Over the last twenty years scientists and the general public have become increasingly concerned about the prospect of dramatic climate change exacerbated, or even triggered, by human activity. The amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases discharged into the earth’s atmosphere increased throughout the twentieth century and the nine warmest years on record have all occurred since 1990. While the implications of the greenhouse effect remain largely unknown, concern over the issue led to international support for a treaty that would reduce the amount of greenhouse gases emitted by the world’s industrialized nations. From December 1 through 11, 1997, representatives from more than 160 nations met in Kyoto, Japan, to negotiate binding limitations on greenhouse gases for the developed nations pursuant to the objectives of the Framework Convention on Climate Change of 1992. The negotiated treaty, referred to as the Kyoto Protocol, called for the signatories to reduce their overall emissions of greenhouse gases by at least 5 percent below 1990 levels in the commitment period 2008–2012. Although the United States, the world’s largest producer of these gases pulled out of the treaty in 2001, the treaty was ratified on November 5, 2004 when Russian President Vladimir Putin signed the treaty, which had required ratification by at least 55 countries accounting for at least 55 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in 1990.

Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

The Parties to this Protocol, Being Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, hereinafter referred to as “the Convention,” In pursuit of the ultimate objective of the Convention as stated in its Article 2, Recalling the provisions of the Convention, Being guided by Article 3 of the Convention, Pursuant to the Berlin Mandate adopted by decision 1/CP.1 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its
first session, Have agreed as follows:

**Article 1**

For the purposes of this Protocol, the definitions contained in Article 1 of the Convention shall apply. In addition:

1. “Conference of the Parties” means the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.
5. “Parties present and voting” means Parties present and casting an affirmative or negative vote.
6. “Party” means, unless the context otherwise indicates, a Party to this Protocol.
7. “Party included in Annex I” means a Party included in Annex I to the Convention, as may be amended, or a Party which has made a notification under Article 4, paragraph 2(g), of the Convention.

**Article 2**

1. Each Party included in Annex I, in achieving its quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments under Article 3, in order to promote sustainable development, shall:
   (a) Implement and/or further elaborate policies and measures in accordance with its national circumstances, such as:
      (i) Enhancement of energy efficiency in relevant sectors of the national economy;
      (ii) Protection and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, taking into account its commitments under relevant international environmental agreements; promotion of sustainable forest management practices, afforestation and reforestation;
      (iii) Promotion of sustainable forms of agriculture in light of climate change considerations;
      (iv) Research on, and promotion, development and increased use of, new and renewable forms of energy, of carbon dioxide