

THE  
NEW ENGLAND  
COUNCIL

*Climate Change Declaration*

The New England region is at the forefront of climate change policy developments in the U.S. The Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers has identified ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction goals for the region that necessitate action. Reliable, diverse energy supplies and environmental quality are vital both to New England's economic growth and to the extraordinary quality of life of our region.

Laudably, some New England states have already developed climate change policies, while others are evaluating their options. Furthermore, some states in this region are actively collaborating on climate change policies with neighboring states. Companies in New England are making business decisions today that will have an impact on current and future efforts to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

Although important, effective actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions cannot be limited to state specific and local initiatives. We must also act as a region. As a region we can most effectively leverage our ingenuity to take meaningful steps towards cost-effective reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. The actions we take now will likely impact the future of global climate change policy -- both national and international-- and our economy and quality of life. We must recognize our place in environmental history.

We must also recognize the challenges and opportunities that our actions present for regional businesses, organizations and governments. The New England states must thoughtfully consider all climate change policies and actions. Those policies must recognize that in order to be effective over the long-term greenhouse gas emission reductions must encompass as large a geographic area as possible. Legislation and regulation, while vitally important, should not be the only response. The market must be encouraged to respond. Climate-friendly technologies and projects must be supported and encouraged. All businesses must also recognize the importance of energy efficiency in helping to mitigate climate change at the generation level. By taking these steps as a region, we can best enhance our regional and global environment and position ourselves as the leaders in climate change policy and innovation.

Therefore, the New England Council puts forth the following points:

- Scientific evidence points towards the conclusion that greenhouse gas emissions should be avoided, reduced or sequestered.
- Greenhouse gases emitted anywhere on Earth impact the global climate to the same extent. A greenhouse gas reduction or avoidance anywhere on Earth should be viewed the same as one achieved at home.
- Tapping into market forces is an integral component in the development of cost-effective climate change action.
- All stakeholders must be involved in the development of climate change solutions in order for them to have long-term success.
- A robust greenhouse gas emission trading program that includes all technologies and activities that avoid, reduce or sequester greenhouse gases is essential to the realization of a cost-effective climate change solution, as long as the technology or activity adequately meets the applicable evaluation criteria established by the region. Such a program must include a measure of predictability to ensure participation by stakeholders.
- The criteria to evaluate the marketability of greenhouse gas emission reduction activities to create carbon offsets should require a demonstration that the emission reductions are real, permanent, surplus, enforceable and verifiable.
- Regional greenhouse gas emission and emission reduction trading policies and programs must be compatible with national and international trading systems as we look toward supporting future market linkages.
- The New England Council supports policies that will drive penetration of new technologies into the marketplace.
- The New England Council supports the Climate Action Plan developed by the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers as an appropriate response to this critical challenge.
- The New England Council supports the development and expeditious implementation of a Northeast Greenhouse Gas (GHG) registry.

As a step toward encouraging further regional action, the New England Council will share this declaration with its members and with appropriate state, regional, national and international leaders. Further, the New England Council will help coordinate private sector participation in an ongoing dialogue with appropriate policy makers on the development of regional climate change policies and programs. Ultimately, educational outreach to the public will also be an important component in increasing understanding of the effects of, and ultimately reducing, greenhouse gas emissions.

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