

NACAA Global Warming Principles
May 1, 2007

Introduction

The phenomenon of global warming has emerged as an issue of serious concern worldwide. While not a new issue—the scientific evidence pointing to the need for action on global warming has been accumulating for decades—the latest reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provide the most compelling case for action now. In February 2007, the IPCC concluded that the evidence of global warming is “unequivocal” and it is very likely (at least 90 percent probability) that human activities have contributed to the global warming experienced to date. The IPCC also states in its report that the global climate is likely to warm between 2 and 4.5 degrees Centigrade (°C) (3.5 to 8 degrees Fahrenheit (°F)) if carbon dioxide (CO₂) concentrations in the atmosphere reach twice pre-industrial levels of 280 parts per million (ppm). Global CO₂ concentrations currently stand at 379 ppm, and if annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions remain at today’s levels, CO₂ concentrations will double by 2050 and triple by 2100, compared to pre-industrial levels.

The February 2007 IPCC report also concluded that global warming is already affecting our planet and is projected to cause severe impacts. The warming experienced to date has caused widespread melting of snow and ice, rising Arctic temperatures, widespread changes in precipitation levels, rising global mean sea level and extreme weather events such as droughts, heavy precipitation, heat waves and more intense tropical cyclones. Continuing increases in CO₂ concentrations will lead to more heat waves, heavy precipitation (including more intense storms such as hurricanes) and droughts in the future, as well as further rises in sea level and acidification of the oceans. In April 2007, the IPCC released a report on climate change impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. This report concluded that 20 to 30% of plant and animal species are at increased risk of extinction if increases in global average temperature exceed 1.5 to 2.5°C. Projected health effects include the increased frequency of cardiorespiratory diseases due to higher concentrations of ground-level ozone and increased deaths, disease and injury due to heat waves, floods, storms, fires and droughts

Following the historical model of air pollution control in the United States, states and localities are leading the way in addressing global warming, including by setting state- or locality-wide caps on GHG emissions, limiting emissions from motor vehicles or power plants, participating in a multi-state GHG registry and developing climate change action plans.

The U.S. Congress is currently focusing significant attention on global warming and legislative proposals to reduce GHG emissions. As discussion ensues regarding these proposals, the National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACAA) offers the following principles, upon which the association believes a viable approach to global warming pollution should be based.

The principles below support the adoption of a mandatory economy-wide program, but one that is flexible enough to allow for a portfolio of strategies to be adopted in addition to such a program. The principles also support sector-specific strategies for the two largest sources of GHG emissions in the U.S.: electric power and motor vehicles. The principles recognize that the federal government would have the lead on an economy-wide program but that there should be a strong role for states and localities. In particular, federal legislation should not preempt state or local governments from taking more stringent actions to reduce GHG emissions.

Principles

1. NACAA urges Congress to promptly enact a mandatory economy-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction program with quantifiable and enforceable limits.
2. This program should include measures and programs that reduce GHG emissions in a cost-effective manner, utilizing, among other approaches, market-based strategies.
3. The goal of such legislation should be to reduce U.S. GHG emissions substantially below current levels in order to lessen dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate. The legislation should also set interim milestones, including short, medium and long-term GHG emission reduction targets, and recognize the benefits of significant early reductions.
4. While any federal program should be sufficiently stringent to substantially reduce GHG emissions, federal legislation should not preempt state or local governments from taking more stringent actions to reduce GHG emissions within their jurisdictions. Legislation should also ensure that GHG emissions do not increase elsewhere as a result of these actions.
5. Federal legislation should reflect the extremely active role state and local governments have played, and will continue to play, in reducing GHG emissions, ranging from developing emission inventories and registries (including reporting protocols) to adopting regulatory emission reduction strategies and action plans.
6. Federal legislation should authorize, and Congress should appropriate, sufficient funds for federal, state and local agencies to implement GHG emission inventory, registry and reduction programs. These funds should be newly authorized appropriations, not reprogrammed resources.
7. Because power generation is the primary source of GHG emissions in the U.S., energy efficiency should be a priority when evaluating emission reduction strategies from this sector. Congress should develop stringent energy efficiency standards for new products in the residential, commercial

and industrial sectors. In addition, Congress should require that all cost-effective energy efficiency measures (e.g., demand-side management strategies) be considered at existing facilities.

8. Congress should require that new Electric Generating Units, as well as existing units making major modifications, reduce GHG emissions by meeting the best available performance standard.
9. Federal legislation should address the transportation sector, the second largest source of GHG emissions in the United States. Legislation should include measures designed to reduce the carbon content of fuels and to promote the development of biofuels that, over their life cycle, produce lower carbon emissions. Legislation should also promote land use and transportation planning that encourages compact, transit-friendly development and alternatives to single occupancy vehicles.
10. Congress should set stringent Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for passenger vehicles and trucks to reduce their substantial GHG emissions. Such standards should become more stringent over time as technology advances.
11. Federal legislation should include measures to promote expanded uses of clean renewable energy, including but not limited to wind, solar, geothermal and appropriate biomass sources.
12. Any data collection system (such as an inventory, registry or allowance tracking program) should be open and transparent and contain data with high environmental integrity.
13. Congress should provide the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with the lead federal role in implementing these programs (e.g., inventory, registry and any market-based program that may be adopted).
14. Federal legislation should promote actions that have collateral and multi-pollutant benefits, including benefits to other environmental media.
15. Federal legislation should recognize that global warming is already underway and should require a full updated assessment of the potential impacts to the United States, including effects on water resources, agriculture, infrastructure, natural systems, environmental quality, public health, biodiversity and the cultures of our native peoples. Such an updated assessment will support the development of domestic and international adaptation strategies. EPA should support and assist, as necessary, states in developing adaptation plans.

16. Congress should authorize and appropriate funding and provide other incentives to spur the *deployment* of new and existing technologies to improve energy efficiency and reduce GHG emissions.
17. Congress should authorize and appropriate funding and provide other incentives for expanded *research, development and demonstration* of new and innovative technologies and other mitigation strategies (e.g., carbon capture and storage) to reduce GHG emissions.
18. Congress should promote and expand technology and R&D transfer with other countries, focusing on developing countries.
19. Congress should seriously consider the GHG recommendations of other state and local organizations, including, among others, the National Governors Association, the Environmental Council of States, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and The Climate Registry.