California has been a leader in climate change action for decades. And, that leadership has made an impact. A few examples: AB 32 (2006) was one of the first comprehensive climate action laws in the world; Tesla, despite Musk's protestations, was the result of California's climate and clean air regulations; cap & trade, whatever you might think of it, created a market mechanism copied around the world; the Low Carbon Fuel Standard generated alternative fuels and industrial in bulk; GHG emissions standards impacted cars worldwide; solar and wind power initiatives impacted price and supply; California's first-in-world energy storage procurement requirement changed the industry; etc., etc.

Now, with the world falling far short of the Paris Agreement and the abdication by the United States, we find ourselves in a precarious situation, facing tipping points and massive disruption.

California's leadership should take a different and bolder form, and the next Governor can bring that to fruition. In addition to providing an example of climate action at scale, California can be the center of worldwide climate action, and reap significant benefits.

The grander role could take a number of forms, but here are some possibilities:

1. Science consortium of universities, institutes, and state government. Universities are notoriously bad at collaborating, but CA could take the lead in funding coordinated research across some of the world's leading universities and institutions;

2. True and specific roadmaps to end fossil fuel usage for the power and transportation sectors. We give lip service to the need to end fossil fuel dependency, but the specifics are lacking. (The Newsom administration has made some progress, but much more detail about sequencing, impacts, and timing is needed). If the world's 4th or 5th largest economy can do it, others will follow;

3. Technology consortium, for climate tech solutions. This could be an ARPA-E replacement, with government support, first loss insurance, university and company participation with specific goals;

4. Expanded financing with government guarantees for the “valleys of death,” expanded I-Bank participation, and some coverage of risk

5. Methane action. California already has the world’s leading methane reduction requirements. Methane is the “climate emergency break.” CA could make methane action and technology innovation a worldwide cornerstone;

6. Ocean CO2 Extraction. This is a growing field. LBL is in a leading role, which CA could expand;

7. Battery clearinghouse. Battery technology can impact multiple industries. What if we have a 1500 mile range battery? That changes our charging needs and cost of cars, while the same technology could then impact how buildings use and store energy and how renewable energy meets peak demand. CA should be leading on all aspects of battery technology and applications.

There are lots of other possibilities. But, right now, with the short-term focus on affordability, we seem to be short on any vision for the next iteration of climate change action.

Time for California to step it up.