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Paul Beckwith is Asking for $25M to Launch a Climate R&D Moonshot

Initial funding would support preliminary engineering, experimental designs, cost models and a climate decision-making website — laying the groundwork for larger research programs.

NOVEMBER 11, 2026 — YouTubers Paul Beckwith and Glenn Weinreb are proposing a $25 million initial phase of a Climate R&D Moonshot: a coordinated effort to identify, design and evaluate research that could help reduce the cost of decarbonization and carbon dioxide removal while investigating solar radiation management (SRM). The larger vision is an R&D effort on the order of $10 billion over five years. The proposed $25 million would be a starting phase, not the cost of executing the full program.

The proposal has two immediate requests: secure approximately $25 million in support and identify an established, respected foundation or comparable research organization willing to receive and responsibly manage those funds. The organization would employ project managers to commission work from scientists and engineers, informed by leading scientific advisers and independent technical review. Beckwith and Weinreb would help organize and communicate the initiative; the funds would be managed by the host organization.

What the first $25 million could fund

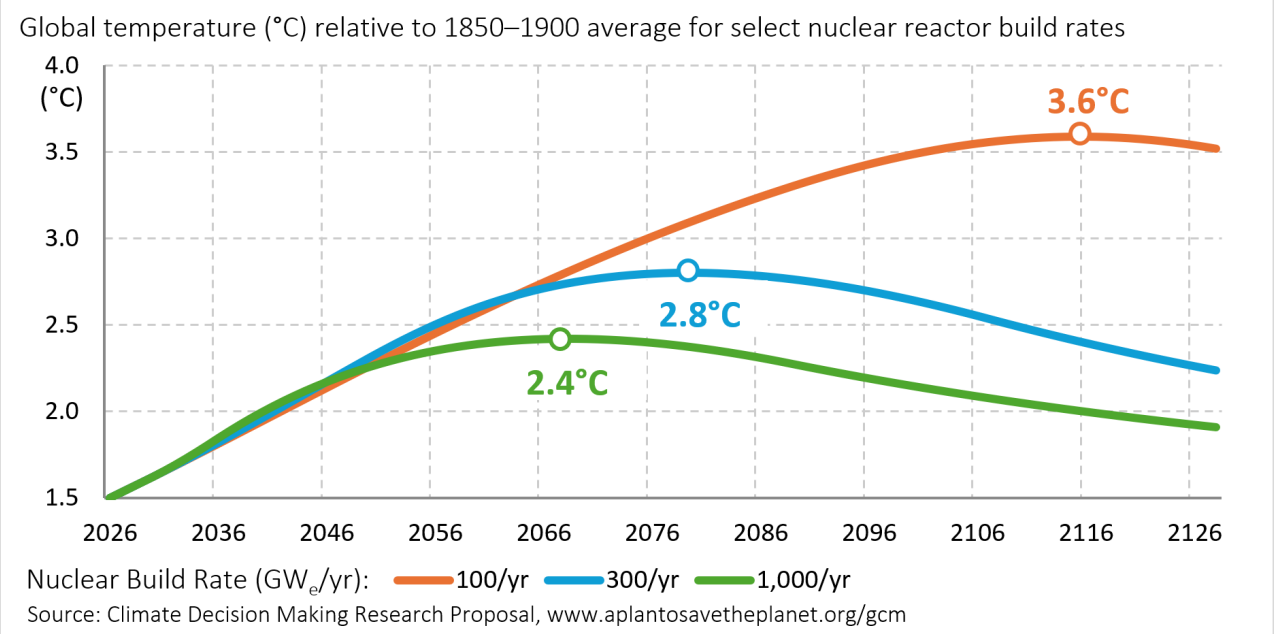
- **Automated nuclear-site construction and economics.** Prepare preliminary designs of specialized construction machines and independently test estimates of construction costs and the resulting cost of electricity.
- **Industrial processing and carbon removal.** Explore equipment and cost models for using nuclear heat directly in chemical production and, potentially, energy-intensive carbon dioxide removal.
- **Stratospheric aerosol injection (SAI) research instrumentation.** Develop and test measurement and experimental instrumentation in the laboratory before considering expensive aircraft-based field experiments. This is research into feasibility and effects, not a deployment proposal.
- **Climate Solution Website.** Prototype an online decision tool in which users specify climate objectives and constraints; the software would estimate the scale and costs of decarbonization, carbon removal and sunlight-reflection options, or indicate when a specified combination is not achievable under its assumptions.
- **Experiments, models and research proposals.** Develop experimental protocols, model specifications, techno-economic analyses, uncertainties and independently reviewed proposals for subsequent larger-scale research.

The climate goal and the technical challenge

The long-term goal is to make global mean temperature peak and then decline — "bend the curve." The initiative would evaluate research pathways across carbon dioxide emissions reductions, carbon dioxide removal and solar radiation management; while examining their costs, speed, scale, uncertainties and possible adverse effects. Funding the proposed first phase would not constitute an endorsement of any particular deployment decision.

Bending the curve without reflecting sunlight

The below graph shows the average global temperature for different nuclear reactor build rates, assuming sunlight is not reflected. For example, if 9,000 GW_e were built over 9 years (1,000 GW_e/year), the average global temperature would peak at approximately 2.4°C relative to 150 years ago. If built over 30 years (300 GW_e/year), it would peak at approximately 2.8°C; and if built over 90 years (100 GW_e/year), it would peak at approximately 3.6°C.



Current global nuclear construction is roughly 10 GW_e/year; therefore, this would represent a major increase. Scientists have warned against exceeding 1.5°C. Therefore, even large-scale nuclear construction would exceed that by a wide margin if sunlight was not reflected.

Cost is also a challenge: if site-construction was automated, the first 3,000 reactors would probably be "economic," meaning cheaper than the fossil-fuel alternative, while the final 3,000 would impose trillions of dollars per year in additional costs.

Proposed outcome and next steps

The immediate deliverables would be preliminary designs, laboratory plans, open technical models, cost estimates, independent reviews and detailed proposals showing which projects — if any — warrant $100 million to $1 billion in follow-on investment. The proponents are seeking discussions with potential funders, research institutions, scientific advisers and program-management organizations.

Reference

- *Climate Moonshot Open-Source Proposals*
  https://www.aplantosavetheplanet.org/cmp

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Interview

- Beckwith is available for in-person interview at COP31.