This past November, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) published a new report, *The Production Gap*, that for the first time analyzed whether the current outlook for fossil fuel production around the world is consistent with the climate objectives set by the Paris Agreement. This report followed in the footsteps of UNEP’s 2019 Emissions Gap Report (and other reports) that have examined current greenhouse gas emissions and compared them with the emission levels needed to meet global climate goals.

To put it simply, these reports reveal a large and alarming disconnect between the world’s governments’ commitment to limit warming and their plans for expanding production of coal, oil, and “natural” gas production.

The release of these two new UN reports coincides with the launch of a major campaign by the oil and gas industry to weaken public support for bans on fracking, led by the American Petroleum Institute (API). API plans to target key states in 2020 with, among other things, a digital advertising campaign promoting the misleading message that American oil and gas production is the only path to energy security — ignoring the fact that 100 percent renewable energy, which over 100 U.S. cities have already committed to, would not only provide greater energy security, but — unlike oil and gas — doesn’t contribute to climate change or threaten public health. As the UN notes, “The time to begin planning for a wind-down of gas production is, as with other fossil fuels, already upon us.”

This industry effort comes at a time when momentum has been building — thanks to your efforts and the efforts of millions of others across the U.S. and abroad — towards serious climate action that includes a ban on fracking. Last September, for example, on the eve of the massive global climate strikes, over 400 activists sent a letter to UN Secretary General António Guterres calling for a worldwide ban on fracking.

PSR has been making the health case against fracking and fossil fuels for decades. At the same time, we’re promoting changes to our energy infrastructure that will reduce the demand for them. This year, for example, we’ve been working with several of our chapters to promote healthy electric alternatives to heating, cooling and cooking with gas — thus reducing the demand for gas over time.

The API campaign is pushing back hard on the effective work of health professionals to promote clean energy and educate policymakers and the general public on the public health emergency posed by climate change. The voices of health professionals will need to be raised even higher as this industry pushback grows in intensity over the coming months.

At our 2019 Visionary Leaders Awards Symposium last month (see page 6), former PSR President Dr. Helen Caldicott summed it up perfectly: “Being health professionals, it’s important for us to realize that our planet is our patient, and it’s in the intensive care unit. We’re doctors to a dying planet, and we have a job to do.” Thank you for being on the job with us.

Wishing you a healthy and peaceful new year. PSR

Jeff Carter, JD
Heidi Hutner, documentary filmmaker, author, professor and Director of the Sustainability Studies Program at Stony Brook University in New York, served as moderator for the Visionary Leaders Symposium on November 7, 2019.
FROM THE PRESIDENT

A year ago, I had the good fortune of speaking with a figure who is considered a legend in PSR’s history, Dr. Helen Caldicott. She was in Australia, and I in Poland attending the 24th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The hardest part of our call was coordinating our time zones. The best part was what ensued. A year later, Dr. Caldicott came to Washington, DC, spoke at our Visionary Leaders Symposium, received the Visionary Leaders Lifetime Achievement Award, and spoke to our Board of Directors the following day, where we had a chance to ask her questions and hear her in a more intimate setting. One of the points she made was that the possibility of activation and deployment of nuclear weapons during the Cold War was extremely tenuous, and in some ways it is a miracle that it did not end in global disaster and the possible end of humanity.

Dr. Caldicott has led a very productive life, and it makes me think about what I would like to see when I reach her current age. More specifically, how would I assess my impact on history and the planet? Are there actions that we undertake that are more defining of future impacts than others, and should we be doing more of those? In the article “The Tyranny of Small Decisions,” regulation and deregulation expert Alfred E. Kahn describes how our individual decisions may seem benign, but collectively they can lead to situations that are deleterious for the community as a whole. And in the recent book Inconspicuous Consumption: The Environmental Impact You Don’t Know You Have by journalist Tatiana Schlossberg, this tension between whether individual actions make a difference towards environmental destruction or societal trends is demonstrated by multiple examples from the age of Anthropocene.

As an organization, PSR has gotten much more intentional in assessing the impacts it makes towards our mission of abolition of nuclear weapons and mitigating drivers of climate change. I really appreciate these efforts as they give some measure of order to the noise and chaos that is happening around us, as well as providing information on where to focus our efforts to make the most impact. I do wonder if the same type of protocols can be applied to our individual actions.

While I will not stop doing personal actions like shutting off gas utilities going to my house and switching everything to electricity, it is working with PSR that makes me feel collective action is farther reaching. Since this will be the last piece I will be writing for PSR Reports as board president, it is appropriate to reflect on how much PSR contributes to changing history for the better. That is how I resolve the impact of my small decisions as well as societal movements.

I can’t express how grateful I am to the contributions of every person who has made this organization operate. The staff who always amaze me with their knowledge and hard work, the board members who supported my tenure as president, the chapters that are the roots and the branches of PSR, and generous donors and supporters of the PSR family. Thanks to all of you who care enough and make the personal decision to contribute to large causes. It has been an honor and a privilege, and now I pass the torch to Dr. Alan Greenglass to lead us through 2020 as board president. PSR

Pouné Saberi, MD, MPH
Establish Your Legacy

At Physicians for Social Responsibility, we are able to keep working to create a healthy, just and peaceful world because of the generosity of dedicated friends like you. To thank you for your support, we want to give you a resource to help establish your legacy while also investing in the health of future generations. Our Personal Estate Planning Kit helps you lay out your long-term plans and provide for your family, while also supporting organizations you’re passionate about, like PSR, through your will or other future financial plans.

Get Your Personal Kit

To download your Personal Estate Planning Kit, simply:

1. Go online to psr.mylegacygift.org
2. Look to the top right-hand side of your screen
3. Click FREE PLANNING KIT

Have Questions?

Contact: Amy Ciciora
Assistant Director of Philanthropy and Member Services
(202) 587-5227 | aciciora@psr.org

This information is not intended as legal or tax advice. For such advice, please consult an attorney or tax advisor. Figures cited in examples are for illustrative purposes only. References to tax rates include federal taxes only and are subject to change. State law may further impact your individual results.
Prior to the Visionary Leaders Awards ceremony, held on November 7, 2019 in Washington, DC, PSR hosted a symposium featuring women leaders who discussed the link between nuclear weapons and climate change issues and the critical fight for justice and equity, and particularly racial, economic and gender justice, in U.S. communities. The symposium began with a keynote address from Dr. Helen Caldicott, followed by a discussion featuring an all-women panel of experts: Lindsay Harper, Executive Director, Georgia WAND; Catherine Killough, Advocacy & Leadership Coordinator, Women Cross DMZ; Jacqueline Patterson, Director, Environmental and Climate Justice Program, NAACP; and Kelly Campbell, Executive Director, Oregon PSR. The panel was moderated by documentary filmmaker Heidi Hutner, a professor at Stonybrook University, who previewed a trailer of her upcoming documentary, Accidents Can Happen: Women of Three Mile Island. 

Photos: Gabriel Martinez
Being health professionals, it’s important for us to realize that our planet is our patient, and it’s in the intensive care unit. We’re doctors to a dying planet, and we have a job to do.

Helen Caldicott, MD
Keynote Speaker
SYMPOSIUM PANELISTS SPEAK OUT

Lindsay Harper, MBA, MAE
Executive Director
Georgia WAND

Catherine Killough
Advocacy & Leadership Coordinator
Women Cross DMZ

Jacqueline Patterson, MA, MPH
Director, Environmental and Climate Justice Program
NAACP

Kelly Campbell
Executive Director
Oregon PSR
Empowering communities is a false premise

“At Georgia WAND, we don’t ‘empower’ folks. You can’t give anybody power. It’s really about helping folks realize their own power. It’s about self-determination. Really work with folks to own the power they already have. That’s the solution.”

The connection between nuclear weapons & climate change

“The intersection of climate change and nuclear weapons is so important because we really need a bold re-imagining of what security means—because our security should not come at the expense of our basic needs or ecological sustainability. ... We need to think about how we invest in our military and how we can redistribute those resources for things like actualizing the Green New Deal, which will make us more secure.”

Gender justice was a key element of the conversation

“So many women are leading on innovative solutions, bold solutions, and on solutions that are going to get us to where we need to be—both in terms of reducing the proliferation of climate change and also surviving the already-existing impacts that we are seeing.”

Oregon PSR’s success working alongside impacted communities

“...really developing authentic relationships with communities experiencing climate injustice and environmental injustice and leading from there. We’ve seen in Oregon that we were then able to have the conversations about, ‘How do nuclear weapons fit in with this?’"
SR's Visionary Leaders Awards ceremony and reception, now in its fourth year, recognizes individuals and organizations for their exemplary efforts in advancing nuclear weapons abolition and/or addressing environmental risks to human health, including the catastrophic consequences caused by climate change, through collaborations that strengthen the PSR mission. PSR works address the gravest threats to human health and survival—nuclear weapons and the climate crisis—in order to achieve a healthier, safer and more peaceful world. 

Photos: Gabriel Martinez
At our 2019 Visionary Leaders Awards, PSR was proud to present Dr. Helen Caldicott with a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of her leadership of PSR during the 1980s. Dr. Caldicott, a prominent Australian pediatrician, has devoted more than half of her life to an international campaign to educate the public about the medical hazards of nuclear weapons and nuclear power and changes we must make in human behavior to stop environmental destruction. During her time living in the United States, she played a major role in reviving PSR and serving as its president (1978-1983). She also founded several organizations, both here and abroad, including WAND (Women’s Action for New Directions). Dr. Caldicott currently divides her time between her home in Australia and the United States and was named one of the most important women of the 20th century by Ladies’ Home Journal.

Dr. Caldicott was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award by Ira Helfand, MD, PSR National Board Member, co-founder and past-president of PSR, and co-president of PSR’s global federation, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW).
**Marylia Kelley**
Cofounder & Executive Director, Tri-Valley CAREs (Communities Against a Radioactive Environment) received the Nuclear Weapons Abolition Visionary Leaders Award for her work for 30 years on in-depth research, analysis and advocacy regarding the U.S. Department of Energy National Nuclear Security Administration, the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, nuclear weapons policy, waste and cleanup.

The award was presented by Robert Gould, MD, PSR Board Member, and President of PSR San Francisco-Bay area (left); and Patrice Sutton, MPH, Research Scientist at University of California San Francisco (right).

**Sunrise Movement**
Sunrise Movement, a powerful youth-led organization, has elevated nationwide and worldwide demands for bold, to-scale solutions like the Green New Deal that uplift communities, create millions of jobs, and provide a rapid just transition to a clean, safe renewable energy economy for fossil fuel workers. With their core emphasis on social justice and on centering impacted communities, Sunrise has proved that the winning model for climate action is demanding concrete commitments from powerful decision-makers and creating massive public support for impactful policies rooted in justice and equity.

Dyanna Jaye, Co-Founder and Organizing Director, accepted the award on behalf of the Sunrise Movement (left).

The award was presented by Yazeed Ibrahim, PSR Board Member, medical student at Des Moines University, IA (right).
Recognizing vital advocacy...

Kelly Campbell and Regna Merritt

Kelly Campbell, Executive Director of Oregon PSR (center right), and Regna Merritt, former Healthy Climate Program Director for Oregon PSR (center left).

During her 10 years leading Oregon PSR, Kelly Campbell has kept the chapter strong, focused and visionary. Under her leadership, the chapter’s current environment and health efforts address the prevention of any new fossil fuel infrastructure or transport through the Northwest region. This is a great example of how the fight against fossil fuels can be carried out in states that do not frack for gas or oil or mine and burn coal. The program is robust and ambitious and includes multiple specific efforts.

Regna Merritt has been absolutely key to the chapter’s successful implementation of these initiatives. She has represented Oregon PSR in these efforts, and she has made the chapter a leader in regional and cross-state coalitions and initiatives, where she has served not only as PSR’s representative but as a key individual leader. She has also been instrumental in ensuring that low-income families and communities of color receive their fair share of the benefits of Oregon’s new renewable energy ecosystem. This insistence on successfully incorporating environmental justice and equity into the energy transition is a leading model for PSR and in and of itself deserves to be honored.

*The awards were presented by Martin Fleck, PSR Nuclear Weapons Abolition Program Director (far left) and Barbara Gottlieb, PSR Environment & Health Program Director (far right).*
ACTIVIST SPOTLIGHT: HELEN CALDICOT, MD,

At this year’s 2019 PSR Visionary Leaders Awards, we honored outstanding contributions to the advancement of nuclear weapons abolition and addressing environmental hazards to health, including the climate crisis. Dr. Helen Caldicott, a past PSR president and highly influential advocate who played a pivotal role in PSR’s work for many years, was honored with PSR’s distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award. PSR interviewed Dr. Caldicott about how she came to do this work, what inspires her, and her advice for young people just starting to get involved in advocacy.

➤ What first drew you to this type of work?
I read *On The Beach* by an Australian, Nevil Shute, when I was a teenager, which was about a nuclear war that occurred in the northern hemisphere. The last people to die from the fallout were people in Melbourne where I lived. The accounts of their deaths were terrifying, and that was the end of the human race.

➤ How have the health impacts of nuclear weapons and climate change-related policies informed your work?
Well, I’m actually a pediatrician specializing in cystic fibrosis, the most common fatal genetic disease of childhood. However, I wrote a letter in 1971 to the local paper in Adelaide, South Australia where I lived about the medical dangers of fallout from the French [nuclear] tests in the Pacific, as the city water supply was showing radiation from the tests. That created enormous publicity and outrage, and as a result the tests went underground.

Naturally, as a physician, I always understood intrinsically about the health effects of radiation exposure, and then I wrote a book in 1992 called *If You Love This Planet* about global warming, industrial pollution, overpopulation, deforestation, etc. I learned much researching this book, as I have for all the other books that I have written—always from a global preventive medical perspective.

➤ What would be your advice to a young person just starting to get involved in this type of work?
Please educate yourself by reading thoroughly about these specific subjects, then you will have the relevant knowledge and ammunition to win any debate and more specifically to educate and lobby politicians, most of whom are medically and scientifically illiterate. As Thomas Jefferson said, “An informed democracy will behave in a responsible fashion.”

➤ Who or what is your greatest inspiration to do the work that you do?
As a pediatrician, I do this for all the world’s children, let alone the incredible beauty and diversity of nature and all living species, which I worship. PSR
Make a Tax Deductible End of Year Gift

Give the Gift of a Healthier Future for All

Thank you for your generous support of PSR!

Our work is more urgent than ever, but we have an incredible asset:

Together, we are making a difference.

Please consider making a generous end-of-year contribution to fuel our essential work in 2020.

We cannot continue our work without Supporters like you!

Have Questions?

Contact: Amy Ciciora
Assistant Director of Philanthropy and Member Services
(202) 587-5227 | aciciora@psr.org
Forwarding Service Requested

STAY ACTIVE

Would you like to be more involved in PSR’s advocacy efforts?

A great place to start is PSR’s Activist Updates. Each of PSR’s program areas reaches out to members through Action Alerts and e-mail. Sign up to receive updates at psr.org.

Coming to Washington, DC, and have an hour to spare?

How about visiting one of your elected officials to talk about issues of most concern to you? Contact PSR and we’ll help schedule a meeting and provide you with background materials.