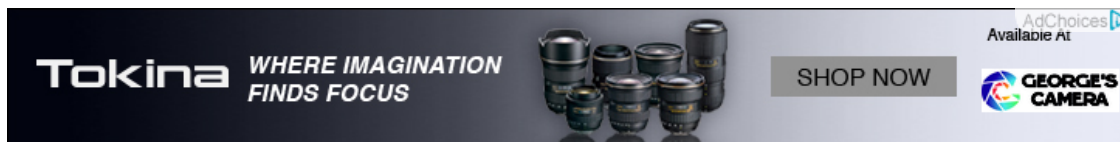


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## City Cuts Eliminate as Much Global Warming Pollution as Japan Produces

Cities in U.S. and China make new greenhouse gas reduction pledges

ClimateWire

By Lisa Friedman and ClimateWire | September 15, 2015 | 0

Leaders of Los Angeles, Beijing and more than two dozen other Chinese and American municipalities will announce sweeping climate change commitments today as they prepare for a landmark U.N. deal in December.

The promises of 11 Chinese cities to peak greenhouse gas emissions, some by the end of this decade, will eliminate 1.2 gigatons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere annually, according to the White House. That's about the amount of carbon pollution Japan or Brazil produces each year.

Meanwhile, American cities are vowing a range of actions—from eliminating coal-fired power in Los Angeles by 2025 to reducing emissions 25 percent below 2005 levels by the end of the decade and 80 percent by midcentury in Boston.

White House senior adviser Brian Deese said the United States and China are taking a leadership role ahead of global negotiations in Paris.

But both nations already jointly announced emissions targets last year—the United States to cut emissions 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025 and China to peak emissions growth by 2030. Deese indicated that neither today's summit nor Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Washington, D.C., next week will produce major new national commitments for Paris.

"Having made those ambitious targets, this year needs to be a year of implementation," Deese said.

He noted that the world's two largest emitters have said they will try to reach the upper range of their targets, and gatherings like today's U.S.-China Climate Leaders Summit in Los Angeles are part of that. For the United States, that means getting to the 28 percent range, and for China, it means peaking well before 2030.

"Both countries are making best efforts to get to ambitious ranges," Deese said, adding that the focus this year for each country will be on proving that they can "credibly" achieve the goals.



Beijing, China.

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**President Xi visits next week. High point in pre-climate talks?**

Xi will visit Seattle on Sept. 22 before arriving in Washington, D.C., to meet with Obama. Though the visit comes at a time of tension over cyber spying, several observers called climate change a likely high point in the U.S.-China discussions. Even without major new national-level pledges—which several sources said are unlikely—the meeting could produce momentum for Paris.

“The visit will reinforce President Obama’s and President Xi’s commitment to reach a strong climate agreement in Paris and to implement the climate mitigation targets they announced last year,” said U.S. Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern in a statement to *ClimateWire*.

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Stern will represent the United States at the Los Angeles summit, which is the first gathering of U.S. and Chinese local leaders under a climate change working group devised last year. All the cities will sign a pledge to slash emissions parallel to whatever deal is worked out among nations in Paris.

The Chinese cities, representing 25 percent of the country’s urban emissions, will announce a new alliance of municipalities that pledge to peak carbon pollution ahead of the national 2030 target. Beijing and Guangzhou most notably will promise to peak by 2020. In addition to the voluntary pledges, the cities will openly report on progress, the White House said.

U.S. cities, states and counties also are making new pledges. California will offer up its goal of cutting emissions 80 to 90 percent below 1990 levels by midcentury, and Seattle will vow to become carbon-neutral by that same year. The mayor of Carmel, Ind., will vow to slash emissions 40 percent by 2040; while Phoenix, Houston and Washington, D.C., will commit to cut carbon 80 percent by midcentury.

They and others will also publicly report on follow-through.

“This will show the two largest emitters in the world are taking seriously the commitments to meet their ambitious goals,” Deese said.

Other leaders, meanwhile, said they hope to see Xi and Obama continue to set a high bar ahead of Paris.

“I wouldn’t expect to see new targets or anything like that,” said Jo Tyndall, New Zealand’s climate change ambassador to the United Nations, during a recent visit to Washington, D.C.

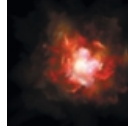
But, Tyndall said, “Anything that signals a preparedness to find common ground ... would of course be helpful to the process.”

Ambassador Karl Hood, Grenada’s envoy to Beijing, who previously led the climate negotiations for small island nations, said that for the sake of vulnerable countries, he hopes to see Obama and Xi further their pledges and “send a shock wave to the rest of the world.”

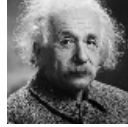
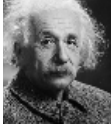
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