

## The politics behind U.S. environmental foreign policy on climate change



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***(Prof. Beulah Stark)***

## THE POLITICS BEHIND U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL FOREIGN POLICY ON CLIMATE CHANGE



GRIN Verlag Aug 2010, 2010. Taschenbuch. Book Condition: Neu. 229x147x23 mm. This item is printed on demand - Print on Demand Neuware - Seminar paper from the year 2004 in the subject American Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 1,0, University of Potsdam, course: International Environmental Policy, 19 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: Climate change is the extraordinary warming of the Earth from increased concentration of greenhouse gasses (GHG)<sup>1</sup> and the climate consequences of that warming, which can be in many ways harmful to humans and the environment.<sup>2</sup> In the 1980s climate change appeared on the agenda in international politics<sup>3</sup> but only since the end of the Cold War the climate change debate has shifted into the focus of concern in foreign policy circles<sup>4</sup> until it was swept away by an omnipresent War on Terror after September 11. The United States, as the world's largest polluter<sup>5</sup> to climate change - US emissions of CO exceed those of all other countries<sup>6</sup> plus on a per capita basis US CO -emissions are the highest off all countries<sup>7</sup> - plays a major, if not the decisive, role in international environmental politics and the dialogue for a global strategy to address climate change. While the United States was one of the leading countries in terms of progressive domestic legislation and one of the driving forces behind international environmental agreements (e.g. dealing with the problem of ozone depletion culminating in the Montreal Protocol) <sup>8</sup>, the US is now not only blocking the Kyoto Protocol, but also actively pressuring other undecided countries not to sign and ratify the Protocol. Paradoxically, American scientists have played a leading role in identifying the anthropogenic affect on global warming and its dangerous consequences, yet political commitment and leadership to address the climate change problem is very weak....



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