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FACT SHEET

The recent National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report on climate change is not inconsistent with the Administration's approach to this important issue and is a contribution to our growing understanding of global climate change. The study, "Policy Implications of Greenhouse Warming," summarizes the science and the limitations of our knowledge and recommends a number of actions that could be taken to meet the challenge of climate change. It highlights the uncertainties in modeling and the current inconsistencies between trends in temperature and accumulation of greenhouse gases. In setting a least cost hierarchy, it rejects options requiring great expense.

- o Bush Administration policies, including measures enacted in the Clean Air Act and proposed in the National Energy Strategy, are projected to maintain U.S. greenhouse gas emissions through the year 2030 at current levels, even accounting for growth in economic activity. The NAS study calls for a 10 to 40 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions at a constant 1990 activity level. Using the NAS static assumptions ("no-growth") approach, which does not factor economic growth into the greenhouse emissions calculation, Administration policies will yield greenhouse emissions reductions comfortably within the range advocated by the NAS study.
- o Targets and timetables for the future reduction or limitation of greenhouse gases as an aggregate, or of carbon dioxide alone, are not advocated by the NAS study.
- o Elements of the comprehensive approach, endorsed by the Administration, are highlighted. The study considers climate change in terms of all greenhouse gases (using CO₂ equivalent), not CO₂ alone, and the contribution of CFCs, which are important greenhouse gases.
- o The Administration's policies address all greenhouse gases. Precursors of ozone and nitrogen oxides are controlled in the Clean Air Act. Methane will be reduced by proposed rules on landfill emissions. CO₂ will be reduced by various energy efficiency measures and by the powerful incentives from the Clean Air Act's caps on utility emissions plus the flexibility allowed in achieving those caps. CO₂ will also be reduced by tree planting. CFCs will be phased out by the Clean Air Act's provisions. A tax on production during the phase-out will accelerate these reductions.

- o Efforts to limit deforestation, and modest domestic and international reforestation efforts, are recommended in the NAS report. The Administration has proposed a multi-year reforestation proposal to plant one billion trees per year on 1.5 million acres, and to improve forest management practices. The United States also supports debt-for-nature swaps, and is active in pushing for a global forestry agreement.
- o A strong research program is endorsed by the NAS panel as an important element of our response to the possibility of greenhouse warming. The U.S. is currently investing almost \$1.2 billion in our global climate change research program, which includes studies of the scientific, social and economic questions surrounding climate change and possible policy responses.
- o Research and development priorities cited by the NAS study in areas such as solar energy and other alternative energy sources, and energy efficiency are receiving additional resources in the President's FY 1992 budget. The budget includes strong efforts in biomass resources, and expansion of solar and other alternative energy research efforts through cost-shared collaborative ventures.
- o The study recommends R&D into the possibilities for adaptation and the need to study geoengineering options. Because natural sources account for 96 percent of the annual CO₂ flux, it makes sense to investigate these options -- although it would be premature to pursue them at this time.
- o Continued development of nuclear power is strongly advocated by the NAS study. The President's National Energy Strategy supports the development of a new generation of safe nuclear reactors.

President Bush has established a comprehensive strategy for action on climate change which is outlined in the brochure America's Climate Change Strategy, and will be implemented through the National Energy Strategy (NES), the Clean Air Act, and various other means. The strategy is part of the Administration's commitment to responsible stewardship of our planet, which includes the promotion of economic growth and sound environmental policies.