# Advantages

## Agriculture FOOD SHOCKS

#### Cuban agriculture sustainability is decreasing-normal trade relations solve-gives Cuba the means to pursue sustainability

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(M. Dawn, “Cuban Sustainability: The Effects of Economic Isolation on Agriculture and Energy”, March, <http://wpsa.research.pdx.edu/meet/2012/kingmdawn.pdf>)

In the 2006 Living Planet Report, which assesses sustainable development based on the United Nations Development Program’s Human Development Index Score coupled with a counties’ ecological footprint, Cuba was heralded as the only country to fall into the “sustainable category” with both a low ecological footprint and a rather high quality of living,but by 2010 Cuba slipped just out of the sustainable category and could be at risk for slipping even further (WWF 2010, 34). While it is too soon to gauge the effect of foreign investment on Cuban sustainable development practices, this section looks at sustainability indictors over the 2000s and finds that Cuba is increasing chemical applications to soils and fossil fuel consumption as venture capital projects increase. Further, I evaluate the change in sustainability indicators from the Environmental Performance Index and find that Cuba’s drop from the ninth ranking country in 2010 to the fiftieth ranking country in 2012 is largely due to changes in air pollution, water pollution, and coastal area protection. While only a limited amount of data is available for Cuba, the World Bank successfully traced Cuban fertilizer consumption, fossil-fuel energy consumption, and foreign direct investment from 2000-2010 (see graph 1). When these numbers are plotted out over a time, fertilizer consumption and fossil fuel energy consumption increase steadily over the decade while direct foreign investment spikes dramatically from 2008-2010. The same agricultural system praised internationally for its decreased use of chemical fertilizers throughout the 1990s is slowly bringing these less sustainable inputs back into the farming system. Certainly, the real Cuban goal of the “special period” was to increase Cuban self-sufficiency and decrease dependence on foreign imports, not sustainable development per se. With the increased availability of domestic and Venezuelan oil, more chemical fertilizers are produced in Cuba, with a plan for increased production in the next few years (Pinón 2010a) in an attempt to grow more on their limited agricultural land. The increase in fossil fuel energy consumption (as a percentage of total consumption) can also be attributed to an increase in domestic drilling and Venezuelan crude imports. This strengthens Cuba’s ability to develop without US assistance, but contributes to increased air pollution and a continued reliance on crude for electricity generation. The effect of the dramatic surge in foreign direct investment is yet to be determined, but it could lead to much-needed grid efficiency improvements and the ability to substitute LNG for crude oil as a power source. Beyond exploring the trends of fertilizer and fossil-fuel use, I also evaluate the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) Scores for Cuba in 2010 and 2012. The EPI replaced the Environmental Sustainability Index in the mid-2000s to better rank countries on performance indicators tracked across ten policy categories (EPI Summary 2010). The indicators changed dramatically from one Index to the next and then changed once again from 2008-2010. While data is available for Cuba in 2008, it would not be comparable to later indicators, hence why I only include data from the last two studies. Cuba dropped from the 9th ranked country in the world to the 50th in this two year time period, and below I compare indicator scores in an attempt to make sense out of such a dramatic drop (see Graph 2). In 2010, Cuba ranked particularly high on their environmental health score due to low levels of industrial pollution. The 2010 performance indicators for air pollution (ecosystem effects) measured nitrogen oxides, ecosystem ozone, sulfur dioxide emissions, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) while the 2012 indicators only measured sulfur dioxide per capita and sulfur dioxide per gross domestic product. Cuba’s increasing reliance on high sulfur crude for electricity generation, paired with a push to expand its oil refining capabilities could help explain why Cuba’s air pollution scores dropped dramatically over the two year period since the study placed more emphasis on sulfur dioxide emissions than the 2010 measurements. The water quality indicators (both effects on human health and the ecosystem) stayed the same for both studies, however, and Cuba’s score also dropped significantly. This is most likely also tied to the modernization of once dormant oil refineries. In Cienfuegos, “almost 85 percent of the river basins in the province…empty into the marine ecosystem around which all the industrial and urban development…is linked” (Grogg 2011). The more industrialization, the more freshwater pollution that drains into the sea – perhaps also explaining Cuba’s diminished “fisheries” score over the two year period since the 2012 indicators focused more on coastal shelf fishing pressure and overexploitation of fish stocks. Cuba maintained exemplary scores in agriculture and forestry due to their pesticide regulations and focus on re-forestation. It should be noted that the agriculture scores could potentially underrepresent the true sustainability of the Cuban model since it does not measure actual pesticide use or the percentage of organic agriculture. Given the consistency between the 2010 and 2012 EPI indicators, however, it is likely that Cuba is, in fact, becoming less sustainable as their GDP per capita and level of foreign direct investment grow. Some scholars argue that environmental degradation may occur during a period of increased trade or industrial growth before eventually getting better (see Grossman and Krueger 1993; Inglehart 2000), but Cuba is one of the few countries in the world that embraced environmental stewardship when economic indicators were depressed. This leaves Cuba in a precarious position – they need further foreign investment and economic growth to bolster their renewable energy potential, but this comes at risk of becoming even more dependent on fossil fuels, including the use of fossil fuels in agricultural production.Cuba needed an alternative agricultural model when foreign oil imports were cut off significantly at the end of the 1980s, and the partial opening of the Cuban economy, focused on creating more autonomous agricultural cooperatives, in the 1990s helped diversity food crops and set Cuba along a path of increased food security. The Cuban model was initiated out of necessity, not because of any sort of Cuban environmental consciousness, yet better environmental conditions went hand in hand with the new development strategy. Cuba learned the limits of their agricultural model under their socialist economic system and it is in need of further transformation in both the agriculture and energy sectors. A further opening of the economy to joint ventures could help with updating the power grid and providing more sources of renewable energy – potentially expanding Cuba’s potential for a more sustainable means of energy security. Further, Cuba needs foreign investment to update agriculture facilities and take maximum advantage of cogeneration and biofuel potential with sugarcane waste. The strong state control of farming practices, used to successfully jumpstart the alternative model, has hit its limit. The Cuban government must begin loosening its grips on the domestic economy to allow for more competition in the farming sector. Despite the potential to become more sustainable with a purposive and focused opening of the economy, the recent surge in joint venture investment on expanding domestic oil extraction, petrochemical facilities, and oil refinery infrastructure reveals a trend toward decreasing environmental sustainability. Once heralded as the world’s most sustainable country by coupling environmental performance indicators with their human development scores, Cuba is slipping further away from this goal. Perhaps the most distressing part of this current trend is that it took Cuba decades to create a national identity that embraced sustainable environmental practices in both the energy and agricultural sector, and it seemingly took only a couple of years to derail these efforts. Undoubtedly, conservation efforts and sustainable education programs can only satiate citizen’s energy desires to a certain point. In order to further the quality of life in the country, electric production must increase to rural areas with little energy infrastructure and to Havana in order to spur foreign investment and domestic small business growth. Cuba’s trade agreement with Venezuela is bringing in much-needed petroleum for electricity production, but their dependence on a relatively unstable country for crude is trapping them into the same relationship that crippled their economy in 1990 – impairing their original goal of self-sufficiency. Cuba is at a turning point in their path toward environmental sustainability, and the current need for immediate foreign capital and increased energy production seem to be trumping its desire to achieve development sustainably. Cuba still has enough centralized control to leap-frog dirty electric production for cleaner renewable forms of energy and the potential to guide development strategies that emphasize investments in and research on renewable energy. It can utilize its expertise on organic farming strategies to increase sugar production in a much more ecologically friendly manner than their monoculture approach in the 1970s and 80s. Decisions made in the next five years will demonstrate whether Cuba embraces their newly created national identity as a society striving for sustainable development or rejects the goal of sustainable development to increase short-term capital and energy needs.

#### Access to the US market is critical to sustainability and emulation

Kost 04 – William is part of the Economic Research Service for the USDA. (“CUBAN AGRICULTURE: TO BE OR NOT TO BE ORGANIC?” 2004, http://www.ascecuba.org/publications/proceedings/volume14/pdfs/kost.pdf)

EXTERNAL MARKETS MAY BE CRITICAL

FOR AN ORGANIC CUBA

In addition to the above European markets, the successful expansion and viability of Cuba’s organic production may also depend on access to geographicallyclose, high-income foreign markets, namely the United States and Canada. Currently, Cuban produce is not certified-organic in either of these markets. Only after Cuban products are certified for these countries could Cuba legally export produce labeled organic to these markets. Given that many technical production practices currently followed by Cuban producers are potentially compatible with U.S. certification standards and given Cuba’s prior experience in becoming Swiss-certified, Cuba could be well positioned to meet U.S. certification standards. For the U.S. organic market, in addition to a lifting of the U.S. embargo, Cuba would have to be certified by a USDA-accredited certification program that assures U.S. markets that Cuban products labeled organic meet all National Organic Program standards and regulations under the U.S. Organic Foods Production Act of 1990. If the U.S. embargo on Cuba were lifted, Cuban exports, once certified, could play a significant role in the U.S. organic market. In this current U.S. niche market, production costs are high. Opening the U.S. market would enable Cuba to exploit its significant comparative advantage in this area. This market could become a quick foreign exchange earner for Cuba. The largest barrier Cuba faces in expanding into the U.S. organic market will be meeting U.S. requirements for organic certification. Tapping the U.S. market may create sufficient price incentives for Cuban producers to take the necessary steps to meet the organic standards of other importing countries. Cuba could then expand production of organic produce geared to these specialty export markets. With sufficiently high prices for organic produce, urban labor may remain active in an organic urban gardening sector. Most likely, the viability of a vibrant organic produce production and processing sector in Cuba will depend on Cuba’s gaining access to the large, nearby U.S. market. Without such access, organic-oriented production of horticultural products in Cuba will likely remain a necessity-driven way to produce food for domestic consumption in an environment where other production approaches are just not available. The U.S. market is large and diverse. The demand for organic produce is only one portion of that market. How Cuba’s horticultural industry responds to restored U.S. trade will be a function of the relative price and cost incentives of the organic and non-organic market segments. If the organic price premiums are sufficient, Cuba has the climate, land resources, low-cost labor, and history of organicoriented production to allow it to develop and grow its horticultural sector in that direction. If the market incentives are not sufficiently large to pursue the organic produce market, Cuba will return to a chemical- and technology-driven, yield-maximizing, and labor-minimizing commercial production as rapidly as they can afford to do so. Cuba will have some incentive to increase domestic food production as rapidly as possible to feed the domestic population, rather than importing food for domestic consumption. Cuba could then use a larger share of its scarce foreign exchange to import energy, technology, and other inputs to support growth in other sectors of the Cuban economy.

#### Two-way trade is key – Cuba’s model will outcompete the industrial ag model

Cornell and Patel, 9 – both write for the Council on Hemispheric Affairs (Christina and Tara, “Cuba Elevates Urban Gardening To a Cause” 4/17, http://www.thecuttingedgenews.com/index.php?article=11525

Since the development of urban agriculture in Havana, production has increased exponentially, with the harvest of fresh herbs and vegetables jumping a thousand fold from 4,000 tons to 4.2 million tons between 1994 to 2005. The introduction of locally grown, organic agricultural products has significantly benefitted the typical Cuban diet. The environment of Cuba’s cities has immensely profited in terms of both climate change and aesthetics. Plots that were previously eyesores and de facto garbage dumps have been transformed into productive land. The social and economic environment has enjoyed the creation of sizeable sources of urban employment as well as the robust incorporation of women and youth into the workforce. Although Havana constitutes only 0.67 percent of the total area of the island, 20 percent of Cuba’s population is concentrated in the capital. The immense agricultural production capable in this small area could be considerable. This production rate is largely due to the overarching organizational structure of Havana’s urban agricultural model. Clearly fundamental to the success of this paradigm is the coherent, central direction that the socialist government provides. In spite of this collective approach, a certain amount of decentralization exists allowing citizens wide pathways to guide marketing and production. The central government offers support and an organizational backbone, while the decentralized arms furnished by the planning model permit decision-making to be made by producers and encourage local solutions to local problems. Thus, urban agriculture in Havana is a model of urban self-sufficiency worthy of imitation. Havana and the Outside World By incorporating modern farming methods into its economy, Cuba has experienced considerable advancements that have allowed the country to address many of its structural as well as life-style shortcomings, particularly the security of its people, the environment and the economy. The former food-supply problem plunged the Cuban economy into a downward spiral of hunger and despair. However, by fostering agricultural awareness, the country was able to attain enhanced levels of food sovereignty and security. This increased allocation of edibles has contributed enormously to the opening of society. Resources are now accessible and affordable to the general public and the creation of infrastructure accommodates more labor and increased wages. Thus, the changes Cuba has made have generated a positive interaction between the community and economy. Many worry whether Cuba’s budget and planning services will be able to maintain its commitment to urban agriculture and sustainable methods, as the country enters the global economy and faces pressures to restructure its economic and political system, especially as Washington nears a decision to lift the U.S.- Cuba trade embargo. As the economy opens, the tourism industry and multinational food corporations will compete for urban land and attempt to flood the Cuban market with cheap imported food products that could undermine the urban agricultural system. Havana must develop policies that will protect their growing agricultural sector, but also allow for international influence and trade to flourish. Although the opening of trade relations threatens local food production, Cuba’s success in the agriculture industry makes it a substantial contender in the global market. Its products are competitively priced and thus, have the ability to generate a considerable profit for the island nation. Not only will increased participation in international trade boost revenue, but it could also promote social reform in the country. Cuba’s urban centers, once underdeveloped and filthy, are now encouraging progressive goals, targeting rising living standards and sanitation concerns, while promoting national initiatives that will support future improvements in the urban landscapes. Agriculture for the Future Cuba’s successful implementation of urban agriculture should serve as a model for other developing countries, particularly in Latin America. By embracing more modern and effective methods of farming, countries theoretically have the opportunity to transform their local markets, augmenting the labor force and cultivating capital and infrastructure. Introduction to the global market would allow a country like Cuba to become an important economic actor, ultimately expanding its profits through competitive transactions and trade.

#### Cuban sustainable urban agriculture is a global model that’s spurring worldwide adoption-the plan is key to save it.

**Ergas, Oregon sociology graduate student, 2013**

(Christina, “Cuban Urban Agriculture as a Strategy for Food Sovereignty”, March, <http://monthlyreview.org/2013/03/01/cuban-urban-agriculture-as-a-strategy-for-food-sovereignty>

The agricultural revolution in Cuba has ignited the imaginations of people all over the world. Cuba’s model serves as a foundation for self-sufficiency, resistance to neocolonialist development projects, innovations in agroecology, alternatives to monoculture, and a more environmentally sustainable society. Instead of turning towards austerity measures and making concessions to large international powers during a severe economic downturn, Cubans reorganized food production and worked to gain food sovereignty as a means of subsistence, environmental protection, and national security.1 While these efforts may have been born of economic necessity, they are impressive as they have been developed in opposition to a corporate global food regime. In Sustainable Urban Agriculture in Cuba, Sinan Koont indicates that most of the global South has lost any semblance of food sovereignty—the ability to be self-sufficient, to practice a more sustainable form of agriculture, and to direct farming toward meeting the needs of people within a country, rather than producing cash crops for export (187). The World Bank and International Monetary Fund imposed structural adjustment programs and free trade agreements on the so-called third world. These policies increased the influence of multinational corporations, such as Monsanto and Cargill, in global food production. They also encouraged large-scale monocultures, whereby food production is specialized by region for international trade. These policies threatened the national food security of countries in several interrelated ways.2 First, economically vulnerable countries are subject to the vagaries of the international marketplace, fluctuating food prices, and heavily subsidized produce from the global North that undermine the ability of the former to compete. Second, in a for-profit economic system, certain crops, like sugarcane, potato, and corn, are planted to produce biofuels, primarily ethanol, instead of food for poor populations. Rich nations that can afford to buy crops for biofuels inflate market prices for food, and when droughts or floods destroy whole harvests, then scarce food still goes to the highest bidder. Third, nations that specialize in cash crops for export must import food, increasing overall insecurity and dependency on trade networks. These nations are more vulnerable to changes in the costs of petroleum, as it influences expenses associated with transportation, fertilizers, pesticides, and the overall price of food. In countries with higher per capita incomes, increasing food costs are an annoyance for many people but not necessarily life threatening. In countries with high rates of poverty, price increases can be devastating. All of the above problems converged during the 2007–2008 food crisis that resulted in riots in Egypt, Haiti, Indonesia, Mexico, and Bangladesh, just to name a few. People worldwide have been affected by these policies and have fought back. Some nations have taken to task corporations like Monsanto, as in the case of India’s response to genetically modified eggplant, which involved a boycott of Monsanto’s products and demands for the eradication of genetically modified foods.3 There are burgeoning local food movements, even in the United States, that despite numerous challenges attempt to produce food outside the current large-scale agricultural paradigm.4 There are also international movements that are working to change agricultural policies and practices. For example, La Vía Campesina is an international movement comprised of peasants, small-scale farmers, and their allies. Their primary goals are to stop neoliberal policies that promote oligopolistic corporate control over agriculture and to promote food sovereignty. In conjunction with these movements, Cuba has made remarkable strides toward establishing a system of food sovereignty. One of their most notable projects in this regard is their institutionalized and organized effort to expand agroecological practices, or a system of agriculture that is based on ecological principles and environmental concerns. Cuba has largely transformed food production in order to pursue a more sustainable path. These practices are not limited to the countryside. Cuba is the recognized leader of urban agriculture.5 As Koont highlights, the Cuban National Group for Urban Agriculture defines urban agriculture as the production of food within the urban and peri-urban perimeter, using intensive methods, paying attention to the human-crop-animal-environment interrelationships, and taking advantage of the urban infrastructure with its stable labor force. This results in diversified production of crops and animals throughout the year, based on sustainable practices which allow the recycling of waste materials (29). In 2007, urban agriculture comprised approximately 14.6 percent of agriculture in Cuba. Almost all of urban agriculture is organic. Cuba’s environmental protections and agricultural innovations have gained considerable recognition. The 2006 Sustainability Index Report, put together by the World Wildlife Fund by combining the United Nations Human Development Index and Ecological Footprint measures (or natural resource use per capita), contends that the only nation in the world that is living sustainably is Cuba.6 The island nation is particularly lauded for its strides in urban food production.7 Sustainable Urban Agriculture in Cuba is the first book to take a comprehensive look at this practice around the entire island. Koont indicates that the significance of urban agriculture in Cuba is that although Cuba is not completely food self-sufficient, it is the only example the world has of a country that produces most of its food locally, employing agroecological techniques for production. Furthermore, most of the food produced is for local consumption. As a result, Cuba has one of the shortest producer-to-consumer chains in the world. In this book, Koont documents the impressive transformations that have taken place within this nation. While Cuba imports the majority of its calories and protein, urban agriculture has increased food security and sovereignty in the area of vegetable production. In 2005, Cuba was “importing 60 percent to 70 percent of what it consumes [mostly so-called bulk foods] at an estimated cost of $1.5 billion to $2 billion annually.”8 However, urban agriculture within and around Havana accounts for 60–90 percent of the produce consumed in the city and utilizes about 87,000 acres of land.9 Cubans employ various forms of urban agriculture, including gardens, reforestation projects, and small-scale livestock operations. In 2010, 75 percent of the Cuban population lived in cities—a city is defined as such if the population is in excess of 1,000 persons.10 Thus, urban food production is the most practical and efficient means to supply the population with food. These transformations did not suddenly materialize. Koont provides a useful overview of the historical circumstances that contributed to changes in food production in Cuba. After the 1959 revolution and the subsequent imposition of the U.S. embargo, Cuba became reliant on the Soviet Union. Cubans used large-scale, industrial, monoculture to produce sugar, which was exchanged for Soviet petroleum and currency. The economy was largely tied to high-yield sugar production. In a vicious cycle, this type of agriculture required importing agrochemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and oil to run heavy machinery. In 1989, three times more arable land in Cuba was utilized to produce sugar for export than food for national consumption. Most of the Cuban diet came from imported food.11 When the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s, Cubans and their economy suffered greatly. Cubans no longer had access to the inputs required to maintain large-scale agriculture, given how dependent such agriculture is on oil. To make matters worse, the end of trade between the Soviet Bloc and Cuba resulted in a loss of access to food, which reduced Cubans’ protein intake by 30 percent.12 The system of agriculture that was in place was not sustainable or organized for self-sufficiency. Cubans refer to the ensuing period of resource scarcity as the Special Period in Peace Time. This period included shortages of food, fuel, and medicine. Faced with food scarcity and malnutrition, Cubans had to revamp their food production systems, which included collectively producing a variety of crops in the most efficient manner possible. Additionally, the necessary mission of Cuban politicians, ecologists, farmers, scientists, biologists, and farm workers was to mend the ecological cycles of interdependence that large-scale, exploitative agriculture destroyed.13 In spite of these hardships, Cuban society was equipped to contend with the ensuing crisis, given the country’s specific commitments and agroecological projects that were already in operation. The Cuban government and leadership worked to provide institutional support to re-direct food production and to enable the development of an extensive urban agricultural project. Governmental policies, following the 1959 revolution, that prioritized extending education, science, and technology served as a springboard for these new agricultural projects. First, the revolutionary government established organizations to address social problems and concerns. These organizations served as supply and distribution networks for food and centers for research that examined farmers’ traditional knowledge, continuing education programs that taught agroecological practices, distribution of technological innovations, and evaluation of existing programs and operations. Second, the government prioritized human resources and capabilities. Thus, the Cuban government invested in human capital by making education more widely available and accessible at all levels. Making use of the organizational infrastructure and investing in the Cuban people made the agroecological transition possible during the economic crisis in the early 1990s. Koont examines how the early agroecological projects, prior to the Special Period, served as a basis for future development and expansion of the revolutionary transformation of agriculture in Cuba. Science is publicly owned and directed toward furthering human development, rather than capital accumulation. Cuba had the human resources to address food scarcity, given that they had 11 percent of the scientists in Latin America. Scientists were already experimenting with agroecology, in order to take advantage of ecological synergisms, utilizing biodiversity and biological pest control. These efforts were focused on diminishing the need for inputs such as artificial fertilizers and pesticides. Other projects included integrating animals into rotational grazing systems with crops and diversifying with polycultures. Cubans also began recycling sugarcane waste as cattle feed; the cows, in turn, excrete waste that is applied to soil as fertilizer, thereby restoring ecological interdependence. By combining manure with worm castings, Cubans were able to fertilize most of their crops organically without having to import fertilizer from long distances. Their experimentation also included creating urban organopónicos, which were constructed four years before the Soviet collapse. Organopónicos are raised beds of organic materials confined in rectangular walls where plants are grown in areas with poor soil quality. Additionally, personal household plots had long existed within urban areas.14 Altogether these experiments and projects served as the foundation to pursue greater self-sufficiency, a system of urban agriculture, and a more sustainable form of food production. The pursuit of food sovereignty has yielded many benefits. Urban agriculture has increased food production, employment, environmental recovery and protection, and community building. Perhaps the most impressive strides are in the area of food security. In the early 1990s, during the Special Period, Cubans’ caloric intake decreased to approximately 1,863 calories a day. In the midst of food scarcity, Cuba ramped up food production. Between 1994 and 2006, Cubans increased urban output by a thousand fold, with an annual growth rate of 78 percent a year. In 2001, Cubans cultivated 18,591 hectares of urban land; in 2006, 52,389 hectares were cultivated. As a result of these efforts, the caloric intake for the population averaged 3,356 calories a day in 2005. During the economic crisis, unemployment sharply increased. However, the creation of extensive urban agricultural programs, which included centers of information and education, provided new jobs that subsumed 7 percent of the workforce and provided good wages. Urban agriculture and reforestation projects also constituted important gains for the environment. Shifting food production away from reliance on fossil fuels and petrochemicals is better for human health and reduces the carbon dioxide emissions associated with food production. Urban reforestation projects provide sinks for air pollution and help beautify cities. Finally, local production of food decreases food miles. It also requires both local producers and consumers. Therefore, community members get to know each other and are responsible for each other through the production and consumption of food. Sustainable Urban Agriculture in Cuba is a detailed documentation of the agroecological transformation in Cuba. Koont delivers a significant amount of information regarding the mechanics of urban agriculture. He highlights the enabling factors of urban agriculture in Cuba, which are the government’s creation of the organizational infrastructure and their investment in human capital. He also provides an assessment of the results from urban agriculture. The results he discusses are gains made in food production, increased employment, environmental recovery and protection, and community building. However, the majority of the book reads like a dry technical manual or guide to urban agriculture, something akin to official Cuban government documents. There are many bulleted lists throughout each chapter that outline types of crops grown, strategies, key features of urban agriculture in Cuba, collaborating organizations, evaluation criteria, tons of produce in each province, program objectives, and the lists go on. While the book contains a significant amount of information regarding process, extent, technology, education, and evaluation surrounding urban agriculture in Cuba, it does little in the way of setting up a theoretical framework and thoroughly exploring the significance of Cuba’s model of urban agriculture for the world. The introduction and the final chapter of the book are the two chapters that touch on Cuba’s relevance and implications. In addition, Koont offers minimal critical analysis of the challenges that Cubans still face in their quest for food sovereignty. Despite these shortcomings, Koont provides a much-needed detailed account of the strides made in Cuban urban agriculture. Cuba’s example has clear implications for food sovereignty and security for the rest of the world. With the very real threat of climate change, potential energy crises, market fluctuations, worldwide droughts, or other economic and environmental problems that may force nations to relocalize food production, this example can serve as a template for future food sovereignty. We can continue to learn from Cuba as they generate new technologies and innovations in organic urban agriculture into the future. In addition, the Cuban example serves as a testament to the potential for a society’s resilience and is worth investigating not just for their innovations, but for inspiration.

#### Industrial ag is unsustainable-the impact is global food supplies

**Altieri, Berkeley agro-ecology professor, 2008**

(Miguel, “Small farms as a planetary ecological asset: Five key reasons why we should support the revitalization of small farms in the Global South”, 5-9, <http://www.foodfirst.org/en/node/2115>)

This global movement, the Via Campesina, has recently brought their message to the North, partly to gain the support of foundations and consumers, as political pressure from a wealthier public that increasingly depends on unique food products from the South marketed via organic, fair trade, or slow food channels could marshal the sufficient political will to curb the expansion of biofuels, transgenic crops and agro-exports, and put an end to subsidies to industrial farming and dumping practices that hurt small farmers in the South. But can these arguments really captivate the attention and support of northern consumers and philanthropists? Or is there a need for a different argument—one that emphasizes that the very quality of life and food security of the populations in the North depends not only on the food products, but in the ecological services provided by small farms of the South. In fact, it is herein argued that the functions performed by small farming systems still prevalent in Africa, Asia and Latin America—in the post-peak oil era that humanity is entering—comprise an ecological asset for humankind and planetary survival. In fact, in an era of escalating fuel and food costs, climate change, environmental degradation, GMO pollution and corporate- dominated food systems, small, biodiverse, agroecologically managed farms in the Global Southare the only viable form of agriculture that will feed the world under the new ecological and economic scenario.There are at last five reasons why it is in the interest of Northern consumers to support the cause and struggle of small farmers in the South: 1. Small farmers are key for the world’s food securityWhile 91% of the planet’s 1.5 billion hectares of agricultural land are increasingly being devoted to agro-export crops, biofuels and transgenic soybean to feed cars and cattle, millions of small farmers in the Global South still produce the majority of staple crops needed to feed the planet’s rural and urban populations. In Latin America, about 17 million peasant production units occupying close to 60.5 million hectares, or 34.5% of the total cultivated land with average farm sizes of about 1.8 hectares, produce 51% of the maize, 77% of the beans, and 61% of the potatoes for domestic consumption. Africa has approximately 33 million small farms, representing 80 percent of all farms in the region. Despite the fact that Africa now imports huge amounts of cereals, the majority of African farmers (many of them women) who are smallholders with farms below 2 hectares, produce a significant amount of basic food crops with virtually no or little use of fertilizers and improved seed. In Asia, the majority of more than 200 million rice farmers, few farm more than 2 hectares of rice make up the bulk of the rice produced by Asian small farmers. Small increases in yields on these small farms that produce most of the world´s staple crops will have far more impact on food availability at the local and regional levels, than the doubtful increases predicted for distant and corporate-controlled large monocultures managed with such high tech solutions as genetically modified seeds.2.Small farms are more productive and resource conserving than large-scale monoculturesAlthough the conventional wisdom is that small family farms are backward and unproductive, research shows that small farms are much more productive than large farms if total output is considered rather than yield from a single crop. Integrated farming systems in which the small-scale farmer produces grains, fruits, vegetables, fodder, and animal products out-produce yield per unit of single crops such as corn (monocultures) on large-scale farms. A large farm may produce more corn per hectare than a small farm in which the corn is grown as part of a polyculture that also includes beans, squash, potato, and fodder.In polycultures developed by smallholders, productivity, in terms of harvestable products, per unit area is higher than under sole cropping with the same level of management. Yield advantages range from 20 percent to 60 percent, because polycultures reduce losses due to weeds, insects and diseases, and make more efficient use of the available resources of water, light and nutrients. In overall output, the diversified farm produces much more food, even if measured in dollars. In the USA, data shows that the smallest two hectare farms produced $15,104 per hectare and netted about $2,902 per acre. The largest farms, averaging 15,581 hectares, yielded $249 per hectare and netted about $52 per hectare. Not only do small to medium sized farms exhibit higher yields than conventional farms, but do so with much lower negative impact on the environment. Small farms are ‘multi-functional’– more productive, more efficient, and contribute more to economic development than do large farms. Communities surrounded by many small farms have healthier economies than do communities surrounded by depopulated, large mechanized farms. Small farmers also take better care of natural resources, including reducing soil erosion and conserving biodiversity. The inverse relationship between farm size and output can be attributed to the more efficient use of land, water, biodiversity and other agricultural resources by small farmers. So in terms of converting inputs into outputs, society would be better off with small-scale farmers. Building strong rural economies in the Global South based on productive small-scale farming will allow the people of the South to remain with their families and will help to stem the tide of migration. And as population continues to grow and the amount of farmland and water available to each person continues to shrink, a small farm structure may become central to feeding the planet, especially when large- scale agriculture devotes itself to feeding car tanks. 3. Small traditional and biodiverse farms are models of sustainabilityDespite the onslaught of industrial farming, the persistence of thousands of hectares under traditional agricultural management documents a successful indigenous agricultural strategy of adaptability and resiliency. These microcosms of traditional agriculture that have stood the test of time, and that can still be found almost untouched since 4 thousand years in the Andes, MesoAmerica, Southeast Asia and parts of Africa, offer promising models of sustainability as they promote biodiversity, thrive without agrochemicals, and sustain year-round yields even under marginal environmental conditions. The local knowledge accumulated during millennia and the forms of agriculture and agrobiodiversity that this wisdom has nurtured, comprise a Neolithic legacy embedded with ecological and cultural resources of fundamental value for the future of humankind. Recent research suggests that many small farmers cope and even prepare for climate change, minimizing crop failure through increased use of drought tolerant local varieties, water harvesting, mixed cropping, opportunistic weeding, agroforestry and a series of other traditional techniques. Surveys conducted in hillsides after Hurricane Mitch in Central America showed that farmers using sustainable practices such as “mucuna” cover crops, intercropping, and agroforestry suffered less “damage” than their conventional neighbors. The study spanning 360 communities and 24 departments in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala showed that diversified plots had 20% to 40% more topsoil, greater soil moisture, less erosion, and experienced lower economic losses than their conventional neighbors. This demonstrates that a re-evaluation of indigenous technology can serve as a key source of information on adaptive capacity and resilient capabilities exhibited by small farms—features of strategic importance for world farmers to cope with climatic change. In addition, indigenous technologies often reflect a worldview and an understanding of our relationship to the natural world that is more realistic and more sustainable that those of our Western European heritage. 4. Small farms represent a sanctuary of GMO-free agrobiodiversityIn general, traditional small scale farmers grow a wide variety of cultivars . Many of these plants are landraces grown from seed passed down from generation to generation, more genetically heterogeneous than modern cultivars, and thus offering greater defenses against vulnerability and enhancing harvest security in the midst of diseases, pests, droughts and other stresses. In a worldwide survey of crop varietal diversity on farms involving 27 crops, scientists found that considerable crop genetic diversity continues to be maintained on farms in the form of traditional crop varieties, especially of major staple crops. In most cases, farmers maintain diversity as an insurance to meet future environmental change or social and economic needs. Many researchers have concluded that this varietal richness enhances productivity and reduces yield variability. For example, studies by plant pathologists provide evidence that mixing of crop species and or varieties can delay the onset of diseases by reducing the spread of disease carrying spores, and by modifying environmental conditions so that they are less favorable to the spread of certain pathogens. Recent research in China, where four different mixtures of rice varieties grown by farmers from fifteen different townships over 3000 hectares, suffered 44% less blast incidence and exhibited 89% greater yield than homogeneous fields without the need to use chemicals. It is possible that traits important to indigenous farmers (resistance to drought, competitive ability, performance on intercrops, storage quality, etc) could be traded for transgenic qualities which may not be important to farmers (Jordan, 2001). Under this scenario, risk could increase and farmers would lose their ability to adapt to changing biophysical environments and increase their success with relatively stable yields with a minimum of external inputs while supporting their communities’ food security. Although there is a high probability that the introduction of transgenic crops will enter centers of genetic diversity, it is crucial to protect areas of peasant agriculture free of contamination from GMO crops, as traits important to indigenous farmers (resistance to drought, food or fodder quality, maturity, competitive ability, performance on intercrops, storage quality, taste or cooking properties, compatibility with household labor conditions, etc) could be traded for transgenic qualities (i.e. herbicide resistance) which are of no importance to farmers who don’t use agrochemicals . Under this scenario risk will increase and farmers will lose their ability to produce relatively stable yields with a minimum of external inputs under changing biophysical environments. The social impacts of local crop shortfalls, resulting from changes in the genetic integrity of local varieties due to genetic pollution, can be considerable in the margins of the Global South. Maintaining pools of genetic diversity, geographically isolated from any possibility of cross fertilization or genetic pollution from uniform transgenic crops will create “islands” of intact germplasm which will act as extant safeguards against potential ecological failure derived from the second green revolution increasingly being imposed with programs such as the Gates-Rockefeller AGRA in Africa. These genetic sanctuary islands will serve as the only source of GMO-free seeds that will be needed to repopulate the organic farms in the North inevitably contaminated by the advance of transgenic agriculture. The small farmers and indigenous communities of the Global South, with the help of scientists and NGOs, can continue to create and guard biological and genetic diversity that has enriched the food culture of the whole planet. 5. Small farms cool the climate While industrial agriculture contributes directly to climate change through no less than one third of total emissions of the major greenhouse gases — Carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), and nitrous oxide (N2O), small, biodiverse organic farms have the opposite effect by sequestering more carbon in soils. Small farmers usually treat their soils with organic compost materials that absorb and sequester carbon better than soils that are farmed with conventional fertilizers. Researchers have suggested that the conversion of 10,000 small- to medium-sized farms to organic production would store carbon in the soil equivalent to taking 1,174,400 cars off the road. Further climate amelioration contributions by small farms accrue from the fact that most use significantly less fossil fuel in comparison to conventional agriculture mainly due to a reduction of chemical fertilizer and pesticide use, relying instead on organic manures, legume-based rotations, and diversity schemes to enhance beneficial insects. Farmers who live in rural communities near cities and towns and are linked to local markets, avoid the energy wasted and the gas emissions associated with transporting food hundreds and even thousands of miles. Conclusions The great advantage of small farming systems is their high levels of agrobidoversity arranged in the form of variety mixtures, polycultures, crop-livestock combinations and/or agroforestry patterns. Modeling new agroecosystems using such diversified designs are extremely valuable to farmers whose systems are collapsing due to debt, pesticide use, transgenic treadmills, or climate change. Such diverse systems buffer against natural or human-induced variations in production conditions. There is much to learn from indigenous modes of production, as these systems have a strong ecological basis, maintain valuable genetic diversity, and lead to regeneration and preservation of biodiversity and natural resources. Traditional methods are particularly instructive because they provide a long-term perspective on successful agricultural management under conditions of climatic variability. Organized social rural movements in the Global South oppose industrial agriculture in all its manifestations, and increasingly their territories constitute isolated areas rich in unique agrobiodiversity, including genetically diverse material, therefore acting as extant safeguards against the potential ecological failure derived from inappropriate agricultural modernization schemes. It is precisely the ability to generate and maintain diverse crop genetic resources that offer “unique” niche possibilities to small farmers that cannot be replicated by farmers in the North who are condemned to uniform cultivars and to co-exist with GMOs. The “ cibo pulito, justo e buono” that Slow Food promotes, the Fair Trade coffee, bananas, and the organic products so much in demand by northern consumers can only be produced in the agroecological islands of the South. This “difference” inherent to traditional systems, can be strategically utilized to revitalize small farming communities by exploiting opportunities that exist for linking traditional agrobiodiversity with local/national/international markets, as long as these activities are justly compensated by the North and all the segments of the market remain under grassroots control. Consumers of the North can play a major role by supporting these more equitable markets which do not perpetuate the colonial model of “agriculture of the poor for the rich,” but rather a model that promotes small biodiverse farms as the basis for strong rural economies in the Global South. Such economies will not only provide sustainable production of healthy, agroecologically-produced, accessible food for all, but will allow indigenous peoples and small farmers to continue their millennial work of building and conserving the agricultural and natural biodiversity on which we all depend now and even more so in the future.

## Latin American relations WARMING

#### Latin American relations are key to solving warming, amazon deforestation and promoting alternative energy production

**Zedillo et al., former president of Mexico, 2008**

(Ernesto, “Rethinking U.S.–Latin American Relations A Hemispheric Partnership for a Turbulent World”, November, <http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/reports/2008/11/24%20latin%20america%20partnership/1124_latin_america_partnership.pdf>)

The link between carbon-intensive activities and changes in the world’s climate is now well established, and the consequences will be felt across the hemisphere. According to figure 2, if current human activity remains unchanged, the hemisphere will likely suffer from a variety of ecological shocks, including declines in agricultural yields, water shortages, the loss of animal and plant species, and more frequent and destructive storms in the Caribbean Basin. These extreme weather events could bring devastation to Central America, the Caribbean, and the southeastern United States, imposing a heavy human and material toll. As we know from recent storms, the costs of replacing homes, businesses, and infrastructure—along with the higher costs of energy if refineries and offshore rigs are damaged—will be vast. Hemispheric Solutions Addressingthe challenge of energy security will require making energy consumption more efficient and developing new energy sources, whereas addressing the challenge of climate change will require finding ways to control carbon emissions, helping the world shift away from carbon-intensive energy generation, and adapting to some aspects of changing ecosystems. Potential solutions to these problems exist in the Americas, but mobilizing them will require a sustained hemispheric partnership. Latin America has enormous potential to help meet the world’s growing thirst for energy, both in terms of hydrocarbons and alternative fuels.Latin America has about 10 percent of the world’s proven oil reserves. Venezuela accounts for most of these, though Brazil’s oil reserves could increase from 12 to 70 billon barrels if recent discoveries can be developed. Bolivia is an important producer of natural gas, Mexico has great potential in solar energy generation, and several countries in the region could potentially produce much more hydroelectric power. Brazil is a world leader in sugarcane-based ethanol production, and the United States is a leader in corn-based ethanol (figure 3). Solar and wind power, particularly in Central America and the Caribbean, remain underdeveloped. To expand the hemisphere’s energy capacity, massive infrastructure investments will be required. Major investments in oil production especially deep offshore), refining, and distribution will be needed to achieve the region’s potential. Developing the Tupi project in Brazil alone will cost $70–240 billion. Liquefied natural gas will become an important source of energy, but not before major investments are made in infrastructure to support liquefaction, regasification, transport, and security. U.S. and Canadian electricity networks, which are already highly integrated, can be further integrated with Mexico’s. Mexico also plans to connect its grid to those of Guatemala and Belize, eventually creating an integrated power market in Central America. Power integration in South America will demand even larger investments in generation, transmission, and distribution. Finally, reliance on nuclear power may grow because it is carbon free and does not require fossil fuel imports. However, efforts to expand energy capacity and integrate hemispheric energy markets face a variety of obstacles. Energy nationalism has led to disruptive disputes over pricing and ownership. Tensions and mistrust in South America have hindered regional cooperation and investment, particularly on natural gas. The security of the energy infrastructure, especially pipelines, remains a concern in Mexico and parts of South America. Gas, oil, and electricity subsidies distort patterns of production and consumption, and they are triggering protectionist behavior elsewhere. Technology on renewables remains underdeveloped, and research in this area can be better centralized and disseminated. Overcoming these obstacles will require high levels of cooperation among hemispheric partners. In addition to developing carbon-neutral sources of energy, the Western Hemisphere has other roles to play in combating climate change. The LAC region currently accounts for about 5 percent of annual global carbon emissions, and emissions per capita are still relatively low compared with other regions. However, minimizing the LAC region’s future carbon footprint will require new policies. Also, deforestation globally accounts for 20 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. The Amazon River Basin contains one of the world’s three most important rainforests, whose protection can therefore very significantly contribute to combating climate change. Brazil is pioneering the use of information technology to lessen deforestation in the Amazon.

#### Specifically key for a successful Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas

**Edwards, Brown University’s Center for Environmental Studies research fellow, 2011**

(Guy, “Climate, energy to dominate US-Latin American relations”, 7-18, http://www.trust.org/item/?map=climate-energy-to-dominate-us-latin-american-relations/)

With the challenges of climate change, clean energy, resource scarcityand green growth [are] set to dominate U.S.-Latin American relations, Valenzuela’s successor should have experience in these areas. These issuesare a [priority](http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/rm/2011/154105.htm) for the Obama administration and present lucrative opportunities for the U.S. to improvetrade and commercialrelations with Latin America at a time when the region is a magnet for investment in clean energy. In Chile, President Barack Obama spoke of the [urgency](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/21/remarks-president-obama-latin-america-santiago-chile) of tackling climate change and embracing a more secure and sustainable energy future in the Americas. TheEnergy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA), which aims to accelerate the deployment of clean energy and advance energy security, is an essential componentof hemispheric relations. Multiple U.S. agencies and departments are carrying out extensive work on climate change. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), which runs the Global Climate Change Initiative, [argues](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/climate/) that climate change is one of the century’s greatest challenges and will be a diplomatic and development priority. The U.S. Special Envoy for Climate Change, Todd[Stern](http://www.ecpamericas.org/files/events/Todd_Stern_20100416_eng.pdf), says that Latin America is a significant focus of funding with over $60 million spent in 2009-10 on climate-related bilateral assistance in the region. The U.S. military Southern Command [co-hosted](http://www.intercambioclimatico.com/en/2011/07/14/wp-content/uploads/Civil-Military-Collaboration-to-Address-Adaptation-to-Climate-Change-in-South-America.pdf) two events in Colombia and Peru focused on climate change concluding that the issue is a major security concern and as a result could be a powerful vehicle for U.S. military engagement in the region. This year the Union of South American Nations’ (UNASUR) Defense Council (CDS)[inaugurated](http://en.mercopress.com/2011/05/23/unasur-defence-strategic-studies-centre-opens-this-week-in-buenos-aires) the new Defense Strategic Studies Center (CEED), which will look at various challenges including the protection of strategic [energy](http://www.rpp.com.pe/2011-05-27-ministros-de-defensa-de-unasur-piden-proteger-recursos-estrategicos-noticia_369675.html) and food resources and adapting to [climatechange](http://www.google.com/hostednews/epa/article/ALeqM5jwR9CJoQuzRwgF3cGM48NV0LuyOA?docId=1538629). THE REGION’S RESOURCES Latin America and the Caribbean boast incredible and highly coveted natural resources including 25 percent of the planet’s arable land, 22 percent of its forest area, [and]31 percent of its freshwater, 10 percent of its oil, 4.6 percent of its natural gas, 2 percent of coal reserves and 40 percent of its copper and silver reserves. The International Energy Agency [forecasts](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/16/business/energy-environment/16oil.html?_r=2) that in the future world consumers are going to become more dependent on the Americas to satisfy their demand for oil with Brazil, Colombia, the U.S. and Canada set to meet the demand. Brazil will host the U.N. [Conference on Sustainable Development](http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/) in 2012 with the green economy theme topping the agenda. Peter [Hakim](http://www.thedialogue.org/page.cfm?pageID=32&pubID=2679), president emeritus of Inter-American Dialogue, argues that while U.S.-Brazilian relations are fraught, both countries need to work harder to improve cooperation. Climate change, clean energy, resource scarcity and green growth are key potential areas for U.S.-Brazilian relations. The launch of a[U.S](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/19/united-states-and-brazil-fact-sheets).[-BrazilianStrategicEnergyDialogue](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/19/united-states-and-brazil-fact-sheets), focusing on cooperation on biofuels and renewable energy, among other areas, is a productive start. Although Latin America and the Caribbean continue to be the largest U.S. export market, the U.S.’s share of the region’s imports and exports has [dropped](http://www.eclac.org/publicaciones/xml/4/42854/2011_195_Highlights_of_economics_and_trade_WEB.pdf)over the last few years. China is now the top destination for the [exports](http://www.eclac.cl/comercio/publicaciones/xml/4/43664/People_Republic_of_China_and_Latina_America_and_the_Caribbean_trade.pdf) of Argentina, Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Peru and Uruguay. Latin American exports to China are concentrated in raw materials, which account for nearly [60 percent](http://www.eclac.cl/comercio/publicaciones/xml/4/43664/People_Republic_of_China_and_Latina_America_and_the_Caribbean_trade.pdf), while exports to the U.S. are more diversified. THE RISE OF CHINA Arturo Valenzuela [says](http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/05/25/2236198/washington-says-its-not-scared.html)this makes Latin Americans better off trading with the U.S. because they can take advantage of greater technology in the value chain. However, crude oil remained the top [export](http://www.eclac.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/4/42854/P42854.xml&xsl=/comercio/tpl/p9f.xsl&base=/tpl/top-bottom.xsl) to the U.S. for Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Venezuela in the 2007-2009 time period. The U.S. may assert it has a superior trade model to China, but the U.N.’s economic commission for the region [argues](http://www.eclac.org/publicaciones/xml/4/42854/2011_195_Highlights_of_economics_and_trade_WEB.pdf)there is a perceived lack of strategic vision by the U.S. in Latin America. Although the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA) is the flagship U.S. initiative in the region and will be a key focus for President Obama at the 2012 Summit of the Americas, it is not yet comparable to past initiatives such as the 1960s-era [Alliance for Progress](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alliance_for_Progress).

#### That’s key to sustainable development

**Kammen, UC Berkeley energy professor, 2012**

(Daniel, “Building Bridges to a Sustainable Energy Future”, 12-5, http://www.greatenergychallengeblog.com/2012/12/05/building-bridges-to-a-sustainable-energy-future/

The Americas are undergoing a transitionin the energy sector that will have global geopolitical ramifications. At the same time as the United States is touted to become the world’s largest oil producer by 2020, and a net exporter by 2030, Brazil, Nicaragua, and Panama show the most promise in becoming regional hubs not only for clean energy investment, but for sustained low-carbon economic growth (see related story: “[U.S. to Overtake Saudi Arabia, Russia as World’s Top Energy Producer](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/energy/2012/11/121112-iea-us-saudi-oil/)“). Although Latin America and the Caribbean lag behind the United States and Canada in terms of implemented clean energy policy and project funding, 7 percent of the region’s total installed capacity today is renewables, and it is expected to grow faster in years to come. (See related interactive map: [“The Global Electricity Mix](http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/energy/great-energy-challenge/world-electricity-mix/)“) Faced with ever-changing economic and political realities, regional collaborations for knowledge-creation and -sharing are crucial for fostering lasting partnerships that can make ‘sustainability science’, well, sustainable.International partnerships that lead to concrete action are often the clearest signs of innovation. At the state to state level, the [Energy and Climate Partnership for the Americas](http://www.ecpamericas.org) (ECPA) and at the person-to-person level, the Fulbright [NEXUS](http://www.cies.org/nexus/) program provide clear evidence regional collaborations that are clearly changing the modes of engagement within the hemisphere. One of us just returned from a partnership-building ECPA sponsored trip to Nicaragua, facilitated by both the U. S. Embassy team and a local NGO, [blueEnergy](http://www.blueenergygroup.org/?lang=en), which is discussed below and [here](http://www.partnersoftheamericas.net/2012/08/senior-ecpa-fellow-returns-from.html), focused on community energy. Just two years after its launch by President Obama in 2009, ECPA has moved beyond its initial focus on knowledge sharing around cleaner and more efficient energy, and now also supports sustainable forest and land use initiatives as well as climate change adaptationstrategies. Governments and institutions such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), have all worked together to support regional technical workshops, business strategies, and other initiatives for new and cleaner ways to provide energy. ECPA has also become a vehicle for leaders in sustainability research and practice to work at the institutional level to link industry, university, and civil-society groups in the New World.

#### Amazon collapse risks extinction

**Takacs, California State Institute for Earth Systems Science and Policy environmental humanities instructor, 96**

(David, “The Idea of Biodiversity: Philosophies of Paradise,” 1996, pg. 200-201)

So biodiversity keeps the world running. It has value and of itself, as well as for us. Raven, Erwin, and Wilson oblige us to think about the value of biodiversity for our own lives. The Ehrlichs’ rivet-popper trope makes this same point; by eliminating rivets, we play Russian roulette with global ecology and human futures: “It is likely that destruction of the rich complex of species in the Amazon basin could trigger rapid changes in global climate patterns.Agriculture remains heavily dependent on stable climate, and human beings remain heavily dependent on food. By the end of the century the extinction of perhaps a million species in the Amazon basin could have entrained famines in which a billion human beings per­ished. And if our species is very unlucky, the famines could lead to a thermonuclear war, which could extinguish civilization.” 13 Elsewhere Ehrlich uses different particulars with no less drama: What then will happen if the current decimation of organic diversity continues? Crop yields will be more difficult to maintain in the face of climatic change, soil erosion, loss of dependable water supplies, decline of pollinators, and ever more serious assaults by pests. Conversion of productive land to wasteland will accelerate; deserts will continue their seemingly inexorable expansion. Air pollution will increase, and local climates will become harsher. Humanity will have to forgo many of the direct economic benefits it might have withdrawn from Earth's well­stocked genetic library. It might, for example, miss out on a cure for cancer; but that will make little difference. As ecosystem services falter, mortality from respiratory and epidemic disease, natural disasters, and especially famine will lower life expectancies to the point where can­cer (largely a disease of the elderly) will be unimportant.Humanity will bring upon itself consequences depressingly similar to those expected from anuclear winter. Barring a nuclear conflict, it appears that civili­zation will disappear some time before the end of the next century - not with a bang but a whimper.14

#### Newest and most rigorous studies conclude warming is anthropogenic – no alt causes

**Muller, University of California-Berkeley physics professor, 12**

(Richard A., former MacArthur Foundation fellow, "The Conversion of a Climate-Change Skeptic," 7-28-12, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/30/opinion/the-conversion-of-a-climate-change-skeptic.html?pagewanted=all)

Call me a converted skeptic. Three years ago I identified problems in previous climate studies that, in my mind, threw doubt on the very existence of global warming. Last year, **following an intensive research effort involving a dozen scientists, I concluded that global warming was real and that the prior estimates of the rate of warming were correct**. I’m now going a step further: **Humans are almost entirely the cause.** My total turnaround, in such a short time, is the result of careful and objective analysis by the Berkeley Earth Surface Temperature project, which I founded with my daughter Elizabeth. Our results show that the average temperature of the earth’s land has risen by two and a half degrees Fahrenheit over the past 250 years, including an increase of one and a half degrees over the most recent 50 years. Moreover, it appears likely that essentially all of this increase results from the human emission of greenhouse gases. **These findings are stronger than those of the I**ntergovernmental **P**anel on **C**limate **C**hange, the United Nations group that defines the scientific and diplomatic consensus on global warming. In its 2007 report, the I.P.C.C. concluded only that most of the warming of the prior 50 years could be attributed to humans. It was possible, according to the I.P.C.C. consensus statement, that the warming before 1956 could be because of changes in solar activity, and that even a substantial part of the more recent warming could be natural. Our Berkeley Earth approach used sophisticated statistical methods developed largely by our lead scientist, Robert Rohde, which allowed us to determine earth land temperature much further back in time. We carefully studied issues raised by skeptics: biases from urban heating (we duplicated our results using rural data alone), from data selection (prior groups selected fewer than 20 percent of the available temperature stations; we used virtually 100 percent), from poor station quality (we separately analyzed good stations and poor ones) and from human intervention and data adjustment (our work is completely automated and hands-off). In our papers we demonstrate that none of these potentially troublesome effects unduly biased our conclusions. The historic temperature pattern we observed has abrupt dips that match the emissions of known explosive volcanic eruptions; the particulates from such events reflect sunlight, make for beautiful sunsets and cool the earth’s surface for a few years. There are small, rapid variations attributable to El Niño and other ocean currents such as the Gulf Stream; because of such oscillations, the “flattening” of the recent temperature rise that some people claim is not, in our view, statistically significant. What has caused the gradual but systematic rise of two and a half degrees? We tried fitting the shape to simple math functions (exponentials, polynomials), to solar activity and even to rising functions like world population. By far the best match was to the record of atmospheric carbon dioxide, measured from atmospheric samples and air trapped in polar ice. Just as important, our record is long enough that we could search for the fingerprint of solar variability, based on the historical record of sunspots. That fingerprint is absent. Although the I.P.C.C. allowed for the possibility that variations in sunlight could have ended the “Little Ice Age,” a period of cooling from the 14th century to about 1850, our data argues strongly that the temperature rise of the past 250 years cannot be attributed to solar changes. This conclusion is, in retrospect, not too surprising; we’ve learned from satellite measurements that solar activity changes the brightness of the sun very little. How definite is the attribution to humans? The carbon dioxide curve gives a better match than anything else we’ve tried. Its magnitude is consistent with the calculated greenhouse effect — extra warming from trapped heat radiation. These facts don’t prove causality and they shouldn’t end skepticism, but they raise the bar: to be considered seriously, an alternative explanation must match the data at least as well as carbon dioxide does. Adding methane, a second greenhouse gas, to our analysis doesn’t change the results. Moreover, our analysis does not depend on large, complex global climate models, the huge computer programs that are notorious for their hidden assumptions and adjustable parameters. Our result is based simply on the close agreement between the shape of the observed temperature rise and the known greenhouse gas increase. It’s a scientist’s duty to be properly skeptical. I still find that much, if not most, of what is attributed to climate change is speculative, exaggerated or just plain wrong. I’ve analyzed some of the most alarmist claims, and my skepticism about them hasn’t changed. Hurricane Katrina cannot be attributed to global warming. The number of hurricanes hitting the United States has been going down, not up; likewise for intense tornadoes. Polar bears aren’t dying from receding ice, and the Himalayan glaciers aren’t going to melt by 2035. And it’s possible that we are currently no warmer than we were a thousand years ago, during the “Medieval Warm Period” or “Medieval Optimum,” an interval of warm conditions known from historical records and indirect evidence like tree rings. And the recent warm spell in the United States happens to be more than offset by cooling elsewhere in the world, so its link to “global” warming is weaker than tenuous. The careful analysis by our team is laid out in five scientific papers now online at BerkeleyEarth.org. That site also shows our chart of temperature from 1753 to the present, with its clear fingerprint of volcanoes and carbon dioxide, but containing no component that matches solar activity. Four of**our papers have undergone extensive scrutiny by the scientific community**, and the newest, a paper with the analysis of the human component, is now posted, along with the data and computer programs used. Such transparency is the heart of the scientific method; if you find our conclusions implausible, tell us of any errors of data or analysis. What about the future? As carbon dioxide emissions increase, the temperature should continue to rise. I expect the rate of warming to proceed at a steady pace, about one and a half degrees over land in the next 50 years, less if the oceans are included. But if China continues its rapid economic growth (it has averaged 10 percent per year over the last 20 years) and its vast use of coal (it typically adds one new gigawatt per month),then that same warming could take place in less than 20 years. Science is that narrow realm of knowledge that, in principle, is universally accepted. I embarked on this analysis to answer questions that, to my mind, had not been answered. I hope that the Berkeley Earth analysis will help settle the scientific debate regarding global warming and its human causes. Then comes the difficult part: agreeing across the political and diplomatic spectrum about what can and should be done.

#### Failure to solve warming causes extinction – geological history proves

**Bushnell, NASA Langley Research Center chief scientist, 10**

(Dennis M. has a MS in mechanical engineering, won the Lawrence A. Sperry Award, AIAA Fluid and Plasma Dynamics Award, the AIAA Dryden Lectureship, and is the recipient of many NASA Medals for outstanding Scientific Achievement and Leadership, "Conquering Climate Change," The Futurist 44. 3, May/Jun 2010, ProQuest)

Unless we act, the next century could see increases in species extinction, disease, and floods affecting one-third of human population. But the tools for preventing this scenario are in our hands.Carbon-dioxide levels are now greater than at any time in the past 650,000 years, according to data gathered from examining ice cores. These increases in CO2 correspond to estimates of man-made uses of fossil carbon fuels such as coal, petroleum, and natural gas. The global climate computations, as reported by the ongoing Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) studies, indicate that such man-made CO2 sources could be responsible for observed climate changes such as temperature increases, loss of ice coverage, and ocean acidification. Admittedly, the less than satisfactory state of knowledge regarding the effects of aerosol and other issues make the global climate computations less than fully accurate, but we must take this issue very seriously. I believe we should act in accordance with the precautionary principle: When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures become obligatory, even if some cause-and-effect relationships are not fully established scientifically. As paleontologist Peter Ward discussed in his book Under a Green Sky, several "warming events" have radically altered the life on this planet throughout geologic history. **Among the most significant** of these **was the Permian extinction**, which took place some 250 million years ago. **This event resulted in a decimation of animal life**, **leading many scientists to refer to it as the Great Dying**. The Permian extinction is thought to have been caused by a sudden increase in CO2 from Siberian volcanoes. **The amount of CO2 we're releasing** into the atmosphere **today**, through human activity, **is 100 times greater than what came out of those volcanoes**. **During the Permian extinction**, a number of chain reaction events, or "**positive feedbacks**," **resulted in oxygen-depleted oceans**, **enabling overgrowth of**certain**bacteria**, **producing** copious amounts of **hydrogen sulfide, making the atmosphere toxic, and decimating the ozone layer**, **all producing species die-off**. The positive feedbacks not yet fully included in the IPCC projections include the release of the massive amounts of fossil methane, some 20 times worse than CO2 as an accelerator of warming, fossil CO2 from the tundra and oceans, reduced oceanic CO2 uptake due to higher temperatures, acidification and algae changes, changes in the earth's ability to reflect the sun's light back into space due to loss of glacier ice, changes in land use, and extensive water evaporation (a greenhouse gas) from temperature increases. The additional effects of **these feedbacks increase the projections**from a 4°C-6°C temperature rise by 2100 **to a 10°C**-12°C **rise**, according to some estimates. At those temperatures, beyond 2100, essentially all the ice would melt and the ocean would rise by as much as 75 meters, flooding the homes of one-third of the global population. Between now and then, ocean methane hydrate release could cause major tidal waves, and glacier melting could affect major rivers upon which a large percentage of the population depends. We'll see increases in flooding, storms, disease, droughts, species extinctions, ocean acidification, and a litany of other impacts, all as a consequence of man-made climate change. Arctic ice melting, CO2 increases, and ocean warming are all occurring much faster than previous IPCC forecasts, so, as dire as the forecasts sound, they're actually conservative.

## Leadership REGIONAL BLOCS

#### Pragmatic cooperation with non-democratic regimes is key to sustain multilateralism.

**Kupchan, Georgetown international affairs professor, 2012**

(Charles, “No One's World: The West, the Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn”, google books)

Although Western hegemony is in its waning days, it still provides a significant level of global stability. Teamwork between the United States and the EU continues to represent the world's most important partnership. The EU's aggregate wealth rivals America's, and the U.S. economy will remain number one into the next decade. The American military will maintain its primacy well beyond the next decade, and Washington's diplomatic clout will be second to none for the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, the stability afforded by Western predominance will slip away in step with its material and ideological primacy. Accordingly, the West must work with emerging powers to take advantage of the current window of opportunity to map out the rules that will govern the next world. Otherwise, multipolarity coupled with ideological dissensus will ensure balance-of-power competition and unfettered jockeying for power, position, and prestige. It is far preferable to arrive at a new rules-based order by design rather than head toward a new anarchy by default. The goal should be to forge a consensus among major states about the foundational principles of the next world. The West will have to be ready for compromise; the rules must be acceptable to powers that adhere to very different conceptions of what constitutes a just and acceptable order. The political diversity that will characterize the next world suggests that aiming low and crafting a rules-based order that endures is wiser than aiming high and coming away empty-handed. What follows is a sketch of what the rules of the next order might look like—a set of principles on which the West and the rising rest may well be able to find common ground. Defining Legitimacy Under American leadership, the West has propagated a conception of order that equates political legitimacy with liberal democracy. If a new rules-based order is to emerge, the West will have to embrace political diversity rather than insist that liberal democracy is the only legitimate form of government. To be sure, nondemocracies currently have their say in global institutions, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the G-20. But even as the West does business with autocracies in these and other settings, it also delegitimates them in word and action. The United States leads the charge on this front. In his second inaugural address, George W. Bush stated that, "America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one.... So it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture." Although of different political stripes, Barack Obama told the UN General Assembly in 2010 that "experience shows us that history is on the side of liberty; that the strongest foundation for human progress lies in open economies, open societies, and open governments. To put it simply, democracy, more than any other form of government, delivers for our citizens."- Obama also made clear his commitment to democracy promotion in outlining the U.S. response to the Arab Spring: The United States supports a set of universal rights. And these rights include free speech, the freedom of peaceful assembly, the freedom of religion, equality for men and women under the rule of law, and the right to choose your own leaders.... Our support for these principles is not a secondary interest... it is a top priority that must be translated into concrete actions, and supported by all of the diplomatic, economic and strategic tools at our disposal.2 Europe generally shares this outlook. Catherine Ashton, the EU's foreign policy chief, declared in 2010 that, "democracy, human rights, security, governance and sustainable development are intrinsically linked. Democratic principles have their roots in universal norms and values."- Such statements affirm Robert Kagan's observation that elites in the West "have operated on the ideological conviction that liberal democracy is the only legitimate form of government and that other forms of government are not only illegitimate but transitory.'' This stance is morally compelling and consistent with values deeply held among the Atlantic democracies. But the equation of legitimacy with democracy undermines the West's influence among emerging powers. Even countries like Brazil and India, both of which are stable democracies, tend to view the West's obsession with democracy promotion as little more than uninvited meddling in the affairs of others. The backlash is of course considerably harsher in autocracies such as China and Russia, which regularly warn the United States and the EU to stay out of the domestic affairs of other countries. In Putin's words, "We are all perfectly aware of the realities of domestic political life. I do not think it is really necessary to explain anything to anybody. We are not going to interfere in domestic politics, just as we do not think that they should prevent practical relations ... from developing. Domestic politics are domestic politics." For the West to speak out against political repression and overt violations of the rule of law is not only warranted but obligatory. But to predicate constructive relations with rising powers on their readiness to embrace a Western notion of legitimacy is another matter altogether. Senator John McCain is off course in insisting that "It is the democracies of the world that will provide the pillars upon which we can and must build an enduring peace."— On the contrary, only if the West works cooperatively with all regimes willing to reciprocate—democracies and nondemocracies alike—will it be able to build an enduring peace. Terrorism, nuclear proliferation, climate change, energy security, water and food security, financial crisis—these challenges are global in nature and can be effectively addressed only in partnership with a wide array of countries. It makes little sense for the West to denigrate and ostracize regimes whose cooperation it needs to fashion a secure new order; the stakes are too high. Western countries only harm their own interests when they label as illegitimate governments that are not liberal democracies. Recognizing the next world's inevitable political diversity and thereby consolidating cooperation with rising powers of diverse regime type is far more sensible than insisting on the universality of Western conceptions of legitimacy—and alienating potential partners. The West and rising rest must arrive at a new, more inclusive, notion of legitimacy if they are to agree on an ideological foundation for the next world.

#### That cooperation is key to planetary survival

**Masciulli, St. Thomas political science professor, 2011**

(Joseph, “The Governance Challenge for Global Political and Technoscientific Leaders in an Era of Globalization and Globalizing Technologies”, Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society, February, ebsco)

What is most to be feared is enhanced global disorder resulting from the combination of weak global regulations; the unforeseen destructive consequences of converging technologies and economic globalization; military competition among the great powers; and the prevalent biases of short-term thinking held by most leaders and elites. But no practical person would wish that such a disorder scenario come true, given all the weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) available now or which will surely become available in the foreseeable future. As converging technologies united by IT, cognitive science, nanotechnology, and robotics advance synergistically in monitored and unmonitored laboratories, we may be blindsided by these future developments brought about by technoscientists with a variety of good or destructive or mercenary motives. The current laudable but problematic openness about publishing scientific results on the Internet would contribute greatly to such negative outcomes. To be sure, if the global disorder-emergency scenario occurred because of postmodern terrorism or rogue states using biological, chemical, or nuclear WMDs, or a regional war with nuclear weapons in the Middle East or South Asia, there might well be a positive result for global governance. Such a global emergency might unite the global great and major powers in the conviction that a global concert was necessary for their survival and planetary survival as well. In such a global great power concert, basic rules of economic, security, and legal order would be uncompromisingly enforced both globally and in the particular regions where they held hegemonic status. That concert scenario, however, is flawed by the limited legitimacy of its structure based on the members having the greatest hard and soft power on planet Earth. At the base of our concerns, I would argue, are human proclivities for narrow, short-term thinking tied to individual self-interest or corporate and national interests in decision making. For globalization, though propelled by technologies of various kinds, “remains an essentially human phenomenon . . . and the main drivers for the establishment and uses of disseminative systems are hardy perennials: profit, convenience, greed, relative advantage, curiosity, demonstrations of prowess, ideological fervor, malign destructiveness.” These human drives and capacities will not disappear. Their “manifestations now extend considerably beyond more familiarly empowered governmental, technoscientific and corporate actors to include even individuals: terrorists, computer hackers and rogue market traders” (Whitman, 2005, p. 104). In this dangerous world, if people are to have their human dignity recognized and enjoy their human rights, above all, to life, security, a healthy environment, and freedom, we need new forms of comprehensive global regulation and control. Such effective global leadership and governance with robust enforcement powers alone can adequately respond to destructive current global problems, and prevent new ones. However, successful human adaptation and innovation to our current complex environment through the social construction of effective global governance will be a daunting collective task for global political and technoscientific leaders and citizens. For our global society is caught in “the whirlpool of an accelerating process of modernization” that has for the most part “been left to its own devices” (Habermas, 2001, p. 112). We need to progress in human adaptation to and innovation for our complex and problematical global social and natural planetary environments through global governance. I suggest we need to begin by ending the prevalent biases of short-termism in thinking and acting and the false values attached to the narrow self-interest of individuals, corporations, and states. I agree with Stephen Hawking that the long-term future of the human race must be in space. It will be difficult enough to avoid disaster on planet Earth in the next hundred years, let alone the next thousand, or million. . . . There have been a number of times in the past when its survival has been a question of touch and go. The Cuban missile crisis in 1962 was one of these. The frequency of such occasions is likely to increase in the future. We shall need great care and judgment to negotiate them all successfully. But I’m an optimist. If we can avoid disaster for the next two centuries, our species should be safe, as we spread into space. . . . But we are entering an increasingly dangerous period of our history. Our population and our use of the finite resources of planet Earth, are growing exponentially, along with our technical ability to change the environment for good or ill. But our genetic code still carries the selfish and aggressive instincts that were of survival advantage in the past. . . . Our only chance of long term survival is not to remain inward looking on planet Earth, but to spread out into space. We have made remarkable progress in the last hundred years. But if we want to continue beyond the next hundred years, our future is in space.” (Hawking, 2010) Nonetheless, to reinvent humanity pluralistically in outer space and beyond will require securing our one and only global society and planet Earth through effective global governance in the foreseeable future. And our dilemma is that the enforcement powers of multilateral institutions are not likely to be strengthened because of the competition for greater (relative, not absolute) hard and soft power by the great and major powers. They seek their national or alliance superiority, or at least, parity, for the sake of their state’s survival and security now. Unless the global disorder-emergency scenario was to occur soon—God forbid—the great powers will most likely, recklessly and tragically, leave global survival and security to their longer term agendas.

#### Plan is key to send a signal that the US doesn’t impose its values on other regimes-key to reverse Bush era perception

**Colvin, New Ideas Fund fellow, 2008**

(Jake, “The Case for a New Cuba Policy”, 12-23, http://web.archive.org/web/20120904201743/http://www.newideasfund.org/proposals/Colvin%20-%20Cuba%20-%20Master.pdf)

A signal to the world Beyond the domestic political benefit of acknowledging a changing Cuban American community, a new approach to Cuba would send an important signal to the world. While complex foreign policy issues from Darfur to Iraq will take years to resolve in cooperation with the international community, with respect to Cuba it would be relatively easy to demonstrate clear, progressive change immediately through a simple Federal Register notice and a new diplomatic approach. Even small changes to policy and rhetoric would send a strong message to U.S. allies, particularly in Europe and the Western Hemisphere, who will be looking for early signs from the next administration. The United States‘ reputation in the world has slid dramatically over the past eight years. Large majorities in key allies such as Canada (77 percent), France (75 percent), Mexico (66 percent), and the United Kingdom (67 percent) say that their opinion of the United States has gotten worse since the start of the Bush presidency. Less than one-half of respondents in Canada and the United Kingdom think that the relationship with the United States is a friendship.40 A troubling number think that Bush and the U.S. presence in Iraq are greater threats to world peace than Kim Jong-Il and the Iranian nuclear program, and view Beijing more favorably than Washington.41 In order for the United States to improve its image in the world, the next president will have to offer new policies that demonstrate a commitment to working with allies and a pragmatic, engagement-oriented approach to foreign policy challenges. Cuba policy offers this opportunity. Embargo politics have kept the United States from pursuing easily attainable changes to policy. With the stroke of a pen, the next president could unilaterally demonstrate that he is willing to try a different approach by allowing greater freedom of travel for U.S. citizens to Cuba. A diplomatic approach to Cuba would signal that the president is willing to pursue peaceful solutions to difficult problems, even if those initial efforts do not bear fruit immediately. Multilaterally, overtures to U.S. allies to promote rule of law, economic development, and human rights in Cuba would be a welcome change from the unproductive criticism that has become the hallmark of recent U.S. policy. Compared with difficult challenges such as stabilizing Afghanistan or containing Iran, Cuba is an easy place to showcase change. ―The next administration needs to have an early win,‖ says former Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Peter Romero. 42 Romero, who was a key player in the Clinton administration‘s second-term efforts to increase people-topeople exchanges, adds, ―We‘ve been on a losing streak for so long, something that breaks the paradigm and shows bold strokes would have an enormous impact. I think you can do that with Cuba.‖

#### The embargo is the largest impediment to US legitimacy-signals hostilities and aggression instead of responsibility

**Safran, NYU global affairs masters, 2012**

(Brian, “End the Cuban Embargo”, 8-14, http://brian-safran-4.quora.com/End-the-Cuban-Embargo-Brian-Safran)

The continuance of the embargo has incited widespread international condemnation of the Untied States.The United Nations General Assembly has consistently denounced the imposition of the embargo almost unanimously on the basis of its illegitimacy and violation of internationally accepted humanitarian standards. (Herrera, 2003, 50) The United States has also recently had to relinquish its seats on the human rights commissions both in the United Nations and in the Organization of American States, which many analysts believe to be a form of retribution aimed at the United States in response to its continuation of the Cuban embargo in the midst of its unfathomable and deplorable effects on the Cuban populace. (Weinmann, 2004, 30) Many leaders in the international community have expressed their distain for the U.S. embargo through international organizations based on the fact that the United States attempts to impose the sanctions it places on Cuba via “extraterritoriality,” or against the international community, thus clearly violating internationally-accepted standards of national sovereignty and international law (Herrera, 2003, 51). Global public opinion perceives the United States as engaging in strong economic and political tacticssuch as the Cuban embargo in an effort to further its own world domination. This sentiment serves to divert attention from the evils of Cuban communism, and instead focus international pressure on the United States; serving to render the existing embargo less effective. Some say that the United States would stand to lose its credibility if it were to put an end to the embargo without its having accomplished its goals in totality. However, the anti-U.S. sentiment on a global scale derived from its continuation is of much greater detriment to U.S. interests than the short-term loss in credibility it may experience by reorganizing its policy. Although in a prior historical era the Cuban embargo and its intended goals might have been seen by the international community as justifiable, the U.S. intervention in Cuba has now come to symbolize the domineering and intolerant methodology that it fosters in many of its international engagements. In addition, U.S. public opinion appears to be shifting in favor of eliminating the embargo. By virtue of its geography, influence in national elections, near even split in terms of ideological composition, and preponderance of Cuban-Americans living within its borders, U.S.-Cuban policy is often procured by considering the views of the now anti-embargo Floridian constituency (Schechner, 7, 1994). Traditionally, Cuban-Americans living in Florida have tended to support the embargo, seeing it as a way to force democracy upon Cuba so as to make the Cuban government more responsive to the demands of the Cuban people, and by extension, their own interests abroad. (Schechner, 1994, 7) In recent years however, many have begun to view the embargo as a failure of foreign policy. In addition, the U.S. government has placed numerous restrictions upon them, prohibiting them from visiting their families in Cuba more than once every three years, and decreasing the amount of remittance that they are entitled to provide for their Cuban relatives. (Lovato, 2004, 23) Based in part upon changing public opinion, the U.S. Congress has enacted numerous measures to decrease the extent of the Cuban embargo, including the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, which allowed for limited sales of U.S. agricultural products and medical supplies. (Griswold, 2005, 2) In 2003, both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate passed measures designed to prevent the U.S. treasury from providing the funding necessary to enforce the ban on Cuban travel. (Weinmann, 2004, 28) Even within the Bush administration, many senior officials remain highly divided on how to best confront Cuban politics. (Weinmann, 2004, 25) Thus, many U.S. citizens and politicians believe the Cuban embargo to be unfounded and unnecessary in the contemporary world.

#### Legitimacy of U.S. hegemony’s key to global stability-prevents great power war

**Fujimoto, US Army Lt. Colonel, 2012**

(Kevin, “Preserving U.S. National Security Interests Through a Liberal World Construct”, 1-11, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/index.cfm/articles/Preserving-US-National-Security-Interests-Liberal-World-Construct/2012/1/11>)

The emergence of peer competitors, not terrorism, presents the greatest long-term threat to our national security. Over the past decade, while the United States concentrated its geopolitical focus on fighting two land wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, China has quietly begun implementing a strategy to emerge as thedominant imperial power within Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean. Within the next 2 decades, China will likely replace the United States as the Asia-Pacific regional hegemonic power, if not replace us as the global superpower.1 Although China presents its rise as peaceful and non-hegemonic, its construction of naval bases in neighboring countries and military expansion in the region contradict that argument. With a credible threat to its leading position in a unipolar global order, the United States should adopt a grand strategy of “investment,” building legitimacy and capacity in the very institutions that will protect our interests in a liberal global construct of the future when we are no longer the dominant imperial power. Similar to the Clinton era's grand strategy of “enlargement,”2 investment supports a world order predicated upon a system of basic rules and principles, however, it differs in that the United States should concentrate on the institutions (i.e., United Nations, World Trade Organization, ASEAN, alliances, etc.) that support a world order, as opposed to expanding democracy as a system of governance for other sovereign nations. Despite its claims of a benevolent expansion, China isalready executing a strategy of expansion similar to that of Imperial Japan's Manchukuo policy during the 1930s.3 This three-part strategy involves: “(i) (providing) significant investments in economic infrastructure for extracting natural resources; (ii) (conducting) military interventions (to) protect economic interests; and, (iii) . . . (annexing) via installation of puppet governments.”4 China has already solidified its control over neighboring North Korea and Burma, and has similarly begun more ambitious engagements in Africa and Central Asia where it seeks to expand its frontier.5 Noted political scientist Samuel P. Huntington provides further analysis of the motives behind China's imperial aspirations. He contends that “China (has) historically conceived itself as encompassing a “‘Sinic Zone'. . . (with) two goals: to become the champion of Chinese culture . . . and to resume its historical position, which it lost in the nineteenth century, as the hegemonic power in East Asia.”6 Furthermore, China holds one quarter of the world's population, and rapid economic growth will increase its demand for natural resources from outside its borders as its people seek a standard of living comparable to that of Western civilization. The rise of peer competitors has historicallyresulted inregional instability and one should compare “the emergence of China to the rise of. . . Germany as the dominant power in Europe in the late nineteenth century.”7 Furthermore, the rise of another peer competitor on the level of the Soviet Union of the Cold War ultimately threatens U.S. global influence, challenging its concepts of human rights, liberalism, and democracy; as well as its ability to co-opt other nations to accept them.8 This decline in influence, while initially limited to the Asia-Pacific region, threatens to result insignificant conflictif it ultimately leads to a paradigm shift in the ideas and principles that govern the existing world order. A grand strategy of investment to address the threat of China requires investing in institutions, addressing ungoverned states, and building legitimacy through multilateralism. The United States must build capacity in the existing institutions and alliances accepted globally as legitimate representative bodies of the world's governments. For true legitimacy, the United States must support these institutions, not only when convenient, in order to avoid the appearance of unilateralism, which would ultimately undermine the very organizations upon whom it will rely when it is no longer the global hegemon. The United States must also address ungoverned states, not only as breeding grounds for terrorism, but as conflicts that threaten to spread into regional instability, thereby drawing in superpowers with competing interests. Huntington proposes that the greatest source of conflict will come from what he defines as one “core” nation's involvement in a conflict between another core nation and a minor state within its immediate sphere of influence.9 For example, regional instability in South Asia10 threatens to involve combatants from the United States, India, China, and the surrounding nations. Appropriately, the United States, as a global power, must apply all elements of its national power now to address the problem of weak and failing states, which threaten to serve as theprincipal catalysts of future global conflicts.11 Admittedly, the application of American power in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation raises issues. Experts have posed the question of whether the United States should act as the world's enforcer of stability, imposing its concepts of human rights on other states. In response to this concern, The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty authored a study titled, The Responsibility to Protect,12 calling for revisions to the understanding of sovereignty within the United Nations (UN) charter. This commission places the responsibility to protect peoples of sovereign nations on both the state itself and, more importantly, on the international community.13 If approved, this revision will establish a precedent whereby the United States has not only the authority and responsibility to act within the internal affairs of a repressive government, but does so with global legitimacy if done under the auspices of a UN mandate. Any effort to legitimize and support a liberal world construct requiresthe United Statesto adopt a multilateral doctrine which avoids the precepts of the previous administration: “preemptive war, democratization, and U.S. primacy of unilateralism,”14 which have resulted in the alienation of former allies worldwide. Predominantly Muslim nations, whose citizens had previously looked to the United States as an example of representative governance, viewed the Iraq invasion as the seminal dividing action between the Western and the Islamic world. Appropriately, any future American interventions into the internal affairs of another sovereign nation must first seek to establish consensus by gaining the approval of a body representing global opinion, and must reject military unilateralism as a threat to that governing body's legitimacy. Despite the long-standing U.S. tradition of a liberal foreign policy since the start of the Cold War, the famous liberal leviathan, John Ikenberry, argues that “the post-9/11 doctrine of national security strategy . . . has been based on . . . American global dominance, the preventative use of force, coalitions of the willing, and the struggle between liberty and evil.”15 American foreign policy has misguidedly focused on spreading democracy, as opposed to building a liberal international order based on universally accepted principles that actually set the conditions for individual nation states to select their own system of governance. Anne-Marie Slaughter, the former Dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, argues that true Wilsonian idealists “support liberal democracy, but reject the possibility of democratizing peoples . . .”16 and reject military primacy in favor of supporting a rules-based system of order. Investment in a liberal world order would also set the conditions for the United States togarner support from noncommitted regional powers (i.e., Russia, India, Japan, etc.), or “swing civilizations,” incountering China's increasing hegemonic influence.17 These states reside within close proximity to the Indian Ocean, which will likely emerge as the geopolitical focus of the American foreign policy during the 21st century, and appropriately have the ability tooffset China's imperial dominance in the region.18 Critics of a liberal world construct argue that idealism is not necessary, based on the assumption that nations that trade together will not go to war with each other.19 In response, foreign affairs columnist Thomas L. Friedman rebukes their arguments, acknowledging the predicate of commercial interdependence as a factor only in the decision to go to war, and argues that while globalization is creating a new international order, differences between civilizations still create friction that may overcome all other factors and lead to conflict.20 Detractors also warn that as China grows in power, it will no longer observe “the basic rules and principles of a liberal international order,” which largely result from Western concepts of foreign relations. Ikenberry addresses this risk, citing that China's leaders already recognize that they will gain more authority within the existing liberal order, as opposed to contesting it. China's leaders “want the protection and rights that come from the international order's . . . defense of sovereignty,”21 from which they have benefitted during their recent history of economic growth and international expansion. Even if China executes a peaceful rise and the United States overestimates a Sinic threat to its national security interest, the emergence of a new imperial power will challenge American leadership in the Indian Ocean and Asia-Pacific region. That being said, it is more likely that China, as evidenced by its military and economic expansion, will displace the United States as the regional hegemonic power. Recognizing this threat now, the United States must prepare for the eventual transition and immediately begin building the legitimacyand support of a system of rules that will protect its interests later when we are no longer the world's only superpower.

#### The alternative is regional blocs and great power war

**Zhang et al., Carnegie Endowment researcher, 2011**

(Yuhan, “America’s decline: A harbinger of conflict and rivalry”, 1-22, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/01/22/americas-decline-a-harbinger-of-conflict-and-rivalry/>)

This does not necessarily mean that the US is in systemic decline, but it encompasses a trend that appears to be negative and perhaps alarming. Although the US still possesses incomparable military prowess and its economy remains the world’s largest, the once seemingly indomitable chasm that separated America from anyone else is narrowing. Thus, the global distribution of power is shifting, and the inevitable result will be a world that is less peaceful, liberal and prosperous, burdened by a dearth of effective conflict regulation.Over the past two decades, no other state has had the ability to seriously challenge the US military. Under these circumstances, motivated by both opportunity and fear, many actors have bandwagoned with US hegemony and accepted a subordinate role. Canada, most of Western Europe, India, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Singapore and the Philippines have all joined the US, creating a status quo that has tended to mute great power conflicts. However, as the hegemony that drew these powers together withers, so will the pulling power behind the US alliance. The result will be an international order where power is more diffuse, American interests and influence can be more readily challenged, and conflicts or wars may be harder to avoid.As history attests, power decline and redistribution result in military confrontation. For example, in the late 19th century America’s emergence as a regional power saw it launch its first overseas war of conquest towards Spain. By the turn of the 20th century, accompanying the increase in US power and waning of British power, the American Navy had begun to challenge the notion that Britain ‘rules the waves.’ Such a notion would eventually see the US attain the status of sole guardians of the Western Hemisphere’s security to become the order-creating Leviathan shaping the international system with democracy and rule of law. Defining this US-centred system are three key characteristics: enforcement of property rights, constraints on the actions of powerful individuals and groups and some degree of equal opportunities for broad segments of society. As a result of such political stability, free markets, liberal trade and flexible financial mechanisms have appeared. And, with this, many countries have sought opportunities to enter this system, proliferating stable and cooperative relations.However, what will happen to these advances as America’s influence declines? Given that America’s authority, although sullied at times, has benefited people across much of Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, as well as parts of Africa and, quite extensively, Asia, the answer to this question could affect global society in a profoundly detrimental way. Public imagination and academia have anticipated that a post-hegemonic world would return to the problems of the 1930s: regional blocs, trade conflicts and strategic rivalry. Furthermore, multilateral institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank or the WTO might give way to regional organisations.For example, Europe and East Asia would each step forward to fill the vacuum left by Washington’s withering leadership to pursue their own visions of regional political and economic orders. Free markets would become more politicised — and, well, less free — and major powers would compete for supremacy.Additionally, such power plays have historically possessed a zero-sum element. In the late 1960s and 1970s, US economic power declined relative to the rise of the Japanese and Western European economies, with the US dollar also becoming less attractive. And, as American power eroded, so did international regimes (such as the Bretton Woods System in 1973). A world without American hegemony is one where great power wars re-emerge, the liberal international system is supplanted by an authoritarian one, and trade protectionism devolves into restrictive, anti-globalisation barriers. This, at least, is one possibility we can forecast in a future that will inevitably be devoid of unrivalled US primacy.

## Plan Text

#### The United States federal government should establish normal trade relations with the Republic of Cuba.

## Solvency

#### Establishing normal trade relations is key to two way trade

**French, Lexington Institute, 2009**

(Anya, “Options for Engagement A Resource Guide for Reforming U.S. Policy toward Cuba”, April, <http://www.lexingtoninstitute.org/library/resources/documents/Cuba/USPolicy/options-for-engagement.pdf>)

If the United States were to lift its trade embargo against Cuba, this would not automatically confer “normal” status to the bilateral trade relationship. It would mean that the United States and Cuba have the opportunity to begin trading in more goods and services than they have in the last fifty years. Whether much expanded trade actually occurs depends on whether the United States were to take additional steps beyond lifting the embargo: the most important of which is the provision of Normal Trade Relations (NTR). NTR is a technical term which refers to the provision of nondiscriminatory treatment toward trading partners. Cuba and North Korea are the only two countries to which the United States continues to deny “normal trade relations.” All other countries either have permanent normal trade relations or temporary, renewable normal trade relations with the United States.161 Assuming that the Cuba-specific trade sanctions contained in the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (the continuity of which was codified by the 1996 Helms-Burton Act) were to be eliminated, achieving normal trade relations between Cuba and the United States would not be a simple matter. A first stumbling block could be the 1974 Trade Act provision dubbed “Jackson-Vanik,” which prohibits non-market economy countries from receiving normal tariff treatment, entering into a bilateral commercial agreement, or receiving any U.S. government credits or loan guarantees, until the President has reported to Congress that such a country does not: 1) deny its citizens the right to emigrate, 2) impose an unreasonable tax or fine for emigrating, and 3) impose more than a “nominal tax, levy, fine, fee or other charge on any citizen as a consequence of the desire of such citizen to emigrate to the country of his choice.”162 Thus, Cuba’s restrictions on its citizens’ emigration rights pose an obstacle to normalization of bilateral trade. Only once the requirements set forth by the Jackson-Vanik amendment have been met, (and absent any other Cuba-specific sanctions, such as the Export Administration Act controls on countries found to be supporting international terrorism), could the United States begin negotiations of a bilateral commercial agreement with Cuba. To begin to extend normal trade relations to Cuba, the United States would need to enter into a reciprocal trade agreement with Cuba (not equivalent to a “free trade agreement”) that would provide a balance of trade benefits and protections to U.S. exports and commercial entities doing business with Cuba, at the same time it would provide such benefits to Cuba. Such an agreement would need to include protection for U.S. patents and trademarks and for “industrial rights and processes,” include a safeguard mechanism to prevent market disruptions due to trade, and provide that the agreement, and its continuation, be subject to the national security interests of both parties.163 Assuming bilateral relations had reached the appropriate milestones to begin discussing two-way trade, negotiating such an agreement could potentially take years, as both countries would need to adopt statutory and regulatory changes.

#### Only total removal unilaterally solve the signal and gets Cuba to change

Koenig 10 Colonel, US Army War College [Lance R. Koenig, Time for a New Cuba Policy, Strategy Research Project, Colonel Lance R. Koenig, 2010, http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA518130]

There is a sound reason for unilaterally lifting the trade and travel embargoes without first seeing positive actions from the Cuban government. From Cuba expert Carlos A. Saladrigas, Co-Chairman, Cuba Study Group, “We can go back in the history -- in the 50-year history of United States-Cuba relations and clearly see that any time we begin to see a little bit of relaxation of tensions in the relationship, whenever we begin to see a little bit of openness on the part of the United States or Cuba, historically the Cuban government has done something to counteract that trend and significantly revert back to their playbook.” 40 The United States needs to take the initiativeaway from the Castro regime, and have them react to actions they have publicly called for (removal of the embargo), but in reality are unsure of the second and third order effects and their ability to control the outcome. One of the first problems for the Cuban government after the removal of the embargo will be the excuse for the poor performing economy. “… the embargo and the United States policyof confrontation and isolation have been incredibly useful to the Cuban regime as an alibi for the failures of the regime to meet the fundamental needs of the people on the island, but also is a significant source of legitimacy, both internal and external.”41 This situation may present the United States with the opportunity to step in to assist with market reforms if the Cuban economy sputters and the government realizes they don’t have a scapegoat.Conclusion The efforts expended by the United States to keep the embargo effective, the loss of trade, and the loss of soft power in most of the world are clearly not worth it in comparison to the threat that Cuba poses today. The gainsto be achieved by following any path other than the unilateral removalof the economic and travel embargoes are small in comparison to the overall costs of continuing the current failed policy. The United States is losing far too much soft power in its efforts to punish and isolate the government of Cuba. American firms could be left out of any economic gains as Cuba continues to grow its economy. As Cuba emerges from the economic difficulties of the last two decades, the United States has an opportunity to influence the future direction of our southern neighbor. The current United States policy has many passionate defenders, and their criticism of the Castro regime is justified. Nevertheless, we must recognize the ineffectiveness of our current policy and deal with the Cuban regime in a way that enhances United States interests.42 The United States cannot afford to miss out on the window of opportunity to affect a positive change in the relationship with Cuba. If Cuba is able to continue on a path of economic progress and emerge once again as a true regional power, with communism intact, the United States will be the loser in this half century struggle. Cuba is spreading its limited influence to Venezuela, Honduras, Nicaragua, and will be ready to bring in any other countries in the Americas that want to move away from the United States orbit. The United States can’t stand by and watch Cuba regain strength, intact as a communist country, but must take this opportunity to create an inflection point for Cuba that guides her onto a path that will benefit the nations of the Americas.

#### Partial or conditioned removal isn’t enough to solve any part of the AFF

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RETAIN SANCTIONS AGAINST CUBA, BUT ENFORCE THEM IN VARYING DEGREES DEPENDING ON THE POLITICAL CLIMATE AND THE CUBAN REGIME’S CONDUCT IN REGARD TO AMERICAN INTERESTS

Throughout the past 15 years, the U.S. has experimented with a variable enforcement option. During the Clinton administration, restrictions were occasionally eased. For example, in March 1998, President Clinton announced: 1) the resumption of licensing for direct humanitarian charter flights to Cuba; 2) the resumption of cash remittances up to $300 per quarter for the support of close relatives in Cuba; 3) the development of licensing procedures to streamline and expedite licenses for the commercial sale of medicines and medical supplies and equipment; and 4) a decision to work on a bipartisan basis with Congress on the transfer of food to the Cuban people.33 In January 1999, President Clinton ordered additional measures to assist theCuban people, which included further easement of cash remittances, expansion of direct passenger charter flights to Cuba, reestablishment of direct mail service, authorization for the commercial sale of food to independent entities in Cuba, and an expansion of people-to-people exchanges (i.e. scientist, students, athletes, etc.)34 This policy ended when the newadministration failed to see any reciprocal progress from Castro.Fragmenting the policy process may do more harm than good. Itdoes too little too lateand causes hard feelings among Cubans and American businesses. The carrot-stick diplomaticapproach will not make Castro yield. Such policy breeds inconsistency as it can vary fromadministration to administration, as it has between the Clinton and Bush administrations. Therules constantly change and thus have a ripple effect on American businesses and the quality oflife of Americans, Cuban-Americans and native Cubans. Cuban trade has already declined to a trickle since the Bush administration sought to further squeeze the Castro government. Prior to the Bush administration’s trade crack down, 2004 was emerging as a record year for U.S. imports to Cuba. By the end of December 2004 U.S. suppliers and shippers were projected to have earned some $450 million, a 20% increase over 2003 sales.35 Imposing restrictions, as the Bush administration did in June 2004, perplexed American businesses with unpredicted problems. These businesses make adjustments, as do Cuban- American citizens, then must abruptly alter their business strategies because of a Congressional vote or an Executive order. This political tug-of-war does not movethe U.S. any closer to realizing its security objectives.On the Cuban American front there is eroding support for this U.S. policy position. In the 2000 presidential election, President Bush won 81% of south Florida’s Cuban-American vote. A recent poll by the William C. Veleasquez Institute-Mirram Global indicates that his support today has fallen to 66%.36 This decline signals a negative response to policy that limits travel, restricts the amount of goods people can bring to their relatives, and places limitations on sending money to family in Cuba. Cuban-Americans believe that this only hurts their poor relatives inCuba. According to Jose Basulto, head of Brothers to the Rescue, and Ramon Raul Sanchez, head of the anti-Castro Democracy Movement, the U.S. government is using the Cuban peopleto harass Castro.37 Applying policy in a give-and-take manner, accomplishes little to facilitatethe fall of Castro. The Cuban people enjoy brief periods of limited benefits, only to have thesebenefits withdrawn should the President or members of Congress wish to take another jab at Castro. American civilian businesses are also negatively affected. LIFT ALL SANCTIONS AND PURSUE NORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH CUBANormalcy is the only policy that the U.S. has not attempted. The present policy missesthe security implications, alienates allies and others worldwide, harms U.S. businesses, and islosing support domestically. First, the U.S. must reassess the threat posed by Cuba. There is,in fact, virtually no security threat. Further, policies that were applicable in the past, when there was a threat, should not be applied to the current environment. The U.S. Cuban policy is perplexing because it appears to conflict with the ends, ways and means that the National Security Strategy is applied in other regions of the world. The U.S. has normalized relations with Vietnam and Libya and has certainly opted for an open dialogue with Communist China. Likewise, there is abundant evidence that a new policy toward Cuba could very well achieve the ends that 43 years of embargo have failed to accomplish. Secondly, Cuba currently trades and has diplomatic ties with much of the world. The goalof U.S. sanctions is to isolate the Cuban regime; however, they have only slowed, not deterredeconomic growth. On 4 November 2003 the United Nations voted, for the 12th straight year, 173 to 3 (with 4 abstentions) against the four-decade U.S. embargo against Cuba.38 Voting with the U.S. were Israel and the Marshall Islands. The U.S.’ staunchest allies, the 15 members of the European Union, along with Japan, Australia and New Zealand, all object to the “extra-territorial”effect of U.S. legislation that they feel violates their sovereignty. 39 There are two schools of thought regarding trade and democracy. The first is that economic growth will promote democracy. The other questions this notion and argues that democracy must come first.40 There is strong opinion, however, that in Cuba’s case economic engagement will bring about the desired results. Certainly many Cuban-Americans and perhaps some others in the world would not agree with this course of action. However, there is evidence that a significant numberof people both within the U.S. and abroad favor a policy change. In 1992 a pastoral letter from Cuba’s Bishops stated that the US embargo “directly affects the people who suffer the consequences in hunger and illness. If what is intended by this approach is to destabilize the government by using hunger and want to pressure civic society to revolt, then the strategy is also cruel.“41 The third consideration is U.S. business. Under the current rules, U.S. businesses arepermitted to sell agricultural produce to Cuba.42 Today 27 firms from 12 U.S. states are doingbusiness with Cuba, making Cuba 22nd among U.S. agricultural markets.43 These business activities are greatly influenced by Cuban-Americans and members of Congress. Theeconomic power of the U.S. can be our most powerful weapon. The possibilities of economicengagement offer a myriad of branches and sequels that could promote a rapport between theAmerican people and the Cubans. The aggressive pursuit of these endeavors would go far in ensuring an orderly transition to a post-Castro Cuba. It is an erroneous assumption to believe that Castro’s demise will miraculously trigger reform and all the problems of the last 40 years will vanish. A visionary policy, albeit constrained within the parameters of the Castro regime, will go far in setting agreeable social-economic conditions in Cuba both now and in the future. Finally, public opinion in the U.S. favors a new policy direction. A 1997 Miami Herald poll found that a majority of Cubans under the age of 45 supported “establishing a national dialogue with Cuba,” whereas for the most part their elders opposed such dialogue.44 Former President Jimmy Carter, writing in the Washington Post after his May 2002 visit to Cuba, reported that he found an unexpected degree of economic freedom. Carter went on to say that if Americans could have maximum contact with Cuban, then Cubans would clearly see the advantages of a truly democratic society and thus be encouraged to bring about orderly changes in their society. 45 Castro himself appears willing to consider greater reform. In 1998 he permitted Pope John Paul II to visit Cuba; Cubans are permitted to own property; he has opened trade; and in 2002 he broadcast former President Jimmy Carter’s address at the University of Havana.46 Additionally, he indicated that the Cuban government would return any of the Guantanamo detainees in the unlikely event that they would escape.47 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONU.S. policy makers need to confront the real Cuba of today in order to build a “free” Cuba of tomorrow that is capable of taking its place in the world community as a responsible, democratic nation. Given the history of the past 100 years, and particularly our Castro centric policy, the U.S. needs to make a bold change toward Cuba. The U.S. has pursued a hard-lineapproach toward the Castro regime for over 40 years. While this policy was easily justified during the Cold War era and, to a certain degree, during the 1990s, it fails to address the present U.S. national security concerns. The globalization trends of the 21st century are irreversible, Fidel Castro is in the twilight of his life, and a new generation of Cuban-Americans is supportive of new strategies that will ease the transition to a post-Castro Cuba while buttressing economic and social opportunities in the near term. Furthermore, there is a new dimension that U.S. policy strategists must take into account in deciding the course of U.S.- Cuba relations – the GWOT. World-wide asymmetrical threats to U.S. interests, coupled with the Iraqi occupation and the potential for any one of the present hot spots (i.e. Iran, NorthKorea, Taiwan, etc.) to ignite, should prompt strategic leaders to work harder to mitigate apotential Caribbean crises. The prudent action would then be to develop strategies that candefuse or neutralize these situations before they require the U.S. to divert resources fromprotecting its interests in the GWOT. Therefore, the U.S. can best serve its security, the Cuban people, and the WesternHemisphere by abandoning the present draconian policy toward Cuba. The U.S. shouldimplement a new policy designed to achieve its goals through lifting all sanctions and pursuing normalized diplomatic relations; encouraging people-to-people dialogue and trade. The policy should continue to pursue human rights, democracy, and free market ends. However, the waysto realize these objectives should be grounded in full economic engagement, an approach thathas not been fully attempted.The present U.S. policy has failed miserably. What does themost powerful nation on earth have to lose by attempting a bold shift in its policy toward Cuba?