

Air quality and climate change as integrated policy persuasive essay

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



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An integrated approach to tackling air quality and climate change makes sound sense. The topics of air quality and climate change are interrelated, so policies surrounding the two problems should be addressed using an integrated approach. The emissions that pollute our air and those that warm the planet have common sources: vehicles, buildings, power generation and industry. These pollutants and activities that affect the air we breathe also have a significant impact on the climate change the earth is experiencing.

Integrating air pollution control and climate change policies helps to achieve sustainable development and a low carbon society that benefit all. Many benefits are realized through integrating approaches and policies to air quality and climate change. One benefit of integrated policies is that the price to implement the policies is more cost effective. “Integrating climate and air pollution control programs leads to significant cost savings and important benefits to human health and the environment” (Kuylenstierna and Hicks, 2008).

Also, climate policies and decisions are felt in the future while policies improving air quality are felt in the here and now. Also, an integrated policy would avoid unintentional trade-offs. That is “when policy is introduced to benefit one area without consideration of how it will affect the other; in these cases, negative impacts felt by one area may outweigh the actual benefits that the policy was designed to bring” (Environmental Protection UK, 2011). Another benefit of integration is the ability to prioritize actions and weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the action for each problem.

There will be obstacles to realizing an integrative approach to air quality and climate change. Political obstacles can include lobbyist and interest groups that hold significant influence in the political arena. If proposed actions increase costs to manufacture or produce energy, the interest groups and the lobbyists will be vocal about their disapproval and may influence a political leader's decision to implement environmental policies. In addition, individuals may voice their concerns about costs associated with integrated policies.

For example, if the cost of a car goes up to meet emissions regulations, individuals will voice their opinions during election time by voting the out the policy maker. Finally, the science behind the problems needs to be clearly communicated and understood by all. The science needs to be valid and proven as well. If the science is correct, individuals will more readily accept any policy changes. Currently, there are opposing views on air quality and climate change that contribute to the confusion many realize surrounding the environmental problems the world is facing.

A fragmented approach to address these environmental issues may do more harm than good. One policy that is meant to help with climate change may pose many disadvantages to air quality. In a compartmentalized approach, the effect to the other issue is not considered. This can also add additional costs and resources to amend or fix a problem created through a fragmented approach. Separate approaches also contribute to the influence interest groups and lobbyists can have on the implementation of policies. Finally, a fragmented approach can be unclear and communicate competing priorities.

The unclear and fragmented message presented to the public lessens the impact and the crucial need to act on the issues we face surrounding air quality and climate change. “ Individuals are the drivers of larger processes of change involving organizations and political systems, especially in democratic societies” (Liverani, 2009). In addition, “ as consumers, individuals hold a reservoir of mitigation capacity. Roughly 40 percent of OECD emissions result from decisions by individuals—travel, heating, and food purchases. U. S. households directly account for roughly 35 percent of national CO₂ emissions - more in absolute terms than the entire U. S. industrial sector and any other country bar China” (Liverani, 2009). Reflecting on these numbers, the impact that individual behaviors and actions demonstrate the negative consequences people have to the air quality as well as the significant contribution to the climate change problem. However, people must not only be informed, concerned, or understand the problems and issues, the people must act to improve air quality conditions and stop the rapid rate of climate change.

People need to accept responsibility for their waste and their emissions. Policy makers have used economic and market mechanism to drive adoption, but this strategy is not all that is needed. Understanding their impact and acting on their impact without financial incentives is crucial to improve the quality of the air we breathe and slow the climate change we are experiencing. New social norms need to be established through effective marketing and communication of the problems.?