

Resolution No. 010-01-COE

August 20, 2001

[Reducing greenhouse gas emissions]

URGING THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO SUPPORT EFFORTS TO CURB GLOBAL WARMING, ADOPT GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS GOALS FOR THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO IN EXCESS OF THE TARGETED GOALS OF THE KYOTO PROTOCOL, AND CALL FOR CONTINUED ACTIONS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THESE GOALS.

WHEREAS, the world's leading climate scientists have documented a clear global warming trend and the unmistakable impact of human activities on that trend;<sup>1</sup> and

WHEREAS, global warming of the magnitude now predicted by the scientific community will cause extremely costly disruption of human and natural systems throughout the world;<sup>2</sup> and

WHEREAS, climate change is the most critical threat to the sustainability of our planet and the health of millions of people is at risk from smog, rising heat, increased disease, more frequent extreme weather events and rising sea levels;<sup>3</sup> and

WHEREAS, over the next 50-100 years, sea levels around the world could rise one meter;<sup>4</sup> and

WHEREAS, to prevent flooding of the Airports in San Francisco and Oakland; Treasure Island; Mission Bay Development; the Giants new ballpark; parts of Interstate 80 and Highway 101; railroad tracks; sewage treatment plants; marinas; and harbors would require vast investments in dikes, pumping stations or other infrastructure<sup>5</sup>; and

WHEREAS, the International Panel on Climate Change has determined that stabilizing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere will require emission reductions in excess of 60% of current emissions, and the Kyoto Protocol is a modest first step in the direction of those reductions;

WHEREAS, achieving greenhouse gas emission reductions required to protect the climate is of overriding importance not just to the community of nations but to the City and County of San Francisco, which relies heavily on the stability of the climate for our water and power supplies; and

WHEREAS, President George H. W. Bush signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992, which includes the commitment on the part of the United States to seek the "stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system;"<sup>6</sup> and

WHEREAS, the current administration in Washington, D.C. has demonstrated an alarming unwillingness to play a leadership role in climate protection; and

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush rejected the Kyoto Protocol on global warming outright, while

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<sup>1</sup> Third Assessment Report "Climate Change 2001," 2001, IPCC

<sup>2</sup> The Regional Impacts of Climate Change — An Assessment of Vulnerability, 1998, IPCC

<sup>3</sup> Climate Change Information Kit, United Nations Development Program

<sup>4</sup> "The Regional Impacts of Climate Change: An Assessment of Vulnerability" 1997, IPCC

<sup>5</sup> "The Science and Politics of Global Climate Change" by Gleick, P.H., 1993 Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment, and Security. Oakland, CA

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, <http://www.unfccc.int/resource/conv/>

in Bonn 178 countries, not including the United States, reached agreement on the Kyoto Protocol in July, 2001,<sup>7</sup> and

WHEREAS, local actions can help to pave the way for national leadership, by providing working models of greenhouse gas reduction initiatives that reinforce other high-priority policy objectives; and

WHEREAS, over 370 cities across the United States and around the world are inventorying greenhouse gas emissions and adopting reduction targets as part of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives' Cities for Climate Protection program;<sup>8</sup> and

WHEREAS, 16 cities from around the world have agreed in the Toronto Declaration to send a communique<sup>9</sup> to the Conference of the Parties meeting in Morocco in November 2001 declaring their intention to achieve much higher levels of greenhouse gas reduction than those called for in the Kyoto Protocol; and

WHEREAS, many of the critical components of a local action plan for climate protection are already in place or under development in the City and County of San Francisco, including the Green Building Program, the Resource Conservation Ordinance, the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Program, the Clean Air Program, the Urban Forestry Council, the Sustainability Plan, and others; and

WHEREAS, greenhouse gas reduction activities contribute substantially to the achievement of many of the City's highest priority goals, including but not limited to: energy security and cost reduction; affordable housing; mobility and, transportation choices; solid waste reduction and recycling; reliable, affordable water supply; urban and rural forest protection; sustainable economic development; and clean air; and

WHEREAS, the City and County of San Francisco's existing energy, solid waste, and transportation and air quality initiatives – all designed and implemented to meet established City priorities – are expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while delivering tangible local economic and environmental benefits; and

WHEREAS, on a municipal level, reducing greenhouse gas emissions to the target established by the Kyoto Protocol or beyond would demonstrate that the goals of the international treaty are realistic and can be met.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Environment urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco to establish and achieve the long-range goal of reducing San Francisco's greenhouse gas emissions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Environment urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco to direct the Public Utilities Commission, Department of the Environment, and other appropriate City agencies to complete and coordinate the analysis and planning of a local action plan targeting greenhouse gas emission reduction activities, so that:

a. By January 1, 2002, these agencies will complete and deliver an inventory of 1990 and 2000 greenhouse gas emissions, including as a first step, defining the scope of activities and geographic boundaries to be included in the inventory. The completed inventory should include:

- i. an accounting of greenhouse gas emissions associated with City activities for the baseline years
- ii. an accounting of greenhouse gas emissions within the City and County of San Francisco, but not associated with City operations;
- iii. a projection of future emissions through the year 2010.

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<sup>7</sup> Chicago Tribune, "Bush Putting U.S. Above Global Cooperation," John Diamond, July 30 2001

<sup>8</sup> ICLEI: <http://www.iclei.org/ccp-au/ccpfolder/ccp.htm#whatis>

<sup>9</sup> City of Toronto press release, June 28, 2001 (<http://www.jacklayton.com/latest/default.asp?aID=101>)

b. By June 1, 2002, these agencies will present to the Board of Supervisors a proposed plan for the City's role in achieving a greenhouse gas emission reduction target of 40% below 1990 levels by the year 2010 and studying any United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) set scientific targets above the 40% target that would constitute a proper scientific response to the global warming crisis. The plan should include but not be limited to:

- i. an assessment of the most promising alternatives for greenhouse gas reductions, the approximate costs and benefits of those alternatives, and the estimated time and resources required to implement them;
- ii. recommended combinations of measures to meet an emission reduction target of 40% below 1990 levels by 2010, and United Nations IPCC set scientific targets above the 40% target that would constitute a proper scientific response to the global warming crisis;
- iii. an assessment of which of those alternatives require actions that lie outside the City's control and what the City can do to influence those responsible for such actions;
- iv. an assessment of the time and resources required for continuing coordination of the plan and to assure its successful implementation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco to actively support the Kyoto Protocol, and to call upon national leaders to do so as well; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco to join the cities that have signed the Toronto Declaration in calling for strong national leadership and pledging to promote cooperation toward the ultimate goal of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco to continue to achieve steady progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions throughout the period covered by the Kyoto Protocol and beyond.

*I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Commission on the Environment at its regular meeting on August 20, 2001.*

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*Sraddha Mehta*  
*Commission Secretary*

**VOTE:**

**Ayes:** *Commissioners Hayes, Evans, Bingham, Shah, Werbe, Rodriguez, and Bradford-Bell.*

**Noes:** *None.*

**Absent:** *None.*