

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Earth's climate is changing.¹

- ▶ The period from 1995 to 2006 accounts for 11 of the 12 warmest years on record since 1850.
- ▶ Over the last 50 years there have been more frequent hot days/nights and fewer frequent cold days/nights.
- ▶ Sea level has risen consistently since 1961 at a rate of 1.8 millimeters per year and at an even faster pace since 1993 as a result of melting glaciers and thermal expansion.
- ▶ The area impacted by drought has increased worldwide over the past 30 years.



The climate is changing as a result of human activities.²

- ▶ Greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), are a primary factor in contributing to global warming.
- ▶ Greenhouse gas emissions, as a result of human activity, increased 70 percent from 1970 to 2004.
- ▶ The primary sources of greenhouse gas emissions are electricity generation and transportation.
- ▶ Increases have also occurred as a result of land use changes, such as deforestation.

Taking action now will be cheaper and more effective than delaying action. It will also yield economic benefits.

- ▶ Society is unlikely to be able to adapt to unmitigated climate change.³
- ▶ The world will need to reduce CO₂ by 80 percent by 2050 in order to avoid the most severe effects of climate change.⁴
- ▶ Substantial economic benefits exist with mitigation including the creation of green jobs and revenue from carbon taxes or trading.

States are taking the lead in combating climate change.

- ▶ Thirty-two states have enacted Renewable Portfolio Standards or goals, requiring that a certain percentage of electricity generated come from energy sources that do not release greenhouse gases.
- ▶ Nineteen states have formed three regional initiatives to stabilize and reduce greenhouse gas atmospheric concentrations through cap and trade programs aimed at various sectors, such as power generation.
- ▶ Thirty-seven states have drafted climate action plans to mitigate and adapt to the impact of climate change.

¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. November 2007. "Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report: Summary for Policy Makers." P. 2 Accessed from http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/syr/ar4_syr_spm.pdf on October 27, 2008.

² Ibid, 5.

³ Ibid, 19.

⁴ Union of Concerned Scientists. A Target for U.S. Emissions Reductions. Accessed from http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/big_picture_solutions/a-target-for-us-emissions.html on October 27, 2008.

⁵ DSIRE (Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency). Last updated October 27, 2008. *Renewable Portfolio Standards for Renewable Energy*. Accessed from <http://www.dsireusa.org/library/includes/type.cfm?Type=RPS&Back=regtab&CurrentPageID=7&EE=1&RE=1&Search=TableType> on October 27, 2008.

⁶ Regional Websites: Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. Participating States. Accessed from <http://www.rggi.org/states> on October 27, 2008; Western Climate Initiative. WCI Partners. Accessed from <http://www.westernclimateinitiative.org> on October 27, 2008; and Midwestern Greenhouse Gas Accord 2007. Midwestern Greenhouse Gas Reduction Accord. Accessed from http://www.midwesterngovernors.org/Publications/Greenhouse%20gas%20accord_Layout%201.pdf on October 27, 2008.

⁷ Pew Center on Global Climate Change. Last updated September 8, 2008. *States with Climate Action Plans*. Accessed from http://www.pewclimate.org/what_s_being_done/in_the_states/action_plan_map.cfm on October 27, 2008.

STATES WITH MEASURES TO COMBAT GLOBAL WARMING

State	RPS ⁵	Regional Initiative (<i>Participants only</i>) ⁶	Climate Action Plan ⁷
Alabama			✓
Alaska			✓
Arizona	✓	✓	✓
Arkansas			✓
California	✓	✓	✓
Colorado	✓		✓
Connecticut	✓	✓	✓
Delaware	✓	✓	✓
Florida			✓
Georgia			
Hawaii	✓		✓
Idaho			✓
Illinois	✓	✓	✓
Indiana			
Iowa	✓	✓	✓
Kansas		✓	✓
Kentucky			✓
Louisiana			
Maine	✓	✓	✓
Maryland		✓	
Massachusetts	✓	✓	✓
Michigan		✓	✓
Minnesota	✓	✓	✓
Mississippi			
Missouri	✓		✓
Montana	✓	✓	✓
Nebraska	✓		
Nevada	✓		✓
New Hampshire	✓	✓	✓
New Jersey	✓	✓	
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓
New York	✓	✓	✓
North Carolina	✓		✓
North Dakota	✓		✓
Ohio	✓		
Oklahoma			
Oregon	✓	✓	✓
Pennsylvania	✓		✓
Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓
South Carolina			✓
South Dakota	✓		
Tennessee			✓
Texas	✓		
Utah	✓	✓	✓
Vermont	✓	✓	✓
Virginia	✓		✓
Washington	✓	✓	✓
West Virginia			
Wisconsin	✓	✓	✓
Wyoming			