

The WCI Partner jurisdictions have developed a comprehensive initiative to reduce regional GHG emissions to 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and spur investment in and development of clean-energy technologies, create green jobs, and protect public health. The WCI Partner jurisdictions' plan includes the following elements:

- **Using the power of the market**

The central component of the comprehensive WCI strategy is a flexible, market-based, regional cap-and-trade program that caps greenhouse gas emissions and uses tradable permits to incent development of renewable and lower-polluting energy sources. The [Design for the WCI Regional Program](#), released on July 27, 2010, provides a roadmap to inform the WCI Partner jurisdictions as they implement the cap-and-trade program in their jurisdictions. Those expected to implement the program when it begins in January 2012 comprise approximately two-thirds of total emissions in the WCI jurisdictions—a critical mass and a robust market for achieving significant GHG emissions reductions. When fully implemented in 2015, this comprehensive program will cover nearly 90 percent of the GHG emissions in WCI states and provinces.

Learn more about the [WCI Regional Program](#)

- **Encouraging reductions throughout the economy**

To reduce compliance costs and encourage emissions reductions, WCI Partner jurisdictions will issue offsets that represent a reduction or removal of one metric ton of CO₂e and meet all recommended offset criteria. Offsets provide a flexible mechanism that reduces the cost of a cap-and-trade program by introducing a broader range of reduction opportunities, and reward emissions reductions in sectors such as forestry and agriculture that are not covered by emissions caps.

Learn more about the [offsets system](#)

The WCI Partner jurisdictions' comprehensive strategy is good for the environment and good for

the economy. [Economic analysis](#) indicates that the WCI approach can reduce regional GHG emissions to 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and realize a cost savings through increased efficiencies and reduced fuel consumption. These results underscore that mitigation of GHG emissions and the move to a clean-energy economy is affordable, and can be achieved without negatively impacting the regional economy, and are consistent with other recent state and federal analyses of climate mitigation programs.