



Highlights of [GAO-06-1122T](#), testimony before the Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives

## Why GAO Did This Study

The Congress has required annual reports on federal climate change spending. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reports funding for: technology (to reduce greenhouse gas emissions), science (to better understand the climate), international assistance (to help developing countries), and tax expenditures (to encourage emissions reduction). The Climate Change Science Program (CCSP), which coordinates many agencies' activities, also reports on science funding.

This testimony is based on GAO's August 2005 report *Climate Change: Federal Reports on Climate Change Should Be Clearer and More Complete* (GAO-05-461). GAO examined federal climate change funding for 1993 through 2004, including (1) how total funding and funding by category changed and whether funding data are comparable over time and (2) how funding by individual agencies changed and whether funding data are comparable over time.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO recommended, among other things, that OMB include data on existing climate-related tax expenditures. OMB agreed with most of GAO's recommendations and has implemented several of them. CCSP agreed with all of GAO's recommendations and has begun explaining changes in report format or content when they are introduced.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-1122T](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-1122T).

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact John B. Stephenson at (202) 512-3841, or [stephensonj@gao.gov](mailto:stephensonj@gao.gov).

## CLIMATE CHANGE

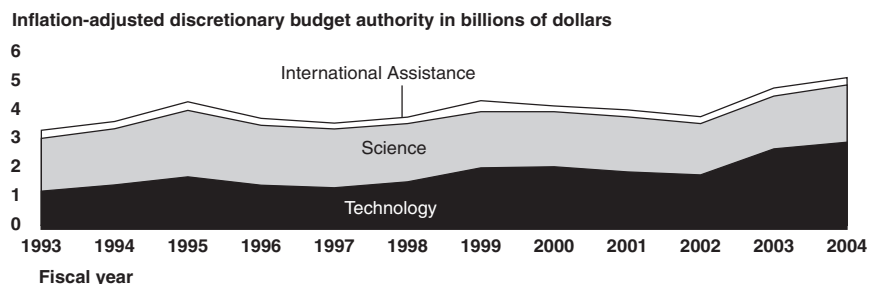
# Greater Clarity and Consistency Are Needed in Reporting Federal Climate Change Funding

## What GAO Found

According to OMB, from 1993 to 2004, federal funding for climate change increased from \$3.3 billion to \$5.1 billion (55 percent) after adjusting for inflation. During this period, reported inflation-adjusted funding increased for technology and science, but decreased for international assistance. However, it is unclear whether funding changed as much as reported because changes in the format and content of OMB and CCSP reports make it difficult to compare funding data over time. For example, over time, OMB expanded the definitions of some accounts to include more activities, but did not specify how it changed the definitions. OMB officials stated that it is not required to follow a consistent reporting format from year to year. Further, CCSP's science funding reports were difficult to compare over time because CCSP introduced new methods for categorizing funding without explaining how they related to previous methods. The Director of CCSP said that its reports changed as the program evolved. These and other limitations make it difficult to determine actual changes in climate change funding.

Similarly, OMB reported that 12 of the 14 agencies that funded climate change programs in 2004 increased such funding between 1993 and 2004, but unexplained changes in the reports' contents limit the comparability of data on funding by agency. For example, reported funding for the Department of Energy (DOE), the agency with the most reported climate-related funding in 2004, increased from \$1.34 billion to \$2.52 billion (88 percent) after adjusting for inflation. DOE and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration accounted for 81 percent of the reported increase in funding from 1993 through 2004. However, because agency funding totals are composed of individual accounts, changes in the reports' contents, such as the unexplained addition of accounts to the technology category, make it difficult to compare agencies' funding data over time and, therefore, to determine if this is a real or a definitional increase. Furthermore, GAO found that OMB reported funding for certain agencies in some years but not in others, without explanation. OMB told GAO that it relied on agency budget offices to submit accurate data. These data and reporting limitations make determining agencies' actual levels of climate change funding difficult.

### Reported Federal Climate Change Funding by Category, 1993-2004



Source: GAO analysis of OMB data.