

## Europe, US to work together on global warming

By DINA CAPPIELLO – 2 days ago

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top environmental officials from Europe say they are encouraged by the United States' new stance on climate change.

After spending years encouraging the Bush administration to take action, three European environmental ministers said Tuesday that the U.S. appears ready to work with them on a new international agreement to curb the emissions blamed for global warming.

The officials were in Washington to meet with members of the Obama administration and Congress in preparation for negotiations on a new global treaty, which are scheduled for Copenhagen, Denmark in December. The Europeans also offered to work closely with the U.S. on climate change matters.

"We've been waiting for eight years," said Martin Bursik, the Czech Republic's environment minister at a briefing Tuesday.

Andreas Carlgren, Sweden's environment minister, said Washington has definitely warmed to dealing with climate change.

"To come to Washington in these days is to really experience climate change," Carlgren said. "There is a completely different mental climate here today."

The last global accord, the Kyoto Protocol, is set to expire in 2012. The U.S. did not enter into that agreement, citing its impact on the economy and the lack of participation by developing countries such as India and China.

Now, the U.S. is poised with a Democratic-controlled Congress and Democratic President to take action on global warming by passing legislation that would limit carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases. The legislation would establish a market for carbon dioxide by selling credits to companies that emit greenhouse gases. The companies could then invest in technologies to reduce emissions to reach a certain target or buy credits from other companies that exceed emission reduction goals.

The European Union has had such a cap-and-trade system in place since 2005. It is the world's largest carbon market.

The ministers on Tuesday said that while the U.S. did not have to adopt an identical system, a compatible program would allow the markets to be eventually linked and then expanded globally.

They also said U.S. leadership is vital if developing countries are to participate in a new agreement. The U.S. is the world's second-largest emitter of greenhouse gases.

"The more the United States can deliver before Copenhagen, the more credibility the United States will have," Carlgren said.

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