

Clearly, such an instrument requires a compliance mechanism; it requires one independent of whether there is any flexibility. Once you have assurances of national compliance, adding the flexibility concepts are very simple and straightforward. We note that there continues to be some political heat over some of the issues -- but in our view, the technical details could certainly be unraveled in the time that we have before us.

With regard to the issue of which gases might be included, the United States has long called for a comprehensive approach which includes all gases, all sources, all sectors and all sinks. However, many have concerned themselves that we do not have methodologies to accomplish this task, and some have suggested a "basket" approach which limits our reductions opportunities to only a few gases. To us, this does not seem as reasonable. It is all gases that lead to the increase in the radiative forcing which raises temperatures and leads to sea level rise and other impacts. We must address all gases, and we have at our disposal a methodology, developed by the IPCC, that will enable us to do this. If countries can use this methodology, they should get full credit for all the emissions reductions they take. If they don't use this methodology, there should be a penalty and they should get less credit. We must also recognize that this methodological issue is not only related to whether we adopt a comprehensive approach but will also need to be resolved to ensure a clear, credible and effective compliance regime.

Our proposal also calls for all countries to participate in a next step. It's quite clear, particularly in light of the evolving science expressed by Professor Bolin that has come to our attention over the course of the last several years on this issue, that it is impossible for any single country or group of countries acting alone to solve this problem. Concentrations in the atmosphere are growing very rapidly: we have already passed 350 ppmv; we're going to pass 450 ppmv; and we're going to pass 550 ppmv concentration of CO₂ equivalent unless we begin to see global declines in atmospheric emissions of CO₂ and other gases.

To this end, Article 4.1 speaks to the obligations of all countries, and the Berlin Mandate calls for advancing the implementation of such commitments. But many of these are couched in very uncertain and ill-defined terms. It must be our objective in this process to better define what we're to do in this context. Clearly, also, there is a difference, and the Convention speaks to the difference, between Annex I and non-Annex I. We all recognize that at all levels countries have different capacities and capabilities. It is therefore reasonable to expect that there is a middle ground between the Annex I and non-Annex I commitments. All countries can take actions. Our proposal creates space for such a middle ground. It is not a new commitment; it's a voluntary opportunity to engage. All countries should take advantage of this opportunity as we seek to reduce global emissions, and then global concentrations of greenhouse gases.

Our proposal also includes a recommendation for a long-term vision: Where are we going in the future? Kyoto will be a step in a long-term process to meet the objective of the Convention. It is a significant step, though, and in our view, our agreement must include a vision for a future that includes all countries. We must construct a mechanism