

# Example of climate change and federal policy essay

[Environment](#), [Climate Change](#)



The average global temperature and concentrations of carbon dioxide (one of the so-called greenhouse gases) in the atmosphere have fluctuated within cycles of hundreds of thousands of years as a result of Earth's varied position relative to the sun. This is perfectly normal. Throughout those times, emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere have been balanced by the gases naturally absorbed in the environment, so that the levels remained fairly constant. This constancy allowed life as we know it to develop and flourish (National Geographic, 2012).

Now, however, human activity has increased the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere by more than a third since the Industrial Revolution.

Changes this large have historically taken thousands of years, but they are now happening over the course of mere decades (National Geographic, 2012). With scientific evidence pouring in, the debate is not any longer if the changes to the atmosphere are taking place, but how fast the warming will occur, and how much damage will be done as a result (Environmental Defense Fund, 2012).

There are a number of agencies within the federal government that have been tasked with overseeing some aspects of documenting and mitigating climate change, but the primary office is the U. S. Cabinet's Department of the Interior. On September 14, 2009, U. S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar signed an order that made climate change become a part of his cabinet department's planning and operation. In addition, The Office of Climate Change Policy and Technology serves as the focal point within the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) " for the development, coordination, and implementation of DOE-related aspects of climate change technical

programs, policies, and initiatives.” The mission of this office is to accelerate the development and deployment of both advanced technologies and best practices to mitigate climate change (Energy. gov, n. d.).

In addition to these offices, in 2009, the Obama Administration convened the Interagency Climate Change Adaptation Task Force, co-chaired by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and included representatives from more than 20 Federal agencies. On October 5 of that year, President Obama signed an Executive Order directing the Task Force to develop a report with recommendations for how the Federal Government can strengthen policies and programs to better prepare the nation to adapt to the impacts of climate change (WhiteHouse. gov, n. d.).

The 2011 Task Force report provided an update on actions in key areas of Federal adaptation, including building resilience in local communities, safeguarding critical natural resources such as freshwater, and providing accessible climate information and tools to help decision-makers manage climate risks (WhiteHouse. gov, n. d.).

Climate change is a global phenomenon, and the U. S., no matter how committed, cannot change the situation alone. With policies such as the 1998 Kyoto Protocol and similar agreements, countries all over the world can unite their forces to cut down greenhouse gases and prevent an environmental disaster.

## **Works Cited**

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