

## U.S. Controls Emissions Better than Kyoto

by **Drew Thornley**  
Economic Freedom  
Policy Analyst

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**N**ot surprisingly, the free market controls carbon dioxide emissions better than an international treaty. The CO<sub>2</sub>-reduction records of the United States and the signatories of the Kyoto Protocol are proof.

Between 2000 and 2005, the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the EU-15 increased 3.8%, while the U.S.'s emissions went up 2.5%. During the same period, the U.S.'s economy grew 40% faster than the EU-15's, and the U.S. population grew twice as fast. U.S. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions fell 1.8% from 2005 to 2006—and all greenhouse gas emissions dropped 1.5%—while the U.S. economy grew 2.9%.

Clearly, the U.S. is onto something, controlling its emissions while also growing its population and economy. The international climate change bandwagon has yet to offer a plan for battling emissions anywhere close to as good as the U.S.'s strategy of unleashing market forces to control emissions and investing in clean-energy technologies, with a focus on long-term emissions control, as opposed to unrealistic short-term strategies. Market forces offer better incentives to use energy more efficiently than multilateral mandates, and the former don't cost hundreds billions of dollars for minimal environmental benefits.

The Kyoto Protocol is estimated to delay the impacts of global warming by seven days at the end of the century at a cost of about \$180 billion per year, if every signatory meets its emissions targets. However, the EU, Japan, and Canada are failing to meet their goals. According to the Euro-

pean Environmental Agency, 13 countries of the EU-15 have increased emissions over the last 16 years. Until now, Sweden and the UK have been thought to be the exceptions. However, recent data reveals Britain's greenhouse gas emissions increased almost 20% over the past 20 years, after counting emissions from shipping, aviation, and the carbon content of imports, all of which the United Nations does not count when calculating emissions. According to the Sierra Club of Canada, Canada's greenhouse gas emissions are up 24% since 1990, while the U.S.'s emissions are up only 14%. Japan is one of the worst-performing Kyoto signatories, with emissions still rising in 2007.

Delegates traveling to Bali, Indonesia, for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change pumped over 40,000 tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, more emissions than 20,000 mid-sized cars produce in an entire year. The irony is that the topic of the 10,000-attendee gathering was particularly focused on how to follow the failing Kyoto Protocol with a plan for even more drastic CO<sub>2</sub> cuts. The biggest aim was to get the United States and China to sign on to whatever GDP- and employment-crippling CO<sub>2</sub> plan the international coalition comes up with. If the goal is to curb emissions over the long-term, then countries should follow the example of the U.S. in letting competition and the free market lead the way to success. 

Drew Thornley is a policy analyst for the Texas Public Policy Foundation's Center for Economic Freedom.