THE CLIMATE GAP

Inequalities in How Climate Change Hurts Americans & How to Close the Gap

Rachel Morello-Frosch, Ph.D., MPH I Manuel Pastor, Ph.D. I James Sadd, Ph.D. I Seth B. Shonkoff, MPH
Outline

• What is The Climate Gap?
• Key Findings
• The Climate Gap & Waxman-Markey
• The Climate Gap & California
• Outreach Update
• Discussion
What is the Climate Gap?

A hidden pattern showing that people of color and the poor in the United States will suffer more from the economic and health consequences of climate change than other Americans.
KEY FINDINGS
Key Takeaways

1. There is a Climate Gap.
2. This is a domestic problem.
3. We can solve climate change and close the Climate Gap.
1. There is a Climate Gap
The Climate Gap:
People of color and the poor will...

- Suffer higher mortality and health problems during extreme weather events
- Be exposed to higher air pollution levels
- See the “spending gap” widen
- Experience reduced economic opportunities
EXTREME WEATHER

From: Spatial patterns of natural hazards mortality in the United States; Borden KA, Cutter SL
Heat Waves

Figure 2.4: Temperature profile of an urban heat island.
(http://www.epa.gov/globalwarming/greenhouse/greenhouse14/reduction.html)

**FIGURE 3.** Estimated percent change associated with a 10°F (4.7°C) increase in mean daily apparent temperature and nonaccidental mortality by race/ethnic group in nine counties, California, May through September, 1999–2003. CI, confidence interval.

Dirtier Air: Segregation and Air Toxics

Estimated cancer risk associated with ambient air toxics by race/ethnicity and racial/ethnic residential segregation, continental United States metropolitan areas

(Morello-Frosch & Jesdale 2006)
Dirtier Air

The difference between the minority share of health risk from industrial air toxics and the minority share of the population.
Higher Prices

Electricity

Percent of Total Expenditures

Expenditure Quintile
Fewer Jobs

- Entertainment
- Travel Arrangements
- Retail
- Ground Transportation
- Air Transportation
- Food
- Traveler Accommodation

Percent People of Color
2. Addressing Climate Change & Closing the Climate Gap
Addressing climate change & closing the Climate Gap

1. Identify Climate Gap neighborhoods
2. Focus GHG reductions from sources who also emit toxic pollution
3. Invest portion of revenue
4. Target green jobs training
Why link GHG & toxic pollution reductions?

- Prevention and mitigation
- Air pollution top concern for voters
Why invest in Climate Gap neighborhoods?

- Offset higher costs
- Green jobs/retraining
- Coping and evacuation
  - Education
  - More tree cover
  - Cooling centers
  - Public transportation
  - Evacuation planning
THE CLIMATE GAP & WAXMAN-MARKEY
Waxman-Markey & The Climate Gap

- Encouraging elements:
  - Fewer free permits for oil sector
  - Several cushions against higher prices
  - Natural resources adaptation framework
    - Could be replicated to focus on Climate Gap neighborhoods
    - Vulnerable Communities Climate Change Adaptation Panel
Waxman-Markey & The Climate Gap

• Concerning elements:
  – No GHG reductions in dirtiest neighborhoods
  – High number of offsets and free allowances
  – GHG emissions exempt from Clean Air Act
  – Mitigation mostly international
  – Credits, refunds and allowances may not be enough for poorest consumers
  – Green jobs not targeted
The Climate Gap & Waxman-Markey

1. Establish a Vulnerable Communities Climate Change Adaptation Panel

2. Target green job opportunities

3. Incentivize public health benefits
The Climate Gap & California

1. **Protect Climate Gap neighborhoods environmentally**
   Add a public health bonus of reducing criteria pollutants and toxic air contaminants in neighborhoods with poor air quality

2. **Protect Climate Gap neighborhoods socially**
   Determine where vulnerability is highest and improve adaptation capacity

3. **Protect Climate Gap neighborhoods economically**
   Cushion low income households from economic effects and target revenue streams to climate gap communities
California: Where are we now?

- Advocates focusing at regulatory and legislative levels to achieve goals
- Several bills in motion:
  - AB 1405 (DeLeon): Dedicate a portion of the revenue to reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency or mitigate climate change related health impacts in the identified vulnerable neighborhoods (NAACP, CRPE, Greenlining Institute, CCA)
  - AB 1404 (DeLeon): Place Limitations on Offsets – geographic & amount (UCS)
  - AB 231 (Huffman): Protect the revenue generated from being raided (EDF)
  - AB 31 (Pavley): Spend the revenue on specific programs & projects (NRDC)
OUTREACH UPDATE
Briefings & Outreach

1. Tradition Media
2. Social Media
3. Advocates
4. Funders
5. Suggestions?
Where to get the Climate Gap Report

- http://college.usc.edu/geography/ESPE/perepub.html
  - Full Report and Executive summary
  - Analysis of Waxman-Markey Bill
THE CLIMATE GAP

Inequalities in How Climate Change Hurts Americans & How to Close the Gap

Rachel Morello-Frosch, Ph.D., MPH  I  Manuel Pastor, Ph.D.  I  James Sadd, Ph.D.  I  Seth B. Shonkoff, MPH