

ACCO Climate Leadership Summit

November 8-9, 2010 | Hyattsville, Maryland

Marriott Inn & Conference Center, University of Maryland University College
(The nation's first LEED certified conference center)

ROUNDTABLE NOTES

Track 5: Government

Session 4: EPA Climate Leaders Stakeholder Meeting

Moderators: Bruce Klafter, Hugh Cherne, Jim Sullivan

Takeaways:

It will be hard, if not impossible, to replace the brand recognition that went along with membership in the EPA Climate Leaders program.

What were the best attributes of the Climate Leaders?

- Learning the technical requirements and receiving related assistance, choosing EPA because of their national prominence, and being part of Climate Leaders helped bring the internal program to a higher level.
- Climate Leaders established a rulebook of how to do an inventory and set goals, was helpful in 2002 and still helpful today, provided a community/network for best practice exchange, and that it will be tough to replace legitimacy and credibility from the EPA.
- Many companies know how to inventory Scope 1 and 2 emissions, however, Climate Leaders was useful outside the four walls because GHG emissions reporting is more challenging than 10 years ago (due to Scope 3 efforts). Every company needs assistance in this area because there are numerous different ways to do Scope 3.
- EPA provided a safe environment to interact without being hounded by consulting sales pitches, as well as a venue that facilitated the ready exchange of information among companies
- Since the goal of the program was to reduce emissions first, EPA is not trying to drive an agenda they just want to see results (i.e., reduced emissions from voluntary partnerships). The EPA's authority helped environmental teams drive participation among Fortune 500 companies seeking a leadership position. Furthermore, larger companies liked the ability of EPA to work on a global scale.

Very few member sites fall under MRR reporting ... this creates the potential to lose leadership in reporting and compliance especially in tight economic times. Community (family feeling) is going to be tough to find in other programs and places because Climate Leaders did the little things right that made people feel a sense of belonging as well as gave them technical expertise.

Since it is harder to have consistency for Scope 3 because it is an order of magnitude more complex, who will set the standard? How well will companies follow these requirements given a budget shortfall?

Since companies are starting from different standards it is tough to have a one size fits all. Can we mitigate this problem by tying science based goals and pathways to reporting requirements? For example, the vertical integration component- what is in their inventory so we can have like comparisons (i.e., one company owns its airplanes and another company leases- how do you compare?, beverage industry- who is vertically integrated upstream to farms?).

Next Steps:

Determine the viability for ACCO to provide a forum for networking and learning opportunities, best practices, etc. for former members of the program? Establish working/discussion group to continue Climate Leaders related discussions in 2011.

Develop collaboration group to:

- Review the EPA update that will be available by the end of December (Input to standardization, Scope 3 guidance, EPA recognition for those in voluntary programs, EPA view on voluntary reporting, etc.)
- Explore opportunities for former members with The Climate Registry, The Carbon Trust, UL Environment, CDP and others in order to provide feedback to each organization on their respective programs. Essentially, develop listing of various US/global standards/registries and a brief comparison of costs/requirements/resources/etc.
- Set up discussion with Kathleen Hogan's group at Department of Energy to explore opportunities for partnership programs based out of her new shop.