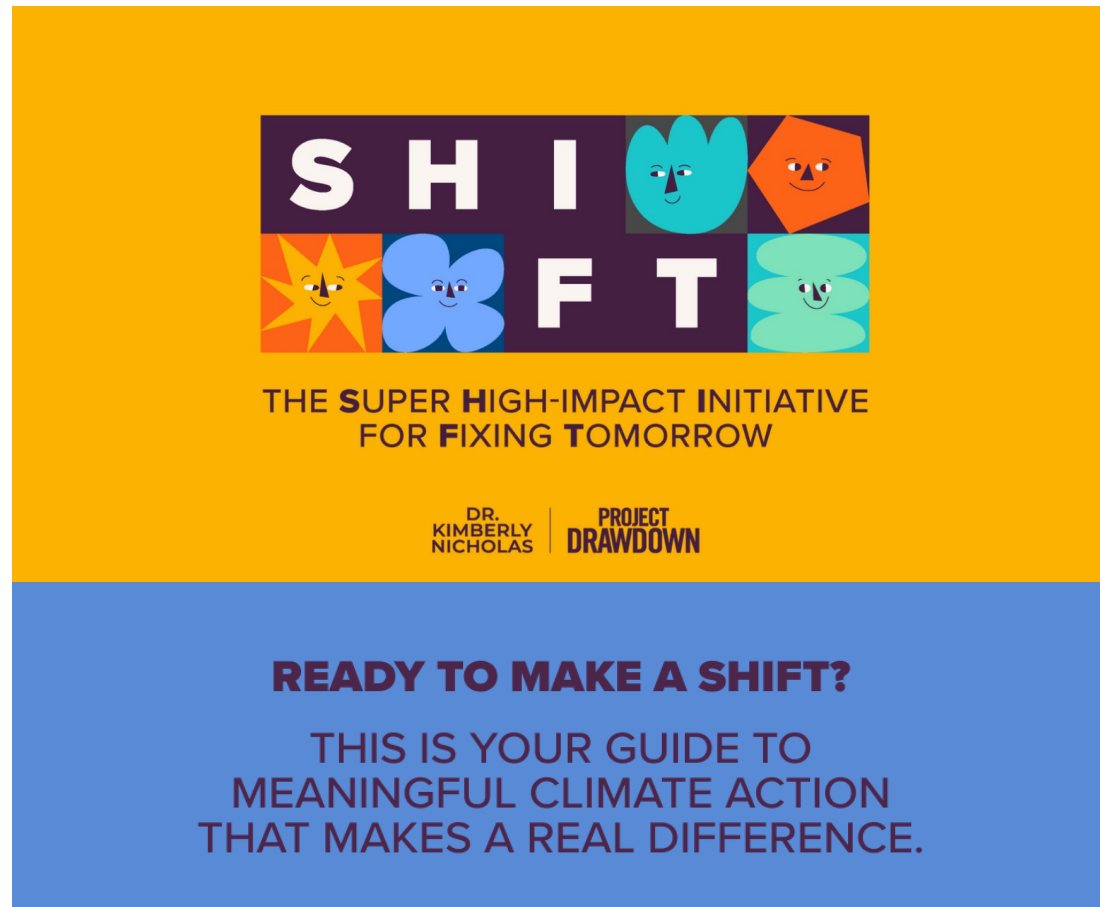


A digital support tool for evidence-based, high-impact climate action: Five climate superpowers to SHIFT the system



Kim Nicholas

LUCSUS, BECC
Lund University

Swedish Climate
Symposium
May 2026



BECC

 substack  We Can Fix It



Kimberly Nicholas



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@KimberlyNicholas.bsky.social

5 Roles for Climate Action

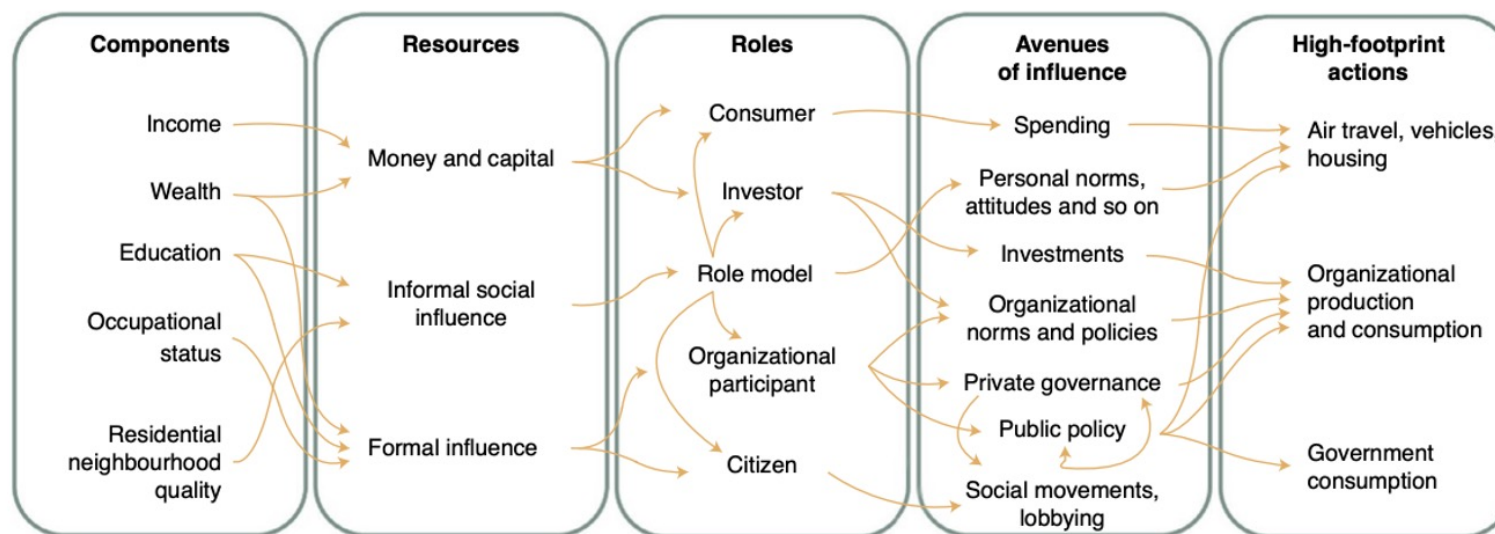
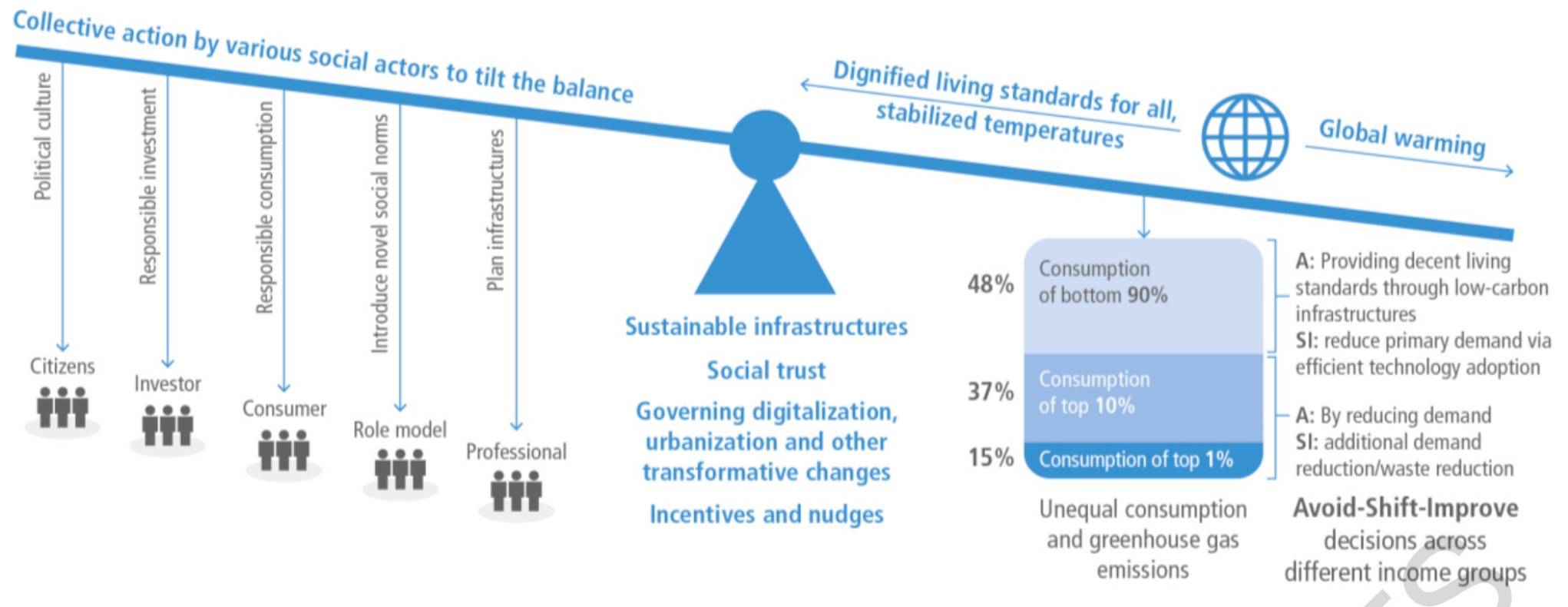
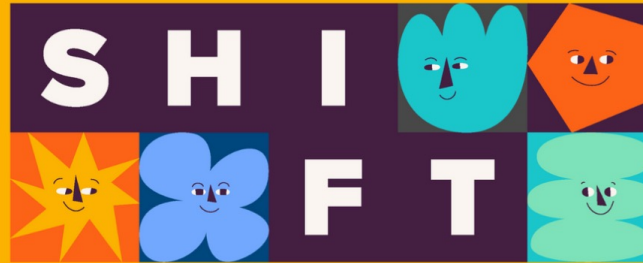


Fig. 2 | Links from SES to actions with high climate footprints. The silos depict how components of SES¹⁵ and the resources they provide may influence high-footprint actions via five social and financial roles that operate through different avenues of influence. The arrows in the figure represent links we hypothesize as important; the figure as a whole and the hypothesized links suggest an agenda for future research. Image credit: Emma Li Johansson (Lilustrations).

(a) Tilting the balance towards less resource intensive service provisioning



Source: IPCC WG3 2022 TS.20



THE **SUPER HIGH-IMPACT INITIATIVE**
FOR **FIXING TOMORROW**

DR.
KIMBERLY
NICHOLAS

PROJECT
DRAWDOWN

READY TO MAKE A SHIFT?

THIS IS YOUR GUIDE TO
MEANINGFUL CLIMATE ACTION
THAT MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE.



jointheshift.earth

[#makeSHIFThappen](https://twitter.com/makeSHIFThappen)

QUESTION 1 OF 3

DO YOU LIVE IN ONE OF THE COUNTRIES LISTED BELOW?

Sweden

No, my country is not listed

MY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

CITIZEN	ELECT LEADERS WHO'LL MAKE AND IMPLEMENT STRONG CLIMATE POLICIES.	JOIN A POLITICAL PARTY OR ORGANIZATION WORKING FOR CLIMATE ACTION.	CREATE MEDIA ATTENTION ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS.	CONTACT YOUR POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVE.	TAKE PART IN A PEACEFUL PROTEST.
	WORK WITH COLLEAGUES TO MEET SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS INITIATIVE.	DIVEST FROM FUNDS SUPPORTING FOSSIL FUELS AT YOUR WORKPLACE.	TAKE CLIMATE ACTION THROUGHOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION.	TAKE COLLECTIVE CLIMATE ACTION; ADVOCATE IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL FIELD.	USE YOUR PARTICULAR SKILLS.
	CHOOSE A FOSSIL-FREE BANK.	DIVEST FROM PERSONAL INVESTMENT FUNDS SUPPORTING FOSSIL FUELS.	CHANGE TO A GREEN PENSION OR RETIREMENT PORTFOLIO.	DONATE TO CLIMATE CHARITIES.	
	CUT DOWN ON FLIGHTS.	REDUCE CAR EMISSIONS.	FOLLOW THE PLANETARY HEALTH DIET.	USE RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY IN YOUR HOME.	
	BUILD CLIMATE COMMUNITY.	WALK THE TALK.	TALK ABOUT THE TALK.	START CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS AND LISTEN.	INSPIRE CULTURAL CHANGE TO SUPPORT CLIMATE ACTION.
PROFESSIONAL					
INVESTOR					
CONSUMER					
ROLE MODEL					



1 of 5

CITIZEN ACTION #1: MOST IMPACTFUL

ELECT LEADERS WHO'LL MAKE AND IMPLEMENT STRONG CLIMATE POLICIES.

There are important climate policy issues on every ballot in national, regional, and local elections.

Your vote can have a **greater climate impact** than that of your personal emissions based on the policies your elected officials enact.

Make sure you're registered to vote in your next election. Sign up at a trusted government website such as that listed below or by searching "register to vote" + "my country".

Register to vote in the [United States](#).

After you've registered to vote, note the date of upcoming elections on your calendar and set a reminder to vote.

Be sure to vote in every election, including primaries, local elections, and national elections.

Find upcoming elections in the [United States](#).

How can you vote for politicians committed to real climate action?

1. Elect politicians with good climate voting scores from organizations like the [League of Conservation Voters](#) in the [United States](#) or the [Climate Action Network](#) in Europe. [The Environmental Voter Project](#) is also doing good work to turn non-voting environmentalists into consistent voters.
2. If your candidate doesn't have a climate score, vote for candidates who have pledged not to take fossil fuel money.
3. Check who funds your candidate. (Hint: Big fossil fuel companies are not great for ambitious climate policy.)
4. And please, for lots of reasons, including the climate, elect more women! A 2019 study showed more women in parliament resulted in lower national emissions via stronger climate policies.



SHARE THIS ACTION



MY PROGRESS

Add a note: How are you accomplishing this action? What challenges do you

Notes are for your own personal reference and are not displayed publicly.

SAVE THIS NOTE

UNDO MARK COMPLETE

GO TO MY ACTIONS

Create an account and you can track your own actions; these are mine!

MY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

CITIZEN	ELECT LEADERS WHO'LL MAKE AND IMPLEMENT STRONG CLIMATE POLICIES. 	JOIN A POLITICAL PARTY OR ORGANIZATION WORKING FOR CLIMATE ACTION. 	CREATE MEDIA ATTENTION ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS. 	CONTACT YOUR POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVE. 	TAKE PART IN A PEACEFUL PROTEST. 
PROFESSIONAL	WORK WITH COLLEAGUES TO REDUCE YOUR WORKPLACE EMISSIONS IN LINE WITH SCIENCE. 	DIVEST FROM FUNDS SUPPORTING FOSSIL FUELS AT YOUR WORKPLACE. 	TAKE CLIMATE ACTION THROUGHOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION. 	TAKE COLLECTIVE CLIMATE ACTION AND ADVOCATE IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL FIELD. 	USE YOUR PARTICULAR SKILLS. 
INVESTOR	CHOOSE A FOSSIL-FREE BANK. 	DIVEST FROM ANY PERSONAL INVESTMENT FUNDS SUPPORTING FOSSIL FUELS. 	CHANGE TO A GREEN PENSION OR RETIREMENT PORTFOLIO. 	DONATE TO CLIMATE CHARITIES. 	
CONSUMER	CUT DOWN ON FLIGHTS. 	REDUCE CAR EMISSIONS. 	FOLLOW THE PLANETARY HEALTH DIET. 	USE RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY IN YOUR HOME. 	
ROLE MODEL	BUILD CLIMATE COMMUNITY. 	WALK THE TALK. 	TALK ABOUT THE WALK. 	START CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS AND LISTEN. 	INSPIRE CULTURAL CHANGE TO SUPPORT CLIMATE ACTION. 

SHIFT

THE SUPER HIGH-IMPACT INITIATIVE
FOR FIXING TOMORROW

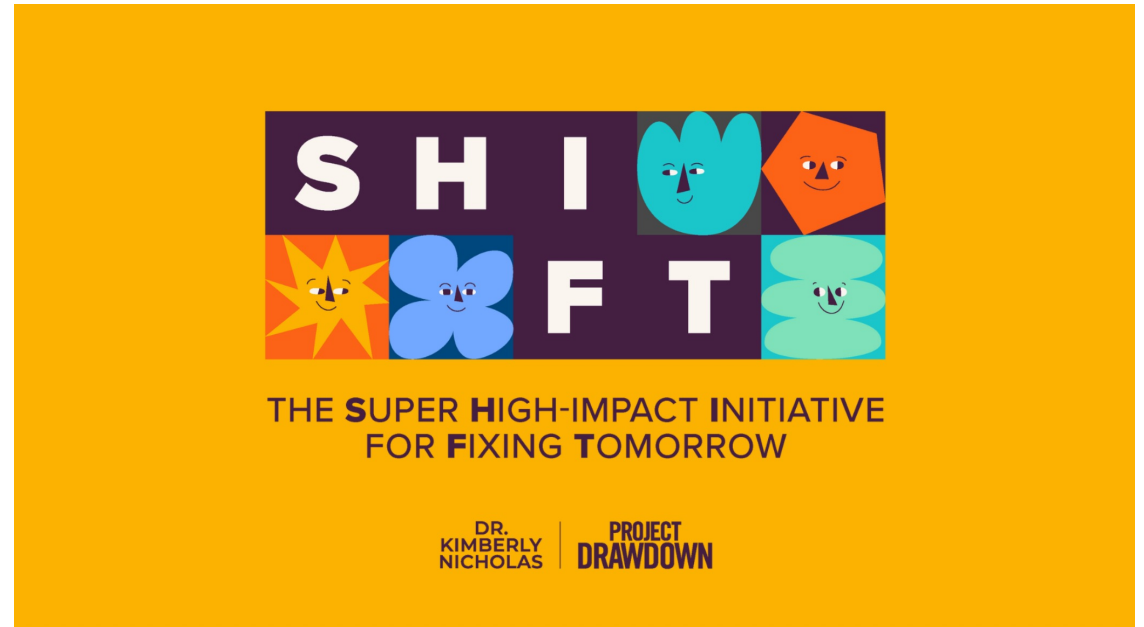
JOINTHESHIFT.EARTH

Teaching SHIFT: Individual paper

30% grade

1500 words

Write a reflection paper on the connections between personal and systemic climate action, reflecting on your experience with taking action yourself, and on the policies (and/or norms and/or infrastructure) that support or hinder climate action in your own lived experience.



[Jointheshift.earth](https://jointheshift.earth)
#makeSHIFThappen

Sample Student Projects, New Climate Action Fall 2025, Climate Science & Politics, LUMES MSc



Joined group
1st protest
Called rep
E-mailed rep

(less relevant for
those currently
studying, I need to
add student actions
to the guide!)

Switched bank
Divested portfolio

Flight-> train
Plant-based week
Promoted cycling

Potluck + film for 13!
Asked partners' mom to take
train to family holiday
Called 5 family members

Assessment Rubric: SHIFT Individual paper

Topic	Criteria
1. Climate action	Sophisticated reflection on what counts as climate action, and how to identify high-impact climate actions, with clear links to emissions reduction potential and system change.
2. Reflections on own position and agency	Reflections on possible climate superpowers, your own experience of your agency to affect change, where you see your strengths in galvanizing climate action.
3. Choice and implementation of own action	Clear description of the action chosen, explanation of why chosen, description of how it was taken and what the results were.
4. System change	Concrete, creative, nuanced understanding of systemic enablers and barriers to personal action (policies, infrastructure, and/or norms).
5. Links between personal & system change	Reflections on connections, synergies and limitations between personal and system change.
6. Writing	The structure of the paper is logical and clear, using section headings and formatting to guide the reader and clearly address the criteria. Every paragraph uses a topic sentence. Each paragraph contains one main idea. The writing is clear, concise, and sophisticated. The paper is a pleasure to read.

Student reflection

“Before I took the guide, I viewed climate action as being largely limited to behaviours connected to individual consumption...

To me, these actions felt superficial, dependent on the systems around them, and left me wanting to be more proactive....

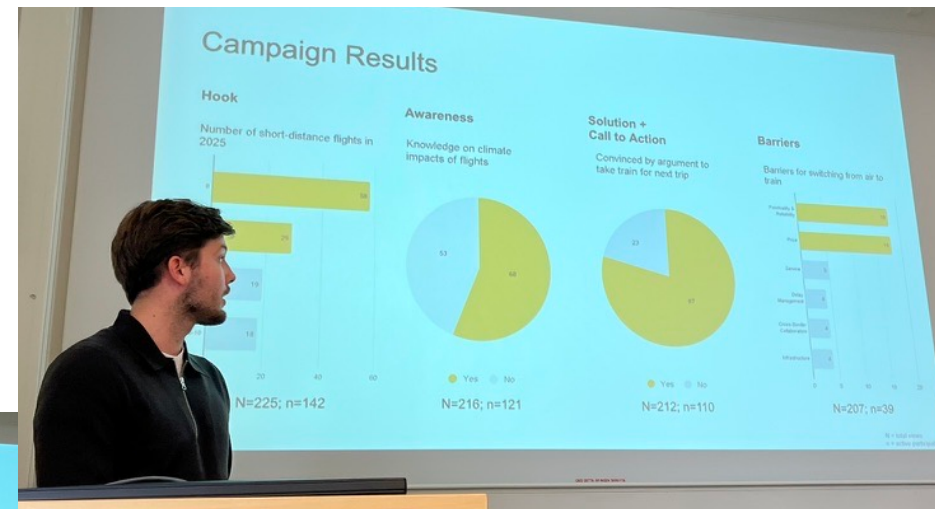
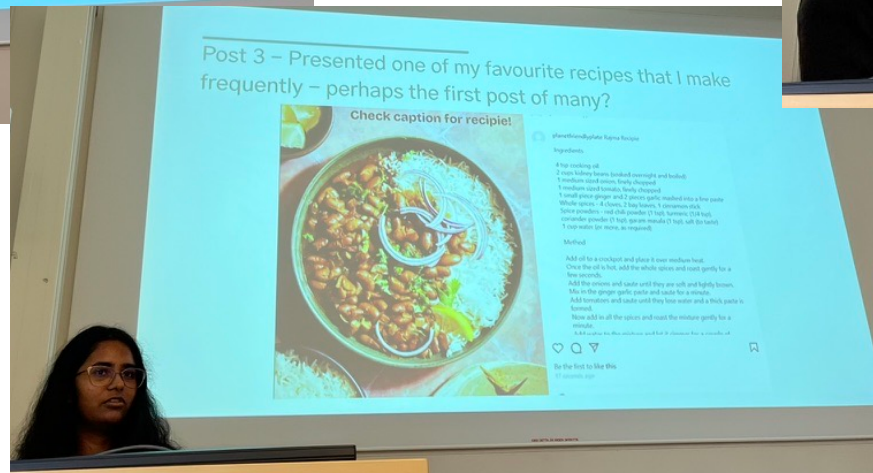
After using the SHIFT guide, I feel more hopeful and inspired as individual's climate actions are put into perspective. As I had never considered these [citizen] actions before, the guide helped me reclaim my agency.”

– LUMES Student 2025

Social media campaign

30% grade

3 posts + Reflection paper (600 words) + 3 min video presentation



SHIFT on social media



Stephen Heckerroth  · Following
 Founder and CEO at Renewables, Inc.
[Visit my website](#)

1w · 

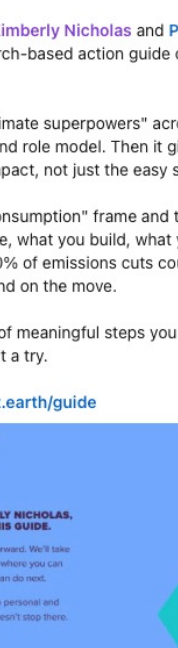
Sending a big THANK YOU and appreciation to [Kimberly Nicholas](#) and [Project Drawdown](#), who put together an excellent research-based action guide called SHIFT.

You answer a few questions, it identifies your "climate superpowers" across five roles: citizen, professional, investor, consumer, and role model. Then it gives you a personalized set of actions ranked by actual impact, not just the easy stuff.

I appreciate that it pushes past the "individual consumption" frame and toward where decisions have real leverage. How you vote, what you build, what you fund. The research behind it suggests 40% to 80% of emissions cuts could come from choices we make at home, at work, and on the move.

It only takes a few minutes to find out what kind of meaningful steps you can take to make an impact on climate - please give it a try.

Link to the tool in comments, or visit jointheshift.earth/guide



SHIFT
THE BUILDING BLOCKS INITIATIVE FOR PEAKING TRANSLATIONS

HII I'M CLIMATE SCIENTIST KIMBERLY NICHOLAS, AND I'LL BE YOUR GUIDE TO THIS GUIDE.

Big changes start with taking smart steps forward. We'll take you through a few questions to figure out where you can have the most impact, and what you can do next.

To tackle the climate crisis, we need both personal and collective action. It starts with you, but it doesn't stop there.

👤 with Project Drawdown **CLIMATE CHANGE IS A BIG PROBLEM. LET'S FIX IT.**

Keeva Duffey and 9 others · 5 comments · 4 reposts

Tara Mahoney · Following
Research and Engagement Manager at SFU's Community-Engaged Rese...
20h · 🌱

The climate movement needs your weird and wonderful gifts! The Super High-Impact Initiative for Fixing Tomorrow (SHIFT) guide starts from where YOU are, and identifies your unique climate superpowers. SHIFT distills the evidence down to specific actions you can take as a citizen, professional, investor, consumer, and role model. Check it out: <https://lnkd.in/g6KzhCzw>

via [Project Drawdown](#) created by [Kimberly Nicholas](#)

Illustration by me



23

2 comments · 2 reposts

Want to #MakeSHIFThappen?

- Take the quiz (jointheshift.earth)
- Take your next action!
- Share the quiz (social media, at work, innebandy...)
- Link to SHIFT from your website
- Teach high-impact climate action
- Get in touch to collaborate!
- ...



Thank you!

Kimberly.Nicholas@lucsus.lu.se



Extra slides for teachers

Please feel free to use/adapt these
learning activities and rubrics!

Assignment 1: Climate Action Reflection paper

Take the SHIFT (Super High-Impact Initiative for Fixing Tomorrow) quiz to find your superpowers: <https://jointheshift.earth/>

Go through once and answer for yourself. (You may choose to go back a second time and answer differently to see what the different paths include.)

The SHIFT guide presents climate superpowers, and the actions within them, in order of impact. Choose the highest-impact action the guide suggests you take next, that you are not yet taking. Take one tangible step towards taking that action in your own life, and reflect on your experience.

For example, if the first climate superpower you see is Role model, and you are already doing Action 1 there (build climate community) but are not yet doing Action 2 (walk the talk), you would take an action to "walk the talk".

Your chosen action must be one of the 23 high-impact climate actions listed in the SHIFT guide (e.g., recycling doesn't count!). For example, if you're choosing "walk the talk" as a role model action, you would need to choose an action to model that's listed under other sections of the guide (e.g., reducing flying, driving, or meat consumption; switching to a fossil-free bank; joining a green group; etc.) Do not choose a climate-adjacent action like waste reduction.

Write a reflection paper on the connections between personal and systemic climate action, reflecting on your experience with taking action yourself, and on the policies and/or norms and/or infrastructure that support or hinder climate action in your own lived experience.

Note the rubric criteria below. You will be assigned a peer reviewer, with whom you should arrange to exchange drafts and give each other feedback based on this rubric. Use the feedback to improve your paper. You can see an overview of all 5 superpowers, with links to the full text description and references in the guide, [here](#).

Some guiding questions:

1. What did you consider "climate action" to be before taking the guide? Did this view change? How do you define climate action now?
2. Starting point: Which of the five climate superpowers are available to you? Any surprises? Any reflections on your positionality in relation to the superpowers (what makes them available to you, or not)? What examples of high-impact climate action are you already taking, and why have you taken these actions (what has supported you to do so, or what barriers have you overcome to do so)? How have you experienced your own ability and effectiveness to take climate action?
3. New action: What new high-impact action did you take from the SHIFT guide? Why did you choose this action? What specifically did you do and how did you do it? How did it feel to take this action? What were the results of taking this action?
4. System change: Reflecting on specific actions from the SHIFT guide that you have taken (and not taken), what policies and/or norms and/or infrastructure supported (hindered) you in taking this action? What changes would be needed to help you, and others, more easily and effectively take this action?
5. Links between personal and system change: How would you describe personal change and system change before you took the SHIFT guide? How do you see each of them now? What is your view on the relationship between personal and system change for climate action?

Does not count towards word count, at end of paper include:

You must include a reference list for any references used, including DOI.

AI declaration: If generative artificial intelligence was used at any stage in the project, describe how and why.

Assessment Rubric: SHIFT Individual paper

Topic	Criteria
1. Climate action	Sophisticated reflection on what counts as climate action, and how to identify high-impact climate actions, with clear links to emissions reduction potential and system change.
2. Reflections on own position and agency	Reflections on possible climate superpowers, your own experience of your agency to affect change, where you see your strengths in galvanizing climate action.
3. Choice and implementation of own action	Clear description of the action chosen, explanation of why chosen, description of how it was taken and what the results were.
4. System change	Concrete, creative, nuanced understanding of systemic enablers and barriers to personal action (policies, infrastructure, and/or norms).
5. Links between personal & system change	Reflections on connections, synergies and limitations between personal and system change.
6. Writing	The structure of the paper is logical and clear, using section headings and formatting to guide the reader and clearly address the criteria. Every paragraph uses a topic sentence. Each paragraph contains one main idea. The writing is clear, concise, and sophisticated. The paper is a pleasure to read.

Assignment 3: Climate action social media campaign

30% course grade

Design and carry out a social media campaign promoting a specific high-impact climate action for a specific audience.

Your goal is to get individuals/organizations to take the high-impact climate action you identified.

Your climate action may be one of the 23 actions from the SHIFT guide (<https://jointheshift.earth/>), OR an action identified by your group paper for Assignment 2 (a specific action for a specific kind of organization that you found substantially reduced emissions, such as installing district heating for a university, or redesigning travel schedules for a sporting organization).

Make at least three posts on the social media platform of your choice, to promote the action in an actionable, engaging, and creative way.

See Canvas calendar for post due dates.

You may post from an existing social media account, or create one for this assignment. Consider that you may want to include your work in future job applications as a portfolio of your social media skills. Past students reported more engagement and success posting from existing accounts. Consider tagging/engaging the accounts of your target audience.

Research the most successful approaches for your chosen platform, and follow best practices (e.g., including hashtags, tagging and engaging with relevant accounts, etc.)

Write a short reflection paper (ca. 600 words). Describe how you identified and targeted your intended audience, explain how you designed the posts to appeal to them (cite sources/inspirations), and any metrics of impact from your campaign. Reflect on the role of policies that enable or hinder this action for your target group. Include links to AND screenshots of your three posts.

You will have 3 minutes to present your campaign to the class. You can choose which elements to include to best meet the rubric criteria for the presentation. Please record a video presentation at the link provided. (You are welcome to post your video presentation on social media as well, but not required.)

Rubric criteria: See separate slide.

Does not count towards word count, at end of paper include:

You must include a reference list for any references used, including DOI .

AI declaration: If generative artificial intelligence was used at any stage in the project, describe how and why.

Assessment Rubric: Social media campaign

Topic	Criteria
1. Post 1	Select strategic, high-impact action. Make specific action steps clear. Messaging is expertly tailored to clear and specific target group. Post content is accurate, appropriate, creative, and engaging. Post invites engagement. Research-backed approach to use the chosen platform effectively clearly applied.
2. Post 2	Select strategic, high-impact action. Make specific action steps clear. Messaging is expertly tailored to clear and specific target group. Post content is accurate, appropriate, creative, and engaging. Post invites engagement. Research-backed approach to use the chosen platform effectively clearly applied.
3. Post 3	Select strategic, high-impact action. Make specific action steps clear. Messaging is expertly tailored to clear and specific target group. Post content is accurate, appropriate, creative, and engaging. Post invites engagement. Research-backed approach to use the chosen platform effectively clearly applied.
4. Reflection paper	Clear and convincing description of how selected action(s) and target audience were chosen and why they are strategically important. Sophisticated, evidence-based justification of how posts were designed to appeal to target group and to motivate them to actually take the action. Sophisticated analysis of impact (using platform metrics and reflecting on any other indicators). Nuanced, well-supported reflection on relevant policies to support or hinder your chosen action for your chosen group. Full images (screenshots) of posts and links to posts are included as an appendix (does not count towards word count). You may want to use this to include relevant engagement (e.g., comments, likes).
5. Presentation	Your time is used effectively to highlight the most effective, creative, and compelling elements of your campaign. Visuals and media are used well. You include information about your key learnings on best practices and impact from social media.

Student summative evaluation

“I really enjoyed the assignments in this course, were my favourite, and felt very relevant whilst also providing skills and work examples that can be used in broader life and future career paths.”

“While expecially the social media campaign was really outside my comfort zone, I was glad about it in the end. I feel like the assignments did not only help me academically, but also made me reflect on the role I want to play in society and how the knowledge I am gaining though my studies is also a great priviledge that should be used in a meaningful way!”

Evaluation item: “The course assignments are engaging and/or intellectually stimulating”: 4.8/5

– LUMES Students 2025