Environment Northeast

Summary Recommendations
for the

32nd Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers

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A. Transportation

A.1 Commit each state & province in the region to reduce fuel demand and CO_2 emissions from heavy-duty freight trucks by at least 10 percent in 2015.

By 2015, an end-use energy efficiency program could reduce projected fuel and emissions from heavy-duty trucks by 10 percent (1,000,000 of CO_2e), by helping truckers pay for efficiency upgrades to new and old trucks, such as auxiliary power units and trailer aerodynamic improvements.[1] This program, variations of which are now in operation in several states, would save the region's trucking businesses approximately $532 million per year at today's diesel fuel prices. Modal shifts to rail and ship in addition to coordinated scheduling practices can also increase the efficiency of the freight transportation system in NE-EC.

A.2 Establish a Low Carbon Fuel Standard regional initiative.

The states and provinces of the region should establish a regional initiative that will report back to the 2009 Conference of the NEG-ECP, on the adoption and implementation of a "low carbon fuel standard" for transportation fuel. The report should contain analysis and recommendations, including whether such a standard is technically and legally feasible, what are the appropriate CO_2 reduction targets by 2020, how to address questions about full lifecycle emissions and indirect effects, and whether alternative policy tools could be employed to reduce carbon in regional transportation fuels more effectively and efficiently on an interim basis.

A.3 Eliminate growth in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by 2020 and reduce VMT to 2000 levels by 2050.

If VMT in the light vehicle sector continue to increase at a regional average of 1.8 percent per year, total VMT for the NE-EC region is projected to increase from 177,000 (2003) to 400,000 million by 2050.[2]

Provinces and states should commit to triple transit ridership by 2010 in large towns and cities, and require all transportation plans, publicly funded transportation infrastructure budgets, and large public and private development projects to compare total lifecycle greenhouse gas impacts and total costs of alternative land use strategies and transportation modes.

[1] See ENE's "Analysis and Recommendations for a Program for Energy Efficiency Trucks (PEET)," www.env-ne.org
[2] See ENE's "Climate Change Roadmap for New England and Eastern Canada" (2006), pp 172-173.

B. Energy & Climate

B.1 Implement energy efficiency mandates.

Report back at the 2009 Conference of the NEG-ECP the status of least cost procurement mandates for energy efficiency, total efficiency investment per capita, and availability of efficiency programs for "all fuels", by jurisdiction. For electricity and natural gas utilities, states and provinces should be following Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts to implement a least-cost procurement mandate that allows energy efficiency to compete with supply-side resources and requires investment levels sufficient to capture all cost-effective energy efficiency and clean distributed resources, as outlined in the recommendations adopted by Resolution 31-1 at the 31st Conference of NEG-ECP. States and provinces should also establish "All Fuels" efficiency programs that ensure consumers who heat with oil, kerosene, and wood have access to energy efficiency programs that are comparable to those of electric and natural gas customers.

B.2 Commit to adopt meaningful policies that will avoid greenhouse "leakage" from power plants and large industrial sources.

States in New England should direct utility regulators to order that publicly directed long-term energy contracts, including contracts for energy or capacity to supply standard offer customers, must be limited to RGGI budget units or otherwise with units subject to a comparable carbon regulatory framework, or alternatively the load serving entity should be required to purchase and retire carbon allowances or offsets sufficient to cover the higher of the non-RGGI units' CO_2 emissions rate or the system average CO_2 emissions rate in the control area where the unit(s) is/are located.

The provinces and states should also commence a regional initiative with the objective of establishing a broader regional carbon market and greenhouse gas emissions regulations for all industrial sources in the region having emissions equivalent to a 5 MW generator. A comprehensive regulatory framework is critical for achieving the NEG-ECP mid- and long-term climate stabilization targets.

B.3 Promote the development of renewable energy throughout the NE-EC region.

Promote the development and deployment of new low-carbon electricity resources on a regional basis and consider harmonizing state and provincial renewable energy targets, eligibility policies and siting issues. States and provinces should also facilitate the development of local, distributed community energy systems.

B.4 Create a cross-border regional transmission planning committee.

A regional transmission planning authority could provide coordination between control areas jurisdictions to maximize existing transmission assets, discuss appropriate cost-sharing, and increase the effectiveness of planning and permitting so as to expand low-carbon energy resources while minimizing total costs.