

POSITION: Federated Women in Timber (FWIT) urges our congressional delegates to fully recognize the full suite of benefits provided by working forests, harvested wood products and renewable energy:

- 1) Promote working forests that have sustainable forest management strategies aimed at maintaining or increasing forest carbon stocks while producing an annual sustained yield of timber, fiber and energy from the forest.
- 2) Support efficient legislation focused on Green House Gas (GHG) emission reductions, inclusion of a robust offsets program and assurance that a robust manufacturing base is maintained in the U.S. The legislation should explicitly include:
 - a) The primary GHG of CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O;
 - b) Exclusion of the forestry sector from regulated sectors;
 - c) Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from combustion of biomass and biofuels are deemed carbon neutral;
 - d) Carbon offsets are included that recognize forest-based projects and renewable energy credits (substitution of wood for non-renewable items and use of wood for power production and biofuels) and are not limited.
 - e) Allowances should be free. Any auction will be detrimental to the overall U.S. economy and the ability of businesses to compete in a global marketplace.
 - f) An economic analysis must be performed to determine whether the benefits of proposed legislation and standards are technologically feasible and economically justified.
 - g) The United States Department of Agriculture should be the administering agency with respect to forestry offset project rules.

BACKGROUND: GHG emission reductions should fully recognize the potential contributions of the forestry sector. Of all economic sectors, forestry is the only sector that can and generally is a net carbon sink. By promoting the potential contribution of increased standing inventory, long-lived solid wood products and use of wood waste for biofuels and power generation, the net sink can be substantially increased providing positive benefit to the U.S. net GHG emissions. Forest carbon offsets provide a stable method of assuring a smooth transition to lower future GHG emissions.

RATIONALE: According to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released in 2007, a sustainable working forest “will generate the largest sustained mitigation benefit”:

Wood has significantly lower lifecycle CO₂ emissions than more carbon-intensive non-renewable products, such as concrete and steel. Climate policies should promote the use of wood as a “green” building product.

Climate policy and legislation should also incorporate incentives for the contribution of forest biomass (wood, other plant material, residuals and byproducts) from private and public forest lands to reducing atmospheric carbon by providing a cellulose-based feedstock for renewable energy (transportation fuels, electricity generation and heat). Forest biomass has significantly lower lifecycle CO₂ emissions than fossil fuels.

CONCLUSION: Utilizing the Forestry Sector for offsets provides a positive net benefit to U.S. GHG emissions reductions.