

This is a printer friendly version of an article from the **The Greenville News**
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back](#)

Explore ideas to reduce greenhouse gases
These ideas could have profound effects on the state's economy

Published: Wednesday, September 5, 2007 - 2:00 am

Emissions of greenhouse gases are rising faster in South Carolina than the nation as a whole, according to an analysis of emissions completed for a committee studying the impact of climate change on South Carolina. The results shouldn't be surprising given the rapid growth in South Carolina, but given growing concern about air pollution -- particularly in the Upstate -- it should be taken seriously.

Greenhouse gases come mainly from cars and electricity production generated by fossil fuels. South Carolina has both in abundance. From 1990-2005, those emissions increased 38 percent in South Carolina, compared to a 16 percent increase nationally. While the science isn't complete yet on how these gases impact the global climate, most people agree that limiting pollution is important. Several ideas on the Climate, Energy and Commerce Advisory Committee's radar screen would go a long way toward helping to mitigate pollution problems here and throughout the state.

Among the ideas the committee is considering:

- Advertisement
- Encouraging production of biofuels in South Carolina.
 - Protecting the state's forests.
 - Converting waste to energy.
 - Providing tax credits for efficient vehicles.
 - Expanding the use of transit, as well as increasing options for bike and pedestrian transportation.
 - Creating an alternative fuel infrastructure.
 - Encouraging "smart growth" that helps reduce energy use.
 - Adding new nuclear power generation to the state.

These are among the best of the 52 draft priorities the panel has proposed to help reduce the amount of pollution that is being put into South Carolina's air. They are also ones that probably could be enacted with a minimal negative impact on the state's economy and taxpayers. In fact, some even hold the potential to boost this state's economy.

"South Carolina has a tremendous opportunity to be a global leader in addressing this issue and taking advantage of what could be tremendous economic benefits for the state," Brad Wyche of Greenville, a member of the committee, said in a report by The Greenville News.

According to that report, Gov. Mark Sanford appointed the committee to create a list of suggestions to improve the state's renewable energy supply, reduce greenhouse gases and better conserve energy.

All of these things also would help reduce pollution. And no matter where we stand on the controversial issue of global warming, all South Carolinians should be able to generally agree that it's a bad idea to add pollution to our atmosphere. In the Upstate, we are wrestling with this issue as robust growth leads to increased pollution that may

well put this region of the state in "non-compliance" with federal pollution standards.

This committee has been given an important task. As it weighs these 52 recommendations, it needs to carefully consider the costs and benefits of each idea. Some will be worth implementing, others probably would be too costly or too impractical to consider. But only by carefully considering these ideas will South Carolina come up with strategies to reduce these emissions while creating an economy that can move this state forward with the rest of the nation.
