Overview

Climate change is one of the most complex issues that the world will face in this century. Concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere have already reached unprecedented levels, causing changes in global temperature and observable impacts throughout the world, and these changes are happening more quickly than expected. Stabilizing greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations will require a fundamental shift in our energy system, but this transition will have other benefits as well, including improved competitiveness, security, air quality, public health, and job creation. This transition will not be easy, but it is crucial to begin now.

This Agenda is the Pew Center's attempt to articulate a responsible course of action for addressing climate change. It identifies 15 actions that should be started now, including U.S. domestic reductions and engagement in the international negotiation process. While reductions across sectors and sources of emissions is key, the steps listed here are not likely to happen simultaneously, nor without costs. However, these recommendations have been designed to be both cost-effective and comprehensive.

The Pew Center on Global Climate Change was established by the Pew Charitable Trusts to bring a new cooperative approach and critical scientific, economic, and technological expertise to the global climate change debate. We intend to inform this debate through wide-ranging analyses that will add new facts and perspectives in four areas: policy (domestic and international), economics, environment, and solutions.

Pew Center on Global Climate Change
2101 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 550
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone (703) 516-4146
www.pewclimate.org

Agenda *for Climate Action*

PEW CENTER ON Global CLIMATE CHANGE

Recommendations

Invest in science and technology research.

1. Ensure a robust research program through the Climate Change Science Program.
2. Offer long-term, stable funds—in the form of a reverse auction—to GHG-related technology research and development.

Establish mandatory limits on greenhouse gas emissions and harness market mechanisms for economy-wide reductions.

3. Create a mandatory GHG reporting system as a basis for an economy-wide emissions trading program.
4. Implement a large-source, economy-wide cap-and-trade program for greenhouse gases.

Stimulate innovation across key economic sectors.

5. **Transportation:** Convert the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) program into strengthened, tradable corporate average emissions standards. Support biofuels, hydrogen, and other low-GHG fuel alternatives.
6. **Manufacturing:** Provide outreach and incentives to manufacturers for improvements in industrial efficiency and low-GHG technologies, and support the production of low-GHG products.
7. **Agriculture:** Raise the priority and funding levels for Farm Bill programs and other federal initiatives on carbon sequestration.

Drive the energy system toward greater efficiency, lower-carbon fuels and carbon capture technologies.

8. **Coal and Carbon Sequestration:** Provide funding for tests of geologic carbon sequestration and for research, development and demonstration (RD&D) projects on separation and capture technologies, in combination with advanced generation coal plants. Establish an appropriate regulatory framework for carbon storage.
9. **Natural Gas:** Expand natural gas transportation infrastructure and production.
10. **Renewables:** Significantly "ramp up" renewables for electricity and fuels, including an extension/expansion of the production tax credit, a uniform system for tracking renewable energy credits, and increased emphasis on biomass.
11. **Nuclear Power:** Provide opportunities for nuclear power to play a continuing role in a future low-carbon electricity sector.
12. **Efficient Energy Production and Distribution:** Support the development and use of combined heat and power installations, distributed generation technologies, and test beds for an upgraded electricity grid.
13. **Efficient Energy Usage:** Reduce energy consumption through policies that spur efficiency, including appliance/equipment standards, building R&D and codes, and consumer education.

Begin now to adapt to the inevitable consequences of climate change.

14. Develop a national adaptation strategy through the Climate Change Science Program and Climate Change Technology Program, and fund development of early-warning systems for related threats.

Engage in negotiations to strengthen the international climate effort.

15. Review options for a new or modified agreement to ensure fair and timely action by all major emitting countries, and participate in negotiations to establish binding climate commitments consistent with domestic interests.

These fifteen recommendations are not the only means of achieving a lower-carbon future, but taken together, they chart a climate-friendly path for the United States. Putting the Agenda into practice will take political will and policy action. All recommendations require government leadership and private sector commitment and time. Nonetheless, the details of specific recommendations in this Agenda are less critical than the compelling need to get started. Further delay will only make the challenge before us more daunting and costly.