INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS AND THE NEXT PRESIDENT: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Context

The ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agreed to at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 is to prevent "dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system," while at the same time promoting sustainable development under the principles of equity and "common but differentiated responsibility."

Leading climate scientists, non-governmental groups, the European Union and others have called for keeping global average temperature below a 2 degree Celsius increase in comparison to pre-industrial levels, in order to avert the worst impacts of climate change. To achieve this objective, total global emissions must peak within a decade or so and then start to decline; by 2050, global emissions must be well below half of 1990 levels – or more than two-thirds below today's levels.

Given the differences in per capita emissions between industrialized and developing countries and the principles embedded in the Framework Convention, this means that net emissions by industrialized countries must be all but eliminated by mid-century. But of equal challenge, there must be significant absolute reductions in emissions of major developing countries as well, even as they continue to grow their economies and lift their people out of poverty. Achieving this objective requires greatly increased support from industrialized nations in the form of technology, financial assistance, and capacity-building to help developing countries to slow, and ultimately reverse, the upward trend in their emissions.

The post-2012 treaty regime needs to set an ambitious long-term global objective, and to establish 2020 emission reduction commitments by industrialized nations that together with actions by major developing countries are sufficient to put the world on track to meet such a goal. For industrialized countries, this means a collective 25 to 40 percent range of reductions from 1990 levels by 2020. For major developing countries, it means aggressive action to decouple greenhouse gas emissions and economic development, so that their absolute emissions can peak and start to decline within the next 10 to 15 years.

The change that is required is not incremental; it is revolutionary. To square the environmental imperative of keeping the world below a 2 degree increase in global temperatures with the equally compelling objective of sustainable development, the world's energy, industrial, land use and agricultural systems must be transformed, and at a pace unprecedented in human history. Global carbon productivity (the amount of economic output per unit of greenhouse gas emissions) must be increased more than ten-fold over the next 40 years. As a report by the McKinsey Global Institute notes, "this is comparable in magnitude to the labor productivity increases of the Industrial Revolution.

However, the 'carbon revolution' must be achieved in one-third of the time that economic transformation took in the Industrial Revolution."[1]

Furthermore, efforts to deal with the ever more evident impacts of climate change -- impacts that are affecting the poor and the innocent more quickly and more brutally than they are the wealthy and the responsible -- must also be at the center of the new climate regime.

Climate Negotiations Status and Process

At the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP 13) in Bali, Indonesia last December, agreement was reached on the need for a multilateral framework to address climate change after 2012, when the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period expires. Nations set a goal of completing negotiations on such a framework by COP 15 in Copenhagen in December, 2009.

The United Nations negotiations now underway provide the forum where this global deal must be done, building on the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, and addressing the varying concerns and interests of both industrialized and developing countries. Other multilateral, regional, and issue-specific initiatives can build understanding among countries and provide useful inputs to the negotiating process. Bilateral discussions among key players in the negotiations are also essential to a successful outcome in Copenhagen, as is the productive engagement of civil society and the business community. But what is most required is political will by government leaders to reach the tough decisions needed to set us on a more sustainable path.

The most important outcome of the Bali climate summit was the full recognition that when it comes to the future climate change treaty regime, the problem *is* global, and we *all* must have a stake in making it work. Because of the constructive efforts in Bali of countries like China, Brazil, Indonesia, and South Africa, and the last-minute acquiescence of the United States, agreement was reached on a "Bali Action Plan," and a new negotiating forum, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA), was created. This represented a clear move towards collaboration between North and South, and away from the confrontation and polarization that has all too long characterized negotiations on this issue.

Simultaneously, negotiations over extending and deepening the emissions reduction obligations of those industrialized countries that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol are continuing in the Ad Hoc Working Group launched at the first meeting of the Kyoto Parties in 2005 in Montreal (negotiations over post-2012 emissions reduction commitments for the United States and the handful of much smaller industrialized countries that have not ratified the Kyoto Protocol will occur in the AWG-LCA).

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[1] "The Carbon Productivity Challenge: Curbing Climate Change and Sustaining Economic Growth," McKinsey Global Institute, June, 2008, online at http://www.mckinsey.com/mgi/reports/pdfs/Carbon_Productivity/MGI_carbon_productivity_full_report.pdf

Though not formally linked, there is a clear expectation that these two negotiating tracks will converge in a comprehensive post-2012 agreement at the Copenhagen climate summit. The job of integrating the outputs of the two negotiating tracks is made more complicated by the fact that the United States is not a Kyoto party. But if the next U.S. president is committed to re-engaging the United States fully in the multilateral climate treaty process, and to taking the actions needed to get U.S. greenhouse gas emissions on a downward trend commensurate with actions of Europe, Japan, and other industrialized nations, decisions on whether the post-2012 regime involves amending the Kyoto Protocol, amending the Framework Convention, or creating an entirely new instrument under the Convention will be made easier.

The Bali Action Plan

The "Bali Action Plan" contains four key elements, or "building blocks" – mitigation, adaptation, technology, and investment and finance. The technology and finance building blocks are viewed as largely in support of developing country efforts on both mitigation and adaptation.

Mitigation: The mitigation building block contains two complementary components: actions to reduce absolute emissions by industrialized countries (most importantly, the United States) that have not ratified the Kyoto Protocol, and "nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing country Parties...supported and enabled by technology, financing and capacity-building, in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner." These actions could include "policy approaches and positive incentives" to reduce deforestation in developing countries as well as "cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific activities."

The inclusion of the issue of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (or REDD) in the Bali Roadmap was a major accomplishment. These emissions account for an estimated 20% of global carbon dioxide emissions -- as much as the total emissions of the United States or China, and more than those from every car, truck, ship, plane and train on the planet. There is a broadly shared understanding that REDD can contribute greatly needed reductions in emissions at a relatively low cost.

Adaptation: No matter how successful the world proves to be in limiting future greenhouse gas emissions, there will be significant impacts of climate change, particularly on vulnerable developing countries. In recognition of this, the Bali Action Plan calls for discussion of ways to foster "international cooperation to support urgent implementation of adaptation actions, including through vulnerability assessments, prioritization of actions, financial needs assessments, capacity-building and response strategies, integration of adaptation actions into sectoral and national planning, specific projects and programmes, means to incentivize the implementation of adaptation actions, and other ways to enable climate-resilient development and reduce vulnerability of all Parties."

The World Bank, Oxfam and others estimate that upwards of $50 billion a year will likely be needed for developing country adaptation actions; this is about two orders of magnitude higher than the resources currently available for such efforts. Identifying strategies to generate dedicated, sustained funding on this scale for adaptation strategies – above and beyond funds from existing aid budgets – will be one of the central challenges of the Copenhagen deal. Other key issues include the need for significant enhancement of existing mechanisms for disaster prevention and response (such as compensating the poorest countries for extreme weather events), and ways to integrate strategies to adapt to climate impacts into poverty reduction strategies.

Technology: The development, transfer, and accelerated deployment of clean energy, transportation, and other technologies are key to meeting the climate change challenge. The United States and other industrialized countries took on obligations in this area when they ratified the Framework Convention. There is widespread agreement that much more must be done to carry out these obligations, together with those on financing and capacity building; the central issue in the dramatic closing plenary debate in Bali last December was whether industrialized countries would accept language proposed by India stating that actions by developed countries in this regard must be "measurable, reportable and verifiable," the same criteria that the United States was pressing to apply to mitigation actions by developing countries. The U.S. found itself alone in opposing this proposal by India; it was this utter isolation – in full view of civil society and the world's media – that led the United States to reverse field and accept the consensus on the floor.

Concrete new initiatives on cooperative research and development of climate-friendly technologies, and on ways to speed up deployment of affordable, environmentally-sound technologies will be at the heart of negotiations leading up to Copenhagen. Key issues include standards, incentives, and other measures that can stimulate market demand for clean technologies, the need to greatly increase funding for low carbon technology development and deployment, and the role of intellectual property rights and technology licensing cooperation agreements.

Finance: A report prepared by the UNFCCC Secretariat estimates that "globally, $200-210 billion in investment and financial flows from all sources (private and public, domestic and international) will be needed in 2030 to bring greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions back to the current level. About $65 billion of this total will be needed in the developing countries. The investment involves the energy, industry, building, waste, agriculture and forestry sectors."[2] The report notes that while investment flows of this magnitude "are large compared with the funding currently available under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol," they are "small in relation to their share in estimated global gross domestic product (0.3-0.5 per cent) and global investment (1.1-1.7 per cent) in 2030." Even greater flows will be needed to facilitate the substantial absolute

[2] UNFCCC "Background paper on analysis of existing and planned investment and financial flows relevant to the development of effective and appropriate international response to climate change," October, 2007, on-line at http://unfccc.int/files/cooperation_and_support/financial_mechanism/application/pdf/background_paper.pdf

emissions reductions below current levels by 2030 that are needed to stay under a 2 degree increase in global temperatures.

The Bali Action Plan calls for "enhanced action on the provision of financial resources and investment to support action on mitigation and adaptation and technology cooperation," including "new and additional resources" from developed countries, "positive incentives for developing country Parties for the enhanced implementation of national mitigation strategies," and "mobilization of public- and private-sector funding and investment, including facilitation of carbon-friendly investment choices." These actions could include linking sectoral, policy-based and other mitigation commitments by developing countries to the growing carbon markets in industrialized countries, creation of new financial mechanisms with dedicated funding streams, reform of lending practices at the World Bank and other multilateral development banks, and strategies aimed at leveraging private sector investments in climate-friendly technology. Other revenue-generating strategies, such as an expansion of the current levy on Clean Development Mechanism projects to the other "flexible mechanisms" (emissions trading and joint implementation) or an auction of allowances for international aviation and marine emissions, are on the table in these negotiations.

The Road to Copenhagen

At the 14th Conference of the Parties meeting from December 1-12 in Poznan, it's expected that the chair of the AWG-LCA will table a negotiating text based on country submissions, which will contain all the necessary elements of the eventual Copenhagen deal – though with lots of different options and "square brackets" indicating disagreement over specific proposed language. Together with the Kyoto track text on post-2012 industrialized country emissions reduction commitments, this will provide the basis for intense negotiations in 2009. A high-level ministerial segment will be held in Poznan to assess progress and provide political impetus for the negotiations leading up to Copenhagen. This will be the last session at which the United States will be represented by the Bush administration.

In 2009, there will be at least three two-week negotiating sessions in advance of the Copenhagen climate summit in December, in March/April, June, and August/September; a fourth session may be added in mid-fall.

Other high-level meetings outside of the UNFCCC process can and should be used to build political will for an ambitious, equitable climate deal in Copenhagen. Largely due to the Bush administration's unwillingness to agree to specific mid-term national emissions reduction targets for industrialized countries, the G-8 economic summit this July in Hokkaido, Japan made no real progress on the issue. But with more constructive participation by the next U.S. president, along with fuller involvement of the "+5 countries" (Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and South Africa), next year's G-8 summit in Maddelena, Italy could provide important signals from a critical mass of key countries on issues such as the scale of mid-term and long-term emissions reductions, and the magnitude and potential sources of the financial flows from developed to developing

countries needed to support activities to accelerate clean technology deployment, reduce deforestation, and adapt to the increasing impacts of climate change.

Other important opportunities to build support around the Copenhagen deal include the EU-US summits in April and October of 2009, as well as bilateral meetings between key countries in the negotiations. The next U.S. president should commit to make the issue of climate change and an ambitious climate agreement in Copenhagen a central topic in his meetings in 2009 with other world leaders. As the world´s two largest emitters, the U.S. and China have a special responsibility to provide leadership on the climate issue; discussions between the new U.S. president and President Hu Jintao of China should take place as early in 2009 as possible.

Key Issues in the Climate Negotiations

There are many complex and politically challenging issues that must be addressed in the Copenhagen climate deal. Some of the ones on which clear signals from the new U.S. administration are most needed are discussed below.

Level of Ambition

The agreement reached in Bali for negotiations on industrialized country reduction commitments under the Kyoto Protocol explicitly recognizes the scale of emissions reductions needed to avoid the worst impacts of global warming. It notes that the Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change "indicates that global emissions of greenhouse gases need to peak in the next 10 to 15 years and be reduced to very low levels, well below half of levels in 2000 by the middle of the twenty-first century in order to stabilize their concentrations in the atmosphere at the lowest levels assessed by the IPCC to date in its scenarios."[3] It also notes that "the AR4 indicates that achieving the lowest levels assessed by the IPCC to date and its corresponding potential damage limitation would require Annex I Parties as a group to reduce emissions in a range of 25 to 40 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020," and that "achievement of these reduction objectives by Annex I Parties would make an important contribution to overall global efforts required to meet the ultimate objective of the Convention."

In the negotiations in Bali over the Framework Convention track decision, the United States fought hard to keep any such specific reference to quantitative emissions reductions for industrialized countries out of the preambular text. Major developing countries were willing to accept language referring to the need for global emissions to peak in the next 10 to 15 years and to be reduced by 50 percent or more by mid-century. This would have been a significant achievement, given that achieving such a goal would require substantial emissions reductions by big developing countries like China, India, and Brazil, even assuming deep cuts in emissions by industrialized countries. But these countries made clear they could only support such a goal if it was accompanied by the

[3] "Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol on its resumed fourth session, held in Bali from 3 to 15 December 2007," p. 5, on-line at http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/awg4/eng/05.pdf

language on 25 to 40 percent reductions in emissions by industrialized countries by 2020, which the United States was unwilling to agree to. Instead, the final decision merely includes a footnote referring to the relevant IPCC text on emissions scenarios.

The next president should state that the United States supports the objective of keeping global temperature increases below 2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels, and is prepared to discuss the greenhouse gas concentration levels and emissions reduction pathways associated with such a goal. He should accept the 2020 emissions reduction range for industrialized countries from the Kyoto track decision in Bali as an appropriate level of ambition to aim for in the post-2012 comprehensive package, and work with other leaders to reach agreement as early in 2009 as possible on an ambitious mid-century global emissions reduction goal.

Comparable Action

The Bali Action Plan calls for emissions reduction commitments by developed countries, whether Kyoto Protocol parties or not, to be set in a way that ensures "the comparability of efforts among them, taking into account differences in their national circumstances." As a result of population increases and economic growth, along with inadequate policy action at the federal level, U.S. emissions are currently about 16 percent above 1990 levels – the base year in the Kyoto Protocol. By contrast, Europe and Japan are committed to meeting their Kyoto Protocol 2008-2012 reduction targets of 8 percent and 6 percent, respectively, below 1990 levels. Europe has made a unilateral commitment to further reduce its emissions to 20 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, and has indicated a willingness to commit to 30 percent reductions by 2020 if other industrialized countries take comparable action.

There has been little analysis or discussion in the negotiations of the economic impact of various targets on countries in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) and cost per ton of reducing emissions. It's likely that similar reduction targets will affect the GDP of some developed countries more than others. How these factors will be reflected in the criteria for setting post-2012 reduction commitments is a major issue in the negotiations.

For the U.S., a 2020 emissions reduction target of 30 percent below 1990 levels implies a cut of about 40 percent from today's levels – far greater than the targets set in legislation introduced to date in the House or Senate. But analysis of the REDD funding provisions of several leading climate bills shows that even using very conservative assumptions, the revenues generated from the domestic emissions allowances allocated for REDD could reduce emissions from deforestation in tropical countries in 2020 by an amount equal to as much as 13 percent of U.S. 1990 emissions.[4] A combination of domestic action, REDD financing, and dedicated funding for clean technology deployment in developing countries – not as an offset or credit against domestic reductions, but in addition to them – could enable the U.S. to achieve effective emissions reduction in the range of 25 to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020. How such REDD and clean technology investments

[4] Union of Concerned Scientists, "Progress on Climate and REDD in the United States Congress," August, 2008, on-line at http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/global_warming/TFCI_REDD_US-Policy.pdf

would be credited against industrialized country emissions reduction commitments in the post-2012 climate treaty will be a significant issue in the negotiations.

The next president should work with Congress to enact climate legislation that sets ambitious 2020 domestic emissions reduction targets, and that generates substantial funding for REDD activities, clean technology deployment, and adaptation assistance. He should indicate U.S. willingness to take on an emissions reduction target in the post-2012 treaty greater than that set in domestic legislation, if emissions reductions generated by U.S. REDD and clean technology investments in developing countries can be credited towards meeting the international commitment.

Developing Country Actions

The vast majority of developing countries do not contribute substantially to overall global greenhouse gas emissions levels. The handful of developing countries that do have a substantial impact on emissions, such as China, Brazil, India, Mexico and South Africa, are already undertaking significant actions. China, for example, has set a goal of reducing the overall energy intensity of its economy by 20% between 2005 and 2010, has vehicle efficiency standards in place that are already stronger than those the Congress set in the 2007 energy bill for the U.S. to reach in 2020, is striving to increase the share of renewable energy to 10% in 2010 and 15% in 2020, and is shutting down inefficient industrial facilities. Brazil has increased renewable electricity production, expanded the use of sugar-cane based ethanol in transportation, and reduced the rate of deforestation in the Amazon. Mexico is aiming to reduce 100 million tons of CO2 per year through a mix of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and cleaner power generation, plus sequestering an additional 17 million tons through land use policies. It's estimated that the voluntary reductions in emissions by China, Brazil, and Mexico alone are already greater than those achieved by the group of countries with commitments under Kyoto.[5]

These countries are willing to do more. South Africa's Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Marthinus Van Schalkwyk put this eloquently during the closing plenary in Bali: "Developing countries are saying voluntarily that we are willing to commit ourselves to measurable, verifiable mitigation action. It has never happened before. A year ago, it was totally unthinkable." Brazil, China, Mexico, and many other developing countries have made similar statements acknowledging their responsibility to participate in addressing the climate challenge, and have put forward constructive proposals in the negotiations both at and since Bali. The next president of the United States should acknowledge these proposals, along with the many positive measures already being taken by major developing countries, and pledge to constructively engage with them to work out an ambitious, equitable climate deal.

Given their lower cumulative emissions, lower emissions per capita, and lower GDP per capita, developing countries won't – and shouldn't be expected to – agree to the binding

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[5] Center for Clean Air Policy, "Greenhouse Gas Mitigation in China, Brazil and Mexico: Recent Efforts and Implications," December, 2007. On-line at http://ccap.org/docs/resources/64/Developing_Country_Unilateral_Actions_2007_Update.pdf

economy-wide emissions targets that are appropriate for industrialized countries (though there are a handful of "developing" countries such as Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates that are as wealthy, or wealthier, than some developed countries; these countries should "graduate" to binding caps under the post-2012 regime). But major developing countries are open to considering other kinds of commitments, including sectoral "no-lose" targets, intensity-based emissions targets, and aggressive policy action to accelerate deployment of climate-friendly technologies. These commitments can be linked to provision of financing, capacity building, and technology transfer, as outlined in the Bali Action Plan. The level of ambition for such commitments, as well as how to measure and verify them, is a key issue for the negotiations, as is the willingness of the United States and other industrialized nations to facilitate these actions with provision of access to technology and financing at appropriate scale.

The Role of the United States and the next President

Re-engagement of the United States in the international climate treaty regime is essential, both to other industrialized countries as they consider moving forward with deeper emissions reductions, and to China and other major developing countries as they consider taking more aggressive action. An ambitious climate deal in Copenhagen is not possible without the full participation of the U.S.

Early signals from the new president are needed. Even before taking the oath of office on January 20, the president-elect should make it clear that

- He will actively re-engage the United States in efforts to reach an effective and equitable climate agreement in Copenhagen in December of 2009.

- He will set ambitious domestic emissions reduction targets for the United States, consistent with the goal of holding global temperature increases to no more than 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels (roughly 2 degrees Fahrenheit above current levels).

- He will join with Europe, Japan, and other industrialized countries in assuring dedicated, predictable funding flows at levels sufficient to meet the needs of developing countries for clean technologies, incentives to reduce deforestation, and efforts to adapt to the increasingly serious impacts of climate change.

- He will make confronting the climate challenge one of the central commitments of his administration.

The new president and Congress must work together on climate policy. After watching the Bush administration walk away from the Kyoto treaty, other countries will want to know that when the next administration negotiates a new climate deal, the Congress will support the agreement. In turn, leaders in Congress must be satisfied the administration is pursuing a good deal for the U.S.

Early on, the next president and his team of key cabinet members and advisers should engage the House and Senate leadership and the chairs and ranking members of relevant committees in active discussion on the major elements of both international and domestic climate policy. The goal should be to create a shared understanding of the principles and key elements of an action agenda on global warming and energy issues in 2009 and beyond. This should not be a one-off meeting, but an ongoing collaboration that builds the mutual understanding and trust between the executive and legislative branches that will be essential to getting the job done.

Relationship between U.S. Domestic Action and the Post-2012 Treaty

The timing of major domestic action (whether passage of a climate bill or promulgation of EPA regulations) in relationship to the Copenhagen climate summit in December, 2009 should be part of these consultations between the new president and Congressional leaders.

One scenario would be to push for domestic action before Copenhagen. If the new law or regulation is strong enough, this would have the advantage of demonstrating that the U.S. is serious about reducing its own emissions, and committed to doing its fair share of addressing the clean technology assistance, avoided deforestation, and adaptation elements of the Bali Action Plan. This sequencing could also facilitate ratification of the post-2012 treaty (assuming that U.S. obligations under such a treaty are consistent with those in the domestic law or regulation), as industries already covered by the new climate provisions would be keenly interested in access to the international emissions trading and other flexibility mechanisms that would be opened up by U.S. participation in the new international climate regime.

On the other hand, such a scenario would reduce U.S. negotiating flexibility, as it's unlikely the president and Congress would be willing to re-open key issues such as the 2020 targets, the level of funding for clean technology, REDD, and adaptation. Also, uncertainty around what level of effort China, India, and other major developing countries are willing to commit to in Copenhagen could make it more difficult to get an ambitious climate bill across the finish line in Congress in 2009 – a task that will already be quite challenging.

A second scenario would be for the president to focus on negotiating targets and other key treaty provisions in Copenhagen, before pushing for action on domestic climate legislation. This would allow the domestic bill to reflect key elements of the post-2012 deal reached in Copenhagen, and would give the president leverage in negotiations with the EU, Japan, China, India, and other key countries.

A major drawback to this approach is that in the absence of domestic action, other countries will be skeptical that the president can win Congressional support for whatever commitments he agrees to in the Copenhagen deal. This would also postpone domestic

action into 2010, as Congress starts to focus on the midterm elections, which could make passage of a strong climate bill more difficult.

A third scenario would see substantial movement on the domestic front before Copenhagen, but final action would take place early in 2010. For example, a strong climate bill could be proposed by the president and approved by the Senate and/or House in 2009, but action by the conference committee and signature by the president could take place after Copenhagen.

This might combine the advantages of both scenarios, while avoiding most of the drawbacks. It would make clear that the president and Congress are serious about meaningful domestic action on climate change, and with the right provisions, would demonstrate that the U.S. will meet its fair share of the technology, REDD, and adaptation financing components of a post-2012 package in Copenhagen. At the same time, it would retain some level of negotiating flexibility for the administration, as the president could commit to seek modification of key elements of the final domestic legislation if that would facilitate getting a more acceptable outcome for the U.S. in the post-2012 deal.

One potential downside is that final action on a domestic climate bill and ratification of the new climate treaty would both need to happen in 2010, though if the climate bill had already passed one or both bodies of Congress, this might be less of a challenge.

Opportunities for the president-elect

Even before taking office on January 20, 2009, the president-elect can send important signals to the world about his serious commitment both to domestic action and to restoring U.S. global leadership on climate change. For example, it would be appropriate for the president-elect to send a high-level representative to the COP 14 meeting in Poznan, Poland this December, both to interact informally with delegates and non-governmental representatives from other countries and to bring back first-hand reports on the key issues and dynamics within the negotiations.

Thought should also be given to other possible activities between Election Day and Inauguration Day, such as the president-elect hosting a domestic conference on climate and energy issues involving a cross-section of constituency leaders, governors, mayors, and others who have demonstrated leadership on the issue. President-elect Clinton used such a summit to good effect in 1992, engaging a range of leaders on his economic revitalization agenda. Announcements of cabinet nominees and other key appointments can also be used to underscore the president's commitment to action on climate and energy issues, as can interactions before January 20 with foreign leaders and the media.