LSE Public Policy Review

How Identity Leadership Drives Collective Action for Sustainability

RESEARCH

ILKA H. GLEIBS

LSE Press

ABSTRACT

The climate crisis presents an unprecedented challenge that requires collective behavioural change on a large scale. Drawing on the social identity approach to crisis leadership, this paper examines how identity leadership principles can mobilise sustainable behaviours. Through integration of recent empirical findings from acute crises and theoretical insights from the identity leadership literature, I propose a framework highlighting that climate leadership involves three key processes: (1) creating shared group identity that makes climate action identity-relevant, (2) building collective efficacy beliefs that transform individual helplessness into group agency, and (3) embedding sustainable practices as group norms. However, climate leadership faces unique challenges distinct from acute crises. The paper also addresses tensions between local identity mobilisation and global coordination, alongside social justice considerations that emerge when climate impacts and action capacities vary across groups. I conclude with policy recommendations for fostering identity leadership at multiple levels, including community-level training programmes, organisational interventions, and international coalition-building strategies, while protecting against manipulation. I argue that the path to sustainability requires navigating collective identity processes within contested influence dynamics.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:
Ilka H. Gleibs
London School of Economics and Political Science, Department of Psychological and Behavioural Science, UK
i.h.gleibs@lse.ac.uk

KEYWORDS:
identity leadership; climate crisis; collective efficacy; social identity; behavioural change; sustainability

JEL CLASSIFICATION:
Q54; D91; Z13

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:
Gleibs IH. How Identity Leadership Drives Collective Action for Sustainability. *LSE Public Policy Review*. 2026; 4(3): 5, pp. 1–14. DOI: https://doi.org/10.31389/lseppr.170

I know we need a system change rather than individual change, but you cannot have one without the other. If you look through history, all the big changes in society have been started by people at the grassroots level. No system change can come without pressure from large groups of individuals. (Greta Thunberg, Brilliant Minds Conference, Stockholm, June 13, 2019)

INTRODUCTION

The climate crisis demands collective action, yet policy responses often focus on individual behaviour change that encourages citizens to reduce their carbon footprint, to adopt renewable energy, or to alter consumption patterns. Whilst individual actions matter, this *i-frame* approach (individual-level frame (1)) overlooks the deeply collective nature of both the climate challenge and human responses to crises. Economists, sociologists, and political scientists have focused on systems-level change (*s-frame;* system-level frame, (1)), examining how to transform rules, norms, and institutions to foster sustainability from the top down. Yet, these interventions often suffer from a lack of social acceptance and can reinforce the status quo by representing the interests of powerful groups whilst failing to engage the broader population.

This paper argues for a third approach: the group-level or *g-frame* perspective (2, 3). Rather than choosing between individual behaviour change and top-down system transformation, I propose that sustainable transitions require activating the group processes through which individual concerns become collective action and through which policies gain the social legitimacy needed for their implementation. By focusing on the meso-level (the groups, communities, and collective identities that bridge individuals and institutions), we can design interventions where system-level and psychological dimensions of change reinforce each other.

To develop this approach, I synthesise insights from the theorising around identity leadership and crises. Unlike traditional leadership models that emphasise individual traits or specific skills, identity leadership focuses on leaders' ability to create, represent, and embed shared group identities (4, 5). Leaders who successfully position themselves as "one of us" and articulate a vision of "who we are and what we stand for" can transform individual concerns into collective mobilisation (6).

Based on this, I propose that climate leadership involves three interconnected processes: (1) crafting inclusive group identities that make climate action identity-relevant; (2) building collective efficacy that transforms helplessness into group agency; and (3) embedding sustainable practices as group norms rather than individual sacrifices. This approach proves particularly relevant for sustainability challenges, where the gap between individual intentions and collective outcomes remains a persistent barrier (7). By building on identification and collective efficacy through identity leadership, this *g-frame* perspective (2, 3) offers a more effective path than approaches focused solely on individual attitudes and behaviours (*i-frame*) or exclusively on system-level policies and institutions (*s-frame*, see Figure 1).

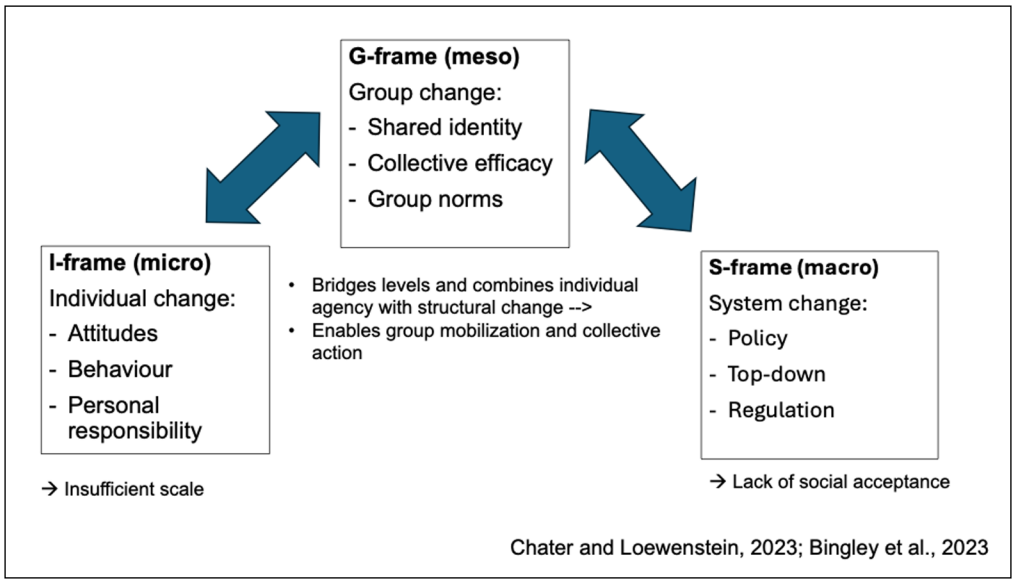


Figure 1 The g-frame as a bridge between micro and macro-level.

DOI: 10.31389/lseppr.170

These insights challenge dominant policy approaches that rely on either individual behaviour change or top-down regulation, suggesting instead that sustainable transformation requires leadership that activates and harnesses social identity processes. The paper addresses a central challenge of this special issue: how do we achieve behavioural change for sustainability at scale? By making group-level dynamics explicit, I develop actionable insights for policymakers seeking to foster rather than to impose sustainable transitions.

A SOCIAL IDENTITY APPROACH TO CRISIS LEADERSHIP

Traditional approaches to crisis leadership focus on individual competencies and managerial skills such as technical preparedness, decision-making abilities, and command structures (8). Yet recent global crises reveal that crisis leadership is fundamentally relational, emerging from the dynamic interaction between leaders and followers within specific social contexts (5, 9). The social identity approach to crisis leadership shifts the focus from what leaders possess or do as individuals to how they foster collective responses through group processes. Thus, I argue that crisis leadership involves three interconnected processes that transform individual perceptions into collective agency (9). First, leaders define features of collective identity that align with crisis requirements. Their task is to articulate "who we are" in ways that enable effective responses. Second, they foster collective efficacy, building the shared belief that "we can tackle this together" rather than centring individual responsibility alone. Thirdly and finally, crisis leaders create structures through norms and values that facilitate a collective response rather than relying solely on individual compliance. This approach embodies the g-frame (group-level frame) perspective (2) and recognises that structural progress is best realised through the mobilisation of shared understanding. It assumes that human psychology is fundamentally social, with individuals' perceptions, cognitions, emotions, and behaviours being shaped by the groups to which they belong. By operating at this group level, crisis leadership bridges individual psychology and top-down policy interventions and creates the social foundation through which both personal action and institutional change become possible.

APPLYING IDENTITY LEADERSHIP TO SUSTAINABILITY: THE CLIMATE CRISIS AS A COLLECTIVE ACTION PROBLEM

Climate change poses a chronic crisis that could be characterised by temporal distance, diffuse impacts, and complex causality (10). However, recent studies highlight that people perceive climate change as proximate and feel responsibility for distant others (11, 12). Beyond individual perceptions, social identities and group memberships play a central role in shaping environmental behaviour.

The Social Identity Model of Pro-Environmental Action (SIMPEA) provides a framework for understanding how group processes influence environmental behaviour (13). SIMPEA posits that pro-environmental action emerges when it aligns with group identity, when sustainable behaviour represents group norms, and when people believe their group can make a difference. This convergence with identity leadership suggests that understanding climate mobilisation requires examining the social identities through which people understand their relationship to environmental challenges and their capacity for collective response (14).

Recent theoretical work addresses how leaders can transform climate concern into collective action by creating and activating relevant group identities (15) and activate concepts relevant to SIMPEA. What follows builds on these foundations by systematically examining how identity leadership mechanisms advance the processes identified in SIMPEA: shared identity construction, collective efficacy building, and norm formation (see Figure 2).

CREATING CLIMATE-RELEVANT GROUP IDENTITIES

The identity leadership model assumes that shared identity emerges through effective leadership within groups. Leaders actively shape collective understanding of "who we are" and "what we stand for" (5, 9). Hence, I propose that climate leadership begins with defining groups in ways that make environmental action identity-relevant. Rather than treating climate as a technical problem requiring expert solutions or an individual responsibility demanding personal sacrifice,

climate leaders can frame it as "our challenge" requiring "our response." However, this identity work can occur on contested terrain, where different groups compete to define climate action's meaning and implications (16). For example, the fossil fuel industry's decades-long campaign exemplifies strategic identity framing, with BP's promotion of the "personal carbon footprint" representing a deliberate attempt to shape understanding in ways that preserve existing power structures by individualising a systemic problem (17). By contrast, climate leaders should engage in counter-narratives that reframe climate action as group-based transformation rather than personal virtue, actively contesting dominant framings like BP's whilst advancing alternative visions of collective identity and action (18). Different identities can be strategically activated to foster sustainable behaviour. Local identities (city, neighbourhood, or community membership) could offer particularly useful entry points for climate mobilisation. When leaders frame climate impacts in terms of threats to "our community," such as local flooding risk, children's future, or regional economy, abstract global challenges become concrete group concerns (7). This localisation makes climate change immediately relevant to existing group memberships rather than requiring the formation of entirely new collective identities.

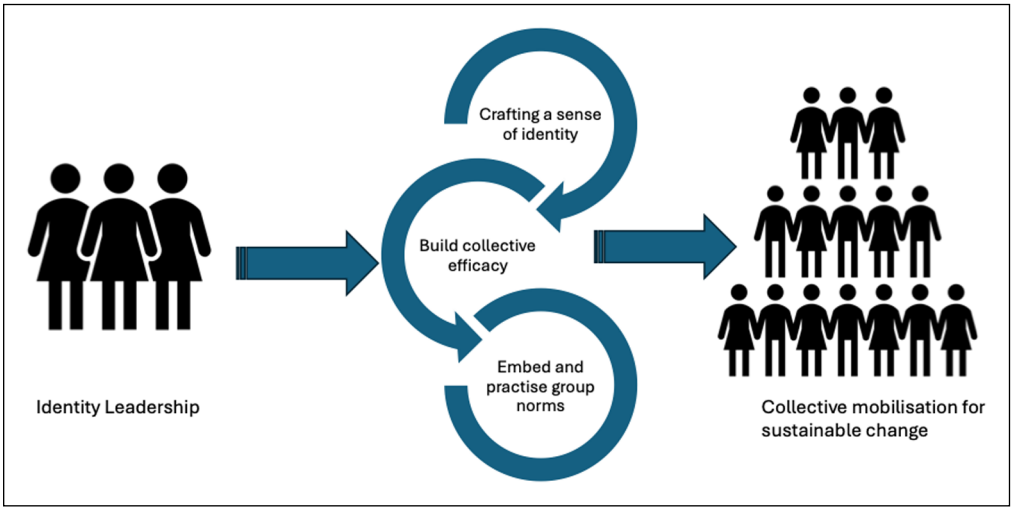


Figure 2 Identity leadership and collective mobilisation.

Beyond place-based identities, existing group memberships can work as scaffolds for pro-environmental collective identities. Professional and organisational identities offer important avenues for mobilisation, where organisational leaders can position their companies as sustainability pioneers, with employees engaging in pro-environmental behaviours as expressions of their organisational identity (19). Generational identity represents another powerful mobilisation pathway. Movements like Fridays for Future successfully galvanised youth identity around climate action by framing climate change as an intergenerational justice issue. They positioned young people as a group disproportionately affected, created a salient ingroup (our generation), and engaged in visible collective action (school strikes); therefore, they transformed environmental concern into identity-based mobilisation (18, 20).

Based on principles from the identity leadership model, leaders can articulate core group values ("this is what our 'we' represent") and champion collective goals ("we will solve this problem together"), thereby strengthening members' sense of belonging while simultaneously establishing norms. Empirical work corroborates these identity leadership mechanisms across diverse settings. A meta-analysis by Steffens and colleagues (21) revealed that leaders who embody aspirational group traits demonstrate greater effectiveness, particularly in established groups with clear collective identities. Studies spanning over 30 countries consistently show positive associations between identity leadership and group identification (22, 23). This relationship holds across diverse contexts, including organisational teams (24, 25), citizens (26), and sports teams (27, 28). Recent evidence by Bibic et al. (29) advances understanding of this relationship by demonstrating that identity leadership dimensions vary in their impacts. Representing and advancing the group relate more strongly to trust, while creating and embedding a shared identity relate more to team identification. These findings highlight that perceived identity leadership promotes shared identity both in everyday settings and during crises, binding individuals into action-oriented communities. This process applies directly to sustainability initiatives ranging from local environmental projects to national policy campaigns.

DOI: 10.31389/lseppr.170

BUILDING COLLECTIVE EFFICACY FOR CLIMATE ACTION

A critical barrier to climate action is the sense of individual helplessness when facing a global challenge. Identity leadership addresses this issue by building collective efficacy: the group's shared belief in its capacity to achieve desired outcomes. This shift from "I cannot solve this alone" to "we can solve this together" is fundamental for sustained engagement (30).

Three interconnected processes can foster collective efficacy. First, highlighting past group achievements might remind members of previous collective successes. Historical mobilisations that successfully addressed environmental challenges, such as ozone depletion and acid rain (31), demonstrate group capability and provide templates for current action (32). Second, making collective impact visible through feedback systems that aggregate individual contributions into group achievements can be useful. For example, carbon tracking applications that display neighbourhood or organisational progress can transform invisible individual actions into tangible collective accomplishments (33). Third, celebrating incremental progress to maintain momentum through recognition of group achievements rather than dwelling on the magnitude of remaining challenges can enhance efficacy. For example, local tree-planting schemes that publicly mark cumulative milestones. Haringey Council's celebration of reaching successive 2,000-tree thresholds toward a borough-wide canopy target (https://haringey.gov.uk/news/20250630/trees-wide-web-new-online-trees-map-launched) can sustain motivation by foregrounding what the group has already achieved rather than the magnitude of what remains.

Moreover, the concept of "participative efficacy" proves particularly important in this context. Participative efficacy captures individuals' belief that their contribution matters to group success (34). When leaders emphasise that every contribution counts and create structures where individual actions visibly contribute to collective goals, both participation and collective efficacy are strengthened. This explains why community-based climate initiatives often succeed where individual behaviour changes campaigns fail: members see their actions as part of a larger collective effort rather than as isolated personal choices.

Research has consistently demonstrated positive relationships between identity leadership and collective efficacy across diverse settings (25, 27). Most directly relevant to climate action, Jans et al. (35) examined identity leadership in community energy initiatives and found a strong correlation between identity leadership and collective efficacy, with both predicting project acceptability and willingness to join. This convergent evidence suggests that identity leadership mechanisms that build collective efficacy can be effectively applied to climate mobilisation contexts.

Rather than focusing messaging on individual responsibility or personal sacrifice, climate leaders can emphasize collective capability and group achievements. This might involve publicly celebrating community milestones in emissions reduction, highlighting how collective actions have produced measurable environmental improvements, or framing climate challenges as problems the group has the capability to solve together. By building collective efficacy through these mechanisms, leaders transform climate action from a burden that individuals must shoulder alone into an empowering collective endeavour.

EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY AS GROUP NORMS

Finding the balance between individual action and collective action specifically matters for achieving social tipping points, defined as the critical minority adoption that triggers broader social change. Whilst recent research identifies approximately 25% as the threshold for social convention shifts (36), seminal social psychological work on minority influence shows the psychological mechanisms underlying such tipping dynamics (37).

Minorities create change not through numbers alone but through consistency, confidence and commitment that forces majorities to reconsider assumed positions. Unlike majority influence, which often achieves mere compliance, committed minorities generate conversion and internalised attitude change that persists even without social pressure (37). Recent experimental evidence demonstrates that environmental activists can accelerate this conversion process when they are perceived as prototypical of the group's identity rather than as threatening deviants

DOI: 10.31389/lseppr.170

(38). Within sustainability contexts, minority members can become identity leaders, elevating expectations toward more ambitious environmental norms. This framework helps explain other social movement dynamics. For instance, Extinction Rebellion began as a small minority in 2018 and catalysed global climate mobilisation through their consistent behavioural style. By accepting arrest through nonviolent civil disobedience, they forced majority reconsideration of conventional climate activism, ultimately spreading the movement across the world (39). Their effectiveness did not arise from majority support but from behavioural consistency that signalled a profound commitment to climate values. Thus, committed minorities can function as identity leaders by demonstrating behavioural consistency. They need not await majority support to initiate influence processes that eventually shift broader social conventions.

Furthermore, leaders shape norms through both symbolic actions and structural changes. By adopting sustainable practices themselves and making them visible, leaders signal that environmental behaviour is normative for group members. When combined with the structural mechanisms discussed earlier, individual exemplary behaviour becomes woven into broader processes of norm formation and collective identity construction.

This integration of identity leadership with minority influence reveals how leaders can catalyse sustainable behaviour change. Leaders who cultivate a shared social identity while demonstrating behavioural commitment create the conditions for norm shifts. Through building identification, establishing environmental norms as group-defining, and fostering collective efficacy, they transform isolated individual actions into coordinated collective movements. The evidence suggests this process operates across contexts, from sports teams to community energy initiatives to global climate movements, indicating that identity leadership principles provide a robust foundation for understanding and enabling climate mobilisation. Yet this integration also raises theoretical tension: minority influence requires deviating from norms, yet identity leadership requires prototypicality. This tension could be resolved by looking at prototypicality as multidimensional. Greta Thunberg embodies core youth identity characteristics (authenticity, moral clarity) while advocating non-normative climate action. Additionally, identity leadership involves actively crafting aspirational identities. Effective leaders are prototypical of "who we are becoming," not just "who we are now," and therefore have the potential to extend norms in new directions (16). Lastly, temporal dynamics also matter in that leaders may initially face resistance but gain prototypicality as groups adopt new norms, exemplified by Extinction Rebellion's success.

CHALLENGE OF INCLUSIVE IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

The preceding sections establish how identity leadership can mobilise climate action by creating relevant group identities, building collective efficacy, and embedding sustainable norms. However, a critical challenge remains. Climate impacts and capacities for action vary across social groups. Climate leadership must therefore navigate the tension between building a unified collective identity for coordinated action whilst acknowledging that different groups face climate change in unique ways and possess unequal resources for response.

This challenge is not unique to climate contexts. Research on (crisis) leadership more broadly reveals that appeals to unified collective identity often obscure differential impacts and competing priorities. Subašić et al. (18) demonstrated that leadership involves intergroup competition where different factions attempt to define superordinate group values, norms, and appropriate responses. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, different experts competed to define what "protecting the community" meant. Some prioritised mortality reduction, whilst others stressed broader wellbeing impacts, including mental health (40, 41) or education (42, 43). These were not only policy disagreements but contests about community values and priorities. Moreover, the pandemic illustrated the "same storm, different boats" reality: whilst leaders invoked unified rhetoric, marginalised communities suffered disproportionate death rates even as affluent areas accessed better healthcare (44).

In climate contexts, these tensions are also acute. For example, climate action threatens not only specific policies, but lifestyle choices closely tied to valued identities. Meat-eating connects to masculine identity for some groups (45) and a high-consumption lifestyles signal economic success and social status (46). When climate leadership contests these practices, it challenges the status and identities they represent. This is a challenge at the identity level,

DOI: 10.31389/lseppr.170

making it particularly difficult to overcome through rational arguments or economic incentives alone (47). Beyond these identity threats, climate policies create distinct material impacts, with lowering carbon emission being closely related to inequality and so potentially affecting communities differently. For example, renewable energy transitions could displace workers in fossil fuel industries or dietary shifts might affect farming communities. Climate leadership that ignores these differential impacts risks fracturing potential coalitions and reproducing existing inequalities under the guise of collective action.

In addition, the identity leadership framework largely focuses on how leaders mobilise collective climate action within groups. Thus, identity leadership primarily addresses intragroup processes rather than relations between groups (48, 49). However, when considering climate politics involving multiple leaders mobilising different constituencies around competing positions, pro-climate identity leadership may provoke counter-mobilisation by leaders constructing oppositional identities. This creates potential for intergroup conflict and escalating polarisation. Managing intergroup conflict from a leadership perspective requires complementary frameworks, such as the intergroup leadership model (48, 49) or approaches that emphasise superordinate identity construction (50). However, intergroup cooperation and negotiation still require that groups themselves are mobilised and capable of collective action. Identity leadership provides the intragroup mechanisms that enable groups to act collectively, even if additional frameworks are needed to manage relations between groups.

Overall, building inclusive climate identities requires deliberate strategies. Thus, leaders should actively shape superordinate identity content to encompass diverse subgroup concerns rather than assuming a single climate identity fits all (51). This might involve articulating higher-order goals that different groups can align with whilst pursuing them through different means (52). In addition, inclusive climate leadership creates multiple pathways for contribution, recognising that groups possess different resources and face different constraints. Just as COVID-19 mutual aid groups enabled diverse participation through activities ranging from food delivery to mental health support (53), climate initiatives should offer varied entry points. Some community members might contribute through behaviour change, whilst others might contribute through advocacy or knowledge sharing or organising. This multiplicity ensures that participation does not depend on specific economic or social privileges. In addition, leaders should explicitly acknowledge differential impacts and address inequities rather than invoking empty unity rhetoric. Climate leadership requires transparency about who bears transition costs and who benefits from maintaining the status quo. This might involve explicitly discussing fairer transition principles, compensatory mechanisms for disproportionately affected communities, or progressive policy design that protects vulnerable populations.

An additional challenge emerges from what social psychologists call ingroup projection (54). Subgroups tend to project their own characteristics onto superordinate categories, assuming their values and norms define the larger group. In climate contexts, this means different factions may assume their approach represents what it means to be environmentally responsible. Urban professionals might project cycling and plant-based diets as defining a sustainable identity, whilst rural communities might emphasise land stewardship and local food systems. But leaders should avoid letting one group define "who we are" as climate actors. This requires actively crafting superordinate identities that are complex and multifaceted, explicitly incorporating diverse perspectives and practices rather than privileging dominant group characteristics (55, 56).

These considerations reveal that inclusive climate leadership is not simply about mobilising unified action but about building coalitions across differences. It requires acknowledging that whilst we face a common climate threat, we arrive from different positions with different vulnerabilities and capacities. Climate identity construction therefore balances the need for coordinated collective action with recognition of legitimate diversity in experiences, priorities and pathways to sustainability (57).

LEADERSHIP AS A CONTESTED AND CREDIBLE PROCESS

The inclusion challenges discussed above represent one dimension of complexity in climate leadership. Beyond building coalitions across diverse groups, climate leaders must also navigate active contestation from opposing interests. Climate leadership does not occur in a social

DOI: 10.31389/lseppr.170

vacuum but represents a contest for influence between competing visions of environmental futures. In climate contexts, this manifests as ongoing competition between those advocating systemic transformation and those defending the status quo, and extends beyond questions of inclusion to active resistance and co-option attempts (18). Within this contested landscape, leader credibility becomes essential. Research conducted by Westlake et al. (58) demonstrated that individual leader behaviours serve as powerful signals that either reinforce or undermine collective identification. When climate researchers who advocate for emission reductions continue to fly frequently to conferences, the inconsistency undermines their credibility and weakens their influence on public behaviour change (59). This behaviour-advocacy gap proves particularly acute in climate contexts. Unlike pandemics or conflicts where leaders face the same immediate threats as followers, climate impacts often feel temporally and spatially distant. When advocates maintain carbon-intensive lifestyles whilst promoting climate action, such behaviour can create cognitive dissonance that undermines emerging group identities (58, 60). The gap signals that climate action is not truly central to group values, making it harder for followers to internalise sustainable practices as identity-consistent behaviours.

Thus, leading by example functions not merely as individual virtue signalling but as strategic leadership. Leaders could use their own behavioural choices to define group boundaries and establish what membership means. When organisational leaders implement no-fly policies for short-haul trips and take trains themselves, they perform dual functions: modelling specific behaviours and reconstructing organisational identity around sustainability. The visible behavioural change redefines what it means to be a member of that organisation whilst demonstrating authentic commitment to collective values (61).

Yet this contested landscape makes climate leadership vulnerable to co-option by vested interests. Corporate greenwashing represents attempts to capture climate identity whilst preserving unsustainable systems. Lamb et al. (62) term these "discourses of climate delay." Such discourses employ identity rhetoric ("we're all in this together") whilst shifting responsibility away from systemic change toward individual action or technological fixes that preserve existing power structures. This strategic use of collective language without commitment undermines climate leadership by creating the façade of action whilst maintaining the status quo.

Distinguishing ethical climate leadership from populist manipulation (63) requires attention to three factors. First, consistency between rhetoric and action. Leaders who invoke a collective climate identity whilst maintaining carbon-intensive operations fail the credibility test. Second, transparency about trade-offs. Ethical leaders acknowledge challenges and losses involved in transition rather than promising painless solutions. Third, attention to distributional effects. Climate leadership should address rather than obscure differential impacts across social groups (64), recognising that burden-sharing and benefit distribution shape whether proposed collective identities feel inclusive or exploitative.

Thus, the relationship between individual examples and collective mobilisation is complex. As mentioned, research on minority influence shows that consistent behavioural commitment from dedicated minorities can shift group norms over time (38). However, overly demanding exemplary behaviour risks creating unrealistic standards that discourage rather than inspire action. Effective climate leadership requires calibrating behaviour to be aspirational yet achievable. Leaders should demonstrate commitment through actions that followers can realistically adopt whilst acknowledging systemic constraints. The goal is not creating an elite of sustainability exemplars but normalising progress and collective improvement.

These considerations suggest that policy interventions require accountability mechanisms to prevent "identity politics." Without such safeguards, collective identity rhetoric risks becoming another tool for maintaining unsustainable systems. The challenge for climate leadership is to build collective identity and efficacy whilst resisting co-option and remaining genuinely inclusive of diverse stakeholder perspectives.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS: FOSTERING IDENTITY LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Addressing climate change requires identity leadership at multiple scales, from local communities to international negotiations. Policy interventions should focus on developing identity leadership capabilities rather than simply providing information or economic incentives.

DOI: 10.31389/lseppr.170

At the community level, programmes that train local leaders in identity leadership principles show promising results. One example is The Women's Environmental Network's Climate Sisters programme. This 10–12-week Feminist Climate Leadership Programme brings together groups of marginalised and racialised women to collectively explore their priorities for climate justice across multiple scales (individual, local, regional, national, and international). Participants then develop creative projects showcasing their experiences, ideas, and solutions to the climate crisis (https://www.wen.org.uk/2023/04/26/meet-the-climate-sisters/). Such programmes emphasise the three cornerstones of effective identity leadership for sustainable behaviour: crafting inclusive narratives and identities; building collective efficacy through participatory co-production; and embedding sustainable practices as community norms.

Organisational leadership development could integrate sustainability with identity leadership training. Rather than treating environmental responsibility as a separate corporate function, organisational leaders could aim to embed sustainability into organisational identity. This requires moving beyond compliance-focused training toward programmes that help leaders connect environmental action to organisational values and purposes (65). For example, the 5R programme (Readying, Reflecting, Representing, Realising, and Reinforcing) provides a practical framework for identity leadership development (51). This work suggests that guiding leaders through processes of mapping values within teams, connecting these values to professional identity, and embedding value and norm considerations into organisational structures and practices (66) can be a fruitful approach to sustainable change. As demonstrated in social work contexts (67), this approach enables leaders to address emerging challenges (such as environmental justice) by grounding them in shared professional identity and collective purpose (for example, by ensuring that sustainability becomes intrinsic to organisational practice rather than an externally imposed compliance requirement).

At a national level, leaders could link climate action to existing national values. For example, the United Kingdom positioned itself as a climate leader by connecting to Britain's identity as an innovator and a global leader. In the 2008 Climate Change Act, the world's first legally binding national emissions law, was framed as putting "British business…into the forefront of world innovation" (68). Such leadership framing could be more effective than framing climate action as a moral obligation or sacrifice. Thus, to build a national identity as a pro-environmental identity, political leaders could represent climate action as expressing "who we already are" (representing), position the nation as climate leaders (advancing), articulate environmental values as core national values (crafting), and create national structures celebrating climate achievements (embedding). Yet effectiveness depends on credible links between climate action and existing national identity, leader legitimacy to redefine identity content, and tangible national benefits that reinforce identity claims.

Overall, the presented framework suggests shifting from individual responsibility narratives toward collective identity frames. Rather than "reduce your carbon footprint," messaging should emphasise "our community's climate action." This linguistic shift, whilst seemingly minor, fundamentally reframes climate action from individual burden to collective endeavour (69). Importantly, climate narratives could connect to existing identities rather than requiring people to adopt new ones. Parents could be urged to protect their children's future (70) or faith communities to see climate justice as a moral issue (71), with identity-matching approaches likely more effective than generic climate messaging.

At the international level, negotiations should recognise the importance of identity dynamics in building coalitions. Rather than focusing solely on technical targets or financial transfers, diplomacy should attend to creating superordinate identities that enable collective action. The Paris Agreement partly reflected its ability to create an inclusive "we" rather than maintaining divisive "developed" versus "developing" country categories (72). Future negotiations could benefit from explicit attention to how treaty language and institutional structures either facilitate or hinder the construction of a shared global climate identity.

Importantly, though, policies should create structures that make collective impact visible and meaningful. Carbon accounting systems that track neighbourhood, city, or organisational progress rather than just individual footprints could help build collective efficacy. Research

on community energy initiatives demonstrates that when community members have visible influence over collective environmental projects, both perceived collective efficacy and willingness to participate increase substantially (35). Such interventions can celebrate progress rather than emphasise inadequacy, as collective efficacy is strengthened when groups can see tangible evidence of their shared impact on sustainability goals.

Policies should therefore balance urgency with agency, maintaining motivation through recognition of collective achievements (73). Investment in collective infrastructure such as public transport, renewable energy systems, and community gardens provides tangible evidence of group capacity to address climate challenges. These collective goods serve both practical and symbolic functions, demonstrating that "we can do this together" whilst making sustainable behaviours more accessible.

Yet a critical challenge for identity-based climate mobilisation remains the tension between local identity mobilisation and planetary-scale coordination. Whilst place-based identities effectively mobilise local action, as we have seen in examples throughout this paper, achieving change on a global scale proves more difficult (74). An open question remains: what form of identity is required for transformational change at a planetary scale and what kind of global leadership would enable it? Related to these questions of scale are questions of justice. As emphasised throughout this paper, climate impacts and capacities for action vary by class, race, geography, and generation. Identity narratives that obscure these differences whilst ignoring distinct vulnerabilities risk reproducing inequalities and fracturing coalitions (75). Climate leadership must acknowledge differential impacts whilst building solidarity through what Muldoon terms "inclusive superordinate identities", shared identities that encompass rather than erase difference (76).

CONCLUSION

The climate crisis requires rapid, large-scale behavioural change that individual-focused approaches have failed to deliver. This paper demonstrates that effective climate action requires identity leadership that activates group-level processes, bridging the gap between individual intent and systemic transformation through mobilised communities.

I propose three core principles for climate leadership. First, leaders create and activate group identities that make climate action identity-relevant rather than treating it as an external obligation. Second, they build collective efficacy by making group impact visible and celebrating collective achievements rather than emphasising individual helplessness. Third, they embed sustainable practices as group norms through both symbolic actions and structural changes, making environmental behaviour an expression of group membership rather than an individual sacrifice.

The climate crisis might be humanity's defining collective challenge. It demands identity leadership that transforms "I should act" into "we must act together." The social identity approach to leadership offers both theoretical foundations and practical strategies for this transformation. Sustainable futures will be built not through millions of isolated individual choices nor through top-down policies alone but through mobilised communities who see environmental protection as expressing their collective identity. The path to sustainability lies in activating the power of "we."

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author has no competing interests to declare.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS

Ilka H. Gleibs orcid.org/0000-0002-9913-250X
London School of Economics and Political Science, Department of Psychological and Behavioural Science, UK

REFERENCES

1. **Chater N, Loewenstein G.** The i-frame and the s-frame: How focusing on individual-level solutions has led behavioral public policy astray. *Behav Brain Sci*. 2023;46:e147. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/s0140525x22002023
2. **Bingley WJ, Haslam SA, Haslam C, Hornsey MJ, Mols F.** Why a group-level analysis is essential for effective public policy: The case for a g-frame. *Behav Brain Sci*. 2023;46:e148. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/s0140525x23000894
3. **Grinstein A, Bolderdijk JW, Risselada H.** From i-level to g-level to s-level change: New methods for a new mindset for consumer researchers. *J Bus Res*. 2025 Sept;198:115492. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2025.115492
4. **Haslam SA, Reicher SD, Platow MJ.** Leadership: Theory and practice. In Mikulincer M, Shaver PR, Dovidio JF, Simpson JA, editors. *APA handbook of personality and social psychology*, Volume 2: Group processes [Internet]. Washington: American Psychological Association; 2015 [cited 2025 Oct 20]. pp. 67–94. Available from: https://content.apa.org/books/14342-003
5. **Haslam SA, Steffens NK, Reicher SD, Bentley SV.** Identity leadership in a crisis: A 5R framework for learning from responses to COVID-19. *Soc Issues Policy Rev*. 2021 Jan;15(1):35–83. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12075
6. **Steffens NK, Haslam SA, Reicher SD, Platow MJ, Fransen K, Yang J,** et al. Leadership as social identity management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to assess and validate a four-dimensional model. *Leadersh Q*. 2014 Oct;25(5):1001–1024. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.05.002
7. **Jetten J, Fielding KS, Crimston CR, Mols F, Haslam SA.** Responding to climate change disaster: The case of the 2019/2020 bushfires in Australia. *Eur Psychol*. 2021 July;26(3):161–171. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040/a000432
8. **Riggio RE, Newstead T.** Crisis leadership. *Annu Rev Organ Psychol Organ Behav*. 2023 Jan 23;10(1):201–224. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-120920-044838
9. **Gleibs IH.** A social identity approach to crisis leadership. *Br J Soc Psychol*. 2024 Sept;64(2):e12805. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12805
10. **Bernhard S.** Climate change as a chronic crisis in Bern Lerner's 10:04. *Resil J Environ Humanit*. 2021;8(2):1–23. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/res.2020.0047
11. **Syropoulos S, Markowitz E.** Responsibility towards future generations is a strong predictor of proenvironmental engagement. *J Environ Psychol*. 2024 Feb;93:102218. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2023.102218
12. **Van Valkengoed AM, Steg L, Perlaviciute G.** The psychological distance of climate change is overestimated. *One Earth*. 2023 Apr;6(4):362–391. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2023.03.006
13. **Fritsche I, Barth M, Jugert P, Masson T, Reese G.** A social identity model of pro-environmental action (SIMPEA). *Psychol Rev*. 2018 Mar;125(2):245–269. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1037/rev0000090
14. **Masson T, Fritsche I.** We need climate change mitigation and climate change mitigation needs the 'We': a state-of-the-art review of social identity effects motivating climate change action. *Curr Opin Behav Sci*. 2021 Dec;42:89–96. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cobeha.2021.04.006
15. **Gleibs IH, Funk L.** *Leading in the Climate Crisis: The role of identity leadership in fostering identity and collective efficacy for climate action*. 2025.
16. **Subašić E, Reynolds KJ, Mohamed MS.** Changing identities to change soceity: Leadership as a contest for influence and collective mobilization. In: Reynolds KJ, Branscombe NR, editors. *Psychology of change* [Internet]. New York: Psychology Press; 2014. pp. 260–277. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315735160
17. **Supran G, Oreskes N.** *Assessing ExxonMobil's climate change communications*. In 2019 [cited 2025 Oct 20]. p. PA14A-10. Available from: https://ui.adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/2019AGUFMPA14A..10S
18. **Subašić E, Mohamed S, Reynolds KJ, Rushton C, Haslam SA.** Collective mobilisation as a contest for influence: Leading for change or against the status quo? *Eur J Soc Psychol*. 2022 Dec;52(7):1111–1127. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2891
19. **Hiller JS.** The benefit corporation and corporate social responsibility. *J Bus Ethics*. 2013 Dec;118(2):287–301. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1580-3
20. **Sabherwal A, Ballew MT, Van Der Linden S, Gustafson A, Goldberg MH, Maibach EW,** et al. The Greta Thunberg Effect: Familiarity with Greta Thunberg predicts intentions to engage in climate activism in the United States. *J Appl Soc Psychol*. 2021 Apr;51(4):321–333. Available from: https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1111/jasp.12737
21. **Steffens NK, Munt KA, Van Knippenberg D, Platow MJ, Haslam SA.** Advancing the social identity theory of leadership: A meta-analytic review of leader group prototypicality. *Organ Psychol Rev*. 2021 Feb;11(1):35–72. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386620962569
22. **van Dick R, Cordes BL, Lemoine JE, Steffens NK, Haslam SA, Akfirat SA,** et al. Identity leadership, employee burnout and the mediating role of team identification: Evidence from the Global Identity Leadership Development Project. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2021 Nov;18(22):12081. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182212081

23. **Van Dick R, Lemoine JE, Steffens NK, Kerschreiter R, Akfirat SA, Avanzi L,** et al. Identity leadership going global: Validation of the identity leadership inventory across 20 countries. *J Occup Organ Psychol*. 2018 Dec;91(4):697–728. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1111/joop.12223
24. **Krug H, Haslam SA, Otto K, Steffens NK.** Identity leadership, social identity continuity, and well-being at work during COVID-19. *Front Psychol*. 2021 June 11;12:684475. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.684475
25. **Krug H, Geibel HV, Otto K.** Identity leadership and well-being: Team identification and trust as underlying mechanisms. *Leadersh Organ Dev J*. 2020 Oct 8;42(1):17–31. Available from: https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1108/LODJ-02-2020-0054
26. **Frenzel S, Haslam SA, Nina J.** How national leaders keep 'us' safe: A longitudinal, four-nationa study exploring the role of identity leadership as a predictor of adherence to Covid-19 non-pharmaceutical interventions. *BMJ Open*. 2022;12:e054980. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2021-054980
27. **Fransen K, Haslam SA, Steffens NK, Mallett CJ, Peters K, Boen F.** Making 'us' better: High-quality athlete leadership relates to health and burnout in professional Australian football teams. *Eur J Sport Sci*. 2020 Aug;20(7):953–963. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17461391.2019.1680736
28. **Figgins SG, Slater MJ, Smith MJ, Miller AJ, Sharpe BT, Pocock C,** et al. Promote "*we*" to inspire me: Examining the roles of group identification and trust in the association between identity leadership and follower inspiration. *Int J Sport Exerc Psychol*. 2025 Feb 23;23(2):261–280. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2023.2300001
29. **Bibic K, Frenzel SB, Kerschreiter R, Wilson-Lemoine J, Steffens N, Haslam SA,** et al. The value of leaders we trust and leaders who make us stronger: Exploring the distinct contributions of different components of identity leadership to group member outcomes. *Group Process Intergroup Relat*. 2025 Aug 21;29(2):13684302251341818. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302251341818
30. **Hamann KRS, Wullenkord MC, Reese G, Van Zomeren M.** Believing that we can change our world for the better: A triple-a (agent-action-aim) framework of self-efficacy beliefs in the context of collective social and ecological aims. *Personal Soc Psychol Rev*. 2024 Feb;28(1):11–53. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/10888683231178056
31. **Ritchie H.** *Not the end of the world: How we can be the first generation to build a sustainable planet*. London: Chatto & Windus; 2024. 340 p.
32. **Geiger N, Swim JK, Fraser J.** With a little help from my friends: Social support, hope and climate change engagement. *Br J Soc Psychol*. 2025 Jan;64(1):e12837. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12837
33. **Abrahamse W, Steg L.** Social influence approaches to encourage resource conservation: A meta-analysis. *Glob Environ Change*. 2013 Dec;23(6):1773–1785. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2013.07.029
34. **Van Zomeren M, Postmes T, Spears R.** Toward an integrative social identity model of collective action: A quantitative research synthesis of three socio-psychological perspectives. *Psychol Bull*. 2008 July;134(4):504–535. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.134.4.504
35. **Jans L, Goedkoop F, Perlaviciute G, Hamann K, Masson T, Burgerhof B.** How bottom-up and top-down governance of community energy initiatives affects citizens' perceptions, acceptability, and willingness to join. *Energy Policy*. 2024 Dec;195:114389. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2024.114389
36. **Centola D, Becker J, Brackbill D, Baronchelli A.** Experimental evidence for tipping points in social convention. *Science*. 2018 June 8;360(6393):1116–1119. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aas8827
37. **Prislin R.** Minority influence: An agenda for study of social change. *Front Psychol*. 2022 June 23;13:911654. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.911654
38. **Koudenburg N, Jans L, Jonker MN.** Entrepreneurs of sustainable identity in groups that value similarity or diversity: Trajectories of change. *Soc Influ*. 2025 Dec 31;20(1):2540411. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/15534510.2025.2540411
39. **Furlong C, Vignoles VL.** Social identification in collective climate activism: Predicting participation in the environmental movement, extinction rebellion. *Identity*. 2021 Jan 2;21(1):20–35. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2020.1856664
40. **Burki TK.** Herd immunity for COVID-19. *Lancet Respir Med*. 2021 Feb;9(2):135–136. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/s2213-2600(20)30555-5
41. **Burki T.** The indirect impact of COVID-19 on women. *Lancet Infect Dis*. 2020 Aug;20(8):904–905. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/s1473-3099(20)30568-5
42. **Mazrekaj D, De Witte K.** The impact of school closures on learning and mental health of children: Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic. *Perspect Psychol Sci*. 2024 July;19(4):686–693. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916231181108
43. **Townsend E.** Debate: The impact of school closures and lockdown on mental health in young people. *Child Adolesc Ment Health*. 2020 Nov;25(4):265–266. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/camh.12428

44. **McGowan VJ, Bambra C.** COVID-19 mortality and deprivation: pandemic, syndemic, and endemic health inequalities. *Lancet Public Health*. 2022 Nov;7(11):e966–e975. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(22)00223-7
45. **Velzeboer R, Li E, Gao N, Sharp P, Oliffe JL.** Masculinity, meat, and veg*nism: A scoping review. *Am J Mens Health*. 2024 Mar;18(2):15579883241247173. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/15579883241247173
46. **Ramakrishnan A, Creutzig F.** Status consciousness in energy consumption: A systematic review. *Environ Res Lett*. 2021 May 1;16(5):053010. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/abf003
47. **Capstick S, Lorenzoni I, Corner A, Whitmarsh L.** Prospects for radical emissions reduction through behavior and lifestyle change. *Carbon Manag*. 2014 July 4;5(4):429–445. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17583004.2015.1020011
48. **Pittinsky TL.** A two-dimensional model of intergroup leadership: The case of national diversity. *Am Psychol*. 2010 Apr;65(3):194–200. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017329
49. **Pittinsky TL, Simon S.** Intergroup leadership. *Leadersh Q*. 2007 Dec;18(6):586–605. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2007.09.005
50. **Hogg MA.** Constructive leadership across groups: How leaders can combat prejudice and conflict between subgroups. In: Thye SR, Lawler EJ, editors. *Advances in group processes* [Internet]. Volume 32. Bingley, England: Emerald Group Publishing Limited; 2015 [cited 2026 Jan 22]. pp. 177–207. Available from: https://www.emerald.com/books/book/15342/chapter/86530193/Constructive-Leadership-across-Groups-How-Leaders
51. **Haslam SA, Steffens NK, Peters K, Boyce RA, Mallett CJ, Fransen K.** A social identity approach to leadership development: The 5R program. *J Pers Psychol*. 2017 July;16(3):113–124. Available from: https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1027/1866-5888/a000176
52. **Butterworth J, Smerdon D, Baumeister R, Von Hippel W.** Cooperation in the time of COVID. *Perspect Psychol Sci*. 2024 July;19(4):640–651. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916231178719
53. **Mao G, Drury J, Fernandes-Jesus M, Ntontis E.** How participation in Covid-19 mutual aid groups affects subjective well-being and how political identity moderates these effects. *Anal Soc Issues Public Policy*. 2021 Dec;21(1):1082–1112. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/asap.12275
54. **Waldzus S, Mummendey A, Wenzel M, Weber U.** Towards tolerance: Representations of superordinate categories and perceived ingroup prototypicality. *J Exp Soc Psychol*. 2003 Jan;39(1):31–47. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-1031(02)00507-3
55. **Loy LS, Reese G, Spence A.** Facing a common human fate: Relating global identity and climate change mitigation. *Polit Psychol*. 2022 June;43(3):563–581. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12781
56. **Pong V, Tam KP.** Relationship between global identity and pro-environmental behavior and environmental concern: A systematic review. *Front Psychol*. 2023 Apr 17;14:1033564. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1033564
57. **Leonardelli GJ, Pickett CL, Brewer MB.** Optimal distinctiveness theory. In: Zanna MP, Olson JM, editors. *Advances in experimental social psychology* [Internet]. Volume 43. San Diego: Elsevier; 2010 [cited 2026 Jan 22]. pp. 63–113. Available from: https://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0065260110430026
58. **Westlake S, Demski C, Pidgeon N.** Leading by example from high-status individuals: Exploring a crucial missing link in climate change mitigation. *Humanit Soc Sci Commun*. 2024 Sept 27;11(1):1292. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03787-8
59. **Attari SZ, Krantz DH, Weber EU.** Climate change communicators' carbon footprints affect their audience's policy support. *Clim Change*. 2019 June;154(3–4):529–545. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-019-02463-0
60. **Westlake S.** Low-carbon leadership from high-status individuals: Exploring a crucial missing link in climate change mitigation. *SSRN Electron J* [Internet]. 2024 [cited 2025 Oct 23]; Available from: https://www.ssrn.com/abstract=4756980
61. **Verfuerth C, Demski C, Capstick S, Whitmarsh L, Poortinga W.** A people-centred approach is needed to meet net zero goals. *J Br Acad*. 2023 Sept 28;11:97–124. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5871/jba/011s4.097
62. **Lamb WF, Mattioli G, Levi S, Roberts JT, Capstick S, Creutzig F,** et al. Discourses of climate delay. *Glob Sustain*. 2020;3:e17. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/sus.2020.13
63. **Uysal MS, Jurstakova K, Uluşahin Y.** An integrative social identity model of populist leadership. *Soc Personal Psychol Compass*. 2022 Dec;16(12):e12713. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12713
64. **Chisadza C, Clance M, Sheng X, Gupta R.** Climate change and inequality: Evidence from the United States. *Sustainability*. 2023 Mar 17;15(6):5322. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3390/su15065322
65. **Barth M, Masson T, Fritsche I, Fielding K, Smith JR.** Collective responses to global challenges: The social psychology of pro-environmental action. *J Environ Psychol*. 2021 Apr;74:101562. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2021.101562

66. **Haslam SA, Reutas J, Bentley SV, McMillan B, Lindfield M, Luong M,** et al. Developing engaged and 'teamful' leaders: A randomized controlled trial of the 5R identity leadership program. *PLoS One*. 2023 May 25;18(5):e0286263. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0286263
67. **Lynch D, McMillan B.** Enacting change through leadership practice in social work: A social identity approach. *Br J Soc Work*. 2025 June 24;55(8):3796–3814. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcaf118
68. **Fankhauser S, Averchenkova A.** 10 Years of the UK Climate Change Act. *Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment*. London School of Economics; 2018. Available from: https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/10-Years-of-the-UK-Climate-Change-Act_Fankhauser-et-al.pdf
69. **Bachmann R, Gleibs IH.** Uncovering the secret life of we-pronouns in the German parliament: Computational text analysis in a large-scale speech dataset. *Z Für Psychol*. 2024 July;232(3):200–208. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1027/2151-2604/a000564
70. **Lawson DF, Stevenson KT, Peterson MN, Carrier SJ, L. Strnad R, Seekamp E.** Children can foster climate change concern among their parents. *Nat Clim Change*. 2019 June;9(6):458–462. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-019-0463-3
71. **Salter J, Wilkinson O.** Faith framing climate: a review of faith actors' definitions and usage of climate change. *Clim Dev*. 2024 Feb 7;16(2):97–108. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2023.2183073
72. **Kinley R.** Climate change after Paris: From turning point to transformation. *Clim Policy*. 2017 Jan 2;17(1):9–15. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/14693062.2016.1191009
73. **Ojala M.** Hope and climate-change engagement from a psychological perspective. *Curr Opin Psychol*. 2023 Feb;49:101514. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2022.101514
74. **Woltering L, Fehlenberg K, Gerard B, Ubels J, Cooley L.** Scaling – from "reaching many" to sustainable systems change at scale: A critical shift in mindset. *Agric Syst*. 2019 Nov;176:102652. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agsy.2019.102652
75. **Roberts JT, Parks BC.** *A climate of injustice: Global inequality, North-South politics, and climate policy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT; 2006.
76. **Muldoon OT.** *The social psychology of trauma: Connecting the personal and the political*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press; 2024. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009306997

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:
Gleibs IH. How Identity Leadership Drives Collective Action for Sustainability. *LSE Public Policy Review*. 2026; 4(3): 5, pp. 1–14. DOI: https://doi.org/10.31389/lseppr.170

Submitted: 22 January 2026
Accepted: 14 July 2026
Published: 05 November 2026

COPYRIGHT:
© 2026 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/.

LSE Public Policy Review is a peer-reviewed open access journal published by LSE Press.