

Climate Change News – 12/25-1/2

Brought to you by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute

Welcome to EESI's first ever "Climate Change News." This weekly email-newsletter is intended to inform recipients of the latest climate change-related news. The newsletter is an EESI publication intended for all interested parties, particularly the policymaker community. Issues will be archived on our website at www.eesi.org under 'Publications.' For more information regarding either the newsletter or EESI please contact JR Drabick at jdrabick@eesi.org.

Sincerely, Carol Werner, Executive Director

2003 May Break Temperature Record

Recently it was announced that 2002 was the second warmest year on record, leaving 1998 the record holder for another year. But that may not be the case after 2003. The New York Times reported on December 31st that some experts foresee a 50/50 chance that 2003 will either match or break the 1998 average temperature record of 58.0 degrees. Other experts, including Dr. James E. Hansen, the director of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, put even higher odds on 2003 taking over the top spot. However, even if 2003 does not break the record, many experts expect that 2003 will not deviate from the warming trend that has formed in the last decade.

More information available via [The New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com).

US Greenhouse Gas Emissions Decrease in 2001

On December 20th the Energy Information Administration released greenhouse gas emission data for 2001. The data displayed a 1.2% decrease in US greenhouse gas emissions relative to the year 2000, or a decrease of 24 million metric tons to 1,883 million metric tons carbon equivalent for the year. The 2001 emission level is still 11.9% higher than the 1990 level of 1,683 million metric tons carbon equivalent. The decrease is primarily attributed to the slumping economy and the relatively warm 2000-2001 winter. The warm winter caused demand for the combustion of coal, oil, and gas to decrease, thereby decreasing greenhouse gas emissions. According to EIA spokesman John Cogan, "This is just one year's worth of data, and our projections don't indicate the beginning of a new trend. This is perhaps an anomaly driven more by lower economic growth than anything else."

More information available via [EIA](http://www.eia.doe.gov) and [The Washington Post](http://www.washingtonpost.com).

Studies Show Climate Change Displacing Species

The January 2nd issue of Nature Magazine reports that two separate studies have found global warming to be a primary cause for the gradual displacement of species. The studies have found that species' ranges are moving 4 miles towards the poles per decade and that some species, such as European butterflies, have shifted between 30 and 60 miles north of their normal habitat already. The lead author of one of the studies, Dr. Terry Root of Stanford University, stated that "If we're already seeing such dramatic changes" among species, "it's really pretty frightening to think what we might see in the next 100 years." Also of importance, the studies calculated that many of the ecological changes they have measured have a 95 percent chance of being a result of climate warming and not some other factor. The studies were conducted by leading scientists from University of Texas, Wesleyan University, and Stanford University, among others.

More information available via [The New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com) and [Nature Magazine](http://www.nature.com).

2002 is 2nd Warmest Year On Record

On Tuesday, December 16th, NOAA announced that the average temperature on Earth rose nearly 1 degree since last year to 57.8 degrees Fahrenheit. Accordingly, NASA recently announced that 2002 was the second warmest year on record. 1998 was the warmest year on record and 9 of the 10 warmest years on record have all occurred since 1990. Tom Karl, director of NOAA's national climate data center, commented that "there is a clear trend toward warmer conditions, and it is a very significant trend."

More information available via [NOAA](#) and [CNN](#).

Canada Ratifies Kyoto Protocol

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien signed Canada's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol on Monday, December 15th. The treaty calls for Canada to decrease greenhouse gas emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2012. The United States has not pursued ratification of the protocol. Business leaders in Canada have shown concern over potential economic consequences, particularly in oil sectors, but Chrétien was able to garner enough support despite these concerns to ratify the protocol. The Canadian Parliament voted 195-77 in favor of ratification on December 10th. Upon signing the ratification Chrétien commented that "with this signature, we are doing the right thing for Canada, for the global environment and for future generations." The protocol will enter into force internationally when ratified by Russia, which is expected to occur in the near future.

More information available via [Reuters](#).

In related news New Zealand also ratified the Kyoto Protocol on December 15th, with Prime Minister Helen Clark stating that "the Kyoto Protocol is the international community's response to climate change and New Zealand is playing its part."

Canadian Auto Workers Support Kyoto's Economic Opportunities

While many business and automobile manufacturing lobbyists have fought the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol in Canada, the president of the Canadian Auto Workers union Buzz Halgrove has come out in support of a well-resourced implementation plan for the protocol. Halgrove rejects the notion that one must decide between protecting the environment and protecting the economy. Rather, Halgrove argues that "as long as we do more work, not less, to protect the environment, then Kyoto will be good for industry as well as for the planet." He goes on to argue that "it is obvious that the industry must adapt in coming decades, to produce motor vehicles that are less environmentally damaging. That will mean more investment, more research, and more spending on the part of the auto companies." And the result? More jobs for CAW members, Mr. Halgrove believes.

More information available via [CAW](#)
