



Environment – Documents on the Web – 3rd Quarter 2010

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

CLIMATE CHANGE -- INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

A NEW PARADIGM: CLIMATE CHANGE NEGOTIATIONS IN THE POST-COPENHAGEN ERA
Todd Stern, Special Envoy for Climate Change. University of Michigan Law School. October 8, 2010.
<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/remarks/2010/149429.htm>

Extract: “Today I want to spend some time talking with you about the state of international climate negotiations and where they may be headed at the upcoming Cancun meeting in December and beyond. In particular, I’m going to focus on four questions: First, can we move to the kind of new paradigm for climate diplomacy that we need and that is foreshadowed in the Copenhagen Accord? Second, is the U.S. domestic situation with regard to climate and energy legislation an impediment to progress in international negotiations? Third, what legal form should a new agreement take? Fourth, can the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change -- the official, UN negotiating body -- remain the central agent for international action to address the climate challenge?”

REMARKS FOLLOWING THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING OF THE MAJOR ECONOMIES FORUM

Todd Stern, Special Envoy for Climate Change. New York, NY. September 21, 2010.
<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/remarks/2010/147784.htm>

Extract: “One of the important elements of the discussion was the need to maintain the fundamental balance that was achieved in the Copenhagen Accord. That agreement reached last year by leaders around the world was important for -- it was essentially a deal or an agreement that involved landmark provisions on financial assistance to support mitigation, technology, adaptation, forest protection on behalf of and for the benefit of developing countries on the one hand. And on the other hand, very important agreements on mitigation and transparency that, in essence, and somewhat of the most core part of the accord on that side was that all major economies, developed and developing, agreed to implement a set of actions that they listed in appendices to the agreement.”

REMARKS AT THE GENEVA DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE FINANCE

Todd Stern, Special Envoy for Climate Change. Geneva, Switzerland. September 3, 2010.
<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/remarks/2010/146821.htm>

Extract: “I think we have had a useful, pretty constructive meeting over the last day and a half to discuss financing issues which are a key part of this overall negotiation. One thing I noted when I spoke yesterday kind of up top was the three key issues that comprise the overall finance question which are the fast start financing piece of it; the goal of mobilizing \$100 billion by 2020, so that’s the longer term

piece; and the establishment of the Green Fund are all creatures of the Copenhagen Accord. They were all agreed there, and actually only there as part of a balanced agreement that also included quite critical provisions on mitigation, transparency and the like. As you know, the Copenhagen Accord was not adopted last year and the effort this year has been to negotiate toward decisions that would hopefully build on the progress that was made in Copenhagen.”

CLIMATE CHANGE: THE QUALITY, COMPARABILITY, AND REVIEW OF EMISSIONS INVENTORIES VARY BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING NATIONS

Government Accountability Office (GAO). Report to Congressional Requesters. July 2010. 52 pages.
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10818.pdf>

Nations that are Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change periodically submit inventories estimating their greenhouse gas emissions. The Convention Secretariat runs a review process to evaluate inventories from 41 "Annex I" nations, which are mostly economically developed nations. The 153 "non-Annex I" nations are generally less economically developed and have less stringent inventory reporting guidelines. The Department of State represents the United States in international climate change negotiations. GAO was asked to report on what is known about the comparability and quality of inventories and barriers, if any, to improvement; what is known about the strengths and limits of the inventory review process; and views of experts on implications for current and future international agreements to reduce emissions.

U.S. CLIMATE ACTION REPORT 2010

U.S. Department of State. June 2010. 193 pages.

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/140636.pdf>

This is the final version of the Fifth U.S. Climate Action Report to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The fifth Climate Action Report provides a detailed summary of U.S. actions to address climate change. This report contains descriptions of specific measures and actions, outlines of broad policy initiatives, and descriptions of activities conducted by the U.S. since the previous report in 2006, principally at the federal level. It also explains U.S. Government efforts to increase scientific understanding of climate change, and provide assistance to help other nations mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.

CLIMATE CHANGE -- GLOBAL ISSUES

CHANGES IN THE ARCTIC: BACKGROUND AND ISSUES FOR CONGRESS

Ronald O'Rourke. Congressional Research Service (CRS). October 8, 2010. 67 pages.

http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R41153_20100330.pdf

The diminishment of Arctic sea ice has led to increased human activities in the Arctic, and has heightened concerns about the region's future. The United States, by virtue of Alaska, is an Arctic country and has substantial interests in the region. Record low extent of Arctic sea ice in 2007 focused scientific and policy attention on its linkage to global climate change, and to the implications of projected ice-free seasons in the Arctic within decades. The Arctic has been projected by several scientists to be perennially ice-free in the late summer by the late 2030s. The Arctic has increasingly become a subject of discussion among political leaders of the nations in the region. Although there is significant international cooperation on Arctic issues, the Arctic is also increasingly being viewed by some observers

as a potential emerging security issue. In varying degrees, the Arctic coastal states have indicated a willingness to establish and maintain a military presence in the high north. U.S. military forces, particularly the Navy and Coast Guard, have begun to pay more attention to the region.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE EU EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEME (ETS): LOOKING TO 2020
Larry Parker. Congressional Research Service (CRS). September 10, 2010. 23 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41049.pdf>

The European Union's (EU) Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) is a cornerstone of the EU's efforts to meet its obligation under the Kyoto Protocol. It covers more than 10,000 energy intensive facilities across the 27 EU Member countries; covered entities emit about 45% of the EU's carbon dioxide emissions. A "Phase 1" trading period began January 1, 2005. A second, Phase 2, trading period began in 2008, covering the period of the Kyoto Protocol. A Phase 3 will begin in 2013 designed to reduce emissions by 21% from 2005 levels. The United States is not a party to the Kyoto Protocol. However, five years of carbon emissions trading have given the EU valuable experience in designing and operating a greenhouse gas trading system. This experience may provide some insight into cap-and-trade design issues currently being debated in the United States.

CARBON TRADING: CURRENT SITUATION AND OVERSIGHT CONSIDERATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS

Government Accountability Office (GAO). Briefing for the Ranking Member, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, U.S. House of Representatives. August 19, 2010. 46 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10851r.pdf>

Industrial activities in the United States emit significant amounts of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases each year, substantially affecting the earth's climate, according to the National Academy of Sciences. In an effort to reduce these emissions, some have suggested capping emissions and allowing them to be traded in secondary markets just as other commodities are traded. This letter, in response to a congressional request concerning carbon trading in the United States and various design and implementation issues to be considered in discussions about a possible national carbon trading program, provides information on: carbon-related products currently traded in the United States and the extent of trading; risks and challenges posed by these products; the extent to which and how these products are regulated; and issues that market observers identified for policymaker consideration as part of creating a national cap-and-trade carbon market.

GEOENGINEERING: GOVERNANCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Kelsi Bracmort, Richard K. Lattanzio and Emily C. Barbour. Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 16, 2010. 43 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41371.pdf>

The term "geoengineering" describes this array of technologies that aim, through large-scale and deliberate modifications of the Earth's energy balance, to reduce temperatures and counteract anthropogenic climate change. In general, geoengineering technologies are categorized as either a carbon dioxide removal (CDR) method or a solar radiation management (SRM) method. Most of these technologies are at the conceptual and research stages, and their effectiveness at reducing global temperatures has yet to be proven. Moreover, very few studies have been published that document the cost, environmental effects, sociopolitical impacts, and legal implications of geoengineering. If

geoengineering technologies were to be deployed, they are expected to have the potential to cause significant transboundary effects.

STATE OF THE CLIMATE IN 2009

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). National Climatic Data Center. July 2010. 222 pages.

<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/bams-state-of-the-climate/2009.php> and

<http://www1.ncdc.noaa.gov/pub/data/cmb/bams-sotc/climate-assessment-2009-lo-rez.pdf>

More than 300 scientists from 160 research groups in 48 countries contributed to this report, which confirms that the past decade was the warmest on record and that the Earth has been growing warmer over the last 50 years. The report defines 10 measurable planet-wide features used to gauge global temperature changes. The relative movement of each of these indicators proves consistent with a warming world. Seven indicators are rising: air temperature over land, sea-surface temperature, air temperature over oceans, sea level, ocean heat, humidity and tropospheric temperature in the “active-weather” layer of the atmosphere closest to the Earth’s surface. Three indicators are declining: Arctic sea ice, glaciers and spring snow cover in the Northern hemisphere.

CLIMATE CHANGE -- DOMESTIC ISSUES

THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE IN REDUCING GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

John Horowitz and Jessica Gottlieb. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Economic Research Service. Economic Brief Number 15. September 2010. 8 pages.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EB15/EB15.pdf>

Agriculture could play a prominent role in U.S. efforts to address climate change if farms and ranches undertake activities that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions or take greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere. These activities may include shifting to conservation tillage, reducing the amount of nitrogen fertilizer applied to crops, changing livestock and manure management practices, and planting trees or grass. The Federal Government is considering offering carbon offsets and incentive payments to encourage rural landowners to pursue these climate-friendly activities as part of a broader effort to combat climate change. The extent to which farmers adopt such activities would depend on their costs, potential revenues, and other economic incentives created by climate policy. Existing Federal conservation programs provide preliminary estimates of the costs of agricultural carbon sequestration.

EPA REGULATION OF GREENHOUSE GASES: CONGRESSIONAL RESPONSES AND OPTIONS

James E. McCarthy and Larry Parker. Congressional Research Service (CRS). June 8, 2010. 17 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41212.pdf>

The Environmental Protection Agency’s promulgation of an “endangerment finding” for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in December 2009, and its subsequent promulgation of GHG emission standards for new motor vehicles on April 1, 2010, have raised concerns among some in Congress that the agency will now proceed to control GHG emissions from stationary sources, including power plants, manufacturing facilities, and others. Stationary sources account for 69% of U.S. emissions of greenhouse gases. Many in Congress have suggested that EPA should delay taking action on these sources or should be prevented from doing so. This report discusses elements of this controversy, providing background on stationary

sources of greenhouse gas pollution and identifying options Congress has at its disposal should it decide to address the issue.

COAL POWER PLANTS: OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR DOE TO PROVIDE BETTER INFORMATION ON THE MATURITY OF KEY TECHNOLOGIES TO REDUCE CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS

Government Accountability Office (GAO). Report to Congressional Requesters. June 2010. 69 pages. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10675.pdf>

Coal power plants generate about half of the United States' electricity and are expected to remain a key energy source. Coal power plants also account for about one-third of the nation's emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the primary greenhouse gas that experts believe contributes to climate change. Current regulatory efforts and proposed legislation that seek to reduce CO₂ emissions could affect coal power plants. Two key technologies show potential for reducing CO₂ emissions: carbon capture and storage (CCS), which involves capturing and storing CO₂ in geologic formations, and plant efficiency improvements that allow plants to use less coal. The Department of Energy (DOE) plays a key role in accelerating the commercial availability of these technologies and devoted more than \$600 million to them in fiscal year 2009. Congress asked GAO to examine the maturity of these technologies, their potential for commercial use and any challenges to their use, and possible implications of deploying these technologies.

GREEN BUILDING

ISSUES IN GREEN BUILDING AND THE FEDERAL RESPONSE: AN INTRODUCTION

Eric A. Fischer. Congressional Research Service (CRS). July 20, 2010. 36 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R40147.pdf>

The construction, characteristics, operation, and demolition of buildings are increasingly recognized as a major source of environmental impact. Without significant transformation of building construction and operations, such impacts are expected to increase with population growth and changes in other demographic and economic factors. One strategy for achieving that transformation is most widely known by the term green building. However, the term is used differently by different proponents and practitioners, denoting a continuum of practices, from those differing minimally from standard practices, to those aimed at providing buildings with a minimum of environmental impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

PESTICIDE USE AND WATER QUALITY: ARE THE LAWS COMPLEMENTARY OR IN CONFLICT?

Claudia Copeland. Congressional Research Service (CRS). October 13, 2010. 18 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32884.pdf>

This report provides background on the emerging conflict over interpretation and implementation of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Clean Water Act (CWA). For the more than 30 years since they were enacted, there had been little apparent conflict between them. But their relationship has recently been challenged in several arenas, including the federal courts and

regulatory proceedings of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In this report, a brief discussion of the two laws is followed by a review of the major litigation of interest. EPA's efforts to clarify its policy in this area are discussed, including a regulation issued in 2006 that was subsequently vacated by a federal court, as well as possible options for EPA and Congress to address the issues further.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS: SUMMARIES OF MAJOR STATUTES ADMINISTERED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

David M. Bearden, Claudia Copeland, Linda Luther, James E. McCarthy, Linda-Jo Schierow and Mary Tiemann. Congressional Research Service (CRS). October 8, 2010. 123 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL30798.pdf>

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established in 1970 to consolidate numerous federal pollution control responsibilities that had been divided among several federal agencies. EPA's responsibilities grew over time as Congress enacted an increasing number of environmental statutes and major amendments to these statutes. EPA's primary responsibilities include the regulation of air quality, water quality, and chemicals in commerce; the development of regulatory criteria for the management and disposal of solid and hazardous wastes; and the cleanup of environmental contamination. EPA also provides financial assistance to states and local governments to aid them in administering pollution control programs and in complying with certain federal environmental requirements. Several federal statutes provide the legal authority for EPA's programs and activities. The major provisions of each of these statutes are briefly summarized in this report.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS: AN OVERVIEW

Harold F. Upton and Eugene H. Buck. Congressional Research Service (CRS). September 29, 2010. 26 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32154.pdf>

There continues to be congressional interest in limiting human activity in certain areas of the marine environment, as one response to mounting evidence of declining environmental quality and populations of living resources. The purposes of proposed additional limits would be both to stem declines and to permit the rehabilitation of these environments and populations. One method of implementing this concept is for Congress to designate areas where activities would be limited, often referred to as marine protected areas (MPAs). Translating the MPA approach into a national program, however, would require that Congress resolve many economic, ecological, and social dilemmas.

FISHERY, AQUACULTURE, AND MARINE MAMMAL: ISSUES IN THE 111TH CONGRESS

Eugene H. Buck and Harold F. Upton. Congressional Research Service (CRS). September 24, 2010. 38 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R40172.pdf>

Increasing use of coastal and marine resources is driving proposals for Congress and the Administration to alter current relationships between environmental protection and sustainable resource management. Recent reports note declines in marine resources and shortcomings in what are perceived as fragmented and limited approaches to resource protection and management in federal and state waters. A further concern is the increasing pressures and conflicts that arise from economic activity associated with continued human population growth in coastal areas. A common concern is habitat loss or alteration, due both to natural processes, such as climate variation, and to development, changes in land management practices, competition from invasive species, and other factors, nearly all related to economic, political,

or social interests. Congress faces the issue of how to balance these diverse interests (which may fall on various sides of any given controversy) while promoting the sustainable management of fishery and other marine resources and protection of the marine environment.

U.S. STATEMENT ON THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT ON BIODIVERSITY

Kerri-Ann Jones, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, U.S. Department of State. Washington, DC. September 22, 2010.

<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/remarks/2010/149181.htm>

Remarks: “Over the past few decades, we have come to better understand the critical role that biodiversity plays in human survival and well-being. Unfortunately, we have also come to understand that the loss of biodiversity is accelerating at an alarming and unacceptable pace, consequences of which are irreversible on any time scale meaningful to humanity. Therefore, let us also reflect upon our collective failure to realize our goal to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. Climate change, exponential growth in natural resource use, and a continually growing population all intensify the pressures on biodiversity.”

SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT OF HYPOXIA IN U.S. COASTAL WATERS

Interagency Working Group on Harmful Algal Blooms, Hypoxia, and Human Health. September 2010. 164 pages.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/hypoxia-report.pdf>

The report, by key environmental and scientific federal agencies, assesses the increasing prevalence of low-oxygen “dead zones” in U.S. coastal waters and outlines a series of research and policy steps that could help reverse the decades-long trend. The interagency report notes that incidents of hypoxia, a condition in which oxygen levels drop so low that fish and other animals are stressed or killed, have increased nearly 30-fold since 1960. Incidents of hypoxia were documented in nearly 50 percent of the 647 waterways assessed for the new report, including the Gulf of Mexico, home to one of the largest such zones in the world.

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT (SDWA): SELECTED REGULATORY AND LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Mary Tiemann. Congressional Research Service (CRS). July 27, 2010. 29 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL34201.pdf>

Much progress has been made in assuring the quality of public water supplies since the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) was first enacted in 1974. Public water systems must meet extensive regulations, and water utility management has become a much more complex and professional endeavor. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has regulated some 91 drinking water contaminants, and more regulations are pending. In 2007, the number of community water systems reporting no violations of drinking water standards was 89.5%. Despite nationwide progress in providing safe drinking water, an array of issues and challenges remain.

OCEAN COMMISSIONS: OCEAN POLICY REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

Harold F. Upton and Eugene H. Buck. Congressional Research Service (CRS). July 20, 2010. 18 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL33603.pdf>

Identification of the need for a comprehensive national ocean policy can be traced back to 1966, when a presidential Commission on Marine Science, Engineering, and Resources was established (called the Stratton Commission). In June 2009, the Obama Administration established an Ocean Policy Task Force to develop a national ocean policy. On September 10, 2009, the task force released the Interim Report of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force, which includes national ocean policy priorities, a governance structure for interagency coordination, and an implementation strategy. On December 9, 2009, the task force released the Interim Framework for Effective Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning, which recommends a regional approach to marine spatial planning. The 111th Congress is continuing to consider ocean policy and management recommendations of the two commission reports.

SUSTAINING AMERICA'S URBAN TREES AND FORESTS

U.S. Department of Agriculture. Forest Service. June 2010. 28 pages.

http://www.fs.fed.us/openspace/fote/reports/nrs-62_sustaining_americas_urban.pdf

Close to 80 percent of the U.S. population lives in urban areas and depends on the essential ecological, economic, and social benefits provided by urban trees and forests. However, the distribution of urban tree cover and the benefits of urban forests vary across the United States, as do the challenges of sustaining this important resource. As urban areas expand across the country, the importance of the benefits that urban forests provide, as well as the challenges to their conservation and maintenance, will increase. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the current status and benefits of America's urban forests, compare differences in urban forest canopy cover among regions, and discuss challenges facing urban forests and their implications for urban forest management.

POLLUTION AND WASTE

MANAGING ELECTRONIC WASTE: ISSUES WITH EXPORTING E-WASTE

Linda Luther. Congressional Research Service (CRS). September 27, 2010. 16 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R40850.pdf>

Various reports and studies (by the mainstream media, environmental organizations, and university researchers) have found primitive waste management practices in India and various countries in Africa and Asia. Operations in Guiyu in the Shantou region of China have gained particular attention. Observed recycling operations involve burning the plastic coverings of materials to extract metals for scrap, openly burning circuit boards to remove solder or soaking them in acid baths to strip them for gold or other metals. Acid baths are then dumped into surface water. Among other impacts to those areas have been elevated blood lead levels in children and soil and water contaminated with heavy metals. The impacts associated with e-waste exports have led to concerns from environmental organizations, members of the public, and some Members of Congress.

REGULATING COAL COMBUSTION WASTE DISPOSAL: ISSUES FOR CONGRESS

Linda Luther. Congressional Research Service (CRS). September 21, 2010. 25 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41341.pdf>

Coal combustion waste (CCW) is inorganic material that remains after pulverized coal is burned for electricity production. A tremendous amount of the material is generated each year -- industry estimates that as much as 136 million tons were generated in 2008. On December 22, 2008, national attention was turned to issues regarding the waste when a breach in an impoundment pond at the Tennessee Valley

Authority's Kingston, TN, power plant released 1.1 billion gallons of coal ash slurry. The cleanup cost has been estimated to reach \$1.2 billion. While the incident at Kingston drew national attention to the potential for a sudden catastrophic release of waste, it is not the primary risk attributed to CCW management. An April 2010 risk assessment by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) indicated that CCW disposal in unlined landfills and surface impoundments presents substantial risks to human health and the environment from releases of toxic constituents (particularly arsenic and selenium) into surface and groundwater.

NUCLEAR WASTE: ACTIONS NEEDED TO ADDRESS PERSISTENT CONCERNS WITH EFFORTS TO CLOSE UNDERGROUND RADIOACTIVE WASTE TANKS AT DOE'S SAVANNAH RIVER SITE

Government Accountability Office (GAO). Report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives. September 2010. 44 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10816.pdf>

Decades of nuclear materials production at the Department of Energy's (DOE) Savannah River Site in South Carolina have left 37 million gallons of radioactive liquid waste in 49 underground storage tanks. In December 2008, DOE entered into a contract with Savannah River Remediation, LLC (SRR) to close, by 2017, 22 of the highest-risk tanks at a cost of \$3.2 billion. GAO was asked to assess DOE's cost estimates and schedule for closing the tanks at the Savannah River Site, and the primary challenges, if any, to closing the tanks and the steps DOE has taken to address them.

BISPHENOL A (BPA) IN PLASTICS AND POSSIBLE HUMAN HEALTH EFFECTS

Linda-Jo Schierow and Sarah A. Lister. Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 13, 2010. 13 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RS22869.pdf>

Bisphenol A (BPA) is used to produce certain types of plastic that are used in thousands of formulations for myriad products. Containers made with these plastics may expose people to small amounts of BPA in food and water. Medical devices and other more ubiquitous products, such as thermal paper coatings, also may contribute significantly to human exposure. Some animal experiments have found that fetal and infant development may be harmed by small amounts of BPA, but scientists disagree about the value of the animal studies for predicting harmful effects in people. In the United States and elsewhere, scientific disagreement about the possibility of human health effects that may result from BPA exposure has led to conflicting regulatory decisions regarding the safety of food containers, especially those intended for use by infants and children.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT (TSCA): SENATE AND HOUSE BILLS COMPARED WITH CURRENT LAW

Linda-Jo Schierow. Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 12, 2010. 69 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41335.pdf>

On April 15, 2010, Senator Lautenberg introduced legislation (S. 3209) to amend the core provisions of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) Title I. Representatives Waxman and Rush introduced comprehensive legislation to amend TSCA (H.R. 5820) on July 22, 2010. Both bills would amend the 35-year-old law to shift the burden of demonstrating safety for chemicals in commerce from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to manufacturers and processors of chemicals. Both bills also

would prohibit manufacture, processing, and distribution of any chemical substance or mixture for which safety has not been demonstrated. Although they propose somewhat different safety standards for EPA to enforce, both bills suggest a health-based standard. This report compares key provisions of S. 3209, as introduced, H.R. 5820, as introduced, and current law (15 U.S.C. 2601 et seq.).

PERCHLORATE: OCCURRENCE IS WIDESPREAD BUT AT VARYING LEVELS; FEDERAL AGENCIES HAVE TAKEN SOME ACTIONS TO RESPOND TO AND LESSEN RELEASES

Government Accountability Office (GAO). Report to the Ranking Member, Committee on Environment and Public Works, U.S. Senate. August 2010. 63 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10769.pdf>

Perchlorate is both a man-made and naturally occurring chemical. It is used in rocket fuel, explosives, fireworks, and other products. Naturally occurring perchlorate is produced through atmospheric processes and then settles on surface water or land. Perchlorate can disrupt the uptake of iodide in the thyroid, potentially interfering with thyroid function and negatively affecting fetal and infant brain development and growth. As of June 2010, there is no federal regulatory standard for perchlorate in drinking water, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which has the authority to regulate contaminants in public drinking water systems, had not determined whether to establish one. The Department of Defense (DOD), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and the Department of Energy (DOE) are the primary federal users of perchlorate. GAO was asked to examine what is known about the extent to which perchlorate occurs in the nation's water and food supply and its likely sources; what actions DOD, NASA, and DOE have taken to respond to or lessen perchlorate releases; and what actions states, such as California and Massachusetts, have taken to regulate perchlorate.

FORMALDEHYDE IN TEXTILES: WHILE LEVELS IN CLOTHING GENERALLY APPEAR TO BE LOW, ALLERGIC CONTACT DERMATITIS IS A HEALTH ISSUE FOR SOME PEOPLE

Government Accountability Office (GAO). Report to Congressional Committees. August 2010. 53 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10875.pdf>

Formaldehyde -- one of the most widely produced chemicals in the world -- is used in many products, including disinfectants, pressed-wood, and clothing and other textiles. Exposure to this chemical, which has been linked to adverse health effects for more than 30 years, typically occurs through inhalation and dermal (skin) contact. Formaldehyde can be used to enhance wrinkle resistance in some clothing and textiles, especially those made of cotton. The Consumer Product Safety Commission reviewed formaldehyde in clothing in the 1980s and determined that the levels found did not pose a public health concern. At that time, most clothing sold in the United States was made locally -- but the market has changed such that most U.S. clothing is now made in other countries. This market change has raised anew questions about the levels of formaldehyde in clothing. In response to a mandate in the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008, this report provides information on what is known about the health risks of exposure to formaldehyde, particularly from clothing, and about the levels of formaldehyde in clothing sold in the United States.

ELECTRONIC WASTE: CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND REUSE AND RECYCLING

Government Accountability Office (GAO). Report to the Chairman, Committee on Science and Technology, U.S. House of Representatives. July 2010. 70 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10626.pdf>

Low recycling rates for used televisions, computers, and other electronics result in the loss of valuable resources, and electronic waste exports risk harming human health and the environment in countries that lack safe recycling and disposal capacity. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates the management of used electronics that qualify as hazardous waste and promotes voluntary efforts among electronics manufacturers, recyclers, and other stakeholders. However, in the absence of a comprehensive national approach, a growing number of states have enacted electronics recycling laws, raising concerns about a patchwork of state requirements. In this context, GAO examined EPA's efforts to facilitate environmentally sound used electronics management, the views of various stakeholders on the state-by-state approach, and considerations to further promote environmentally sound management.

RECOVERY ACT: MOST DOE CLEANUP PROJECTS APPEAR TO BE MEETING COST AND SCHEDULE TARGETS, BUT ASSESSING IMPACT OF SPENDING REMAINS A CHALLENGE

Government Accountability Office (GAO). Report to Congressional Requesters. July 2010. 65 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10784.pdf>

The American Reinvestment Act of 2009 aims to stimulate the economy, including funding for environmental cleanup projects. The Department of Energy (DOE) receives annual appropriations of \$6 billion to support the cleanup of radioactive and hazardous wastes resulting from decades of nuclear weapons research and production. GAO was asked to examine how DOE selected projects for funding and developed cost and schedule targets, project status and extent to which projects are achieving these targets, and key challenges faced and efforts to address them.

SUPERFUND: INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS AND IMPROVED PROJECT MANAGEMENT NEEDED TO ACHIEVE CLEANUP PROGRESS AT KEY DEFENSE INSTALLATIONS

Government Accountability Office (GAO). Report to Congressional Requesters. July 2010. 73 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10348.pdf>

Before the passage of federal environmental legislation in the 1970s and 1980s, Department of Defense (DOD) activities contaminated millions of acres of soil and water on and near DOD sites. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has certain oversight authorities for cleaning up contaminants on federal property, and has placed 1,620 of the most contaminated sites -- including 141 DOD installations -- on its National Priorities List (NPL). As of February 2009, after 10 or more years on the NPL, 11 DOD installations had not signed the required interagency agreements (IAG) to guide cleanup with EPA. GAO was asked to examine the status of DOD cleanup of hazardous substances at selected installations that lacked IAGs, and obstacles, if any, to cleanup at these installations.

DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL

DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL: HIGHLIGHTED ACTIONS AND ISSUES

Curry L. Hagerty and Jonathan L. Ramseur. Congressional Research Service (CRS). September 13, 2010. 9 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41407.pdf>

This report highlights actions taken and issues raised as a result of the April 20, 2010, explosion on the Deepwater Horizon offshore drilling rig, and the resulting oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Congressional responses to the oil spill include at least 32 hearings in 10 committees in the House of Representatives and at least 27 hearings in 8 committees in the Senate. Members have introduced over 150 legislative proposals that would affect policies related to oil spills. As of the date of this report, one bill has been enacted into law (P.L. 111-191), which allows the Coast Guard to advance additional funds from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund for response efforts. Executive branch actions involve multiple agencies working within the framework of the National Contingency Plan. As a responsible party for the spill, BP has worked to control the well and perform cleanup measures at the direction of the federal government.

THE 2010 OIL SPILL: NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT UNDER THE OIL POLLUTION ACT

Kristina Alexander. Congressional Research Service (CRS). September 8, 2010. 18 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41396.pdf>

The 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill leaked an estimated 4.1 million barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico, damaging the waters, shores, and marshes, and the fish and wildlife that live there. The Oil Pollution Act (OPA) establishes a process for assessing the damages to those natural resources and assigning responsibility for restoration to the parties responsible. BP was named the responsible party for the spill. The Natural Resources Damage Assessment (NRDA) process allows Trustees of affected states and the federal government (and Indian tribes and foreign governments, if applicable) to determine the levels of harm and the appropriate remedies. The types of damages that are recoverable include the cost of replacing or restoring the lost resource, the lost value of those resources if or until they are recovered, and any costs incurred in assessing the harm. Claims by individuals or businesses are not allowed, as all injuries are to the resources managed by state, federal, tribal, or foreign governments.

FEDERAL CIVIL AND CRIMINAL PENALTIES POSSIBLY APPLICABLE TO PARTIES RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GULF OF MEXICO OIL SPILL

Robert Meltz. Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 16, 2010. 13 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41370.pdf>

Since the Deepwater Horizon oil spill began on April 20, 2010, Congress has given much attention to the compensatory liability provisions of the Oil Pollution Act and, to a lesser extent, those of the Jones Act and the Death on the High Seas Act. However, federal laws possibly relevant to the oil spill also impose civil and criminal money penalties, which may reach dollar amounts in connection with the Gulf spill greater than those for compensatory liability. This report summarizes selected federal civil and criminal penalty provisions that may be found violated in connection with the Gulf spill and related worker fatalities.

THE DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL: COASTAL WETLAND AND WILDLIFE IMPACTS AND RESPONSE

M. Lynne Corn and Claudia Copeland. Congressional Research Service (CRS). August 5, 2010. 29 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41311.pdf>

The explosion of the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico on April 20, 2010, and the resulting oil spill began a cascade of effects on the coastal areas of the Gulf and on the wealth of species that inhabit those areas. These wetlands, like those elsewhere, have value for water quality, flood

control, shoreline protection, and recreation. They serve as nurseries for many species, including fish and shellfish of commercial significance, waterfowl, and a host of resident and migratory species. They also have cultural importance to the people of the Gulf. The effects of the spill come on top of historic wetland losses due to subsidence, drainage, and saltwater intrusion, along with rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and global climate change.

DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL: SELECTED ISSUES FOR CONGRESS

Curry L. Hagerty and Jonathan L. Ramseur. Congressional Research Service (CRS). July 30, 2010. 53 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41262.pdf>

Several issues are developing for Congress as a result of the Deepwater Horizon incident. Questions include: What lessons should be drawn from the incident? What technological and regulatory changes may be needed to meet risks peculiar to drilling in deeper water? How should Congress distribute costs associated with a catastrophic oil spill? What interventions may be necessary to ensure recovery of Gulf resources and amenities? What does the Deepwater Horizon incident imply for national energy policy, and the trade-offs between energy needs, risks of deepwater drilling, and protection of natural resources and amenities?

DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL DISASTER: RISK, RECOVERY, AND INSURANCE IMPLICATIONS

Rawle O. King. Congressional Research Service (CRS). July 12, 2010. 24 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41320.pdf>

The April 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill disaster in the Gulf of Mexico is now being characterized as the largest spill to have occurred in U.S. waters. As efforts to contain the current spill proceed, the likely scale of clean-up costs and third-party damages has prompted congressional review of clean-up and damage compensation mechanisms, as well as of ways to facilitate future oil spill prevention, response, and recovery. A key element is the role of insurance in ensuring that costs of spills can be financed, while at the same time enabling the continued effective and responsible functioning of offshore energy exploration and production, as well as protecting related economic interests.

THE 2010 OIL SPILL: CRIMINAL LIABILITY UNDER WILDLIFE LAWS

Kristina Alexander. Congressional Research Service (CRS). June 28, 2010. 13 pages.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41308.pdf>

The United States has laws that make it illegal to harm protected wildlife. Those laws could be used to prosecute those who caused the 2010 oil spill. Perhaps the most famous of these laws is the Endangered Species Act (ESA), which provides for both criminal and civil penalties for acts that harm species listed under the act. The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) also provides for civil and criminal punishment when an action takes a marine mammal. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) makes it a crime to kill migratory birds.

OIL SPILLS: COST OF MAJOR SPILLS MAY IMPACT VIABILITY OF OIL SPILL LIABILITY TRUST FUND

Susan A. Fleming, Director, Physical Infrastructure. Government Accountability Office (GAO). Testimony before the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information,

Federal Services, and International Security, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate. June 16, 2010. 27 pages.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10795t.pdf>

On April 20, 2010, an explosion at the mobile offshore drilling unit Deepwater Horizon resulted in a massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The spill's total cost is unknown, but may result in considerable costs to the private sector, as well as federal, state, and local governments. The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) set up a system that places the liability -- up to specified limits -- on the responsible party. The Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (Fund), administered by the Coast Guard, pays for costs not paid for by the responsible party. GAO previously reported on the Fund and factors driving the cost of oil spills and is beginning work on the April 2010 spill. This testimony focuses on how oil spills are paid for, on the factors that affect major oil spill costs, and on implications of major oil spill costs for the Fund.

THINK TANKS AND RESEARCH CENTERS

The opinions expressed in these publications do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Government

CLIMATE CHANGE -- INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

US CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY: IMPLEMENTING COPENHAGEN AND BEYOND

William R. Cline. The Peterson Institute for International Economics. October 8, 2010. 16 pages.

<http://www.iie.com/publications/papers/cline20101008.pdf>

At the 15th Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Copenhagen in December 2009, the United States and other major nations undertook a political commitment to meet certain targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. Although this Copenhagen Accord was not a legally binding treaty like the Kyoto Protocol, it arguably provides an important basis for moving forward on curbing global warming. Crucially, for the first time the Accord incorporated action pledges by major emerging market economies likely to be the largest sources of future increases in emissions.

A ROLE FOR THE G-20 IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE?

Trevor Houser. The Peterson Institute for International Economics. Working Paper 10-15. October 2010. 20 pages.

<http://www.iie.com/publications/wp/wp10-15.pdf>

Following the chaotic Copenhagen conference of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), policymakers and pundits have discussed the G-20 as an alternative forum for advancing climate change diplomacy. This paper assesses the risks and rewards of tackling climate change in the G-20 and finds that despite its seeming attractiveness, the G-20, as structured, is not a suitable replacement for the UN-led process and has limited ability, at present, to advance climate change negotiations. There is much, however, that the G-20 can do to contribute to the goals of the climate negotiations outside of wading into the negotiations themselves.

AFTER COPENHAGEN: CLIMATE GOVERNANCE AND THE ROAD AHEAD

Joshua W. Busby. Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Working Paper. August 2010. 25 pages.

http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/IIGG_Working%20Paper5_AfterCopenhagen.pdf

Climate change is the most difficult collective action problem the world has ever faced, yet global governance frameworks have failed to yield progress toward a solution. The Copenhagen conference in 2009 set the stage for ambitious action by both developed and developing countries, but failed to result in a binding treaty. Moving forward, countries must diversify the institutions and instruments they use to pursue effective climate governance. This Working Paper examines alternatives to large-scale multilateral agreements, evaluates financing and monitoring structures, and recommends smaller and more varied negotiating venues.

THE ROAD TO A CLIMATE CHANGE AGREEMENT RUNS THROUGH MONTREAL

Richard J. Smith. The Peterson Institute for International Economics. Policy Brief 10-21. August 2010. 4 pages.

<http://www.iie.com/publications/pb/pb10-21.pdf>

The 1987 Montreal Protocol to address ozone layer depletion was a pivotal agreement in the history of global environmental negotiations. It established a process that remains an important precedent for dealing with global environmental problems, including global warming. What made the negotiation of that agreement such an iconic event, and what useful lessons does it hold for climate change negotiators?

GLOOM AWAITS U.S. CLIMATE DIPLOMACY

Michael A. Levi. Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). July 23, 2010.

http://www.cfr.org/publication/22689/gloom_awaits_us_climate_diplomacy.html

Cap-and-trade legislation aimed at curbing greenhouse gas emissions appears to be dead in this Congress. Even a moderately ambitious alternative has been shelved until later this year at the earliest. The biggest implication is that the United States has once again failed to confront its climate problems. But there is another: the United States is in for a rocky time in international climate diplomacy.

CONFRONTING THE CRISIS OF INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE POLICY: RETHINKING THE FRAMEWORK FOR CUTTING EMISSIONS

Fergus Green, Warwick McKibbin and Greg Picker. Lowy Institute for International Policy. July 2010. 24 pages.

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2010/0707_confront_climate_crisis_mckibbin/0707_confront_climate_crisis_mckibbin.pdf

The goal of this paper is twofold. First, to articulate clearly the reasons why a carbon price-based framework is, in the post-Copenhagen world, more likely than the existing framework to achieve rapid cuts in global emissions while building trust and confidence among the world's major emitters. This trust will be essential for the deeper, longer-term cuts that the atmosphere needs if we are to have any chance of stabilizing concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The second goal of the paper is to outline a suite of practical steps and institutional innovations needed to implement a carbon price-based framework quickly and embed it within a viable institutional framework.

REVISITING THE NAFTA AGENDA ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Jeffrey J. Schott and Meera Fickling. The Peterson Institute for International Economics. Policy Brief 10-19. July 2010. 11 pages.

<http://www.iie.com/publications/pb/pb10-19.pdf>

The three NAFTA signatories have a shared interest in harmonizing climate change policy, and while they have made steps in that direction, there is still much that can be done to promote renewable energy development and other measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The authors examine channels for energy and environmental cooperation among the three North American countries in light of limited progress in international climate talks and scaled back energy legislation being vetted in the US Senate.

THREE KEY ELEMENTS OF POST-2012 INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE POLICY ARCHITECTURE

Sheila M. Olmstead and Robert N. Stavins. Resources for the Future (RFF). Discussion Paper 10-34. June 2010. 23 pages.

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-DP-10-34.pdf>

The authors describe three essential elements of an effective post-2012 international global climate policy architecture: a means to ensure that key industrialized and developing nations are involved in differentiated but meaningful ways; an emphasis on an extended time path of targets; and inclusion of flexible market-based policy instruments to keep costs down and facilitate international equity. This architecture is consistent with fundamental aspects of the science, economics, and politics of global climate change; addresses specific shortcomings of the Kyoto Protocol; and builds upon the foundation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

CLIMATE CHANGE - GLOBAL ISSUES

THE GLOBAL EFFECTS OF SUBGLOBAL CLIMATE POLICIES

Christoph Böhringer, Carolyn Fischer and Knut Einar Rosendahl. Resources for the Future (RFF). Discussion Paper 10-48. October 2010. 39 pages.

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-DP-10-48.pdf>

Individual countries are in the process of legislating responses to the challenges posed by climate change. The prospect of rising carbon prices raises concerns in these nations about the effects on the competitiveness of their own energy-intensive industries and the potential for carbon leakage, particularly leakage to emerging economies that lack comparable regulation. In response, certain developed countries are proposing controversial trade-related measures and allowance allocation designs to complement their climate policies. Missing from much of the debate on trade-related measures is a broader understanding of how climate policies implemented unilaterally (or subglobally) affect all countries in the global trading system. Arguably, the largest impacts are from the targeted carbon pricing itself, which generates macroeconomic effects, terms-of-trade changes, and shifts in global energy demand and prices; it also changes the relative prices of certain energy-intensive goods. This paper studies how climate policies implemented in certain major economies (the European Union and the United States) affect the global distribution of economic and environmental outcomes, and how these outcomes may be altered by complementary policies aimed at addressing carbon leakage.

THE COMING CONFLICTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Michael L. Baker. Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Expert Brief. September 7, 2010.

http://www.cfr.org/publication/22886/coming_conflicts_of_climate_change.html

As Pakistan continues to struggle with flood devastation, U.S. national security experts are considering the long-term effects of the disaster. Among the concerns are the Pakistan government's stability,

opportunism by extremist groups providing relief, and the impact on the U.S. war effort in neighboring Afghanistan, where U.S. forces depend on smooth supply lines through Pakistan. The case of Pakistan reflects how natural disasters can weigh on U.S. national security considerations. Creating military partnerships years before a crisis allows countries to collectively respond when a catastrophe occurs and offers a reasonable avenue for political and cultural dialogue crucial to avoiding inter-state conflict. This is true for a variety of "irregular challenges," including the possible risks due to climate change.

ECOSYSTEMS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs): SCALING UP LOCAL SOLUTIONS

World Resources Institute (WRI). Working Paper. September 2010. 20 pages.

http://pdf.wri.org/working_papers/ecosystems_climate_change_and_millennium_development_goals.pdf

The growing and increasingly interconnected global threats of ecosystem decline and climate change will profoundly test the ability of the rural poor to maintain viable livelihood options and to escape poverty -- undermining and possibly even reversing progress toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Yet, this time of challenge for rural communities is also a time of opportunity. Local-level approaches to managing ecosystems have shown great promise in increasing the ability of communities to generate new economic options, meet environmental threats, and adapt to climate change. Evidence from many local ecosystem-based initiatives and enterprises shows that investing in the environment makes strong economic sense, producing income benefits and employment opportunities that enhance the rural economy and reduce poverty. The social and environmental benefits of community-driven ecosystem initiatives are just as significant -- from greater empowerment and social mobility to more stable and productive ecosystems.

COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH QUALITY EDUCATION

Allison Anderson. The Brookings Institution. Policy Brief 2010-03. September 2010. 16 pages.

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2010/09_climate_education/09_climate_education.pdf

Climate change threatens to undo and even reverse the progress made toward meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and poses one of the most serious challenges to reducing global poverty for the international community. However, the education sector offers a currently untapped opportunity to combat climate change. There is a clear education agenda in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, which require learning new knowledge and skills and changing behaviors in order to reduce the vulnerabilities and manage the risks of climate change. Therefore, investing in quality education to combat climate change is an essential tool in achieving the MDGs.

COUNTING THE GIGATONNES: BUILDING TRUST IN GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORIES FROM THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA

Irving Mintzer, J. Amber Leonard and Iván Darío Valencia. World Wildlife Fund (WWF). June 2010
Revised September 2010. 52 pages.

<http://www.worldwildlife.org/climate/Publications/WWFBinaryitem16605.pdf>

China and the United States are the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases (GHGs), contributing more than 32% of global emissions in 2005. This report casts light on the measuring and reporting of emissions by both countries, examining the methods and institutional structure for emissions inventories in energy and industrial sectors. It concludes that both countries have existing technology and procedures currently in place to accurately measure and report their GHG emissions, albeit in different ways. In addition, collaboration opportunities exist between the two countries. China could learn from

the U.S.'s long experience in conducting surveys, more regular reporting, and disclosure of primary data and methodologies; while the U.S. could gain from China's recent experience in ensuring the validity of self-reporting structures through robust auditing and regular spot-checking.

CONFRONTING THE CHANGE IN CLIMATE

Toni Johnson. Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Analysis Brief. August 25, 2010.

http://www.cfr.org/publication/22848/confronting_the_change_in_climate.html

While Pakistan continues to face the aftermath of devastating floods and the Indus River remains a swollen danger, the disaster has fed debate on whether the extreme weather is part of a new normal. Is it just a seasonal anomaly or another signal that the world's vulnerable spots should expect a surge in such radical climate episodes? And though an August 13 U.S. government study found no substantive relationship between Russia's 2010 summer heat wave and global warming, it argues the need for a clear understanding of the incident to help inform decision-makers on whether they need to do more on climate adaptation because projected changes could "produce heat waves materially more severe than the 2010 event."

FLOWING FORWARD: FRESHWATER ECOSYSTEM ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

World Wildlife Fund (WWF). August 2010. 74 pages.

<http://www.worldwildlife.org/climate/Publications/WWFBinaryitem17968.pdf>

Climate change has significant implications for freshwater infrastructure. Impacts such as increases in droughts and floods as well as changing precipitation patterns in countries across the world imply that development and conservation programs could fail to realize intended benefits or, worse still, contribute to increased exposure of populations to the hazards of climate change. However, freshwater infrastructure which is developed and operated in a sustainable and climate informed manor, can play a significant role in helping communities adapt while placing as little additional pressure on ecosystems as possible. This report develops guiding principles, processes, and methodologies for incorporating climate change adaptation for water sector projects, with a particular emphasis on impacts on ecosystems.

NEW KILLER: CLIMATE CHANGE THREATENS HOMES AND LIVELIHOODS

Sasha Chavkin. Yale Center for the Study of Globalization. July 22, 2010

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/new-killer-climate-change-threatens-homes-and-livelihoods>

Changes in weather patterns and the landscape, once gradual, have become more abrupt and noticeable with this century. Deserts expand, seas rise, rains pound -- etching away land, jobs and homes. Hardest hit are the poorest nations, and families forced to move are left to their own devices by their governments as well as the wealthier nations that continue to emit carbon that fuel extreme weather. The number of environmental refugees could approach 50 million, and yet most domestic and international agencies have avoided their plight for decades. The poor migrants may be invisible now, but as extreme weather events become commonplace and environmental refugees continue to grow, poverty and conflict will spread and glare at the indifferent world.

GETTING READY WITH FOREST GOVERNANCE: A REVIEW OF THE WORLD BANK FOREST CARBON PARTNERSHIP FACILITY READINESS PREPARATION PROPOSALS

Crystal Davis, Andrew Williams, Lauren Goers, Florence Daviet and Sarah Lupberger. World Resources Institute (WRI). Working Paper. July 2010. 28 pages.

http://pdf.wri.org/working_papers/getting_ready_2010-07-13.pdf

This working paper is part of a series of regular updates reviewing the Readiness Preparation Proposals (R-PPs) submitted by REDD+ Country Participants to the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF). The authors analyze the R-PPs in order to assess how countries are dealing with fundamental issues of forest governance that undermine efforts to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in REDD+ countries.

SUSTAINING SECURITY: HOW NATURAL RESOURCES INFLUENCE NATIONAL SECURITY

Christine Parthemore and Will Rogers. Center for a New American Security (CNAS). June 2010. 40 pages.

http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_Sustaining%20Security_Parthemore%20Rogers.pdf

In the 21st century, the security of nations will depend increasingly on the security of natural resources, or "natural security." The global economy, developing countries and local economies throughout the world all rely on the availability of potable water, arable land, fish stocks, biodiversity, energy, minerals and other renewable and nonrenewable resources to meet the rising expectations of a growing world population. Yet the availability of these resources is by no means assured. Stable and sustainable natural resource supplies influence an array of U.S. security and foreign policy interests. The national security community is not yet well attuned to these challenges, in part because it lacks a common framework for considering natural resources in day-to-day operations. There is a particularly weak understanding of the role of renewable resources in promoting U.S. security interests.

EARTH OBSERVATION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

James A. Lewis, Sarah O. Ladislaw and Denise E. Zheng. Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). June 2010. 34 pages.

http://csis.org/files/publication/100608_Lewis_EarthObservation_WEB.pdf

Climate change now occupies a central place on the global political agenda, and the United States should adjust its space policies to reflect this. Assessing and managing climate change will require taking what has largely been a scientific enterprise and "operationalizing" it. Operationalization means creating processes to provide the data and analysis that governments will need if they are to implement policies and regulations to soften the effects of climate change. Operationalization requires the right kind of data and adequate tools for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating that data in ways that inform decision-making at many levels of society. Satellites play a central role in assessing climate change because they can provide a consistent global view, important data, and an understanding of change in important but remote areas.

CLIMATE CHANGE - DOMESTIC ISSUES

WIDE PARTISAN DIVIDE OVER GLOBAL WARMING

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. October 27, 2010.

<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1780/poll-global-warming-scientists-energy-policies-offshore-drilling-tea-party>

A majority of Americans say the earth is warming, but far more said so in 2006. The decline has come mostly among Republicans, and very few Tea Party supporters say there is solid evidence. The public is now divided on whether scientists themselves agree that the earth is warming, whereas four years ago about six-in-ten said there was scientific agreement on the phenomenon.

FOREIGN POLICY AND THE 2010 MIDTERMS: ENERGY AND CLIMATE POLICY

Toni Johnson. Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Backgrounder. October 14, 2010.

http://www.cfr.org/publication/23112/foreign_policy_and_the_2010_midterms.html

President Barack Obama and Democratic leaders in the 111th Congress took office with promises to produce comprehensive energy and climate legislation. But lingering questions over economic recovery, a bitter debate over healthcare reform, and a massive oil drilling accident in the Gulf of Mexico have disrupted policy goals in both areas. And action in the next congressional session is uncertain, with Congress facing a potential transfer of party power in the House and Senate in the November midterm elections. Environmental and energy advocates foresee post-election challenges to some of Obama's energy initiatives, especially the EPA regulation of greenhouse gas emissions. Still, some experts say clean energy, which could provide a much needed economic boost, could benefit regardless of which party controls Congress after the election.

THE WORST SUMMER EVER? RECORD TEMPERATURES HEAT UP THE UNITED STATES

Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). September 2010. 4 pages.

<http://www.nrdc.org/globalWarming/hottestsummer/files/WorstSummerEver4pgr.pdf>

Summer 2010 set temperature records across the country and around the world. NRDC's analysis of June, July, and August 2010 temperature data from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) Historic Climatology Network reveal that this summer set heat records in many parts of the country. In fact, of the 1,218 weather stations in the contiguous United States, with data going back to 1895, 153 locations recorded their hottest summer on record and nearly one in three stations recorded average temperatures among their five hottest on record. Even more telling is that nighttime lows were the hottest ever recorded at nearly one in four weather stations in NOAA's Historic Climatology Network. This means that at 278 stations the average nighttime low temperatures for June, July and August 2010 were hotter than at any time since 1895.

GLOBAL WARMING AND EXTREME WEATHER: THE SCIENCE, THE FORECAST, AND THE IMPACTS ON AMERICA

Tony Dutzik and Nathan Willcox. Environment America Research & Policy Center. September 2010. 53 pages.

<http://www.environmentamerica.org/uploads/dc/98/dc981d0345be1591c171bc3635fb7e83/Global-Warming-and-Extreme-Weather.pdf>

Patterns of extreme weather are changing in the United States, and climate science predicts that further changes are in store. Extreme weather events lead to billions of dollars in economic damage and loss of life each year. This report reviews recent trends in several types of extreme weather, the impacts caused by notable events that have occurred since 2005, and the most recent scientific projections of future changes in extreme weather.

BANKING ON ALLOWANCES: THE EPA'S MIXED RECORD IN MANAGING EMISSIONS-MARKET TRANSITIONS

Arthur G. Fraas and Nathan Richardson. Resources for the Future (RFF). Discussion Paper 10-42. September 2010. 48 pages.

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-DP-10-42.pdf>

The history of emissions-trading markets in the United States is marked by change. Since cap-and-trade programs were first implemented on a large scale after the 1990 Amendments to the Clean Air Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has repeatedly revised and replaced emissions trading markets for nitrous oxides and sulfur dioxide. In each transition, the agency has had to decide what to do with emissions allowances banked in the earlier program. These banked allowances represent early reductions in emissions, with corresponding environmental benefits, but also the expectation on the part of regulated entities that they will continue to hold value in the future. Unsettling these expectations can lead to price volatility, instability in markets, and erosion of buy-in from regulated entities and the credibility of regulators. This paper discusses EPA's mixed record regarding these transitions and implications for the future of cap and trade as a policy tool.

EXTREME HEAT IN SUMMER 2010: A WINDOW ON THE FUTURE

Amanda Staudt. National Wildlife Federation. August 11, 2010. 5 pages.

<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/Reports/Archive/2010/~//media/PDFs/Global%20Warming/Reports/81010%20NWFGW4pageReportHeatWaves8MED%20RES.ashx>

Many Americans in the eastern and southern United States have been sweltering during summer 2010. As global temperature records have been set for the early summer months, states and cities are also setting hundreds of temperature records. More than 70 million Americans experienced extreme heat during June and July. Unfortunately, climate models indicate that an average summer in 2050 will have even more days topping 90°F if global warming continues unabated.

MEASURING AMERICANS' ISSUE PRIORITIES: A NEW VERSION OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM QUESTION REVEALS MORE CONCERN ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

David Scott Yeager, Samuel B. Larson and Jon A. Krosnick. Stanford University. August 2010. 27 pages.

<http://woods.stanford.edu/docs/surveys/Krosnick-May2010-Measuring-Americans-Issue-Priorities.pdf>

For decades, numerous surveys have asked Americans the "Most Important Problem" (MIP) question: "What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today?" Global warming and the environment have rarely been cited by more than a tiny number of respondents in these surveys in recent years, which might seem to suggest that these have not been the most important issues to Americans. This paper explores the possibility that an additional method of assessing the public's priorities might support a different conclusion. Three experiments embedded in national surveys (two done via the Internet, the other done by telephone) show that when asked the traditional MIP question, respondents rarely mentioned global warming or the environment, but when other respondents were asked to identify the most serious problem that will face the world in the future if nothing is done to stop it, global warming and the environment were the most frequently mentioned problems. Furthermore, a large majority of Americans indicated that they wanted the federal government to devote substantial effort to combating problems that the world will face in the future if nothing is done to stop them.

PROMOTING INNOVATIVE CLIMATE ADAPTATION THROUGH FEDERALISM

Winston Harrington. Resources for the Future (RFF). Issue Brief 10-17. August 2010. 11 pages
<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-IB-10-17.pdf>

As defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, adaptation includes a set of actions to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities in response to climate change. To date, little research has addressed public policy options to frame the nation's approach to adapt to a changing climate. In light of scientific evidence of extreme and unpredictable climate change, prudent policy requires consideration of what to do if markets and people fail to anticipate these changes, or are constrained in their ability to react.

EVALUATING "CASH-FOR-CLUNKERS": PROGRAM EFFECT ON AUTO SALES, JOBS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Shanjun Li, Joshua Linn and Elisheba Spiller. Resources for the Future (RFF). Discussion Paper 10-39. August 2010. 53 pages.

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-DP-10-39.pdf>

The authors investigate the effects of "Cash for Clunkers", a \$3 billion economic stimulus program, on new vehicle sales, employment, gasoline consumption, and the environment. Using Canada as the control group in a difference-in-differences framework, they find that the program increased new vehicle sales by about 0.39 million during July and August of 2009, while the net increase reduced to 0.25 million from June to December. The difference suggests that, as intended, the program significantly shifted sales to July and August from other months. Nevertheless, the program would result in only 8.58 to 28.28 million tons of CO₂ emission reductions, implying a cost per ton ranging from \$91 to \$301 even after accounting for the benefit of the program in reducing criteria pollutants. In addition, the program is estimated to have created 3,676 job-years in the auto assembly and parts industries from June to December of 2009. That effect decreased to 2,050 by May 2010.

U.S. AGRICULTURE & CLIMATE CHANGE LEGISLATION: MARKETS, MYTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

Jessica Shipley, Sara Hessenflow-Harper and Laura Sands. Pew Center on Global Climate Change. July 20, 2010. 21 pages.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/us-agriculture-climate-change-legislation-markets-myths-opportunities.pdf>

Any climate and energy legislation will impact U.S. farmers and ranchers, and this paper examines the many legitimate concerns the agriculture sector has with such legislation. This brief tries to objectively assess the impacts of climate legislation and identify ways that such legislation could be shaped to provide greater opportunities for the sector. U.S. farmers have long exhibited adaptability and entrepreneurship in the face of changing circumstances, and they will be presented with a host of new markets and opportunities with the advent of climate and energy legislation.

Farmers have many reasons to be engaged participants in the climate and energy policymaking process. It is imperative that the United States take constructive action on climate and energy to maintain a leading role in the new energy economy. In shaping those actions, productive engagement by American farmers can help ensure that U.S. policy addresses their concerns and embodies their ideas.

REDUCING GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IN THE UNITED STATES USING EXISTING FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND STATE ACTION

Nicholas Bianco and Franz Litz. World Resources Institute (WRI). July 2010. 60 pages.

http://pdf.wri.org/reducing_ghgs_using_existing_federal_authorities_and_state_action.pdf

As the U.S. Congress has struggled to pass comprehensive climate change legislation, observers in the United States and abroad have asked what greenhouse gas emissions reductions are possible under existing federal laws and through state action. Can the U.S. meet the Obama Administration's Copenhagen commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the range of 17 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 using the regulatory tools already available to federal agencies, together with announced actions at the state level? Even if congressional action is ultimately necessary to put the U.S. on a long-term low-carbon path and aid in the transition to a low-carbon economy, can federal agencies and state governments get the U.S. started down that path?

BEYOND ADDITIONALITY IN CAP-AND-TRADE OFFSET POLICY

Leigh Raymond. The Brookings Institution. Issues in Governance Study. July 2010. 9 pages.

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2010/07_additionalilty_raymond/07_additionalilty_raymond.pdf

Perhaps no element of recent cap-and-trade proposals has been as controversial as provisions for offset credits, under which sources whose emissions are limited may increase their emissions in exchange for reducing emissions from an unregulated source outside the cap. At the heart of nearly all offset programs is the requirement of "additionality" -- offset credits should only be given for emissions reductions that would not have happened in the absence of the offset program. This paper questions the usefulness of additionality as a standard on both practical and moral grounds.

LONG-TERM RISKS AND SHORT-TERM REGULATIONS: MODELING THE TRANSITION FROM ENHANCED OIL RECOVERY TO GEOLOGIC CARBON SEQUESTRATION

Alexander Bandza and Shalini Vajjhala. Resources for the Future (RFF). Discussion Paper 08-29. July 2010. 31 pages.

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-DP-08-29-REV.pdf>

Recent policy debates suggest that geologic carbon sequestration (GS) will play an important role in any carbon-constrained future. As GS evolves from its current role as an end-stage process within enhanced oil recovery (EOR) operations to a long-term, dedicated emissions mitigation option, regulations must simultaneously evolve to address the risks of potential carbon dioxide (CO₂) migration underground and leakage to the surface. Because CO₂ injection practices are currently based on petroleum industry extraction techniques, risk assessment and regulatory frameworks are also derived from these experiences, and EOR serves as a critical point of departure for GS. In this paper, the authors develop a basic engineering-economic model of four strategies associated with key deployment pathways in the portfolio of EOR and GS projects.

COMPARISON OF MAJOR CLIMATE AND ENERGY PROPOSALS IN THE 111TH CONGRESS

Pew Center on Global Climate Change. Climate Policy Memo #9. July 2010. 4 pages.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/policy-memo-9-111-congress-climate-energy-bill-comparisons.pdf>

In June 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a comprehensive climate and energy bill, the American Clean Energy and Security Act (H.R. 2454). The U.S. Senate has been considering a number

of related proposals, ranging from “energy only” bills, such as the American Clean Energy Leadership Act (S.1462) to proposals that place an economy-wide cap on greenhouse gas emissions, such as the American Power Act. This memo seeks to compare the major provisions included in the full range of legislative proposals.

COMPARISON OF INTERNATIONAL PROVISIONS IN CLIMATE AND ENERGY LEGISLATION IN THE 111TH CONGRESS

Pew Center on Global Climate Change. July 2010. 8 pages.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/Comparison-International-Provisions.pdf>

This memo provides a table comparing the international provisions detailed in the American Clean Energy and Security Act (Waxman-Markey), the International Climate Change Investment Act (Kerry), and the American Power Act (Kerry-Lieberman).

COMPARISON OF DOMESTIC OFFSET PROVISIONS IN CLIMATE AND ENERGY LEGISLATION IN THE 111TH CONGRESS

Pew Center on Global Climate Change. July 2010. 10 pages.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/Comparison-Domestic-Offset-Provisions.pdf>

This memo provides a table comparing the domestic offset provisions detailed in the American Clean Energy and Security Act (Waxman-Markey), the Clean Energy Partnerships Act of 2009 (Stabenow), and the American Power Act (Kerry-Lieberman). While the bills are similar in program category and design element, the bills build on each other, starting with the American Clean Energy and Security Act and ending with the American Power Act.

EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS UNDER POLLUTION REDUCTION PROPOSALS IN THE 111TH U.S. CONGRESS

John Larsen. World Resources Institute (WRI). June 8, 2010. 11 pages.

http://pdf.wri.org/usclimatetargets_2010-06-08.pdf

This analysis provides an assessment of net reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions relative to total U.S. emissions that could be achieved by pollution reduction proposals currently under consideration in the 111th Congress. This assessment includes an analysis of the American Power Act (APA), introduced as a discussion draft on May 12, 2010 by Senators Kerry and Lieberman. The APA draft is compared against S. 2877, the Carbon Limits and Energy for America’s Renewal Act (CLEARA) as introduced by Senators Cantwell and Collins, and H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACESA) sponsored by Representatives Waxman and Markey, as passed by the House of Representatives June 26, 2009.

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE LEGISLATION

Pew Center on Global Climate Change. June 2010. 16 pages.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/business-case-for-climate-legislation-06-2010.pdf>

In recent years, leading businesses have emerged as some of the strongest advocates for passage of national climate and energy legislation that mandates reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. While many have cheered this business engagement, others have been left confused and at times suspicious of why businesses would support such a policy. But climate change is not strictly an

environmental issue. Instead, it is a multi-faceted problem, encompassing national security, international diplomacy, and most crucially for business, economic policy.

GREEN ECONOMY

PUTTING GREEN TO WORK: ECONOMIC RECOVERY INVESTMENTS FOR CLEAN AND RELIABLE WATER

American Rivers. September 2010. 24 pages.

<http://www.americanrivers.org/assets/pdfs/reports-and-publications/putting-green-to-work-report.pdf>

Only a few days after taking office, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), the largest government public works package since the New Deal. ARRA included a much-needed \$6 billion for clean water and drinking water infrastructure through the State Revolving Fund, the biggest federal infusion of water infrastructure money through the fund ever. As part of this package, 20 percent (\$1.2 billion) of this water infrastructure funding was dedicated to programs for green infrastructure, water and energy efficiency, and environmental innovation (called the Green Project Reserve). This effort was groundbreaking because it represents the first step in a much needed shift away from solely “gray,” inflexible water infrastructure towards innovative approaches that will bring water management into the 21st century.

EFFICIENCY WORKS: CREATING GOOD JOBS AND NEW MARKETS THROUGH ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Bracken Hendricks, Bill Campbell and Pen Goodale. Center for American Progress. September 2010. 56 pages.

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/08/pdf/good_jobs_new_markets.pdf

The United States is mired in an urgent jobs crisis. Despite some early signs of a sustained economic recovery, in many parts of the country the debilitating fallout from the Great Recession on employment remains a painful fact of daily life. Few industries have felt the economic downturn harder than the construction industry. Collapsing demand for labor in construction industries is devastating to American families and communities nationwide. To confront this crisis, the U.S. jobs market needs sustained new demand for the skills of construction workers that is grounded in providing real value to the economy through enhanced productivity, greater efficiency, and improved asset value for real estate. Such a solution is readily available. The U.S. needs a national program to retrofit America’s homes, offices, and factories for energy efficiency.

2010 GLOBAL ECOLABEL MONITOR: TOWARDS TRANSPARENCY

World Resources Institute and Big Room, Inc. July 2010. 19 pages.

http://pdf.wri.org/2010_global_ecolabel_monitor.pdf

How do consumers and institutional buyers know if something is ‘green’ or ‘ecofriendly’? As environmental qualities are often imperceptible in the final product, producers need to make them visible to consumers. The purpose of the 2010 Global Ecolabel Monitor was to increase the transparency of the different ecolabels for the benefit of both producers and consumers. The authors also sought to reduce confusion among ecolabels so that certifications can be more easily compared, and institutional buyers can recognize the different attributes of using one ecolabel or another. 340 ecolabels in 42 countries were surveyed.

LOW-SKILL WORKERS' ACCESS TO QUALITY GREEN JOBS

Karin Martinson, Alexandra Stanczyk and Lauren Eyster. The Urban Institute. May 2010. 10 pages.

<http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412096-low-skilled-worker.pdf>

This brief discusses strategies for improving access to green jobs among those with low skill levels, particularly jobs that can help improve workers' economic standing and better support their families. In order to understand where green jobs for low-skill individuals can be found, the first section provides an overview of green industries and occupations and what they pay. The second section focuses on identifying "good" green jobs that provide the potential for individuals to support themselves and their families. Other sections discuss how training for green jobs can equip low-skill workers with needed skills, provide recommendations for improving these training efforts, and detail examples of innovative programs.

GREEN BUILDING

GREEN BUILDING CRITERIA IN STATE LOW-INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT PROGRAMS

Global Green USA. September 2010. 7 pages.

<http://www.globalgreen.org/docs/publication-164-1.pdf>

Qualified Allocation Plans (QAPs) are typically established by state housing finance agencies to guide the annual distribution of federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). 2010 marks the sixth year that Global Green USA has conducted an analysis and ranking of Qualified Allocation Plans (QAPs) for all 50 states. The analysis of the 2010 QAPs shows a continued increase in the incorporation of green building strategies, albeit at a slower rate than previous years. Nearly every state scored points in all four of the green building categories used in the analysis, demonstrating an increase in the degree of comprehensiveness with which green building is being addressed in the QAP documents.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

THE CLEAN AIR ACT'S ECONOMIC BENEFITS: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Small Business Majority and The Main Street Alliance. October 2010. 10 pages.

<http://mainstreetalliance.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Benefits-of-CAA-literature-review-final-10-04-2010.pdf>

In 1970, the United States Congress enacted the Clean Air Act (CAA) -- one of the nation's most important environmental laws. The CAA directs the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop and enforce regulations addressing a wide range of air quality problems and challenges. This paper examines the legacy of the CAA, its cost and benefits to the American economy (including an analysis showing that the costs of compliance have been greatly overestimated time and again), and the important innovations spurred by the Act. This study concludes that the benefits of the CAA, in the form of improved worker productivity, increased agricultural yields, reduced mortality and illness, and other economic and public health benefits far exceed the costs of compliance.

THE BEST OF AMERICA UNDER THREAT FROM UNDERFUNDING: NATIONAL PARKS RECEIVING MORE VISITORS AND LESS MONEY

Dan Levine and Nancy Pyne. Environment America Research & Policy Center. October 2010. 25 pages.

<http://www.environmentamerica.org/uploads/c0/93/c093194ce9b35dfeff168853e4b95cf3/Best-of-America.pdf>

America's national parks are the nation's most treasured places, where visitors can experience the best of America's great outdoors, wildlife, history and culture. However, even as more people are visiting parks, operating budgets for the majority of national parks are at risk of being cut. Nearly three-quarters of parks that saw an increase in visitorship last year face a budget cut in the next fiscal year.

THE PROBLEM OF THE COMMONS: STILL UNSETTLED AFTER 100 YEARS

Robert N. Stavins. Resources for the Future (RFF). Discussion Paper 10-46. September 2010. 37 pages.

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-DP-10-46.pdf>

As the U.S. and other economies have grown, the carrying-capacity of the planet -- in regard to natural resources and environmental quality -- has become a greater concern, particularly for common-property and open-access resources. The focus of this article is on some important, unsettled problems of the commons. Within the realm of natural resources, there are special challenges associated with renewable resources, which are frequently characterized by open access. An important example is the degradation of open-access fisheries. Critical commons problems are also associated with environmental quality. A key contribution of economics has been the development of market-based approaches to environmental protection. These instruments are key to addressing the ultimate commons problem of the twenty-first century -- global climate change.

AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS: A VISION FOR CONSERVING THE NATION'S WILDLIFE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Derek Brockbank, Patrick Fitzgerald, Todd Keller and Bentley Johnson. National Wildlife Federation. August 13, 2010. 16 pages.

http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/Reports/Archive/2010/~media/PDFs/Be%20Out%20There/NWF_Americas_Great_Outdoors_Report.ashx

From time spent with friends in neighborhood parks and backyards as a child to teaching a grandchild how to fish, Americans connect with each other by connecting with the outdoors. These inter-personal connections and connections with land are the root of the American conservation ethic. As the Obama administration considers the future of American conservation, enacting policies that protect the outdoors and reconnect people to nature must be a top priority. The America's Great Outdoors initiative should translate Americans love for the outdoors to policies that will sustain and improve the outdoors for future generations.

IDENTIFYING AND PROTECTING IMPORTANT ECOLOGICAL AREAS OFF THE OREGON COAST

Oceana. August 2010. 36 pages.

http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/Oceana_Identifying_Protecting_IEAs_Oregon.pdf

Home to gray whales, salmon, puffins, and life giving swarms of krill, the Pacific Ocean off Oregon is one of the richest temperate marine ecosystems in the world. Yet like much of the world's oceans, Oregon's coastal and ocean ecosystems are facing increasing threats, including ocean warming, acidification, overfishing, pollution and development. Increasing human uses of our oceans and coasts have led to steep declines in fish and wildlife populations and habitat loss that threatens the long-term sustainability of biological resources. Identifying Important Ecological Areas is a critical first step in coastal marine spatial planning, helping to improve the health of ocean ecosystems and plan for long-term sustainable uses.

WHY HEALTHY OCEANS NEED SEA TURTLES: THE IMPORTANCE OF SEA TURTLES TO MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

Wilson, E.G., Miller, K.L., Allison, D. and Magliocca, M. Oceana. July 2010. 20 pages.

http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/reports/Why_Healthy_Oceans_Need_Sea_Turtles.pdf

Major changes have occurred in the oceans because sea turtles have been virtually eliminated from many areas of the globe. Commercial fishing, loss of nesting habitat and climate change are among the human-caused threats pushing sea turtles towards extinction. As sea turtle populations decline, so does their ability to fulfill vital functions in ocean ecosystems. Oceans are unhealthy and under significant threat from overfishing, pollution and climate change. It is time to protect sea turtles and rebuild their populations to healthy levels as a vital step in ensuring healthy and resilient oceans for the future.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL ON SEA TURTLES

Elizabeth Griffin Wilson. Oceana. June 2010. 14 pages.

http://na.oceana.org/sites/default/files/Potential_Impacts_of_Deepwater_Horizon_Oil_Spill_on_Sea_Turtles_FINAL_0.pdf

A variety of human actions including commercial fishing, coastal development, and direct harvest have led to the decline of sea turtle populations and the need for Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings. Sea turtle protection measures have resulted in increased numbers for some sea turtle populations. For other populations, however, the outlook is increasingly grim. Each of the five sea turtle species that can be found in the Gulf of Mexico are now at risk of significant harm from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

FOREST SUSTAINABILITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOOD BIOENERGY IN THE U.S.

The H. John Heinz III Center For Science, Economics and the Environment and The Pinchot Institute for Conservation. June 2010. 52 pages.

http://www.heinzctr.org/publications/PDF/Pinchot_Heinz_Bioenergy%20Report_Final.pdf

With the development of renewable energy sources to meet the challenges of energy security and climate change, wood bioenergy and biofuels have the potential to become a much larger part of the nation's energy future. There is concern that efforts to expand the production and use of this energy source could have unintended environmental and economic consequences for forests in several regions of the United States. However, there are policy options at the federal, state, and local levels, as well as opportunities, that can minimize the sustainability risks related to the development of a wood bioenergy industry.

OUR GREAT WATERS

Piper Crowell. Environment America Research & Policy Center. June 2010. 16 pages.

<http://www.environmentamerica.org/uploads/40/51/40515f4bd1176e5db86e600dd0206d40/EA-OurGreatWatersReport.pdf>

Dead zones, toxic chemicals, and the destruction of wetlands around the U.S. great waters are significantly damaging to the health of the ecosystems, wildlife, and people who depend on them. To restore and protect America's great waters, this report is calling on Congress to pass legislation that will reduce pollution, increase investments in restoration efforts, and protect our most treasured places for generations to come. This report highlights the following eight waters across the country that are in the most need of increased protections and immediate restoration efforts: Long Island Sound, Chesapeake Bay, the Gulf of Mexico, Lake Tahoe, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, the San Francisco Bay and the Great Lakes.

POLLUTION AND WASTE

IN HARM'S WAY: LACK OF FEDERAL COAL ASH REGULATIONS ENDANGERS AMERICANS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

Jeff Stant. Environmental Integrity Project, Earthjustice and Sierra Club. August 26, 2010. 270 pages. http://www.environmentalintegrity.org/news_reports/documents/INHARMSWAY_FINAL3.pdf

An investigation led by expert hydrogeologists has identified 39 more coal combustion waste (CCW) disposal sites in 21 states that have contaminated groundwater or surface water with toxic metals and other pollutants. Their analysis is based on monitoring data and other information available in state agency files and builds on a report released in February of 2010, which documented similar damage at 31 coal combustion waste dumpsites in 14 states. When added to the 67 damage cases that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has already acknowledged, the total number of sites polluted by coal ash or scrubber sludge comes to at least 137 in 34 states. This total represents nearly a three-fold increase in the number of damage cases identified in EPA's 2000 Regulatory Determination on the Wastes from the Combustion of Fossil Fuels.

TURNING THE TIDE: INVESTING IN WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE TO CREATE JOBS AND SOLVE THE SEWAGE CRISIS IN THE GREAT LAKES

Jeff Alexander and Beth Wallace. Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition. August 2010. 40 pages. <http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/Reports/Archive/2010/~media/PDFs/Water/08-02-2010HOWSewageReportFINAL.ashx>

The Great Lakes are under siege from sewage pollution, four decades after Congress passed one of America's landmark environmental laws -- the federal Clean Water Act. Communities that rely on the Great Lakes for drinking water and recreation continue to dump billions of gallons of untreated sewage every year into these freshwater seas. From January 2009 through January 2010, just five cities on the U.S. side of the Great Lakes -- Detroit, Cleveland, Buffalo, Milwaukee and Gary, Ind. -- discharged 41 billion gallons of untreated sewage and filthy storm water into the lakes. That volume equals the amount of water that flows over Niagara Falls during a 15-hour period.

JAPANESE POTENTIALLY POLLUTING WRECKS IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN

Ryo Sato. Global Green USA. July 2010. 7 pages. <http://www.globalgreen.org/docs/publication-119-1.pdf>

This paper assesses the location and potential dangers of contaminant associated with Japanese sunken ships and the possible contaminants, including oil and chemical weapons, leaking from the sunken ships in the Pacific Ocean. Many countries dumped chemical agents into the ocean; some agents, including chemical weapons (CWs), were dumped intentionally and others accidentally into the ocean. In either case, marine disposal of chemicals of all kinds threatens human and environmental life.

SEA-DUMPED CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN HAWAII

Ryo Sato. Global Green USA. July 2010. 5 pages.

<http://www.globalgreen.org/docs/publication-120-1.pdf>

Beginning in 1932 and through 1945, the U.S. Army dumped thousands of tons of chemical weapons off Hawaii's coasts. Until the Virginian Daily Press drew attention to these chemical weapons dumpsites in 2005, the general population of Hawaii lived unaware of their existence. Although the University of Hawaii has been investigating chemical weapons dumpsites and has found a number of sea-dumped chemical weapons around the heavily populated island of Oahu, the U.S. Army has no plans to remove the munitions (April 2009). This report summarizes the problems, background and risks of sea-dumped chemical weapons primarily around the island of Oahu.

DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL

OIL SPILL LIABILITY: A PLAN FOR REFORM

Nicolas D. Loris, Jack Spencer and James Jay Carafano. The Heritage Foundation. Backgrounder No. 2446. August 2, 2010. 8 pages.

http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2010/pdf/bg2446.pdf

Current law states that oil or gas companies do not have to pay more than \$75 million in liability costs for accidents they cause -- no matter how great the damages. Republicans and Democrats agree that the cap is too low. But simply raising it to another artificial level, or eliminating it entirely without other reforms, is not the easy answer, tempting as it might seem. A higher cap, or none at all, means very little as long as crucial safety, regulatory, and liability issues continue to be ignored, and public concerns are unaddressed. Government regulatory oversight is necessary, but liability insurance must be privately managed, with claims assessed and paid out by an independent administrator. Safety and preparedness measures must also be independently reviewed and approved. Above all, taxpayers must be protected from footing the liability costs for industry-caused disasters.

WHO BEARS THE LONG-TERM COSTS OF STRICTER ANTI-SPILL POLICY? IT'S NOT WHO YOU THINK

Timothy J. Brennan. Resources for the Future (RFF). Backgrounder. August 2010. 7 pages.

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-BCK-Brennan-StricterAnti-SpillCosts.pdf>

An understandable and appropriate reaction to a tragedy like the explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil rig and subsequent spill is to ratchet up liability to ensure that those firms that undertake deepwater oil drilling bear the costs if something goes wrong. How we determine those costs is, of course, a complex task. The effects go beyond measurable lost profits to include ecosystem services that are often difficult to evaluate because markets often don't exist to tell us what people are willing to pay for intangible goods like fish habitat. We also need to consider what kinds of policy tools could ensure that those who impose these costs know enough to take them into account in making their choices of how and where to

drill for oil. Examples include stronger liability rules, increased civil and criminal penalties, or more stringent regulations.

ASSAULT ON AMERICA: A DECADE OF PETROLEUM COMPANY DISASTER, POLLUTION, AND PROFIT

Tim Warman, Jack Doyle and Miguel Mejia. National Wildlife Federation. July 28, 2010. 32 pages.

<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/News-by-Topic/Global-Warming/2010/~media/PDFs/Global%20Warming/Reports/Assault-on-America-A-Decade-of-Petroleum-Company-Disaster.ashx>

This report catalogs a decade of serious oil spills, fires, leaks and loss of life over the last decade that the authors say underscores petroleum company malfeasance. According to the report, from 2000 to 2010, the oil and gas industry accounted for hundreds of deaths, explosions, fires, seeps, and spills as well as habitat and wildlife destruction in the United States. These disasters demonstrate that the BP incident is not merely an accident but an industry pattern that places profit ahead of communities, local economies, and the environment.

Previous issues of Environment -- Documents on the Web are available at:

<http://france.usembassy.gov/web-alert.html>