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Bush: Global Climate Report Is Bureaucratic Hot Air

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By Tom Doggett

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Bush on Tuesday called a recent report that blames humans for global warming nothing more than a product of government "bureaucracy" and said he would not accept an international accord to reduce heat-trapping emissions.

The report by the Environmental Protection Agency, whose top officials are appointed by the president, appeared to back the view of many scientists who believe that global warming is primarily caused by emissions from automobiles, power plants, and oil refineries.

Until the new report became public, the Bush administration had repeatedly emphasized that there was not enough scientific evidence to link global warming to industrial emissions. President Bush indicated on Tuesday he was skeptical of the report's conclusions.

"I read the report put out by the bureaucracy," Bush told reporters. Instead, Bush said he would continue to push voluntary efforts and financial incentives for U.S. companies to use new technologies to reduce their emissions.

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer later told reporters that there remained "considerable uncertainty" on the scientific causes of global warming.

A spokeswoman for the EPA had no immediate comment.

Gases such as carbon dioxide and methane are blamed for rising temperatures and changing weather patterns around the world.

Bush repeated his opposition to the Kyoto treaty, which seeks to reduce worldwide atmospheric warming emissions, especially from industrialized countries.

"I do not support the Kyoto treaty," said Bush, a former Texas oilman. "The Kyoto treaty would severely damage the United States economy, and I don't accept that."

Meanwhile, Japan on Tuesday became the latest country to ratify the global warming agreement and said it would urge the United States to do the same.

"The Kyoto treaty is an important international step toward climate change. I very much hope that other countries will join as soon possible," said Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi.

Some 55 nations producing 55 percent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions must ratify the pact before it becomes binding. Russia is widely expected to adopt the Kyoto plan by the end of the year.

The European Union has also adopted the treaty, and has criticized the United States -- the world's biggest energy consumer and emission polluter -- for not doing more to fight global warming.

The new report was quietly released last week by the EPA and sent to the United Nations by the State Department.

The document said that "greenhouse gases are accumulating in the Earth's atmosphere as a result of human activities, causing global mean surface air temperatures and subsurface ocean temperatures to rise."

Total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions will increase 43 percent between 2000 and 2020, the report said.

The EPA is headed by Christine Todd Whitman, the former New Jersey governor who has cabinet rank.

One year ago, Whitman endorsed limits on carbon dioxide emissions by electric generating plants just before Bush declared he would not seek mandatory cuts by the industry.

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