RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN U.S. CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

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In 2009, the United States made a commitment to reduce U.S. GHG emissions in the range of 17 percent below 2005 levels by 2020.

Source: www.whitehouse.gov
AGENDA

• Institutional Arrangements
• Building on Success – First Term Progress
• Climate Action Plan
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS – FEDERAL ACTORS IN GOVERNANCE OF ENERGY, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND CLIMATE-RELATED POLICIES

Constitution
(provided a separation of powers)

Legislative
(makes laws)

Executive
(carries out laws)

Judicial
(evaluates laws)

Senate
100 elected senators total; 2 senators per state

House of Representatives
435 elected representatives total; representatives based on each state’s population

President

Vice President

Cabinet
Nominated by the president and must be approved by the Senate (with at least 51 votes)

Supreme Court
9 justices nominated by the president and must be approved by the Senate (with at least 51 votes)

Other Federal Courts
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS – WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH: FEDERAL EXECUTIVE

Executive Office of the President
– Office of Energy and Climate Change, Domestic Policy Council
– National Economic Council
– National Security Council
– Office of Science and Technology Policy
– Council on Environmental Quality
– Office of Management and Budget
– Council of Economic Advisors

Key Departments and Agencies
– Environmental Protection Agency
– Department of Energy
– State Department
– Department of Agriculture
– Department of Transportation
– Department of Interior
– Housing and Urban Development
– Department of Defense

Examples:
– Preparedness and Resilience
– Light Duty Vehicle Rulemaking Process
Institutional Arrangements - Independent Authorities for State and Local

Note: The state count is inclusive of mandatory portfolio and resource standards only. Source: U.S. EPA State and Local Climate and Energy Program.
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS – REGIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ACTIONS

- 29 states with some form of emissions targets or limits
- 29 states with renewable portfolio standards
- 18 states with mandatory energy efficiency resource standards
- Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)
- California’s Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32)

Note: The state count is inclusive of mandatory portfolio and resource standards only.
Since 2005, net U.S. GHG emissions have declined at roughly 1.1% per year.
In 2012, carbon emissions from the energy sector fell to the lowest level in nearly two decades.

Source: 2014 Climate Action Report
PROGRESS IN FIRST TERM - U.S. PRIMARY ENERGY PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS

Since 2005, the U.S. has experienced a 5% reduction in energy consumption even as real GDP increased by 9%, partially attributable to fuel economy standards and appliance efficiency standards.

The U.S. has seen a shift from coal to natural gas, largely in the power sector.

The U.S. has experienced reductions in power and transportation sectors from renewables.

Source: 2014 Climate Action Report
PROGRESS IN FIRST TERM — ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- Established the toughest fuel economy standards in U.S. history, doubling the efficiency of our cars and trucks by 2025.

- Finalized the first-ever national fuel economy and greenhouse gas emission standards for commercial trucks, vans, and buses for model years 2014-2018. These standards are projected to save over 500 million barrels of oil and save vehicle owners and operators an estimated $50 billion in fuel costs.

- Completed energy efficiency upgrades in more than 100 million homes – saving many families more than $400 on their heating and cooling bills in their first year alone.

- Established new minimum efficiency standards for dishwashers, refrigerators, and many other products.

- In partnership with the electric utility industry, launched a Green Button Initiative in 2012 to provide families and business with easy and secure access to their own energy usage information in a consumer-friendly and computer-friendly format and empower Americans to reduce energy use in their homes.
PROGRESS IN FIRST TERM — CLEAN ENERGY

• Doubled electricity generation from wind and solar energy sources.
• Invested $90 billion in innovative and transformative clean energy and energy efficiency programs.
• The Department of Interior approved 10,000 megawatts of renewable power on public lands, enough to meet the needs of more than 3 million homes.
• Between 2007 and 2011, the U.S. more than doubled its annual corn-based ethanol production from 6.5 billion gallons to 14 billion gallons.
• Announced a conditional DOE loan to support the first new commercial nuclear power reactors built in the United States in more than three decades.
• Launched the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate and the Clean Energy Ministerial to catalyze the development and deployment of clean energy and efficiency solutions.
Through the Recovery Act, the Department of Energy invested more than $31 billion to support a wide range of clean energy projects across the nation.

Source: energy.gov/maps/doe-recovery-act-field-projects
The Climate Action Plan consists of executive actions across three key pillars, grounded in existing legal authorities:

1. Reduce U.S. GHG Emissions
2. Prepare the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change
3. Lead International Efforts to Combat Global Climate Change and Prepare for Its Impacts
1. CAP COMMITMENTS: CUTTING GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- Develop carbon pollution standards for new and existing power plants.

- Double electricity generation from solar and wind in the U.S. once again by 2020.

- Establish appliance efficiency standards in the first and second term to reduce carbon pollution by at least 3 billion metric tons cumulatively by 2030.

- Develop post-2018 fuel economy standards for heavy-duty vehicles.

- Expand the President’s Better Buildings challenge, which will help Americans’ commercial and industrial buildings become at least 20 percent more energy efficient by 2020.
CAP COMMITMENTS: CUTTING GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, CONTINUED

• Set a target for the Federal government to consume 20 percent of its electricity from renewables sources by 2020.

• Lead through international diplomacy and domestic actions to reduce short-lived climate pollutants.

• Identify new approaches to protect and restore our forests, as well as other critical landscapes including grasslands and wetlands, in the face of a changing climate.

• Continue to support the Renewable Fuels Standard, and invest in research and development to help bring next-generation biofuels on line.
CAP COMMITMENTS: PREPARING THE U.S. FOR THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

• Direct agencies to support climate-resilient investment.

• Establish a State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness.

• Launch a climate data initiative and provide a toolkit for climate resilience.

• Continue to provide targeted support and assistance to help communities prepare for climate-change impacts.
2 CAP COMMITMENTS: PREPARING THE U.S. FOR THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, CONTINUED

• Reduce the risks from wildfires and drought.

• Rebuild and learn from Hurricane Sandy.

• Identify vulnerabilities of key sectors to climate change.

• Update flood-risk reduction standards for federally funded projects to reflect a consistent approach that accounts for sea-level rise and other factors affecting flood risks.

• Promote resilience in the health sector.

• Conserve land and water resources.
CAP COMMITMENTS: LEADING INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

- Lead efforts to address climate change through international negotiations.
- Expand bilateral cooperation to drive mitigation in the major emerging economies.
- Combat short-lived climate pollutants.
- Mobilize climate finance to promote low-emissions, climate-resilient development.
- Phase out fossil fuel subsidies and public financing for high carbon power plants.
- Negotiate global free trade in environmental goods and services.
- Reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.
CAP PROGRESS: LEADING INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

• Implemented the President’s commitment to end public financing for new conventional coal plants overseas, except in the poorest countries. Leveraged similar commitments from the UK, Nordic countries, and the World Bank.

• Led a coalition of countries, including the European Union and China, to launch a round of WTO talks aimed at facilitating free trade in environmental goods.

• President Obama and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to work together to phase down HFCs under the Montreal Protocol.

• Established the U.S.-China Working Group on Climate Change and launched five new initiatives that advance concrete measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

• Along with Norway and the U.K., launched the Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes (ISFL), a $280 million public-private partnership to reduce emissions from the land sector while promoting sustainable agriculture in developing countries.

• Continued to catalyze the development and deployment of clean energy and efficiency solutions though the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate and the Clean Energy Ministerial.
FOR MORE INFORMATION

• United State’s First Biennial Report to the UNFCCC

• White House Fact Sheet on Climate Action Plan progress