



WESTERN  
GOVERNORS'  
ASSOCIATION

**WGA Policy Resolution 03-07**  
**September 15, 2003**  
**Big Sky, Montana**

***National Policies Regarding Global Climate Change***

SPONSOR: Governor Johanns

**A. BACKGROUND**

1. Atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases are rising and are projected to continue to increase. There is continuing scientific debate as to what the impact of increasing contributions of green-house gases would be on the climate.
2. Climate variability has impacted the West in recent years, including very significant droughts across much of the region.
3. The failure to take appropriate actions to address global climate change risks economic, environmental and societal damage. The costs for stabilizing greenhouse gas emissions are, and will be substantial and may be borne in large part by each state.
4. The climate in the West is highly variable from watershed to watershed, and can be dramatically different than the eastern United States.

**B. GOVERNORS' POLICY STATEMENT**

1. Western Governors urge the President, Congress, the U.S. Department of State, and other federal agencies to include the interests and expertise of the states as part of any national debate on global climate change including\_ the mitigation of greenhouse gases to ensure fully coordinated policies.
2. Western Governors support a full and vigorous discussion, including all stakeholders, and consideration of all alternatives regarding the mitigation of greenhouse gases, adaptation of policies and other global climate change measures.
3. Western Governors support a coordinated research effort on global climate change. The Governors believe research should appropriately emphasize decision support, in order to engender informed discussion of climate change issues by decisionmakers, stakeholders, the media, and the general public.”
4. The Governors recognize that climate prediction is complex with many uncertainties and that the economic and environmental risk of long-term climate change may, or may not, outweigh the uncertainty of climate prediction. Therefore, the Governors recommend

that policies related to long-term climate should incorporate results from ongoing scientific research.

5. Federal agencies should invest in science programs in Western states which are able to pursue scientific questions relevant to the West. Western Governors support the implementation of tools such as carbon sequestration that have broad public support and can help address the unique conditions of the West.
6. Western Governors urge the President and the U.S. Department of State's international negotiating team to proceed cautiously with regard to new aims and post-2000 commitments for greenhouse gas mitigation strategies that would place an undue, cost burden on energy consumers of the states while supporting agreements for globally applicable provisions that will significantly reduce the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions.
7. Western Governors support a national policy on global climate change that is consistent with efforts to develop cost-effective alternative energy sources and more efficient use of energy.
8. Western Governors recognize the need to be able to proactively respond to short-term climate change and variability, e.g. drought.

**C. GOVERNORS' MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE**

1. The Western Governors' Association shall post this resolution to its web site to be referred to and transmitted as necessary.
2. The Governors direct WGA staff to work with the appropriate federal agencies in implementing this resolution.

*Originally adopted in 1997 as Policy Resolution 97 - 002, and readopted as 00-014.*

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All policy resolutions are posted on the WGA Web site ([www.westgov.org](http://www.westgov.org)) or you may request a copy by writing or calling:

Western Governors' Association  
1515 Cleveland Place, Suite 200  
Denver, CO 80202-5114  
Ph: (303) 623-9378  
Fax: (303) 534-7309