



The White House

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FACT SHEET: President Obama Announces New Actions To Strengthen Global Resilience To Climate Change And Launches Partnerships To Cut Carbon Pollution

The U.S. Continues to Lead International Efforts to Combat Global Climate Change and Prepare for its Impacts

Today, at the United Nations Climate Summit in New York, President Obama announced a new set of tools to harness the unique scientific and technological capabilities of the United States to help vulnerable populations around the world strengthen their climate resilience. The United States also announced its leadership and participation in more than a dozen new climate change partnerships launched at the Climate Summit.

The tools for global resilience announced by the President include improved and extended extreme weather risk outlooks to help avoid loss of life and property, data, tools and services to enable countries to better prepare for the impacts of climate change, including a new release of global elevation data; and an announcement of a new public-private partnership to ensure that the climate data, tools, and products made available by U.S. technical agencies are useful to developing countries. The President also announced a new Executive Order requiring Federal agencies to factor climate resilience into the design of their international development programs and investments.

New international climate change partnerships in which the United States has played a key role in launching include the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture, the Oil and Gas Methane Partnership, the Pilot Auction Facility for Methane and Climate Change Mitigation, and the Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance.

These actions build on the President's Climate Action Plan, which includes unprecedented efforts by the United States to reduce carbon pollution, promote clean sources of energy that create jobs, and protect American communities from the impacts of climate change.

The Climate Action Plan is working. In 2012, U.S. greenhouse gas emissions fell to the lowest level in nearly two decades. Since the President took office, wind energy production has tripled, and solar energy has increased by a factor of ten. This summer, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed the first carbon pollution standards for existing power plants, which account for a third of U.S. carbon pollution. And the President is empowering state and local leaders to reduce carbon pollution and prepare for the impacts of climate change in their communities through initiatives including a \$1 billion National Disaster Resilience Competition and the State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience.

Internationally, the United States continues to press for an ambitious, inclusive, and pragmatic global climate agreement in 2015, and intends to put forward a robust post-2020 climate commitment in the context of other major economies doing the same. Through our leadership of the Major Economies Forum and the Clean Energy Ministerial as well as our bilateral relationships, we continue to press the scientific and economic case for strong climate action. U.S. leadership has helped spur international action to address the health and climate impacts of short-lived climate pollutants, to launch free trade talks on environmental goods, and to cut donor country financial support for new coal-fired power plants. Going forward, the United States will continue to help develop, launch, and implement practical, action-oriented international initiatives such as those announced at today's U.N. Climate Summit.

New U.S. Actions to Strengthen Global Resilience to Climate Change

Executive Order on Climate-Resilient International Development

President Obama announced an Executive Order on Climate-Resilient International Development, requiring agencies to factor climate-resilience considerations systematically into the U.S. government's international development work and to promote a similar approach with multilateral entities. U.S. financial support for adaptation activities in developing countries has increased eightfold since 2009; such dedicated funding is critical. At the same time, the magnitude of the challenge requires not just dedicated adaptation finance flows but also a broader, integrated approach. Development investments in areas as diverse as eradicating malaria, building hydropower facilities, improving agricultural yields, and developing transportation systems will not be effective in the long term if they do not account for impacts such as shifting ranges of disease-carrying mosquitoes, changing water availability, or rising sea levels, thereby reducing the effectiveness of taxpayer

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money. This new Executive Order will:

- Improve the resilience of the Federal Government's international development programs, projects, investments, overseas facilities, and other funding decisions through consideration of current and future climate-change impacts, as appropriate;
- Share knowledge, data, tools, information, frameworks, and lessons learned in incorporating climate-resilience considerations; and
- Complement efforts by the Federal Government to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at home and globally.

Releasing Powerful New Data to Enable Planning for Resilience

To empower local authorities to better plan for the impacts of severe environmental changes such as drought, glacial retreat, flooding, landslides, coastal storm surges, agricultural stresses, and challenges concerning public health, today the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Geospatial-intelligence Agency (NGA), and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), as part of an ongoing commitment to open data and international data sharing through the inter-governmental Group on Earth Observations, will release a collection of higher-resolution elevation datasets for Africa. Datasets covering other global regions will be made available within one year, with the next release of data providing more accurate elevation information for Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. Until now, elevation data for Africa were freely and publicly available only at 90-meter resolution. The datasets being released today, and during the course of the next year—which are based on data collected by sensors designed by an international partnership and carried on the U.S. Space Shuttle—resolve to 30-meters and will be used worldwide to improve environmental monitoring, climate change research including sea-level rise impact assessments, and local decision support. These datasets are being made available via a user-friendly interface on [USGS's Earth Explorer website](#). With a commitment from the Secure World Foundation, and in collaboration with the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites, USGS, NOAA, and NASA plan to offer online training and regional workshops to further enable users to take advantage of these data resources.

Developing New Outlooks for Extreme-Weather Risk

To reduce harm from extreme-weather events occurring throughout the world, the Obama Administration announced its intent to begin a coordinated U.S. effort, led by NOAA, to develop reliable extreme-weather risk outlooks on time horizons that are currently not available. This effort will initiate the planned development of new extreme-weather outlooks in the 15-30 day range, beyond the 14-day limit of current reliable weather forecasts and will explore producing information products for longer time-scales at which climate change influences risk. Currently available weather and climate information from NOAA empowers decision-makers, communities, farmers, and business owners to make smart decisions as they plan and prepare for the future. This new effort will seek to increase the information available to these decision makers in the 15-30 day timeframe with new kinds of actionable information to use as they plan and prepare for the future. To kick off the effort this year, NOAA will begin issuing weekly 3-4 week precipitation outlooks and will extend its current extreme-heat index product from the current 6-to-10-days-out to 8-to-14-days-out, giving communities several additional days to prepare for potential life threatening heat waves.

Equipping Meteorologists in Developing Nations with the Latest Tools and Knowledge

To help connect meteorologists in developing nations with the best-available tools, knowledge, and information resources, NOAA will seek to significantly expand the reach of its highly successful [international "Training Desk" program](#), which brings developing-country meteorologists to the United States for state-of-the-art training and education at NOAA's National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center. Since 1992, more than 300 meteorologists from 35 nations have completed NOAA's training desk program, helping both to build capacity at meteorological institutions in their home countries for climate prediction, monitoring, and assessments, and to feed local observational climate data back to NOAA upon returning to their home countries. This effort will increase the number of meteorologists from developing countries in Africa, the Caribbean, South America, and Southeast Asia who will participate in the training desks and will expand the curriculum from weather and climate to include the important water challenges (predicting how much, how little and what quality) that are now confronting the global community.

Launching a Public-Private Partnership on Climate Data and Information for Resilient Development

President Obama announced that the United States will develop and launch a new public-private partnership focused on connecting actionable climate science, data, tools, and training to decision-makers in developing countries. This partnership will enhance capacity within developing countries to assess impacts and vulnerabilities associated with climate change, boost resilience, and achieve their own development goals in the context of a changing climate. Building on the skills and investments of USAID's climate change and development programming, including leveraging the newly announced Global Resilience Partnership, expertise from international and scientific agencies, including the agencies of the U.S. Global Change Research Program; and the innovation of U.S. universities, NGOs, and the private sector, this new partnership will:

- Make existing climate data, scientific information, outlooks, tools, and services more accessible to decision-makers around the world;
- Identify and address targeted climate information and capacity gaps, including by providing targeted training opportunities;

- Create a global community of practice that links climate data, climate change adaptation efforts, and international development; and
- Commit to the timely development of new products to support decision-making targeted at the needs of specific climate-vulnerable countries.

Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives Launched at the Climate Summit with U.S. Leadership

The Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture

The United States is joining the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture as a founding member. The Alliance brings together governments, businesses, farmers' organizations, civil society groups, research bodies and intergovernmental entities to address food security in the face of climate change. The United States will bring its existing food security and climate programs to this multi-stakeholder effort, including:

- Feed the Future – the U.S. Presidential initiative for food security, invests in technologies to deliver drought tolerant seeds, fertilizer and water efficiency technologies, and other tools to help farmers become more climate-smart in achieving its objectives of inclusive agricultural sector growth and improved nutrition.
- The Agriculture Initiative of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) – the United States co-chairs CCAC's Agriculture Initiative, which seeks to reduce methane and black carbon emissions while promoting agricultural livelihoods and advancing broader climate change objectives on adaptation and mitigation.
- The Department of Agriculture's Regional Climate Hubs will deliver information to American farmers, ranchers and forest landowners to help them adapt to climate change and weather variability.

Launch of CCAC Oil and Gas Methane Partnership

The United States has played an integral role in launching the Oil and Gas Methane Partnership, an innovative public-private initiative bringing together governments, leading oil and gas companies, and other stakeholders in a partnership focused on cost-effective reduction of methane emissions. The Partnership, an initiative of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), provides involved companies with a systematic, cost-effective approach for reducing their methane emissions and for credibly demonstrating to stakeholders the impacts of their actions.

Global Green Freight Action Plan

The United States is helping to lead the development and implementation of a Global Green Freight Action Plan together with over 20 countries plus NGOs, international organizations, and companies. This effort will result in fuel and cost savings for businesses and consumers as well as emission reductions of climate and air pollutants such as black carbon, carbon dioxide, and particulate matter.

Indonesia Palm Oil Pledge

The United States applauded the signing of the landmark Indonesia Palm Oil Pledge by the CEOs of Cargill, Asian Agri, Golden Agri-Resources, Wilmar, and the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This Pledge includes industry-leading benchmarks such as proactive government engagement on policy reform and a principle of no planting on peat lands, and go beyond the companies' existing sustainability commitments. By applying these principles to third-party suppliers and covering the signatories' operations worldwide, these companies are creating best practices for their industry. The U.S. Government looks forward to working with the signatories, civil society and the Government of Indonesia to follow and promote implementation of the Pledge.

Pilot Auction Facility (PAF) for Methane and Climate Change Mitigation

The United States will announce the intention to provide a \$15 million contribution to the Pilot Auction Facility for Methane and Climate Change Mitigation (PAF), an innovative, World Bank-managed climate finance instrument that will use auctions to maximize the efficiency of public resources for climate change mitigation. The PAF will pioneer an innovative, results-based climate finance model with potential to support low-carbon investment in ways that provide better value and lower risk for the taxpayer. The United States drove this concept forward from the time of our G8 presidency in 2012 to its launch by the World Bank this month.

Power Africa Cooperation Agreement with Sustainable Energy for All Initiative

The United States will sign a Cooperation Understanding Agreement with the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) Initiative to further strengthen collaboration between the President's Power Africa Initiative and the UN- and World Bank-led SE4All activities in Africa. Building on Power Africa's Beyond the Grid component, the cooperation will focus on expanded energy access, as well as development of renewable energy projects. At the August 2014 U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit, President Obama announced new aggregate goals for Power Africa to add 60 million new electricity connections and 30,000 megawatts of clean energy generation in Africa. Working with the countries on investment strategies and reducing barriers to project development will be a high priority of the collaboration.

The Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance

The United States is a founding member of the Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance, a new initiative

aimed at helping cities around the world access financial tools for low carbon, climate resilient infrastructure. The Alliance will bring together cities, national governments, financial institutions, NGOs, and other stakeholders. The United States will contribute experience, best practice and lessons learned from ongoing efforts such as the National Disaster Resilience Competition and Climate Resilient Transportation System.

National/Subnational Cooperation on Climate Change

Enhanced cooperation and coordination among national and subnational levels of government is essential to forge coherent, effective, and efficient responses to climate change. The United States has been at the leading edge of efforts to connect these national and subnational efforts through its State, Local and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience and other programs, and announced a range of initiatives at the Climate Summit including:

Climate Action Champions – The Climate Action Champions initiative will recognize local and tribal government entities that are leading emission reductions and climate resilience efforts domestically. The initiative will enhance opportunities for financial and technical assistance, as well as facilitated peer-to-peer networking and mentorship, to support and advance their climate mitigation and resilience objectives.

Public Transportation Resilience Projects – The U.S. Federal Transit Administration announced the awarding of nearly \$3.6 billion for climate resilient transportation infrastructure projects in the states impacted by Hurricane Sandy that were competitively selected.

Federal-Tribal Climate Resilience Partnership – The Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs launched a new \$10 million program for delivering adaptation training.

First Green Guaranties Issued by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)

By providing "Green Guaranties," OPIC (the U.S. government's development finance institution) joins other public and private sector institutions in supporting climate-friendly investments. OPIC's first Green Guaranties were offered to eligible U.S. investors in the domestic debt capital markets on September 17, 2014. These U.S. government-guaranteed certificates of participation adhere to the Green Bond Principles of 2014, which have been collaboratively developed with the guidance of leading capital markets issuers, investors, underwriters and environmental groups. The placement enables OPIC to boost an asset class that is rapidly becoming an attractive investment for generating both social and financial returns. Proceeds raised under these Green Guaranties will total an initial \$47 million to be deployed in the construction of the Luz del Norte solar project in Chile – which, when completed, will be the largest photovoltaic project in Latin America.

Phasing down Climate-Potent Hydrofluorocarbons

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are potent greenhouse gases used in refrigerators, air conditioners, and other industrial applications as replacements for ozone-depleting substances. At the Climate Summit, a large group of governments and civil society partners agreed to support phasing down consumption and production of HFCs through a Montreal Protocol amendment; promoting public procurement of climate-friendly alternatives to high-GWP HFCs; and welcoming new private sector led initiatives aimed at reducing HFC emissions, including a Global Cold Food Chain Council, and a Global Refrigerant Management Initiative. This summer, EPA proposed two new rules under the Significant New Alternatives Policy (SNAP) program that would smooth transition to climate-friendly alternatives to HFCs in the United States by expanding the list of acceptable alternatives and limiting use of some of the most harmful HFCs where lower risk alternatives are available. Last week, the Obama Administration also announced new private sector commitments and executive actions that will reduce the equivalent of 700 million metric tons of carbon pollution globally through 2025. Companies committed to introducing new climate-friendly alternatives, transitioning production lines and cold food chain equipment – the equipment that brings food from farm to market – away from potent HFCs.

City Action to Reduce Methane and Black Carbon from Municipal Solid Waste

The United States, in cooperation with over 60 country, city, non-government, and private sector partners, is taking action to reduce harmful methane and black carbon from municipal solid waste through a global city network that seeks to catalyze action in 1,000 cities by 2020. The United States is providing direct technical assistance to cities to improve waste and emissions data, design waste policies and programs, and conduct project studies. American cities like San Diego and San Francisco are also doing their share by building partnerships with cities overseas to help them apply our world-class practices in their own cities.

U.S. Leadership on Forest Preservation

The United States joined other governments, the private sector, civil society, and indigenous peoples organizations in signing the New York Declaration on Forests. Supporting the Declaration reaffirms the ongoing commitment of the United States to protecting the world's forests and restoring degraded lands, including our pledge to restore 15 million hectares (ha) of forest land domestically as our contribution to the Bonn Challenge global goal to restore 150 million ha of forests and degraded lands by 2020. The United States government has committed over \$1.3 billion to support REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) since 2010. The United States was a co-founder of the BioCarbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes (ISFL), which seeks to promote reduced greenhouse gas emissions from the land sector, from REDD+, and from sustainable agriculture, as well as smarter land-use planning, policies and practices. The ISFL co-founders announced at the Climate Summit that they have agreed to establish the first two large-scale,

public-private programs in the Oromia Regional State of Ethiopia and the Luangwa Valley of Zambia.

New International Energy Partnerships

At the Climate Summit and SE4All events in New York, the United States announced its support for three group initiatives:

- The [Africa Clean Energy Corridor](#) is a regional project in East Africa aimed at accelerating renewable energy development and complements the Administration's Power Africa initiative;
- A coalition of foundations and private companies is launching "[energy efficiency accelerators](#)" to pursue policy reforms and commercialization of new technologies in buildings, appliances and lighting, and transport. The United States will support these accelerators through the Clean Energy Ministerial's (CEM) Clean Energy Solutions Center and other CEM initiatives; and
- The [SIDS Lighthouse Initiative](#) complements U.S. efforts in Hawaii and the Virgin Islands and the new Caribbean Energy Security Initiative.



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		Immigration		Mobile Apps	
		Refinancing		Tools You'll Use	
		Rural			
		Service			
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