

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE
Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio
Department of Climate Change
Additional Budget Estimates Hearing—February 2009

Written question reference: CC2

Outcome/Output: Response to climate change

Topic: Global emissions

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Question: (Senator Boswell)

Senator BOSWELL—Have all those countries undertaken to reduce emissions by specific targets?

Senator Wong—By specific targets?

Senator BOSWELL—Yes.

Dr Parkinson—President Obama has committed to reducing emissions by 80 per cent by 2050. The Chinese government has released a white paper climate change strategy which indicates a range of measures that they are undertaking.

Senator BOSWELL—So the answer is that they do not have specific emissions targets.

Dr Parkinson—Sorry, Senator, what I am saying is I do not actually have in my head exactly the contents of either the Chinese white paper or the Indian strategy. I do not know whether they have indicated that their actions would reduce emissions by a certain number of tonnes. We can take that on notice if you would like.

Answer:

Proportion of global emissions represented by India, China and the US

Taken together, India, China and the United States (US) account for 42.47 per cent of global emissions. This data is taken from the World Resources Institute's Climate Analysis Indicators Tool (CAIT), which is the most recent, comprehensive emissions data available for all countries.¹ CAIT's most recent data was published in December 2008 and provides emissions data for 2005 that covers all six greenhouse gases listed in the Kyoto Protocol and all sources of emissions except for land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF).²

¹ The World Resources Institute's CAIT is available at <http://cait.wri.org/>

² The most recent data including LULUCF is for the year 2000 and is available from CAIT's website.

Greenhouse gas emissions in 2005 for China, India and the US³

	Absolute emissions (Mt CO ₂ -e)	Proportion of global emissions
China	7,219.2	19.12%
India	1,852.9	4.91%
United States	6,963.8	18.44%
Total (3 countries)	16,035.9	42.47%

Reduction targets undertaken by India, China and the US

India

As a developing country, India is not subject to emissions limitation and reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol, nor has it committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a specific target.

On June 30 2008, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh released India's first National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) outlining existing and future policies and programs addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation. The NAPCC includes a long-term commitment that India's per capita emissions, which were 1.7 tonnes CO₂-e in 2005 (ranking 120th in the world), will not exceed those of the developed world.⁴ By contrast, the European Union's per capita emissions were 10 tonnes CO₂-e (ranking 39th in the world) and Australia's were 27 tonnes CO₂-e (ranking 5th in the world). Mitigation measures outlined in the NAPCC include energy efficiency measures expected to result in a saving of 10,000MW by the end of 2012. Other measures include increasing the production of solar photovoltaics to 1,000MW per year and increasing the total area of tree and forest cover from 23 to 33 per cent.

China

As a developing country, China is not subject to emissions limitation and reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol, nor has it committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a specific target.

The Chinese Government released its white paper on climate change, *China's Policies and Actions for Addressing Climate Change*, on 29 October 2008. The white paper is largely a summary of China's climate change policies and builds on China's first national strategy on climate change, *China's National Climate Change Program*, released June 2007. Mitigation policies in these documents focus on transitioning to a lower carbon economy and reducing emissions in the energy sector. The white paper references a target of reducing energy consumption per unit of gross domestic product by 20 per cent on 2005 levels by 2010. It also commits to increasing renewable energy by up to 10 per cent of the primary energy supply by 2010. The white paper also outlines China's plans to accelerate the development of its service sector and high-tech industries to focus on achieving less emissions-intensive economic growth than under a business-as-usual scenario. Limits have also been placed on the expansion of emissions-intensive industries, including implementing higher standards for market entry.

³ Sourced from CAIT. Emissions data for 2005 covers all six greenhouse gases listed in the Kyoto Protocol and all sources of emissions except for LULUCF.

⁴ Pew Centre on Global Climate Change 2008, *National Action Plan on Climate Change Government of India June 2008*, available at <http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/India%20National%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Climate%20Change-Summary.pdf>, accessed 23 March 2009.

US

The US has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol. However, the US Environmental Protection Agency 2010 Budget includes plans to “develop an economy-wide emissions reduction program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions approximately 14 percent below 2005 levels by 2020, and approximately 83 percent below 2005 levels by 2050”.⁵

⁵ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2010 Budget is available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/fy2010_new_era/Environmental_Protection_Agency1.pdf, accessed 24 March 2009. These targets are compare (to within 1%) to President Obama’s election commitment to return to 1990 levels by 2020 and achieve an 80 per cent reduction on 1990 levels by 2050.