



Executive Directive 07-13
Local Carbon Offset Program

December 18, 2007

Scientific evidence indicates that the risks of global warming are so dire that aggressive and immediate action is needed to reduce carbon emissions globally. San Francisco's Climate Action Plan commits to reducing localized greenhouse gas emissions to 20 percent below 1990 levels by 2012. To meet this goal, the City has implemented a broad array of aggressive emission reduction measures.

In addition to pursuing direct reduction measures, our local government can also play a leadership role mitigating carbon emissions that are produced in San Francisco by government, residents and businesses. The purchase of 'carbon offsets' allow this mitigation to occur by funding activities that either absorb carbon from the atmosphere or reduce carbon that would otherwise be emitted into the air.

Through this Executive Directive, I am directing the City's Department of Environment to develop and pilot a Local Carbon Offset Program, the first of its kind in the United States. This Program will fund carbon-offset activities exclusively within San Francisco's boundaries. In doing so, it will give city departments, local businesses and residents alike the opportunity to mitigate carbon pollution generated by their own activities, while investing in building a sustainable local renewable energy economy and improving the environment within the community in which we live. This program differs from existing carbon offset programs that seek to offset carbon pollution far away from where this pollution is actually created.

The first phase of this Local Carbon Offset Program will consist of carbon offsets purchased by City departments when employees travel by airplane. Supervisor Alioto-Pier earlier this year called for carbon offsets for city travel, and I believe this is an critical element of our Local Carbon Offset Program. Offsets purchased by this program in the pilot phase will subsidize a limited set of projects including solar panel installation on low-income housing and a biodiesel conversion program to convert restaurant waste into fuel.

Once this pilot project is complete, I am instructing the Department of the Environment to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify the most productive carbon offset projects that can mitigate greenhouse gas emissions locally and included these in our Local Carbon Offset Program. If the pilot is successful, this second phase of the Local Carbon Offset Program would invite and encourage local residents and businesses to purchase carbon offsets through the City's program.

The Department of the Environment is instructed to collaborate with other relevant departments on the creation of this pilot program, and work with the Mayor's Office and Board of Supervisors to issue subsequent direction to City departments to implement this program.

For questions concerning this Executive Directive, please contact Wade Crowfoot in my office (415-554-6640).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom".

Gavin Newsom
Mayor