



FACT SHEET: United States Policy on the Kyoto Protocol

“The earth’s well-being is also an issue important to America – and it’s an issue that should be important to every nation and in every part of the world. My Administration is committed to a leadership role on the issue of climate change. We recognize our responsibility and we will meet it, at home, in our hemisphere, and in the world.” - President George W. Bush

On March 29, 2001, the Bush Administration withdrew the United States from the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change.

The U.S. Government is deeply committed to developing an effective way to address the problem of global warming. The United States believes, however, that the Kyoto Protocol is fundamentally flawed, and is not the correct vehicle with which to produce real environmental solutions.

The Kyoto Protocol does not provide the long-term solution the world seeks to the problem of global warming. The goals of the Kyoto Protocol were established not by science, but by political negotiation, and are therefore arbitrary and ineffective in nature. In addition, many countries of the world are completely exempted from the Protocol, such as China and India, who are two of the top five emitters of greenhouse gasses in the world. Further, the Protocol could have potentially significant repercussions for the global economy.

That is why, ten days after entering office, President Bush established a Cabinet-level working group to find a more practical method to work with global climate change. The result of the working group was an energy policy that reflected the seriousness and practicality of the future of United States’ environmental policy.

Following the work of this Cabinet-level group, the President announced in February of 2002 the Clear Skies and Global Climate Change Initiatives. These initiatives collectively accomplish the following for global climate change:

- By 2018, cuts emissions of the three worst air pollutants by seventy percent.
- In the next ten years, commits America to cutting greenhouse gas intensity by eighteen percent.
- Achieves goals comparable to the Kyoto Protocol using market-based approaches.

Both the above Initiatives and the future of environmental policy center on the following key recommendations of the working group:

- **Ensuring continuing economic growth.** The solution to the problem of climate change must be based on free market solutions, so that it is both sustainable and smart. It is in no country’s best interest to sacrifice their or the United States’ economic growth, which could have adverse effects around the world. With market-based incentive structures to spur innovation, we can move forward in the field of environmental conservation. Provisions under to Kyoto Protocol would rely on inflexible regulatory structures that would distort investment and waste billions of dollars on pollution permits, accomplishing no real change for the environment. Furthermore, a number of countries would reap huge windfall gains not

based on actual reduction of greenhouse gas emissions but rather, because external factors made baseline emission quotas inappropriate. Estimates of such spending under regulation range from 2-4% of United States GDP, which would have a similar effect on the economy as the worldwide Oil Supply Shock of the 1970's.

- **Finding “truly global” solutions.** The future of the global environment is not a question that any one or any one group of countries can solve. The effort to address this issue in a real and practical way must be as comprehensive as possible, incorporating as many countries as possible into the effort to reach attainable, scientific goals. Currently, the developing countries of our globe emit more greenhouse gases than the developed ones. Global warming cannot be effectively addressed without considering this aspect.
- **Utilizing the most modern technology.** The United States is committed to investing heavily in research and development and encouraging private companies to do the same through market-based incentives. As a country, the United States intends to use this technology to further both its environmental and energy goals globally, starting with the new National Climate Change Technology Initiative. Since 1990, the United States has spent more than all of the countries of the European Union on research in this field and intends to use the knowledge gained in this process intelligently to address America's global future.
- **Focusing on bilateral relations to provide assistance, especially in the Western Hemisphere.** In places where the processes of democracy and free markets are already firmly established, the United States has an even greater ability to truly influence the future in this field with practical assistance. The Bush administration has already worked with over 56 countries in our Hemisphere and beyond on their energy and environmental policy in places where it is needed the most.

The United States fully acknowledges the problem of global warming, and is committed to pursuing a practical and sustainable plan to address this grave situation. The United States hopes to find a workable solution to this serious problem that affects all of us in the global community.