

The head of the US Delegation suggested that the approaches that have so far been suggested are essentially variations on a single theme, and are narrower than the broad mandate contained in the decisions of the CoP 1 in Berlin. They call for a common emissions target and a timetable for meeting that target. The US wanted an organized discussion of alternative approaches and full consideration of all options. Industry representatives at the AGBM meeting were pleased to see a more thoughtful discussion of the emerging issues.

While the US démarche was greeted with some enthusiasm by industry, it was not immediately clear if the US was simply going through the motions of a full consideration of options or genuinely looking to establish a path away from binding "one size fits all" targets and measures. With the US presidential election next fall, the US Delegation may be saying everything that its home audiences want to hear, while not yet really narrowing matters down to choices/decisions. However, the US Delegation at the first Conference of the Parties made undertakings to US industry regarding Article 4.2 (b) and it is expected that as a practical matter, there will be movement and shifting occurring soon to better reflect the "national circumstances" in the US position.

It is premature at this time to think a new current of thought will prevail over the "reductions protocol" assumption. However, some delegations from Annex 1 countries started raising the need for a more realistic cost-benefit consideration of emission reductions in informal discussions with industry representatives.