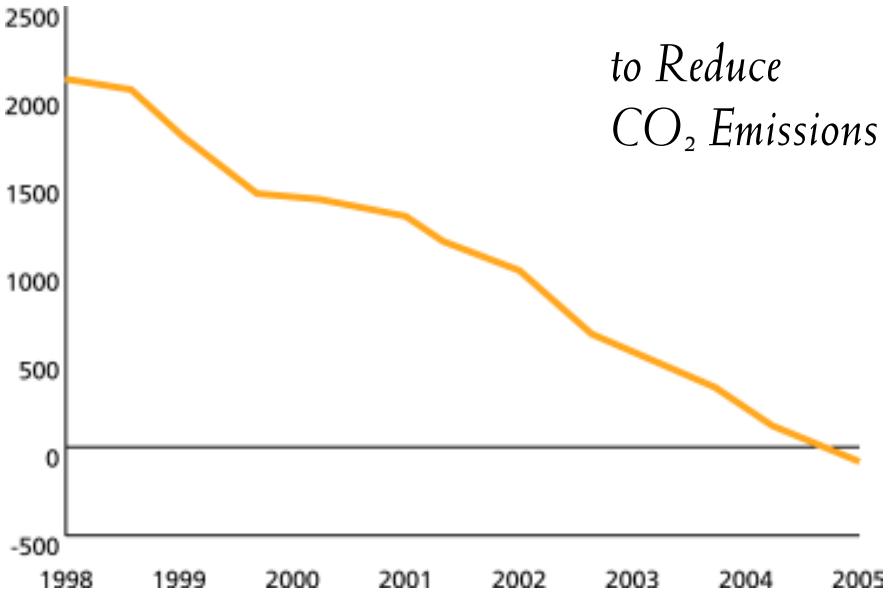


WRI's

# Commitment



*to*  
**Zero**  
*by 2005*

With Answers to  
Frequently Asked  
Questions



WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

TO PROTECT THE GLOBAL CLIMATE, World Resources Institute has made a commitment to reduce our emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) to zero or better by 2005. The decision was made by a vote of WRI staff in April 1999.

Although we do not have smokestacks or large industrial machinery, our office electrical use, travel, commuting, paper use, and other activities, all lead to emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>, the primary agent of human-induced climate change. By going to zero net emissions, we hope to demonstrate that significant and early action on climate change is technically and economically feasible. To help ourselves and others track our progress, we will annually measure and publicly report our emissions, starting in October 2000.

## **Beginning with simple steps**

WRI is already starting to reduce emissions by taking some simple steps to reduce energy use that we can control in our own offices, including the installation of energy efficient lighting and equipment. In the coming years we will explore other options beyond our walls as well. Among the efforts now underway or being planned are:

- Ensuring that office equipment is turned off each night (a computer and monitor can each use 200 watts per hour; by turning them off each night, about 2.5 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions can be prevented annually, and \$150 saved each year).
- Reducing paper use (WRI used about 3,750 reams of office paper in 1998; cutting use by 10 percent would save over \$1,300 and reduce the related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by about 4 tons).
- Looking farther ahead, we'll replace some of our travel with videoconferencing (for short trips by air, for example, roughly 40kg, or 88 pounds, of CO<sub>2</sub> are emitted for each 100 miles of travel by one person).

- We'll work on options like urban forestry projects, and assist in making green power (electricity from renewable and low-carbon sources) available in the Washington, DC, area.

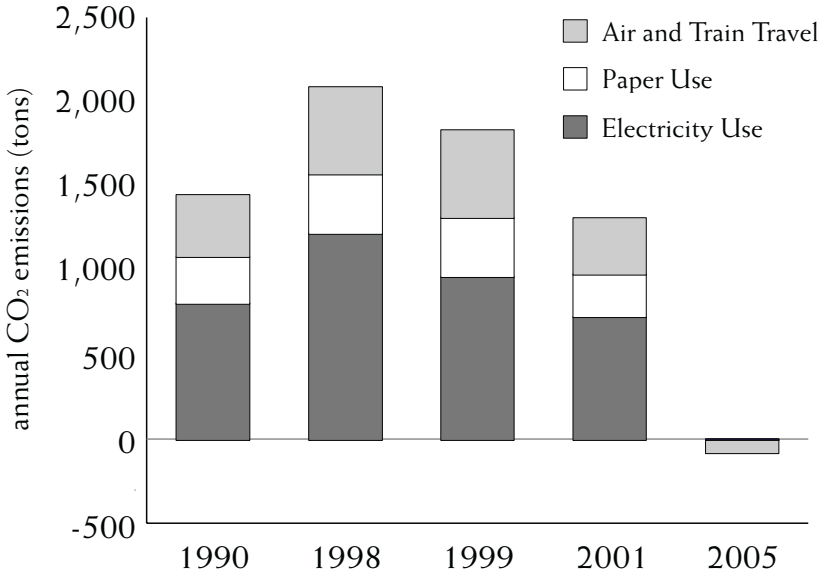
## **Developing a baseline for measurement**

We have taken the first step toward our goal by completing a preliminary estimate of our 1990 and current CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Going forward, we will reduce our emissions to 7 percent below our 1990 levels by October 2000 (see Chart 1). This milestone reflects the reduction commitment that the United States would assume if it ratifies the Kyoto Protocol. By October 2005, we will reduce our net emissions to zero or better, meaning that we would achieve a net sink of CO<sub>2</sub> (more carbon sequestered than emitted) through emissions reductions and offsets. We will include greenhouse gases other than CO<sub>2</sub> in our goal as we further develop our program.

## **Sharing our experience with others**

WRI will pursue this goal in ways that maximize the impact of our commitment beyond our own walls. Specifically, as part of our measurement and reporting efforts we will develop guidelines to help similar, small- to medium-sized organizations and businesses measure their own emissions. We will share this and other information through our website. We will pursue emissions reduction options that enable other organizations, businesses, and households to cut their own emissions. For example, we are looking into how we might help make green power available in our region, or help make efficiency improvements in lower-income housing in the area. And finally, we will integrate our practical lessons from this effort into our work with other organizations and businesses on climate change.

Significant global reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are necessary to stabilize atmospheric concentrations and reduce the risks of human-caused climate change. By eliminat-

**Chart 1** WRI's Emissions and Goals

ing our own emissions, we will make a small contribution to the kind of reductions necessary to minimize the negative health, sea level, economic, and weather changes that would be associated with such climate change. Our estimated 1990 carbon dioxide emissions were over 1,500 tons—equivalent to burning about 170,000 gallons of gasoline. (WRI's current emissions are about 1,663 tons — the equivalent of burning about 188,000 gallons of gasoline.) By going to zero net emissions, we will be making a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to keeping 300 cars off the road each year, or saving more than 680 tons of coal annually.

All of WRI's emissions are indirect, meaning that they come from services and products that we purchase from others. As a result, WRI will need to work closely with our property manager (Trammell Crow Real Estate Services, Inc.), our current power company (Potomac Electric Power), other power companies, providers of shipping services, and community organi-

zations in the Washington, DC, area to reach our zero emissions goal. The United States Postal Service is helping WRI estimate the emissions associated with our shipping component, and has expressed interest in establishing their own reduction goal. WRI is also committed to working with organizations such as the Climate Neutral Network and companies such as Interface Flooring Systems, which are successfully tackling this challenge.

## **Working to protect the global climate**

This effort builds on and will contribute to work within WRI's Climate Protection Initiative, which has included efforts such as the Safe Climate, Sound Business collaboration among BP Amoco, General Motors, Monsanto, and WRI. All partners in the collaboration agreed to pursue a seven-point action agenda to address climate change concerns. WRI's reduction effort will address several points on that agenda, and we will share what we learn with these partners and others. For example, WRI and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development are building a multi-stakeholder collaboration to design and disseminate an internationally accepted standard for measuring and reporting corporate greenhouse gas emissions.

Finally, we hope that our own efforts will inspire reduction commitments and action by others. In April 2001, WRI will launch SafeClimate.net (<http://www.safeclimate.net/>), which seeks to educate citizens to the climate imperative and to the fact that there are easy actions they can take right now on an individual and organizational level to help with this serious threat.

We will pursue reduction options and share information from our efforts in ways that enable others to take action. While we cannot quantify the impact of these outreach efforts, we believe

that we can play an important role in helping other organizations — especially similar small- to medium-size enterprises — to achieve emissions reductions as well.

***What about natural gas consumption in your building? Does your building use natural gas or oil? Is your office space individually metered so that you can track your own energy usage?***

Our building runs entirely on electricity, which simplifies our efforts to estimate our carbon dioxide emissions in some ways. We do not have individual metering yet, so for the time being we have to estimate our electricity use based on the building's total electricity use, our floor space, and our equipment. Our property manager is helping us to look into installing individual meters.

Looking to the future, we will work with our landlord to encourage a switch to a low-carbon source of electricity. This will depend, however, on consumer choice becoming available in Washington, DC.

***How about transportation to work? Does WRI offer free parking? How many people drive gasoline-powered cars to work? How many carpool? Are you going to have a "Bicycle or AFV only" policy for your parking spaces?***

Most of our staff bicycle, walk, or rely on public transportation to get to work. WRI does not offer free parking, and we have only ten people who have monthly parking tags (about 8 percent of the staff). By contrast, twenty-eight people have keys to the bike room (almost 22 percent). The remainder walk, take public transportation, or carpool. Biking to work is important enough to our staff that, as part of our lease negotiations for our new office space, the property managers gave us exclusive access to a secured bicycle storage room at no extra cost. They were willing to do this because we told them that we would need a very limited number of parking spaces.

Although WRI does not subsidize commuting costs, employees can contribute to a tax-exempt fund from which they are then reimbursed for some commuting costs. This program doesn't distinguish between public transport and, say, parking expenses. We do plan to address emissions associated with commuting, for example, by educating staff about biking to work. But we have to respect the fact that a few people simply have to drive to meet family and other obligations.

*Are you counting employee use of energy in their homes for this effort?*

We do not include residential energy use in our estimate of WRI's carbon dioxide emissions, but we have started to educate staff to encourage energy conservation at home. For example, one of our employees estimated how much electricity and money people could save by using compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) instead of conventional lightbulbs. We're looking into how we can make technologies like CFLs more readily available to our staff and others.

We do plan to develop an emissions measurement approach for telecommuting that will account for electricity that staff use at home for work, and we will revise our estimate of WRI's emissions to reflect that energy use. As part of this effort, we also will educate staff about how to choose low-carbon or carbon-free sources of electricity in states where they have the freedom to choose their energy company.

*Are you going to lobby the District of Columbia government to establish electric competition? Maryland and Virginia have already taken steps to allow choice.*

As a non-profit organization, WRI doesn't lobby. The kind of steps that we might take to promote green power in the Washington, DC area include working with energy companies, organizing a buyers' group, policy and environmental analysis, and general education and outreach. Since we're interested in

improving the environmental aspects of energy use in the DC area, we would consider working in Maryland and Virginia as well.

***Are you going to stop making paper publications? Will you allow readers to download or print off your web site, or have a "read only" policy to save paper?***

We have already started to make greater use of electronic publications, but it's highly unlikely that we'll ever eliminate our paper publications. There are still a lot of people — especially in developing countries — who would lose access to our work if we offered it only electronically.

Your question about letting people print out publications raises the issue of "leakage," which is when one group's emissions reduction efforts unintentionally lead to more emissions somewhere else. This would happen, for example, if we reduced our paper use for publications only to have that reduction partially offset by people increasing their paper use to print out the electronic versions of our publications. However, we believe that, even if people do use energy and paper to print out copies for themselves, their use on demand will be more efficient than our current methods of estimating demand in advance, which often results in printing more or fewer copies than might actually be needed.

To address all of these concerns, we plan to use a combination of approaches: increasing the recycled content of the publications paper that we do use, offering publications electronically, and encouraging people to use the electronic versions as such rather than printing them out.

***Are you only going to buy from suppliers that are involved in Energy Star programs?***

As we have done in designing our new office space, we will continue to work with suppliers that are energy efficient and that offer superior environmental performance in other re-

spects. We haven't identified specific requirements for all of our suppliers at this point, but we are committed to purchasing only equipment that is Energy Star rated. All the equipment and appliances purchased for our new office space — including dishwashers, refrigerators, copiers, fax machines, computers and printers — are Energy Star rated, and we are determined to make full use of the power saving features on each of them.

***Will WRI engage in carbon sequestration activities like planting trees?***

We will undertake carbon sequestration efforts, and it's important to understand why. First, we can't achieve our goal of zero emissions by 2005 without sequestering carbon. We will pursue energy efficiency, energy technology changes, and reductions in resource use. But, after exhausting the affordable options in these categories, we will still have some carbon dioxide emissions. We've identified a number of options for sequestering carbon to compensate for those emissions.

Second, we understand that land-use practices in forestry and agriculture are an important part of the carbon cycle — and many other environmental processes like water cycling and absorption of pollution. Land-use practices that sequester carbon can also provide people with immediate benefits, such as cleaner water and air. For example, planting trees in urban areas can reduce stormwater runoff (a significant source of water pollution in many cities) and can help absorb air pollutants. Agricultural practices that sequester carbon can reduce the amount of fertilizer and soil that ends up in streams and rivers. One of our priorities will be to make sure that the sequestration options that we pursue provide these types of benefits to local communities.

## Recent WRI publications on climate protection

### **Safe Climate, Sound Business: An Action Agenda**

*British Petroleum, General Motors, Monsanto, and World Resources Institute*

1998/20 pages/ISBN 1-56973-286-8/\$15.00

### **Building a Safe Climate, Sound Business Future**

*British Petroleum, General Motors, Monsanto, and World Resources Institute*

1998/64 pages/ISBN 1-56973-287-6/\$20.00

### **Taking a Byte Out of Carbon: Electronics Innovation for Climate Protection**

*John B. Horrigan, Frances H. Irwin, and Elizabeth Cook*

1998/50 pages/ISBN 1-56973-265-5/\$20.00

### **Climate Protection Policies: Can We Afford to Delay?**

*Duncan Austin*

1997/56 pages/ISBN 1-56973-231-0/\$20.00

### **Climate Protection and the National Interest**

*James J. MacKenzie*

1997/56 pages/ISBN 1-56973-228-0/\$20.00

### **The Costs of Climate Protection: A Guide for the Perplexed**

*Robert Repetto and Duncan Austin*

1997/60 pages /ISBN 1-56973-222-1/\$20.00

### **Carbon Counts: Estimating Climate Change Mitigation in Forestry Projects**

*Paige Brown, Bruce Cabarle, and Robert Livernash*

1997/32 pages/ISBN 1-56973-229-9/\$20.00

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