



## **POLICY STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE AGREEMENT**

### **BLUE GREEN ALLIANCE**

#### **DECEMBER 2009**

**Global warming and unsustainable energy dependence are the foremost environmental issues of our time and the signature economic issues of our day. These two challenges provide enormous risks to future economic development, but when confronted, offer unparalleled opportunities to create millions of new jobs building the clean energy economy in the United States while launching a different model of global economic development.**

In response to deepening economic and climate crises, the Blue Green Alliance and its labor and environmental partner organizations — including the United Steelworkers, Sierra Club, Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Communications Workers of America (CWA), Service Employees International Union (SEIU), American Federation of Teachers (AFT), Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) and Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA) — strongly advocated for U.S. domestic energy and climate change legislation in our *Policy Statement on Climate Change Legislation*. We also strongly advocated for a global climate deal that puts the world unequivocally on a path to avoiding the worst impacts of climate change while simultaneously addressing the global economic crisis, unemployment, economic development and other important strategic U.S. objectives. We are hopeful that, at a minimum, a political agreement reached in Copenhagen will set forth a timeframe allowing six to 12 months for parties to reach a binding international agreement.

Within this context, the Blue Green Alliance and its partners urge the adoption of a strong international agreement with a goal of creating millions of good, green jobs across the world — initiating a "Global Green New Deal" — and putting the world on a path to addressing climate change based on the following principles:

#### **UNITED STATES ACTION.**

Action by the U.S. to significantly reduce its greenhouse gas emissions is a critical first step to achieving a strong international agreement to address climate change. We believe it is also the most effective way to rapidly put millions of Americans back to work building a clean energy economy. As we stressed in our *Policy Statement on Climate Change Legislation*, our goal must be to reduce U.S. emissions by at least 80 percent by 2050, with meaningful reductions by 2020, with domestic and international reductions in uncovered sectors (e.g., forestry and agriculture) supplementing those reductions.

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#### **GLOBAL SCIENCE-DRIVEN TARGETS.**

We support a renewed U.S. effort to forge a global treaty to hold global temperatures to less than 3.6°F (2°C) below pre-industrial levels. This would require that worldwide emissions are reduced by at least 50 percent by 2050. All developed countries must lead with deep absolute cuts in their emissions, while developing countries must contribute adequately toward this global effort.

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#### **INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS AND TRADE.**

The Blue Green Alliance believes that achieving a strong global agreement requires addressing international competitiveness concerns so that measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions achieve the objective of saving and creating millions of jobs in the clean energy economy.

As we outlined in our *Policy Statement on Climate Change Legislation*, a number of mechanisms are available within U.S. climate legislation to help ensure that this legislation does not disadvantage U.S. manufacturing workers or manufacturing industries by causing energy-intensive industries to close their U.S. facilities because of rising energy costs, and relocate them to countries that do not take effective action to curb emissions related to products shipped to U.S. markets. These mechanisms include tools such as transitional allowances, international sectoral agreements and border measures. A global treaty cannot restrict international trade and competitiveness measures from being implemented by the United States.

## INVESTING IN A GLOBAL AGREEMENT.

In order to help secure a strong international agreement, the U.S. must invest in five key pillars of a global agreement: deployment of clean energy and energy-efficient technologies; a just transition; international adaptation; tropical deforestation emissions reductions; and accountability. To achieve this aim, U.S. climate legislation and the global agreement must secure a dedicated source of investment in these important opportunities. We believe that these dedicated tools can be designed to aid in accomplishing effective global emissions reductions while achieving the goal of creating jobs across the world and reducing national security threats.

- **Mobilize Clean Energy and Energy-Efficient Technologies.**

The U.S. must recognize the opportunity and responsibility to help fund a clean energy economic development model for developing and emerging economies. We cannot afford to have clean energy and energy-efficient technologies deployed in developing countries many years after deployment in developed countries. The United States is a global leader in technological innovation and has much to gain from new initiatives to promote U.S. clean energy exports. Any effective domestic climate change legislation must ensure a dedicated source of funding to aid in the transfer and deployment of these technologies in developing countries. We see this investment as a way to grow America's manufacturing base and help American companies export products and technologies that help solve climate change. International efforts must also be designed to strengthen, rather than weaken, international implementation of intellectual property rights and find innovative means to speed up technology transfer.

- **Support Just Transition.** Government-driven actions and investments are needed to develop long-term sustainable economic policies. Such investments should also include the training of workers and the inclusion of social and labor protections so that the green economy will truly lead to good, sustainable jobs and livelihoods.
- **Provide International Adaptation Assistance.** The most vulnerable throughout the world are already being impacted by the current build-up of greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere and will be at the forefront of climate change impacts in the future. A significant portion of the revenues raised through U.S. climate legislation must be dedicated to international adaptation measures that provide solutions to those immediately impacted by global warming.
- **Reduce Tropical Deforestation Emissions.** The loss of the world's tropical forests accounts for about 15 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, any effort to address climate change must also find solutions to the loss of these forests. We recognize that U.S. climate legislation and the global agreement need to establish a dedicated source of funding towards reducing these emissions.
- **Ensure Transparency, Verification and Accountability.** A cornerstone of any global effort is the ability to regularly assess the actions of key countries and hold them accountable for achieving their actions. We need a means for those countries that are achieving their commitments to be recognized as good global partners, and we also need mechanisms that would ensure that those countries that are not living up to their commitments are to be recognized as such. We urge that the international agreement include strong provisions toward these objectives so we can regularly assess and hold accountable countries for progress towards their commitments, and global progress toward achieving our environmental objectives.

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