

Dear Friends,

As you may have gathered from my message to you last week, there is much to be hopeful about in the local and regional response to the climate change. Scott Zimmermann, a 3rd year law student at Boalt Hall who has been instrumental in prodding Cal to work on its greenhouse gases reminded me that there is also a great deal of activity at the State level as well. He writes:

In the last month alone the California Public Utilities Commission passed the world's largest solar initiative, and last week just voted unanimously to move forward on instituting a greenhouse gas (GHG) cap for the electric utilities. Currently I'm working on a project there which will require all long-term contracts for power to meet a GHG standard that will effectively prevent coal plants from being built out-of-state to meet California's increasing demands (30 of which are currently proposed). These things are all being done to protect both the environment and to protect California ratepayers from future liability associated with investments in imprudent high GHG emitting power plants.

I mentioned that this week's message would also be a plea (OK, request) to join KyotoUSA in its efforts to provide grassroots support to Alameda County's 14 cities who will be engaged in developing action plans for reducing their greenhouse gas emissions. **Now's your chance to make a real difference in a location where you have an incredible amount of influence.** Citizen-led activities are already underway in several cities, while other cities are at the very beginning of this process and will benefit from the support that you can give them.

At this point, Mayors and City Managers from all 14 cities have agreed in principal to work with [ICLEI's Cities for Climate Protection Campaign](#) and the County's [StopWaste.org](#) to develop individual city plans for identifying and inventorying local sources of greenhouse gas emissions and developing a plan for their reduction. StopWaste is also contributing funding to the cities for this activity so that they are not hampered by a lack of funds from taking this project on. This takes care of two big impediments to action: lack of political commitment and lack of funding.

Here's a description of how this might work, keeping in mind that each city has a different culture, history, political structure, and level of awareness of the issue. The point here is that while we can and will give you some ideas about how to approach this issue based on what we've learned over the past year, it will be important to the success of your efforts to tailor your participation to the characteristics of your city. In other words, what might work in Berkeley may not be as successful in a south county city. And vice-versa.

Ideally, we will identify about 10 people in each city who are willing to work together collaboratively for a period of several months to a year. Your time commitment will vary depending on the size of your group and individual availability, but should be consistent. Whenever possible, this group should be representative of the people of the city, all age groups, genders, ethnicities, and above all, be willing and able to work together. And remember – these are Action Teams – so be prepared to make a contribution.

KyotoUSA will work with each group to help educate everyone about the issue, assist in recruiting supporters, provide materials, speak to other interested groups in your community, help you develop ideas about how you can encourage and support the city's effort, and provide whatever other support we can muster.

Each group's efforts might include all or some of the following:

KyotoUSA Newsletter – Alameda County Cities on the Move!

- 1) Telling your city government that you are concerned about climate change, that the city contributes to the problem through its municipal operations, and that you would like to see the city develop a plan to reduce its production of greenhouse gases.
- 2) Offering to do what you can as a volunteer group to educate the city and its residents about climate change and ways to reduce greenhouse gases.
- 3) Drafting a Resolution on climate change for the City.
- 4) Writing letter and articles to your local papers on the issue.
- 5) Speaking with representatives of your schools, religious institutions, workplaces, and the businesses you frequent about the problem and its solution
- 6) Working with KyotoUSA to organize workshops on global warming and highlighting local strategies for greenhouse gas reduction activities.

If you are a resident of one of Alameda County's 14 cities and are ready to participate in this challenging and rewarding grassroots experience, then let us know and we'll start organizing Action Teams in your city. And if you are already active on this issue locally, let us know and we'll try to bolster your efforts. All the best!

Tom

P.S. If you'd like to get regular media stories on climate change issues, here are two solid recommendations:

- 1) *Grist* - news with a sense of humor - <http://www.grist.org/>
- 2) *Climate Crisis Coalition Newsfeed* – send an e-mail to Tom Stokes at Kyoto and Beyond (tstokes@kyotoandbeyond.org) indicating whether you want to receive it daily or weekly

Visit KyotoUSA's "upcoming events" page at <http://www.kyotousa.org/index.php?p=upcoming> for a list of events occurring near you. Let us know if you'd like us to publicize an activity related to climate change and we'll post it.

And if you get the urge to help us pay the rent and phone bill, you can do so here:



Thanks!