

ATHGO International



Summary Resolution Adopted by the Third Annual Global Forum

June 2007

United Nations, New York

[submitted by the Resolution Summary Committee]

“Global Heating and Environmental Sustainability”

ATHGO International, an alliance of students and young professionals, calls upon the international community, the United Nations, individual nations, business, non-profits, and all citizens of the world to recognize, value, and address the issue of global heating and environmental sustainability by:

Reaffirming the United Nations Charter and its jurisdiction in the matter,

Recognizing the Kyoto Protocol, the Millennium Development Goals, the 2004 Potsdam Resolution, the Stern Report, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as a foundation for a sustainable climate conscious society,

Aware that the recent release of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report reaffirms the immense consequences of inaction or slow action over climate change,

Noting further the work of The Hadley Center and the Met Office suggesting that biospheric carbon storage is likely to fall to only 40% of current carbon emissions by 2030,

Deeply convinced that we are already regrettably locked into a certain and irreversible level of anthropogenic climate change due to past burning of fossil fuels,

Recognizing the need for a post-Kyoto framework to provide a long-lasting, loud, and legal global structure to ensure the world achieves its stated commitments under the UNFCCC,

Affirming that solutions need originate not only from government and business, but also from citizens, whose home energy-use practices, transportation and consumption decisions all heavily influence global development and supply

Emphasizing that the economic savings associated with energy efficiency are market forces that can facilitate many changes in business and citizen practices that do not depend on the imposition of fines or penalties,

Noting that most solutions to climate change proposed thus far have overlooked significant populations that can contribute greatly to its solution,

Emphasizing that Climate Change is an issue that particularly applies to future generations, and that the voice, power, and activity of young people on this important topic should be acknowledged and incorporated into strategies to stem Climate Change,

Expressing the hope that our path to solving Climate Change is an opportunity to transform our collective approach to global problems overall and lead to new solutions in global health, improved economies, reduced group-based conflicts, and a more participatory, peaceful model for a sustainable global future,

From this several recommendations emerge. The ATHGO Third Annual Global Forum

CONCEPTUALLY:

1. **MOST STRONGLY URGES** that emissions reduction commitments reflect the proactive search for solutions needed to avoid potentially catastrophic consequences of Global Heating, rather than what appears possible given current practices,
2. **STRONGLY RECOMMENDS** the reduction of greenhouse gases in line with the precautionary principle, recognizing the risk for potentially devastating yet unforeseen events due to climatic “tipping points”
3. **INVITES** NGOs and Nations to explore the idea of Contraction and Convergence with citizens of their nations in order to raise awareness of the inequity between current per capita emissions around the globe,¹
4. **ENCOURAGES** the accountability of leadership accountability at the top levels of business and the incorporation of social responsibility into the "bottom line" emphasis of corporate entities,
5. **RECOMMENDS** framing Global Heating as an international security issue and considering avenues for the UN Security Council to become involved in policing the climate abuses that impose social and ecological consequences on the global community,
6. **STRONGLY EMPHASIZES** the importance of including ALL accountable global emissions in any post-Kyoto global Protocol including emissions from air and maritime transport and from the military,
7. **ENCOURAGES** focus on the mechanisms that will empower businesses, communities, individuals, and NGOs to develop and implement solutions,

GLOBALLY:

8. **STRONGLY RECOMMENDS** setting targets for Greenhouse Gas emission reductions at 60% below current levels by 2030 in order to avoid the “tipping point” which has been identified by earth scientists of all fields to be around 2 degrees Celsius above pre-Industrial levels,²
9. **RECOMMENDS** the implementation of customized performance management systems within each country by a multi-stakeholder process in consideration of each nation’s economic and environmental diversity in order to assess and report progress, advise practical collaborative approaches, and ensure incremental progress toward the agreed greenhouse gas emission limits,
10. **RECOMMENDS** increased research and funding addressing the specific challenges posed by mass migration resulting from increased natural disasters due to climatic change,
11. **CALLS FOR** the development by the International Accounting Standards Board to analyze the costs and benefits of a company’s environmental impact,
12. **URGES** the public to consider implementing a “Food for Carbon Plan,” given the Cap and Trade proposal submitted by the EU and the Kyoto Protocol (See Example 1)

ECONOMICALLY:

13. **RECOMMENDS** an increase in transparency of the Global Environment Fund, including continuous evaluation of the systems of technology transfer to ensure that developing nations are fully supported with adaptation,
14. **FURTHER RECOMMENDS** a designated percentage of the GEF or alternative fund to be earmarked for Climate Change measures, with funds to be generated in part, where appropriate by: a) contributions from the World Bank, b) multilaterally enforced tariffs on goods exported by countries not meeting international greenhouse gas regulations and c) donations from nations equivalent to 1% of their GDP each year, the amount identified by the Stern Review as an effective and proactive response to Climate Change,³
15. **CALLS FOR** corporate disclosure of financial risks imposed by climate change and policies related to the issue, as exemplified by the Sarbanes-Oxley law,
16. **CALLS FOR** the investment by individual business owners and pharmaceutical companies in developing nations in order to prevent the deforestation of these invaluable ecological systems for local profit; such investment is to be rewarded by micro financing/credits for environmentally and ecologically sound businesses,

LOCALLY:

17. **ENCOURAGES** citizens around the world to form diverse grassroots movements and multi-stakeholder solutions utilizing local level knowledge and participation for purposes including the design and implementation of

community specific energy efficiency and alternative energies (including but not limited to solar electric, wind energy, and sustainable-grown biomass) and encourages all levels of government to recognize the value and pragmatism of results produced by grassroots initiatives to support coordination between different groups (Example 2),

18. **FURTHER SUPPORTS** the formation of an online community network allowing community groups, existing networks (i.e. students, businesses, etc), and focus groups on specific solutions to serve as a clearing house for local solutions and to allow citizens to share ideas, discuss broader solutions, and generate participation in broader-scale initiatives with local governments,
19. **ENCOURAGES** local governments, businesses, and financial institutions to create revolving funds to allow homeowners and community groups to take out loans for energy efficiency and smart design improvements, which will be repaid by the cost savings generated by these projects,
20. **RECOMMENDS** exploring the strategic distribution of energy efficiency funds in such a way as to accomplish not only energy efficiency but also secondary educational or awareness-raising benefits, such as involving children in learning about and disseminating information about Global Warming via distribution of market-ready, energy-efficient, and zero-emission technologies (such as Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs) (see Example 3),
21. **SUPPORTS** the establishment of a user friendly system (such as a website) to help individual people, nations, and private businesses observe their carbon emission levels and progress toward zero-footprint goals (See Example 4),
22. **RECOGNIZES** the need for a universally accepted unit to convey carbon emission levels and a label to identify the carbon footprint of consumer and industrial products,
23. **RECOMMENDS**, considering the media impact on public perception, the development of international and local environmental advertising agencies that work in concert with the IPCC to broadcast climate change research and information (with an air of optimism at the same time grounded in sound science and urging action) through tailored local outlets, including print, television, radio, and interactive digital media,
24. **REAFFIRMS THE NEED** to incorporate Global Change lesson plans into children's education in order to target youth at an early age to begin thinking along environmental lines, which would include but not be limited to field trips and presentations, pamphlets, events, fairs and/or lectures by non-profit organizations,

NOTES ON OBJECTIVES:

EXAMPLE 1

A. Firstly, this would target reducing the developed world's reliance on food sources that employ poor land usage, such as cattle farming, and instead transform the existing space into more beneficial, flexible, and sustainable agriculture in crops such as wheat, soybean, and barley. As of now most governments discourage maximizing production of these commodities to avoid flooding the agricultural market.

B. Secondly, as an alternative ATHGO suggests using the extra produce as a bargaining tool for the carbon credit market. This would allow developed countries with high carbon emissions to bargain with underdeveloped countries, which have extra carbon credits available. This would help provide more food for these societies, which currently are experiencing food and water shortages. Moreover, these countries will be more directly affected by climate change, which will further hinder them from producing sustainable agriculture on their own;

EXAMPLE 2

The National Center for Atmospheric Research's Institute for the Study of Society and the Environment has undertaken co-developing research with interested communities along the Koyukuk River (Huslia, Hughes, Koyukuk, Alatna, Allakaket) and scientists who study Arctic and global climate change in order to better understand the changes associated with Global Heating, plan for coping with future changes, and create opportunities for education that combines elements of Native Knowledge and western science.

Shannon McNeeley's Process of mutual inquiry and problem solving:

A. Acknowledge the community's control and ownership of its own intellectual property by allowing its members to ask questions they think are important, to speak in their own terms, and to decide for themselves how to use the results

B. Involve all who are interested in participating

C. Build capacity within the community for self sufficiency -Develop local researchers

D. Give back to the community

EXAMPLE 3

One example of this process, which is occurring spontaneously at the grassroots level in many areas, is the city of Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. Since the spring of 2006, nine Cambridge schools, the Cambridge-Rindge Latin High School Environment Action Club, and Cambridge Boy Scouts have sold almost 10,000 compact fluorescent light

bulbs (CFLs), raising \$32,773 for their school activities or organizations and decreasing carbon emissions in the city. The bulbs were supplied for free to the schools by the utility company NSTAR, which purchased the bulbs with funds collected as an Energy Efficiency surcharge on electrical bills. Schools were able to keep 100% of the monies collected in this pilot program, and marketing for the fundraiser was combined with education about global warming to the children in materials provided by Radio Disney.

Within this model, there are many opportunities for adaptation and improvement to educate and motivate children as societies' leaders in the mobilization of citizenries around action for Global Warming.

EXAMPLE 4:

- A. Implementing a color classification system to measure carbon output with red being the highest, orange being moderately high, yellow being moderately low, and green being the lowest,
- B. An internationally established carbon output unit in the form of a 'carbon calorie' consisting of 1 carbon calorie per 100 metric tons of carbon dioxide output,
- C. An accurate labeling system to include the aforementioned components to engage consumer populations and instill political will;

This labeling system will provide consumer populations and the general public the means to identify more accurately how anthropogenic greenhouse gas output is affecting the goods and services being purchased on a day to day basis. This evaluation and exposure will place pressures on corporate industry to institute practices that are more environmentally sound as well as bring about increased subject knowledge by general populations.

³ Forrest, Colin. "The Cutting Edge: Climate Science to April 2005." 4/14/05.

http://portal.campaigncc.org/files/THE_CUTTING_EDGE_CLIMATE_SCIENCE_TO_APRIL_05.pdf

Colin Forrest, who is not a climatologist, derives these goals based on extensive review of primary literature particularly reports on the need to hold global concentrations below 440 ppm (Hare and Meinhausen) to hold global temperature rise below the 2-degree Celsius temperature rise over pre-Industrial levels established by the European Commission as the threshold for significant risk of catastrophic tipping-point events, current understanding of the world's carbon sinks and fluxes, and studies referring to the changes in biospheric carbon storage (Jones), which are synthesized to argue that 60% global emission reductions from current levels are needed to keep temperature rise from pre-Industrial levels below 2 degrees C.

Hare, Bill, and Malte Meinshausen. PIK report 93, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. 2003.

Jones, Chris et al. "Strong Carbon Cycle Feedbacks in a Climate Model with Interactive CO₂ and Sulphate Aerosols." *Geophysical Research Letters*, vol 30:9 (1479), 2003.

³ Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change. http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/sternreview_summary.cfm