

**Subject:** Global Warming and GHG Reduction

To All:

FYI - The pressure to regulate carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses is mounting. Below are two articles from Environmental Resource Center's Environmental Tip of the Week at [www.ercweb.com](http://www.ercweb.com).

Gary

## **President Unveils U.S. Plan to Curb Global Warming**

Last week, President Bush announced his plans for reducing carbon emissions and other steps the administration is taking to curb global warming. At the "major economies meeting," the President indicated (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/09/20070928-1.html>) that a strong and transparent system is needed for measuring progress and that each nation should design its own separate strategy for making progress to achieve these goals. **New Report Sets Target for U.S. Emissions Cuts**

## **New Report Sets Target for U.S. Emissions Cuts**

According to a study by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) and scientists at Stanford University and Texas Tech University, the world needs to stabilize the concentration of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere to no more than 450 parts per million in order to avoid the most severe effects of climate change. This limit aims to avoid exceeding a 2 degree Celsius increase in global average temperature above preindustrial levels (roughly equivalent to a 2 degree Fahrenheit rise above current temperatures).

Stabilizing gases above this level likely would lead to severe risks to natural systems and human health. Sustained warming of this magnitude could, for example, result in the extinction of many species and increase the threat of extensive melting of the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets.

"Hitting this target for heat-trapping gases would give us a fighting chance to avoid the worst consequences of global warming," said Amy Luers, UCS California climate manager and one of the study's authors. "The study assumes both developing and industrialized countries would cut their emissions to avoid such a temperature increase. However, even with other countries taking aggressive action, the United States must make deep cuts."

The study found that the United States must cut its emissions by at least 80 percent below 2000 levels by 2050 if the world is to stay within the prescribed atmospheric concentration limit. According to the study, cutting emissions soon is essential.

"The cost of delay is high," said Michael D. Mastrandrea, research associate at the Woods Institute for the

10/10/2007

Environment at Stanford University. "If we wait until 2020 to start emission reductions, we'll have to cut twice as fast than if we start in 2010 to meet the same target."

U.S. policies under consideration vary in the timing and levels of emission cuts called for and many fail to achieve the minimum pollution cuts needed.

"This report makes clear that the United States must make meaningful cuts in global warming pollution, and soon, to reduce the risk of severe climate impacts," said Alden Meyer, UCS director of strategy and policy. "President Bush should drop his opposition to mandatory emissions limits and put forward a specific proposal to aggressively reduce U.S. emissions at the meeting of major emitting countries that he is hosting next week."

Congress also must act to help the world avoid the worst consequences of global warming. [Several pieces of legislation](#) have been introduced that set mandatory reductions, but only two bills would keep U.S. emissions within the overall limits called for in the UCS study. One measure was introduced by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) and the other by Sens. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.).

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