

DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis  
International Carbon Action Partnership Conference  
Brussels, Belgium  
May 20, 2008

Thank you for that generous introduction.

And thanks to European Commission for hosting the event and for all the staff from the ICAP members for putting together such a great conference full of enlightening information, useful discussions and inspiring messages.

Please join me in a round of applause for the day chairs and the speakers.

It's been wonderful to be in this beautiful, historic city, home to some of the world's best chocolate.

Belgium may not be a leading producer of clean energy yet, but it could have a bright future in that sector.

I just read a story about two British men who took a 4,500 mile road trip from the southern coast of England to Timbuktu in a cargo truck powered by bio-diesel made from waste chocolate

Chocolate power. What a great idea.

It's cheap to produce, environmentally friendly, and best of all ...

You can pull over anytime and dip strawberries in the gas-tank.

I've already thought of a name for the fuel: ECocoa

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Seriously, I am heartened by this conference and the important work ICAP is doing.

This critical partnership of countries and regions sharing experiences and knowledge to develop cap and trade carbon markets is essential if we are going to successfully address this global climate crisis.

By continuing to share best practices on the design, monitoring, reporting, compliance and enforcement of our various emissions trading schemes, we can build the foundation for a level playing field and consistent regulatory framework in any future global carbon market.

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After two full days of discussing the minutiae of cap and trade, I thought it would be appropriate to close this conference by bringing the discussion back to why all of us are here.

Last summer, 600,000 square miles of Artic Ice Cap melted away in 5 weeks.

600,000 square miles – an area twice the size of the state of Texas. For the first time since humans started keeping track, the Northwest Passage was free of ice.

Scientists were shocked.

And just last week, scientists at the Mauna Loa observatory in Hawaii reported that CO<sub>2</sub> levels in the atmosphere now stand at 387 parts per million (ppm), up almost 40% since the industrial revolution and the highest for at least the last 650,000 years.

Scientists say that those newest figures show that CO<sub>2</sub> is accumulating in the atmosphere faster than we expected, which could indicate that the Earth is losing its natural ability to soak up billions of tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted each year.

The environment is in crisis ...

... a crisis leading to more frequent and more violent storms throughout the globe, devastating droughts, floods and wildfires and massive loss of crops, property and life.

There is no question that climate change is the defining challenge of our age. Unless we dramatically reduce our emissions of Co<sub>2</sub>, generations will live in a world damaged beyond hope as a result of our neglect.

The good news is that after too many years of apathy and inertia, the tide has begun to turn toward action across the globe.

Just a year and a half years after the seminal International Panel on Climate Change Report and Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" ...

... There has been an explosion of awareness about Climate Change.

The issue has been tattooed on the public's consciousness.

Young children are learning about their carbon footprint in school...

... There is mounting pressure on businesses to go green, as more and more consumers expect environmental leadership from company they do business with.

The Green industry is exploding. For example, in 2004 and 2005, the market capitalization of the 85 largest renewable energy companies in the world doubled, to \$50 billion.

And in 2006, there were \$71 billion in investments in renewable power – up 50% from 2005.

Everyone is clamoring to get to the head of the green line.

Just look at Abu Dhabi.

Over the next decade, Abu Dhabi will spend \$20 billion to create a city of 50,000 residents from scratch. Their goal is for it to be the first city in the world with no carbon footprint.

When it's done, the city will be powered exclusively by solar energy, cars will be replaced by a fleet of solar-powered, six person mass transit vehicles, and 80 percent of the city's water will be recycled and converted to energy.

Why would a nation sitting on a sea of oil spend \$20 billion to build a zero carbon city?

Like most of the world, Abu Dhabi understands that *Sustainability means survival*.

If only George W. Bush would take pointers from them.

Two weeks ago, after 8 years of denial and inaction, America's "Doubter in Chief" finally stepped to the podium to announce his plan to address climate change.

Word is that he finally made up his mind to act after he was told that we'll soon run out of party ice.

The announcement it wasn't nearly worth the 8 year wait.

Bush's new national "goal" of stopping the growth of Co2 emissions by 2025 is like a chain smoker facing lung cancer whose "goal" is smoking more cigarettes for the next 17 years.

It's too little, *far* too late.

Congressman Ed Markey put it best when he said

*"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked,"*

But there's a silver lining here.

On January 20, 2009, we'll have a new president.

Looking at the climate change agendas of John McCain and Barack Obama, it looks like we'll finally have a partner in the White House who will set strong course for federal action.

And let me take a moment to say how heartening it is to see EPA staff in attendance here.

To see you all participating in this conference without fear of reprisal is a welcome sight – and a sure sign that your long ordeal under the Bush White House is coming to an end.

Whether or not George Bush and Dick Cheney acknowledge it, we are at a change moment, a pivot point in world history.

We can either hold fast to outmoded notions that imperil the future of our planet, or we can stand up and take action to save it.

Back in New York, we have chosen the latter.

Whether it's forging ahead on RGGI, aggressively working to fast-track development of clean/renewable power, fighting the EPA to adopt California's stronger greenhouse gas emissions standards for new cars and trucks, ramping up our energy efficiency and conservation efforts, or setting an example with our green building construction ...

We are not waiting for Washington to lead. We are taking action.

We're hardly alone. Many other states and localities have also filled the void left by the Bush's climate chicanery ...

In the west, a group of states is planning to have an economy-wide cap and trade program up and running by 2012. In the Midwest, in the heart of coal country, several states have banded together to cap carbon and to emphasize wind power and biofuels.

Across America, local communities have put in place their own carbon reduction strategies including sustainable land use policies ... expanded opportunities for mass transit and bicycle and pedestrian traffic ... and green building strategies.

With or without Washington, U.S states will continue to lead the way.

I said earlier how hopeful I am that we will have a new partner in Washington next January. But we have some work to do in Congress before then.

Beginning in a few weeks, floor debate will begin on the Lieberman-Warner Bill.

New York and other states will make the case in Washington that no matter how strong a future federal cap-and-trade program is – it will not be enough. In order for the United States to sufficiently reduce its contribution to worldwide greenhouse gas levels, states

and localities across the US must be allowed to continue the innovative approaches that have been so effective over the years.

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Whether it's building federal-state partnerships in America or strengthening international collaborations like ICAP, we need to keep moving forward and acting with vision.

I know for many of you, like me, this conference is just the start. You'll soon be participating in other events and collaborating with others at the international, regional and local level.

I know your calendars fill up fast. Please save a place on your calendar for the next ICAP conference. We're finalizing plans now, and it is likely to be held in my home city of New York. I look forward to welcoming all of you there.

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We represent many nations and regions, but we all have one goal.

As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said,

*"We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."*

Climate Change doesn't recognize geopolitical boundaries. It doesn't differentiate between those working to combat it and those choosing to ignore it.

It affects everyone, and we need all hands on deck.

Safe travel to all. I hope to see you soon.

Until then, remember, you heard it here first:

ECocoa.

**END**