

Search

How do I find it?

Most popular on site | [Subscribe to paper](#)

Advertisement

# 5.05% APY\*

**HSBCdirect.com**

## HSBCdirect.com

NO FEES NO MINIMUMS FDIC INSURED†



START SAVING



[Home](#)
[News](#)
[Travel](#)
[Money](#)
[Sports](#)
[Life](#)
[Tech](#)
[Weather](#)

Nation Inside News ▼

[Shopping](#)
[Buy a Car](#)
[Job Search](#)
[Online Dating](#)
[Real Estate](#)

# Calif. poised to act on its own on global warming

Updated 8/24/2006 10:40 PM ET

E-mail | Save | Print | Subscribe to stories like this [RSS](#)



Enlarge By David McNew, Getty Images

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and British Prime Minister Tony Blair discuss clean-technology research last month.

SAN FRANCISCO — California has led the nation on many environmental issues: clean air, energy efficiency, recycling, alternative fuels. Now the Golden State is poised to grab the initiative on one mostly ignored in Washington: global warming.

Two bills nearing passage in the California Legislature would authorize the USA's broadest crackdown on greenhouse gases, considered by most scientists the cause of Earth's warming.

One bill would create the first mandatory caps, requiring companies to cut emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and eliminate an estimated 190 million tons of greenhouse gases. California produces more greenhouse gases than all but 11 countries, according to the California Environmental Protection Agency.

The other bill would bar California utilities from buying electricity from out-of-state power plants that generate large quantities of carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas. That would force more than two dozen coal-fired plants under development in the West to adopt non-polluting technologies or lose a piece of the California market.

"This is the most progressive thing to come down the pike," says Deborah Sivas, director of Stanford University's environmental law clinic. "We're very likely to see other states follow suit."

Two years ago, California regulators approved strict rules to curb motor vehicle emissions. Those rules, requiring 30% emissions cuts by 2016, are being challenged in federal court by auto companies and the Bush administration.

Ten other states have adopted the vehicle standards, and most are likely to join California in sidestepping the federal government to clamp down on sources other than vehicles.

"The objective is bottom-up pressure on the Bush administration," says Fabian Nunez, speaker of the California Assembly and a sponsor of the cap bill. "The United States hasn't come around. We're Johnny-come-latelies here."

The caps are based on the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, an international global warming treaty that President Bush has declined to sign.

Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, running for reelection, has made global warming a campaign issue, even though part of the state's powerful business

Related Advertising Links What's this?

CLICK TO FLY



MEMBER OF  
STARWOOD PREFERRED GUEST

SETTLE IN AT FOURPOINTS.COM

### ANNUAL EMISSIONS OF CARBON DIOXIDE

Source	Millions of metric tons*
USA	1,576
China	1,033
Russia	419
Japan	331
India	302
Germany	236
United Kingdom	148
Canada	141
South Korea	136
Italy	123
Mexico	108
California	107

\* - 2002, last year available

Sources: World Resources Institute and California Energy Commission

lobby opposes the pending bills.

The California Chamber of Commerce calls an emissions cap a "job killer" that will drive industry from the state, hurt middle-income wage-earners and raise electricity prices that already are the nation's highest. "This is just a political stunt to limit growth in California," says chamber President Allan Zarembeg.

Other businesses — financial services, high-tech, venture capital — believe emissions caps will stir competition among energy producers, encourage cleaner technologies and create jobs .

"The business community is divided on this," says Bob Epstein, co-founder of Environmental Entrepreneurs, a national group that advocates economic approaches to environmental issues. "Some of the leaders in the energy field would just as soon have the rules stay the same."

Returning greenhouse-gas emissions to 1990 levels could boost the state economy by as much as \$74 billion a year and create as many as 89,000 jobs, says a study by David Roland-Holst, a University of California-Berkeley economist.

Two-thirds of the state's likely voters backed the cap bill last month in a Public Policy Institute of California survey. Nearly half, 49%, rated global warming a "very serious threat" to the state's economy and quality of life.

"There's reason to believe that Californians have reached bipartisan consensus on this issue," says Mark Baldasare, the institute's research director.

The governor's representatives &lt;B> &lt;B> are in talks with lawmakers to settle differences on the cap bill by Thursday, when the Legislature adjourns.

Schwarzenegger is no latecomer to the debate. Last year he outlined a broad program to cut air pollution at a United Nations summit. In July, he and British Prime Minister Tony Blair agreed to cooperate on clean-technology research.

"I say the debate is over," he said at the U.N. summit. "We know the science. We see the threat. And we know the time for action is now."

Posted 8/24/2006 10:32 PM ET

Updated 8/24/2006 10:40 PM ET

E-mail | Save | Print | Subscribe to stories like this **RSS**

E-mail features

E-mail newsletters

Sign up to receive our free Daily Briefing e-newsletter and get the top news of the day in your inbox.

E-mail  

Select one:  HTML  Text

Breaking news E-mail alerts

Get breaking news in your inbox as it happens

Featured Advertiser

[What's this?](#)

**HSBCdirect.com Online Savings Account**

Earn 5.05% APY\* -- start earning more on your money. No fees, no minimums, FDIC-insured.† [www.hsbcdirect.com](http://www.hsbcdirect.com)

**HSBCdirect.com**

Related Advertising Links

[What's this?](#)

**American Express® Small Business Cards**  
Business Gold Rewards card. 1st year fee free - save \$125.  
[www.americanexpress.com](http://www.americanexpress.com)

**Capital One Small Business Solutions**  
Capital One thinks big about your small business-cards, loans, credit.  
[www.capitalone.com/smallbusiness](http://www.capitalone.com/smallbusiness)

**Free Bare Escentuals Bare Minerals Kit**  
Over 26 pieces MakeUp collection. Free to those who participate now!  
[onlinerewardcenter.com](http://onlinerewardcenter.com)

Place your ad here

Advertisement



Newspaper Home Delivery - Subscribe Today

Home • News • Travel • Money • Sports • Life • Tech • Weather

**About USA TODAY.com:** Site Map | FAQ | Contact Us | Jobs with Us  
Terms of Service | Privacy Policy/Your California Privacy Right | Media Kit | Press Room

**News Your Way:** Mobile News | Email News | Add USA TODAY.com RSS feeds

**Partners:** USA Weekend | Sports Weekly | Education | Space.com

Copyright 2006 USA TODAY, a division of Gannett Co. Inc.