

U.S. unveils Kyoto alternative plan

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The United States Thursday announced agreement with several Asian nations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick made the announcement on the sidelines of the Association of South-East Asian Nations meeting in Vientiane, Laos, the Financial Times reported.

Zoellick's announcement confirmed a Wednesday Australian report revealing the pact to replace the controversial Kyoto climate protocol that Australia and the United States refused to sign.

But Zoellick brushed aside that interpretation, declaring: "We are not detracting from Kyoto in any way at all. We are complementing it. Our goal is to complement other treaties with practical solutions to problems."

U.S. officials say the new agreement -- the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate -- contrasts with Kyoto's "broad international commitments that lack a program of action."

The partnership involves India, South Korea, Japan, Australia and the United States -- which, together, generate 50 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.

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