships and transformational funding. We need capacity and to be the voice of what a solution looks like (not just the poster child for impacts). We want to see Latinos become a major voice on climate change at all levels. And we need to start identifying, inviting, mentoring, and funding people for leadership.





## SESSION TWO

### BUILDING LEADERSHIP: WHO, HOW, WHAT'S NEEDED

Speakers from faith, business, health, and higher education offered thoughts on how to build capacity for Latino climate leadership and methods of engagement that lead to the greatest success.



**Stephanie A. Herrera** (Session Moderator)  
Chief Operating Officer, *Hispanic Heritage Foundation*

Latino leaders need to inspire the community, but also ourselves. We need to have this balance. The Hispanic Heritage Foundation identifies, inspires, promotes, and prepares Latino leaders through national leadership, cultural education, and workforce programs. We challenge everyone to use their talents to connect, teach, and give back. We can expand this challenge, help each other, and be accountable for what we say.



**Rev. Dr. Gabriel Salguero**  
President, *National Latino Evangelical Coalition*

There is a lot of passion among Latinos, but sometimes, there is not proper direction. We need practical examples to follow, to shine a light on what is working. We need to put a microphone to our messages and find trusted faith messengers who can weave climate change with sacred texts. Our efforts must be sustained and targeted even when we have setbacks. There is a lot of funding in the Latino community from opposition interests that lead us in the wrong direction. We must bust their myths with credible messengers.



**Dr. Antonio Flores**  
President and CEO, *Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)*

Latinos in the US are not always acknowledged, and resources are often lacking. Today, 3.3 million Latinos are in college. More than two-thirds attend higher education institutions that are in the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, which represents a range of schools that do research and development work, teaching, and service. Half of all Latinos today attend community colleges. Our challenge is to get Latinos to higher levels, especially in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Through HACU efforts, the percentage of Latinos in STEM fields has doubled to 8% in just a few years. Money matters, and investment matters, and we need both.



**Dr. Ruben Guerra**  
Chairman and CEO, *Latin Business Association*

The Latin Business Association supports renewable energy. We need to create more awareness of the business opportunity of clean energy. This could include having a climate and Latino business conference that involves the larger businesses that are already leading. We can't just be about business and selling. We need to ensure that the environment is considered. At the end of the day, we need to show how green connects to green.



**Dr. Elena Rios** (a statement read by Dr. Sergio Rimola)  
MD, MSPH, President and CEO, *National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)*

NHMA represents 50,000 Hispanic licensed physicians to improve the health of Hispanics and others. We help advance policies to reduce climate change and raise attention that inaction would mean further devastating consequences of diseases such as asthma from air and chemical pollution and cancer from pesticides. We provide counsel to policymakers, collaborate with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on knowledge sharing, and support the President's Climate Change Plan. We have programs for physicians, residents, and medical students to educate them on climate change as a key policy issue.



**Dr. Linda Rudolph**  
Director, Center for Climate Change and Health, *Public Health Institute*

Climate change is our greatest health challenge, threatening our air, water, food, and homes. It disproportionately impacts low-income communities, people of color, those with asthma and diabetes, outdoor workers, and those without health insurance—many in the Latino community. However, dealing with climate change will improve the health of all. We need Latino health professionals to spread the word about the health impacts of climate and the many health benefits of solutions.



## SESSION 2 FINDINGS

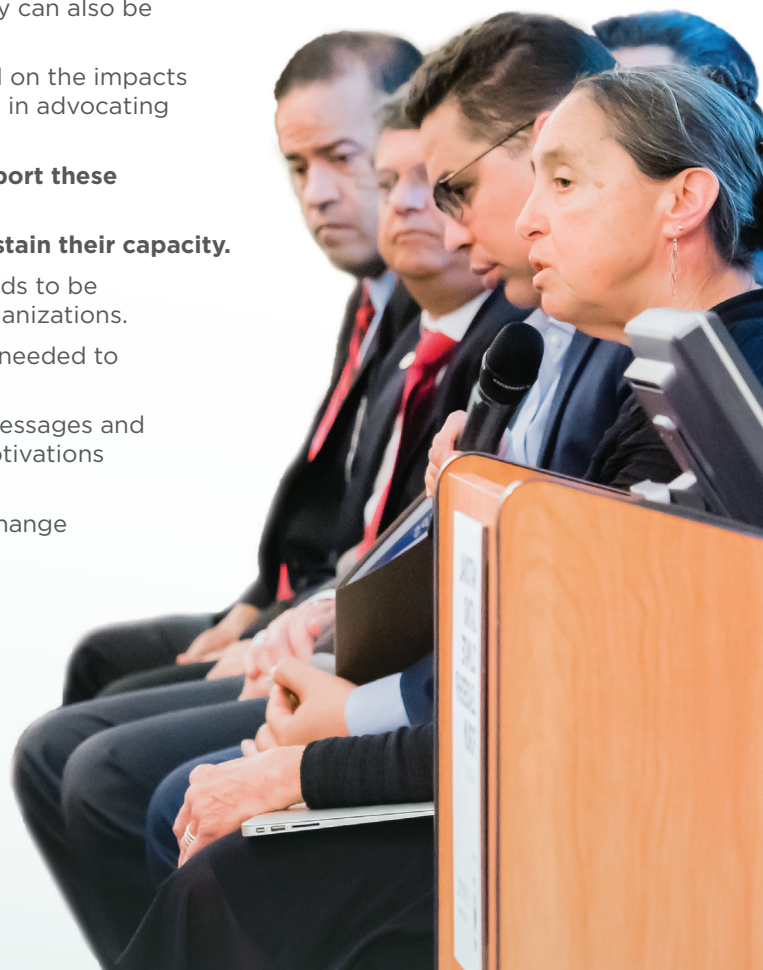
The following are the findings from table discussions conducted to elicit top answers to the following question: *Which Latino audiences are important to engage on climate for leverage and impact? How (by which means, what offerings or programs)?*

The following were found to be the most important Latino audiences to engage on climate:

1. **Latino-led grassroots leaders, organizations, and local and environmental justice organizations.** These are the organizations that connect directly with Latinos, understand their needs and capabilities most, and have the best opportunity to educate, activate, and advocate.
2. **Latino clergy and faith leaders.** These leaders have regular and profound connections with their communities and the opportunity to act as powerful messengers of responsibility and action.
3. **Latino policymakers at every level.** These leaders need to be informed about impacts, shown how solutions can benefit Latino communities, and supported by a strong Latino voter constituency that is demanding solutions at every level of government.
4. **Latino youth and millennial students.** Youth need education, leadership development, and pathways for action that include inspiring and activating other youth, voting, and advocating for policy and politics.
5. **Latino doctors and health professionals.** These leaders need to be educated on the health impacts of climate change, and the health benefits of solutions. These leaders need to be trained and deployed as messengers with citizens, policymakers, and media.
6. **Press and media serving Latino communities, including local and national media.** The press needs to be informed on how climate impacts Latinos and how solutions benefit. The media need real stories of Latinos who are impacted and those who have achieved success on solutions. They need spokespeople for interviews.
7. **Latino business owners, investors, and entrepreneurs.** These leaders need to be educated on how their business may be impacted and the opportunities for innovation and new business with solutions that can lead to success. They can also be trained as and serve as messengers for solutions.
8. **Women and mothers.** These leaders need to be educated on the impacts of climate change, the benefits of solutions, and their role in advocating in their community and nationally as messengers.

The group found the most important ways to engage and support these audience are the following:

1. **To ensure they have adequate resources to build and sustain their capacity.**
  - a. **Funding.** Funding was the top necessity. Funding needs to be increased significantly, and it needs to reach local organizations.
  - b. **Tools.** Education, organizing, and advocacy tools are needed to inspire and empower action.
  - c. **Culturally relevant messages and storytelling.** The messages and stories need to be authentic and connect with the motivations and priorities of Latinos.
  - d. **Education.** Latinos need to understand how climate change uniquely impacts them, how solutions can personally benefit them, and what they can do about it.
2. **To identify, train, and empower messengers.**  
A concerted and sustained effort to build and deploy Latino messengers from various disciplines, in collaboration with community leaders and the media, will help expand awareness and action.
3. **To form and facilitate cross-sector coalitions**  
to share resources and learning, and collaborate for collective action at local, regional, and national levels.



## SESSION THREE

### LET'S TALK CLIMATE: EFFECTIVE LATINO CLIMATE MESSAGING

In this session, ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners shared early topline findings from the research-in-progress to test Latino climate messaging. Findings included two of the successful messages and early results from the accompanying poll.



#### Meighen Speiser

Chief Engagement Officer, *ecoAmerica*

There has been a necessary transformation of climate messaging over time, from doom and gloom to social benefit messages. Today, we need positive, personally relevant messages.

This research was conducted with Lake Research Partners and Ana Rivera. The methodology included 1) a meta-analysis of the latest research and polling on Latinos and climate; 2) an analysis by Ana Rivera and a linguist of language trends, meanings, and neuroscience; 3) application of the first two steps to inform the questions and messages that went into focus groups; and 4) an 800-person dial test of the messages with before and after surveys to measure shifts in saliency and motivation. All research was conducted with self-identified Latinos and categorized as primarily Spanish-speaking or English-speaking.



#### Celinda Lake

President, *Lake Research Partners*

The strength of this research is that, from beginning to end, we rooted it in the Latino community. We collaborated with native speakers and social scientists. There were no after-the-fact translations. What we found was that conventional wisdom was wrong.

Our polling showed that:

- 84% of Latinos are concerned about climate, including 80% of primarily English-speaking, and 93% of primarily Spanish-speaking, vs. 78% of all registered voters. This shows significantly more concern about climate vs. the population as a whole.
- 84% (with 31% very willing) of Latinos are ready to take action now to prevent damage to the climate vs. 77% of all registered voters.
- Latinos support action at every level—federal (92% support), state and local (88% support), and business (92% support).
- Latinos support the government limiting pollution (88%) or imposing a fine on large companies for the pollution they create (89%) at significantly higher levels than the national averages of 72% and 80%, respectively, and even if it increases taxes.
- Latinos are optimistic about the economic impacts of dealing with climate change:

	Latinos agree	Total U.S. adults agree
Save money	68%	58%
Create jobs	66%	56%
Reduce costs	66%	n/a

Our message testing and research showed that these values resonated most with Latinos:

- **74% Moral responsibility and family:** We have a moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy place for our families
- **71% Pollution:** We need to take action now to reduce the pollution that is causing damage to the climate
- **68% Optimism:** We can reduce the pollution that is causing climate change
- **68% Saving money:** Dealing with climate change and pursuing clean energy can save money in the long term
- **65% Hope:** I'm hopeful we can reduce the pollution that is causing climate change.

## Learnings

- “Damage to the climate” works much better than “climate change”
- “Reduce pollution” works much better than “prevent pollution”
- “Save money” works much better than “reduce costs”
- Successful messaging promotes the value of family and future generations, connects to moral values, and taps into desire for action.

## Successful message (English)

*Family is everything. We give thanks for the blessings we have, and we work hard to provide for our family and ensure that our children and grandchildren have a better life than we do. As part of this, we have a moral responsibility to preserve the air, water, and land in our communities for our children and future generations. We need to make our voices heard to see the changes we need. We need to take steps to reduce the pollution that contaminates the air we breathe, damages our climate, hurts our communities, and threatens the natural beauty around us. We need to move beyond the failed ways of the past, and embrace clean energy like wind and solar power that can help us preserve our heritage for our children and grandchildren.*

## Successful message (Spanish)

*La familia lo es todo. Damos gracias por las bendiciones que recibimos, y trabajamos duro para mantener a nuestra familia y garantizar que nuestros hijos y nietos tengan una mejor vida que la que nosotros tenemos. Como parte de esto, tenemos la responsabilidad moral de cuidar el aire, agua y tierra en nuestras comunidades para nuestros hijos y futuras generaciones. Necesitamos que se escuchen nuestras voces para poder ver los cambios que requerimos. Necesitamos adoptar medidas para reducir la contaminación que afecta el aire que respiramos, que daña nuestro clima, afecta nuestras comunidades y amenaza la belleza natural que nos rodea. Debemos dejar atrás las maneras equivocadas en que hacíamos las cosas en el pasado, y recibir con los brazos abiertos las energías limpias, como la energía eólica y solar, que nos pueden ayudar a preservar nuestro legado para nuestros hijos y nietos.*

## Thoughts on this research from Vanessa Cardenas

We need to make communications bilingual. Action-oriented community- and local-level work is crucial. We must connect climate to other issues like money and taxes. The Latino community at its core is a hopeful, optimistic community that believes in the American Dream. We need to meet the Latino community with action that we can take.

The full report, with additional analysis by demographics, generations, and topics, plus several more successful messages is coming soon. Sign up to be notified at [ecoAmerica.org/research](https://ecoAmerica.org/research).





## LUNCHTIME KEYNOTE



**Honorable Robert Menendez**  
Senator, New Jersey,  
*United States Senate*

Buenos días amigos y amigas,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to such an event that underscores the crossroads between Latinos and the environment, the common concerns we all share in protecting our planet. Many of us live in coastal communities threatened by the rise of sea levels. Many farmworkers' livelihoods begin and end at the whim of the weather. Many of our brothers and sisters have been affected by the changes in our climate, by droughts, floods, and superstorms, causing increases in migration and in where and how we live. Our communities have a greater conscience about the disastrous effects of climate change, and yet we are less likely than most to have access to the systems to change climate injustice. Our voice is needed in this dialogue. We need justice now. Climate change should be a top priority on everyone's agenda. But to Latinos, the fastest-growing population in the world's most powerful country, the decisions we make not only matter to us but will also shape the planet for generations to come. Let us continue to be part of the debate, discussion, and solution. I salute the National Latino Climate Leadership Forum and its member organizations for spearheading this critical conversation. And I extend my best wishes for a successful and informative event.

Muchas gracias.

*"...to Latinos, the fastest-growing population in the world's most powerful country, **the decisions we make** not only matter to us but **will also shape the planet for generations to come.**"*





## SESSION FOUR

# WHAT'S WORKING: COLLABORATION FOR COLLECTIVE IMPACT

### **Mark Magaña** (Session Moderator)

Founding President and CEO, *GreenLatinos*

Collaboration is one of the most important things I work on. Latino environmental groups in DC had not known each other, and these are people who should be working together. We can fight longer when we know the people we are working with. We don't feel this working alone. When we work alone, there is a lack of a feeling of belonging, inclusion, or being listened to. But we know that climate is a legacy issue for us. Instead, we need to collaborate, to work together. We need to connect the people who want to take action (a mother who has a child with asthma) to the people who have the money to support them. We need to look to our own community to make collaboration easy. There is so much we can do when we bring power together, particularly at the community level.



### **Pamela Rivera**

Partnership and Constituency Advocate, *Voces Verdes*

NRDC isn't meant for grassroots work. To reach the Latino community, we decided to take a grassroots approach through Voces Verdes. Our goal is to bring a Latino voice to climate. Many Latino leaders are doing many things and don't have the time to do research, op-eds, radio programs, and other outreach, but Voces Verdes is designed to fill in this gap. We know that non-whites are more likely to think climate change should be a top priority, and the a majority of Latinos believe that the government should act on climate. We work collaboratively with many other organizations. We have a lot of research other organizations need to influence policy; we work with organizational priorities and add to their resources.



### **Javier Sierra**

Director of Latino Media Outreach, *Sierra Club*

According to the World Health Organization, fossil fuel pollution kills 3.3 million people each year; 43% of Latinos live dangerously close to toxic sites. Fossil fuel companies are telling youth that getting rid of fossil fuels is a danger to the economy. A Washington State University (WSU) study concluded that non-English-speaking Latinos are most likely to be exposed to pollutants that cause cancer and reproductive and birth defects. Undocumented immigrants are most likely to be discriminated against and are the least aware. A University of Minnesota study showed that race is the "determining factor" in the levels of pollution the country's communities are exposed to. Latinos are the most affected, twice as high as non-Hispanic whites. Two million Californians live dangerously close to a gas or oilfield, and 92% are in communities of color. No study has been conducted on the true impact on Latinos. Fossil fuels are not a blessing for Latinos but a curse. The environmental movement has a moral obligation to welcome 60 million Latinos, including 11 million undocumented workers, into its realm.



### **Jorge Madrid**

Campaign Manager, *Environmental Defense Fund*

Efforts to engage Latinos on climate struggled for the first four years because there was a lack of collaboration and we believed a top-down approach to climate was not working. We decided to work on Los Angeles (LA). The West Side of LA has a lot of solar improvements and renewables. The East Side has freeways, pollution, and lead contamination in soils (and also is mostly Latino). It is important to not look just at the bad stuff but also look at what the community does have—its cultural fabric. Art is a way marginalized communities can express themselves. And Latinos are innovative. Mobile vendors started years before they were popular. We decided to mix old values with renewables (food trucks with solar panels, fruit cart on a bike, music) to create the "EastSide Sol" event. We created a space to show how clean energy can fit into the Latino community. We showed people how easy it is to get solar panels and gave out information on how individuals could contribute.



## QUESTIONS FROM MARK MAGAÑA, ANSWERS FROM PANEL

*You are all experts in partnerships and collaboration. You have all worked with Latino organizations and environmental justice organizations. What do you feel are the keys to an equitable and just collaboration?*

- **Jorge Madrid**

We need to listen, and not talk so much. We need to understand the goals, values, and fears of a community. Example: Latinos were concerned that more solar energy, more parks, and more bike paths could force them out of their neighborhoods (gentrification). They need to make personal connections. We need to lead with a logo.

- **Pamela Rivera**

Transparency is key. There are many people within the organizations trying to change the way that they do business. We need to be part of a much larger movement. And, even when you disagree, be honest. On resources, we need to do better to support and collaborate. We don't always know who is working with what.

- **Javier Sierra**

Every single national environmental organization has a Latino program in place. We need to encourage Latinos to feed the fire. We need to hire Latinos, promote Latinos, and have Latinos in positions of leadership.



## SESSION 4 FINDINGS

In this session, speakers highlighted successful Latino climate initiatives, discussed what's working in engaging Latinos on climate, and offered ideas to collaborate more broadly for greater efficacy and broader inclusion and ownership of the movement. This was followed by a working session with all participants to prioritize answers to this question: *How can Latinos collaborate more broadly with each other, and within and beyond the climate movement to accelerate climate leadership and solutions?*

**The following were found to be the best ways for Latinos to collaborate to accelerate leadership on solutions:**

- 1. Do mapping exercises to prepare for collaboration.** Identify shared issues of concern and opportunities for collaboration. Map out strengths and weaknesses of organizations working on climate and those that are missing from the issue.
- 2. Build a platform for collaboration.** Create a unified national platform for all interested Latino organizations and others who support them. Collaborate to understand and agree on the big picture, and define the issue for ourselves, in our own terms. Create common goals, focus between organizations, and define principles for working together.
- 3. Overcome tensions and obstacles to collaboration.** Take overt steps to acknowledge and address past tensions, and build trust. Focus on creating and maintaining productive personal relationships, moving beyond transactional to transformational. Turn tensions into synergies. Foster mentorship between organizations. Reframe the US–Mexico relationship.
- 4. Share resources.** Make greater efforts to share resources equitably, particularly with funding from national to local or larger to smaller organizations. Find ways to share capacity, such as with human resources, locations, operations, events, outreach, and more. Conduct and share research more broadly. Create and share informational, educational, and advocacy research among organizations.
- 5. Extend partnership farther.** Bring other organizations into the climate movement, including cultural, youth, and organizations that work with communities or issues that could benefit from alignment with Latinos and climate (and vice versa). Form creative and new partnerships.
- 6. Empower collaboration in local communities.** Develop a local framework for collaboration that models the national platform. Host local summits to empower and activate platforms and resources for collaboration.
- 7. Foster communication and media engagement.** Activate and empower Latino voices on climate change through an actively managed Speakers Bureau. Create a dedicated effort to communicate and engage with Latino and mainstream media. Create and maintain a rapid response system for media.



## PRIORITIZED OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCELERATING LATINO CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

In this session, findings from all prior working sessions were brought forward and reviewed. Participants were each given 5 votes to select the top priorities for accelerating Latino climate leadership. All of the ideas shared and generated throughout the day are important to pursue, but where should we start? The following opportunities received the top votes.

- 1. Funding, funding, funding.** We need to expand and increase funding for Latino climate leadership. There is not enough funding overall, and funding is not getting to the smaller and local organizations. We need to expand the pool of funding, the amount of funding, and the ways in which funding is allocated or shared. We should encourage consortium funding or pooling of funding to build capacity for climate leadership in Latino organizations of all sizes and focus.
- 2. Collaboration and resource sharing.** Latino and national environmental organizations have to collaborate better, to work together in coalitions for collective action. We need to create a national platform for collaboration, map out roles, and share resources. We must also bring this kind of collaboration to the local level. And we must share resources and best practices. We go farther faster together.
- 3. Politics, policy.** We must engage Latino political leaders and policymakers to ensure they understand the impacts of climate on Latinos and the benefits of solutions. These leaders need to know that they have support from a strong Latino voter constituency who is demanding solutions at every level of government.
- 4. Forge new partnerships, empower new voices.** We must broaden our collaboration to new partners, going beyond the core Latino community to extend reach, relevancy, and power. This includes partnership with evangelicals, education leaders (may be the most productive dollar spent), health leaders, local leaders, and many more who work with communities or issues that could benefit from alignment with Latinos and climate (and vice versa). We must empower women and mothers, faith leaders, health leaders, and youth as messengers on climate change. They need to be trained, provided with culturally relevant messaging, and deployed as messengers with citizens, policymakers, and the media.
- 5. Focus on media engagement.** We need a concerted and sustained program to engage the media that serves Latino communities, including local and national media. The press needs to be informed on how climate impacts Latinos and how solutions benefit. They need real stories of Latinos who are impacted and those who have achieved success on solutions. They need spokespeople for interviews and to bring real stories to life. This can be supported by a rapid response effort and Speakers Bureau.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**ecoAmerica** would like to thank the following organizations and individuals who helped provide intellectual and financial capital for the National Latino Climate Leadership Forum.

### PARTNERS



Hispanic Heritage  
FOUNDATION



### SUPPORTERS



*ecoAmerica is grateful to the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation for its generous support.*

### STEERING COMMITTEE

#### Jennifer Allen

Vice President and National Director  
*Chispa at League of Conservation Voters*

#### Deborah Burke

Program Associate, Sustainable Development  
*Rockefeller Brothers Fund*

#### José Calderón

President  
*Hispanic Federation*

#### Vanessa Cardenas

Director, Climático  
*World Wildlife Fund*

#### Laura M. Esquivel

Director of National Advocacy  
*Hispanic Federation*

#### Dr. Antonio Flores

President and CEO  
*Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities*

#### Lucia Oliva Hennelly

Campaign Manager, New Climate Partnerships  
*Environmental Defense Fund*

#### Stephanie A. Herrera

Chief Operating Officer  
*Hispanic Heritage Foundation*

#### Jorge Madrid

Campaign Manager  
*Environmental Defense Fund*

#### Mark Magaña

Founding President and CEO  
*GreenLatinos*

#### Adrianna Quintero

Founder and Director  
*Voces Verdes*

#### Rev. Dr. Gabriel Salguero

President  
*National Latino Evangelical Coalition*

#### Javier Sierra

Director of Latino Media Outreach  
*Sierra Club*

#### Meighen Speiser

Chief Engagement Officer  
*ecoAmerica*

**SPEAKERS**, as noted on the previous pages.

**TABLE MODERATORS AND SCRIBES**, as noted on the following pages.

## ATTENDEES

**Tayde Aburto**, Founder, Hispanic Chamber of E-Commerce  
**Jeanette Alcaraz**, Summer Intern, GreenLatinos\*\*\*  
**Jennifer Allen**, Vice President and National Director, Chispa at League of Conservation Voters  
**Rubén Arvizu**, Director for Latin America, Ocean Futures Society  
**Vero Balderas Iglesias**, Multimedia Journalist, VOA Latin America Division  
**Kara Ball**, Faith Program Director, ecoAmerica\*\*  
**Dominique Bangasser Slavin**, Executive Director, Treehouse Investments  
**Dan Barry**, Communities Program Director, ecoAmerica\*\*  
**Sam Becker**, Development Associate, ecoAmerica\*  
**Felipe Benítez**, National Director of Development and Communications, Mi Familia Vota  
**Deborah Burke**, Program Associate, Sustainable Development, Rockefeller Brothers Fund  
**José Calderón**, President, Hispanic Federation  
**Vanessa Cardenas**, Director, Climático, World Wildlife Fund  
**Alaura Carter**, Climate Justice Associate, Sojourners  
**Ivana Castellanos**, Program Associate, Center for Public Health Policy, American Public Health Association  
**Karina Castillo**, Florida Latino Outreach Organizer, Moms Clean Air Force  
**Fernando Cazares**, California Manager, Climate-Smart Cities, The Trust for Public Land Los Angeles  
**Miriam Centurion**\*\*\*  
**Jesus Chavez**, World Wildlife Fund\*\*\*  
**Russell Corbin**, Events Associate, ecoAmerica\*  
**Rev. Dr. Jorge Delgado**, Volunteer Clergy, Metropolitan Community Church of Washington, D.C.  
**Andrea Delgado**, Senior Legislative Representative, Earthjustice  
**Melissa DeSantiago**, Program Assistant, The Children's Environmental Health Network\*\*\*  
**Eduardo Díaz**, Executive Director, Smithsonian Latino Center  
**David T. Dyjack**, Executive Director, National Environmental Health Association  
**Monica Echevarria**, World Wildlife Fund\*\*\*  
**Chris Espinosa**, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, GreenLatinos  
**Maria Estrada**, Associate Director, Global Diversity and Inclusion, The Nature Conservancy  
**Laura M. Esquivel**, Director of National Advocacy, Hispanic Federation  
**Ignacio Fernandez**, Analyst, Energy and Water Programs, Climate Resolve  
**Jesse Festa**, Sr. Project Coordinator, Office of the President, The Nature Conservancy  
**Ashley Fisher-Poggio**, Events Manager, ecoAmerica\*  
**Dr. Antonio Flores**, President and CEO, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities  
**Al Gallegos**, National President, National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives  
**Doug Glancy**, Director, Climate Speakers Network, The Climate Reality Project  
**Amanda Gonzales**, Program Officer, Wildlife Without Borders, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
**Jess Gray**, Sector Administration Coordinator, ecoAmerica\*  
**Victor Griego**, Founder, Diverse Strategies for Organizing, Inc.  
**Andrea Grosse**, Wildlife Biologist, Migratory Bird Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
**Dr. Ruben Guerra**, Chairman and CEO, Latin Business Association  
**Marce Gutiérrez-Graudiñš**, Founder and Executive Director, Azul  
**Rev. Fletcher Harper**, Executive Director, GreenFaith  
**Vanessa Hauc**, Correspondent, Noticiero Telemundo  
**Stephanie A. Herrera**, Chief Development and Operating Officer, Hispanic Heritage Foundation  
**Amy Hinojosa**, President and CEO, MANA, A National Latina Organization  
**Chloe Hwang**, Development Manager, ecoAmerica\*  
**Peggy Knudson**, Vice President of Development, ecoAmerica\*\*  
**Kirra Krygsman**, Research Manager, ecoAmerica\*  
**Celinda Lake**, President, Lake Research Partners  
**Jerry Lawson**, National Manager, Energy Star  
**Jill Leanness**, The Climate Reality Project\*\*\*  
**Rachel Locke**, Summer Intern, The Children's Environmental Health Network\*\*\*  
**Alfonso Lopez**, Member, 49th District, Virginia House of Delegates  
**Frank Loy**, Board Chair, ecoAmerica\*  
**Edwin Luevanos**, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Citizen Energy  
**Miguel Luna**, Founder, Urban Semillas  
**Jorge Madrid**, Coordinator, Partnerships and Alliances, Environmental Defense Fund  
**Mark Magaña**, Founding President and CEO, GreenLatinos  
**Leyla McCurdy**, National Health and Environmental Consultant\*\*  
**Leah Missbach Day**, Co-Founder, World Bicycle Relief  
**Ben Monterroso**, Executive Director, Mi Familia Vota  
**Rich Morales**, Director of Organizing, Catholic Climate Covenant

**Susan Moran**, Vice President of Marketing, ecoAmerica\*  
**Mar Muñoz-Visoso**, Executive Director of the Secretariat for Cultural Diversity, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops  
**Matt Oberhoffner**, Consultant, Partnership Project  
**Jamie Olson**, Sustainability Program Associate, Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation  
**Mariana Panuncio**, Climate Change Director, Latin American and Caribbean Program, World Wildlife Fund  
**Jonathan Parfrey**, Executive Director, Climate Resolve\*\*  
**Bob Perkowitz**, President and Founder, ecoAmerica\*\*  
**Elianne Ramos**, Principal and CEO, Speak Hispanic Communications  
**Lisa Renstrom**, Director, Bonwood Social Investments  
**Dr. Sergio Rimola**, Associate Clinical Professor, Ob/Gyn, VCU Health System and George Washington University  
**Dr. Elena Rios**, President and CEO, National Hispanic Medical Association  
**Pamela Rivera**, Partnership and Constituency Advocate, Voces Verdes  
**Alex Rodriguez**, President and CEO, Diversity Consulting Group  
**Lisette Rodriguez**, Policy Analyst, Hispanic Federation\*\*\*  
**Dr. Linda Rudolph**, Director, Climate Change and Public Health Project, Public Health Institute\*\*  
**Rev. Dr. Gabriel Salguero**, President, National Latino Evangelical Coalition  
**Yadira Sanchez**, Mi Familia Vota  
**Dr. Mona Sarfaty**, Director, Program on Climate and Health at Center for Climate Change Communication, George Mason University\*\*  
**Javier Sierra**, Director of Latino Media Outreach, Sierra Club  
**Manuel Silva**, Associate, Cleary Gottlieb  
**Camilla Simon**, Director, Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting, and the Outdoors (HECHO)  
**Raoul Slavin Julia**, Managing Director, Treehouse Investments  
**Farley Lord Smith**, Principal, Wesley Walden  
**Meighen Speiser**, Chief Engagement Officer, ecoAmerica\*  
**Jennifer Tabola**, Health Program Director, ecoAmerica\*\*  
**Mark Vargas**, Commissioner, California Coastal Commission  
**Elena Visoso**, Daughter of Mar Muñoz-Visoso  
**Kimberly Wasserman Nieto**, Organizing and Strategy Director, Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO)  
**Brent Wilkes**, National Executive Director, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)  
**Candace Williams**, Executive Assistant, ecoAmerica\*  
**Gustavo Ybarra**, World Wildlife Fund\*\*\*

\*ecoAmerica staff    \*\*Table Moderators    \*\*\*Scribes





**1730 Rhode Island Avenue NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036**

**870 Market Street  
Suite 428  
San Francisco, CA 94102**

**202.457.1900  
ecoAmerica.org**

---

ecoAmerica grows the base of popular support for climate solutions in America with research-driven marketing, partnerships, and national programs that connect with Americans' core values to bring about and support change in personal and civic choices and behaviors.

*This report is printed on post-consumer fiber content recycled paper.*