Chapter 1

ANALYSIS RESULTS

This report presents the results of a study conducted by five U.S. Department of Energy national laboratories that quantifies the potential for energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies to reduce carbon emissions in the United States.[1] The stimulus for this study derives from a growing recognition that any national effort to reduce the growth of greenhouse gas emissions must consider ways of increasing the productivity of energy use. To add greater definition to this view, we quantify the reductions in carbon emissions that can be attained through the improved performance and increased penetration of efficient and low-carbon technologies by the year 2010. We also take a longer-term perspective by characterizing the potential for future research and development to produce further carbon reductions over the next quarter century. As such, this report makes a strong case for the value of energy technology research, development, demonstration, and diffusion as a public response to global climate change.

Three overarching conclusions emerge from our analysis of alternative carbon reduction scenarios. First, a vigorous national commitment to develop and deploy cost-effective energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies could reverse the trend toward increasing carbon emissions. Along with utility sector investments, such a commitment could halt the growth in U.S. energy consumption and carbon emissions so that levels in 2010 are close to those in 1997 (for energy) and in 1990 (for carbon). It must be noted that such a vigorous national commitment would have to go far beyond current efforts. Second, if feasible ways are found to implement the carbon reductions, the cases analyzed in the study are judged to yield energy savings that are roughly equal to or greater than costs. Third, a next generation of energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies promises to enable the continuation of an aggressive pace of carbon reductions over the next quarter century.

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

The purposes of this study are threefold:

1. To provide a quantitative assessment of the reduction in energy consumption and carbon emissions that could result by the year 2010 from a vigorous national commitment to accelerate the development and deployment of cost-effective energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies;

2. To document the costs and performance of the technologies that underpin a year 2010 scenario in which substantial energy savings and carbon emissions reductions are achieved;

3. To illustrate the potential for energy-efficiency and renewable energy R&D to produce further reductions in energy use and carbon emissions by the year 2020.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

To achieve these objectives, we started with the *Annual Energy Outlook 1997* (AEO97) reference case forecasts for the year 2010 (Energy Information Administration, 1996). After thoroughly reviewing these forecasts on a sector-by-sector basis, and working with EIA staff, we chose to accept the EIA "business-as-usual" (BAU) scenario as is for buildings and industry. We modified some of the assumptions and data to produce a new BAU case – not greatly different from the EIA case – for the transportation and the electric utility sectors.[2]

We then assembled existing information on the performance and costs of technologies to increase energy efficiency or, for selected end-uses, to switch from one fuel to another (e.g., from electricity to natural gas for residential end-uses or from gasoline to biofuels for transportation). For the buildings sector, the technology performance and cost data base are extensive. For transportation, the data base – although less fully developed than for buildings – is sufficient for our purposes. For industry, only partial information on technologies and costs is presently available. As a result, the analysis for industry relies primarily on historical relations between energy use and economic activity and much less on explicit technological opportunities. The industrial analysis also includes some examples of industrial low-carbon technologies. The analysis of low-carbon supply technologies in the electricity sector is based on a review of the literature including detailed technology characterizations prepared by DOE in conjunction with its national laboratories and industry.

Next we created scenarios of increased energy efficiency and lower carbon emissions using the technology data (or, in the industrial sector, historical relations) as key inputs. We chose to run three scenarios other than the BAU case. We have termed the first the "efficiency" (EFF) case. It assumes that the United States increases its emphasis on energy efficiency through enhanced public- and private-sector efforts. The general philosophy of the efficiency case is that it reduces, but does not eliminate, various market barriers and lags to the adoption of cost-effective energy efficiency technology.[3]

The other two cases, dubbed the $25 permit and the $50 permit "high-efficiency/low-carbon" (HE/LC) cases, describe a world in which, as a result of commitments made on a climate treaty or other factors, the nation has embarked on a path to reduce carbon emissions. Both of these cases assume a major effort to reduce carbon emissions through federal policies and programs (including environmental regulatory reform), strengthened state programs, and very active private sector involvement. Both also include a focused national R&D effort to develop and transform markets for low-carbon energy options (e.g., fuel cells for microcogeneration in buildings and advanced turbine systems for combined heat and power in industry). The difference between the two HE/LC cases is in the assumption of a carbon permit price resulting from a domestic trading scheme for carbon emissions with a cap on U.S. emissions (or from equivalent policy measures that increase the price of carbon-based fuels relative to those with less carbon). We assume a domestic permit price of $25 and $50 per tonne of carbon for the two cases. Both of these HE/LC cases include a program of research, development, demonstration and diffusion that is more vigorous than in the efficiency case. In the buildings and industry sectors, the carbon price signal, combined with policies promoting energy efficiency, is believed to trigger most of the additional carbon reductions. In the transportation sector, it is the R&D-driven technology breakthroughs that generate the bulk of the carbon reductions beyond the efficiency case. For the electricity sector, higher prices for carbon-based fuels cause larger shifts from coal to natural gas; for this sector, these same higher relative prices combined with federal and private research, development, and demonstration can bring advanced low-carbon technologies to market.

Although most of the analysis focuses on 2010, we also look beyond this date. Here we describe new technologies, materials, processes, manufacturing methods, and other R&D advances that promise to offer significant energy benefits by the year 2020; for this time period, we make no effort to forecast specific levels of market penetration, energy savings, or carbon reductions. Thus, instead of creating scenarios we describe the technological innovations that could enable the continuation of an aggressive pace of decarbonization well into the next quarter century, if appropriate investments in R&D were made.

1.3 BACKGROUND

The decade of gains in energy productivity achieved by the U.S. following the 1973-74 Arab oil embargo represents a period of economic growth that was decoupled from increases in energy consumption, resulting in substantial economic benefits. Between 1973 and 1986, the nation's consumption of primary energy froze at about 74 quads – while the GNP grew by 35%. Starting in 1986, energy prices began a descent in real terms that has continued to the present. As a result, energy demand grew from 74 quads in 1986 to 91 quads in 1995, and carbon emissions have been increasing at a similar pace.

Despite the growth in energy consumption since 1986, the U.S. economy today remains more energy productive than it was 25 years ago. In 1970, 19.6 thousand Btu of energy were consumed for each (1992) dollar of GDP. By 1995, the energy intensity of the economy had dropped to 13.4 thousand Btu of energy per (1992) dollar of GDP. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) estimates that the country is saving $150 to $200 billion annually as a result of these improvements.

Nevertheless, many cost-effective energy-efficient technologies remain underutilized, as discussed in Chapter 2. A host of market barriers account for these lost opportunities. And declining energy R&D expenditures may cause promising technology options to be foregone.

The rationale for government support of energy-efficiency R&D is strong. Much energy-efficiency research is both long-term and high-risk and therefore is not adequately funded by the private sector – despite the possibility of sizable gains in the long run. Furthermore, advances in energy efficiency offer substantial public benefits (such as carbon reductions and improved national security through greater oil independence) that cannot be fully captured in the private marketplace.

The benefits of past public investments in energy-efficiency R&D have been well documented. Between 1978 and 1996, DOE spent approximately $8 billion on energy-efficiency research, development and demonstration (RD&D). Just five of the technologies that were developed or demonstrated with a fraction of this DOE support have resulted in net benefits of $28 billion through 1996. Many other R&D successes have produced technologies yielding substantial energy and cost savings in the market. The DOE RD&D portfolio has also led to significant environmental, health, productivity, and economic competitiveness benefits.

1.4 RESULTS

1.4.1 Prospects for Improved Efficiencies by the Year 2010

Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1 compare the nation's primary energy use in quads for the years 1990 and 1997 (projected) with the results of three scenarios for 2010. (We have included only the high-efficiency/low-carbon case at $50/tonne in the table and figure for simplicity.) The $50/tonne HE/LC case shown below does not reflect the energy impacts of the selected low-carbon technologies described later in this summary (e.g., stationary fuel cells for buildings, advanced turbine systems and biomass gasification in industry) or the supply-side options shown in Table 1.4.

Table 1.1 Primary Energy Use in Quads: 1990-2010

	1990	1997	2010 Business-as-Usual Case	2010 Efficiency Case	2010 High-Efficiency/ Low-Carbon Case ($50/tonne C)
Buildings	29.4	33.7	36.0	34.1	32.0
Industry	32.1	32.6	37.4	35.4	33.6
Transportation	22.6	25.5	32.3	29.2	27.8
Total	84.2	91.8	105.7	98.7	93.4

Source: Energy use estimates for 1990 come from EIA (1996a, Table 2.1, p. 39). Energy use estimates for 1997 come from forecasts conducted for EIA (1996b). Numbers may not add to the totals due to rounding.

The major observations are as follows:

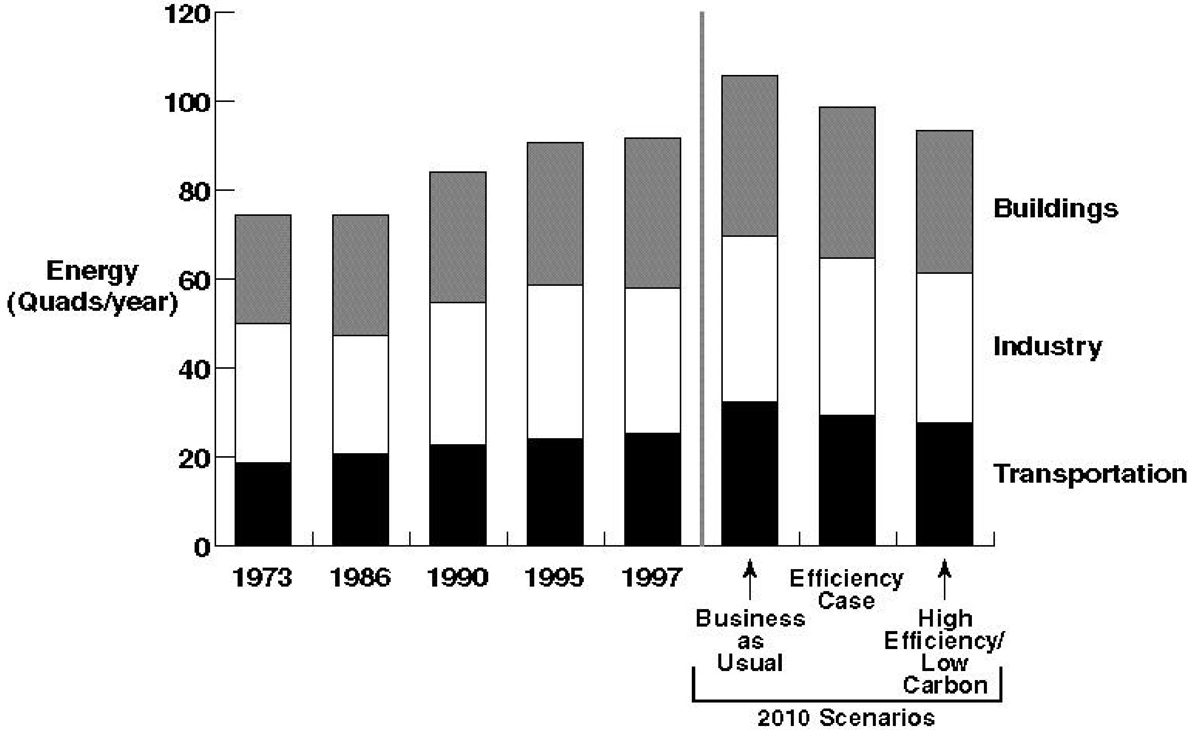
- In the business-as-usual case, energy use increases by 22 quads (26%) between 1990 and 2010; 8 quads of this increase have occurred during the first seven years of this 20-year period. The fastest growing sector during these initial seven years has been buildings (4.3 quads) followed by transportation (2.9 quads) and industry (0.5 quads). In the BAU case, the fastest growing sector during the remaining 13 years is transportation (6.8 quads). This is followed by industry (4.8 quads) and then buildings (2.3 quads). The rapid projected growth in the energy consumed for transportation is driven by estimates of increased per capita travel and minimal fuel efficiency gains.

- The efficiency scenario cuts the overall growth between 1990 and 2010 from 22 to 15 quads. This is a 17% increase over the level of energy consumption in 1990, down from a 26% increase in the BAU case. Relative to the BAU case, the efficiency scenario for transportation delivers slightly more energy savings (3.1 quads) than do the same scenarios for the industrial (2.0) or buildings (1.9) sectors. Compared with 1997 levels, the smallest increase in energy growth for this case is in buildings (0.4 quads), followed by industry (2.8 quads), and transportation (3.7 quads).

- The high-efficiency/low-carbon scenario with a $50/tonne carbon charge further decreases the overall growth between 1990 and 2010, reducing it from 22 to 9 quads. This is an 11% increase over the level of energy consumption in 1990. Relative to the BAU case, the high-efficiency/low-carbon scenario for buildings, industry, and transportation delivers energy savings ranging from 3.8 to 4.5 quads for each sector. Compared with 1997 levels, the buildings sector is down about 2 quads and industry and transportation are up 1 and 2 quads, respectively.

Table 1.2 documents the impact of these projected energy savings in 2010 on carbon emissions in that same year. It also presents the results of the HE/LC scenarios with both $25 and $50 per tonne carbon charges. These scenarios show significant carbon reductions from the combination of greater efficiency improvements and increased use of advanced low-carbon technologies.[4] In these cases, a number of low-carbon technologies have high rates of adoption (e.g., advanced turbine systems and biomass gasification in industry), the utility grid is dispatched to reduce carbon emissions (by using many coal plants for intermediate power and by running more natural gas plants as base load), a set of coal-based power plants are repowered, nuclear plant lifetimes are extended, and key renewable energy technologies are deployed. In all cases, these technologies and measures are estimated to be cost-effective with a differential carbon fee of $50/tonne.

Figure 1.1 Primary Energy Use in Quads: 1990-2010



Note: The high efficiency/low carbon scenario values represent the $50 per tonne carbon charge.

Table 1.2 Carbon Emissions (MtC): 1990-2010

			2010			
	1990	1997	Business-as-Usual (BAU) Case[a]	Efficiency Case	High-Efficiency/ Low-Carbon[b] $25/tonne	High-Efficiency/ Low-Carbon[b] $50/tonne
Buildings	460	511	571	546	527	509
Industry	452	482	548	520	494	455
Transportation	432	486	616	543	528	513
Utilities[c]	–	–	–	–	-48	–136
Total (rounded)	1340	1480	1730	1610	1500	1340
Change from 1990		140	390	270	160	0
Change from BAU	–	–	–	-120	-230	-390

a Two of these numbers differ from the AEO97 BAU case. The estimate for buildings (571 MtC) is slightly lower than the AEO97 estimate (576 MtC) due to the use of different ratios for converting "other" fuels (i.e., liquid propane gas, kerosene, and coal) to carbon. The estimate for transportation (616 MtC) is higher than the AEO97 estimate (598 MtC) due to the assumption that auto fuel economy does not increase.

[b]This scenario includes the carbon emission reductions resulting from a carbon permit price of $25 or $50/tonne: (1) dispatch of power plants in which natural gas is favored relative to coal, (2) repowering and partial repowering of coal-based power plants to convert to natural gas, and (3) introduction of selected low-carbon technologies to replace conventional ones, primarily in the industrial and utility sectors.

[c]The entries in the last two columns are negative as they correspond to reductions in carbon emissions resulting from the increased use of natural gas and low-carbon technology for electricity generation as a result of the $50/tonne carbon permit price in this scenario.

Table 1.2 presents results for the business as usual and three efficiency and/or low carbon cases in 2010 as point estimates, because they are meant to be scenarios. When we use these scenarios for analysis, in section 1.5, we describe sources of uncertainty and the effects of uncertainty on our understanding of the implications of these cases. For now, we only describe the different cases.

Figures 1.2 and 1.3 complement the above table by illustrating the carbon emissions reductions from each scenario. The major observations are:

- In the BAU case, carbon emissions are forecast to increase by approximately 390 million tonnes from 1990 levels.

- The energy-efficiency gains incorporated in the efficiency case cut overall growth between 1990 and 2010 by one-third (from 390 to 270 million tonnes). This represents a carbon increase of 20% above 1990 emissions.

- The HE/LC scenario with $25/tonne carbon charge has the potential to reduce carbon emissions by 230 million tonnes from the BAU case in 2010. The largest part of these carbon reductions are from increased efficiency, but major changes in electricity supply (retirements of coal plants, repowering, and carbon-based dispatching) contribute 34 million tonnes, and other low-carbon technology, particularly renewables and advanced turbine systems, produce another 14 million tonnes.

- The HE/LC scenario with $50/tonne carbon charge has the potential to reduce carbon emissions by approximately 390 million tonnes, thereby achieving 1990 carbon emission levels in 2010. Of this 390 million tonne carbon reduction, 205 million tonnes are from increased energy efficiency, 135 million tonnes results from increases in the use of low-carbon fuels and technologies in the utility sector, and 50 million tonnes results from the use of low-carbon technology in industry and transportation.

  Ninety-five million of the 135 million tonnes of carbon reductions in the utility sector comes from retirement of coal power plants and carbon-ordered dispatching of the utility system (including optimization of capacity expansion and unit commitment) and from repowering coal plants with natural gas. These are cost-effective with a $50/tonne carbon charge. The remaining 41 million tonnes are from renewables (wind, co-firing coal-based power plants with biofuels, expansion of hydropower capacity), nuclear power plant life extensions, and power plant efficiency improvements.

  The 50 million tonnes of carbon reductions in industry and transportation from low-carbon technologies are about equally divided among: (1) advanced combustion turbine cogenerators in industry, (2) biomass and black liquor gasification and low-carbon industrial processes, and (3) cellulosic ethanol/gasoline blends for automobiles.

- Approximately 140 MtC of the increase in carbon emissions between 1990 and 2010 will have occurred by the end of 1997; thus, it is useful to look at the 13-year forecast starting with 1997. The carbon reductions incorporated in the efficiency case cut the overall *growth* in carbon emissions between 1997 and 2010 from 250 million tonnes (as forecast in the BAU case) to 130. The HE/LC scenario with $50/tonne carbon charge *reduces* carbon emissions in 2010 by an additional 270 million tonnes.

Figure 1.2 Reductions in Carbon Emissions from Each Scenario

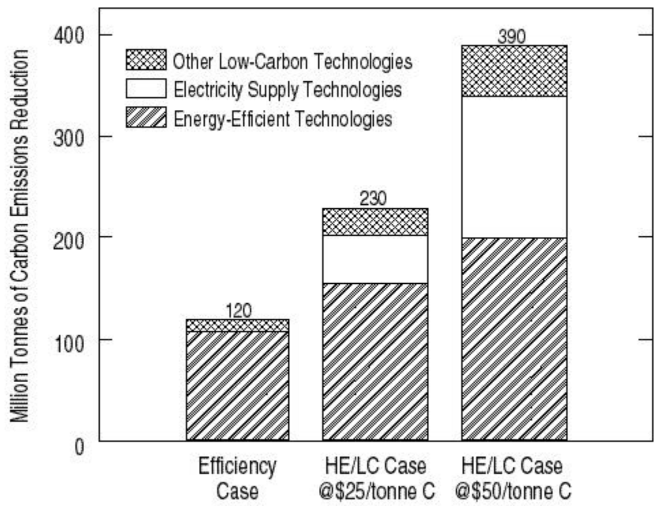


Figure 1.3 Reductions in Carbon Emissions from Each Type of Technology

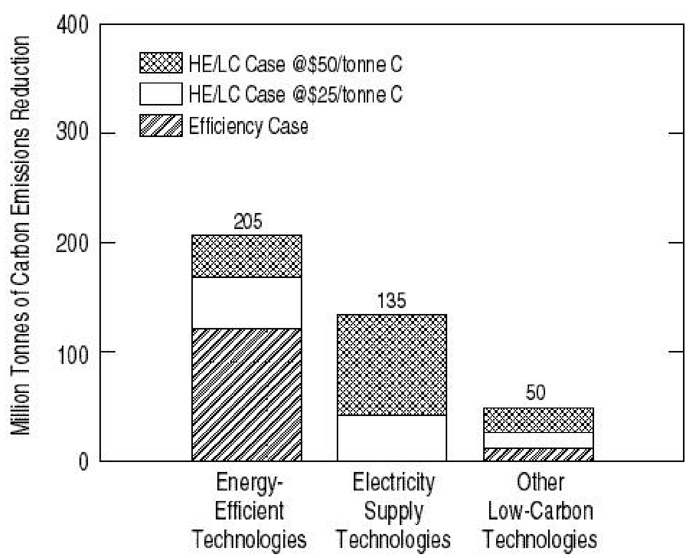


Table 1.3 provides a comparison of the growth rate in energy and in carbon emissions for the four cases, from 1997 to 2010. For the BAU and efficiency cases, the growth in carbon emissions is slightly more rapid than the increase in energy demand. For the HE/LC case with a $50/tonne carbon

charge, carbon emissions decline while energy consumption rises. The carbon reduction reflects the increased deployment of low-carbon fuels and technologies as a consequence of the relative increase in price of carbon-based fuels precipitated by the $50/tonne incentive.

It is useful to compare the scenarios in this study to those of other studies. The 1991 report by the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) titled *Changing by Degrees* (U.S. Congress, 1991) analyzed the potential for energy efficiency to reduce carbon emissions by the year 2015, starting with the base year of 1987. Its “moderate” scenario results in a 15% rise in carbon emissions, from 1300 MtC/year of carbon in 1987 to 1500 MtC/year of carbon in 2015 (compared to a BAU forecast of 1900 MtC/year). Its “tough” scenario results in a 20% to 35% emissions reduction relative to 1987 levels, or emissions levels of 850 to 1000 MtC/year of carbon in 2015. Our efficiency and HE/LC cases ranging from 1.3 to 1.6 billion tonnes of carbon emissions in 2010 are comparable to OTA’s “moderate” case and show considerably higher emissions than OTA’s “tough” case.

Table 1.3 Average Annual Energy and Carbon Growth Rates, 1997 to 2010, for Four Cases

	Business-As-Usual (BAU)	Efficiency Case	High Efficiency/ Low Carbon Case ($25/tonne)	High Efficiency/ Low Carbon Case ($50/tonne)
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)[a]	1.88%	1.88%	1.88%	1.88%
Energy Demand	1.09%	0.56%	0.34%	0.13%
Carbon Emissions	1.24%	0.65%	0.11%	-0.75%
Energy Consumption Per GDP (E/GDP)	-0.77%	-1.30%	-1.51%	-1.71%
Carbon Emissions Per GDP (C/GDP)[b]	-0.63%	-1.20%	-1.73%	-2.58%

[a] The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 1995 was $7251 billion in 1995 dollars. The 1.88% annual growth was assumed to apply to the entire period, 1995-2010 to derive the results above.

[b] The carbon decrease per unit GDP growth for 1990 to 2010 is 0.7%, 1.1%, 1.4% and 1.9% per year for the reference, efficiency, $25/tonne HE/LC, and $50/tonne HE/LC cases, respectively.

Another benchmark is provided by the 1992 National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report on *Policy Implications of Greenhouse Warming* (National Academy of Sciences, 1992). This study identified a set of energy conservation technologies that had either a positive economic return or that had a cost of less than $2.50 per tonne of carbon. Altogether, NAS concluded that these technologies offer the potential to reduce carbon emissions by 463 million tonnes, with more than half of these reductions arising from cost-effective investments in building energy efficiency. Our efficiency and HE/LC cases suggest the potential for reducing carbon emissions by between 120 and 380 million tonnes by the year 2010. One reason that the NAS estimate is higher is because it is not limited to the 2010 time frame, but rather characterizes the full potential for carbon reductions. Thus, it did not take into account the replacement rates for equipment and processes, and other factors that prevent the instantaneous, full market penetration of cost-effective energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies.

1.4.2 R&D’s Potential for Further Benefits by 2020

If carbon reductions in 2010 and beyond are to be sustained at reasonable cost, vigorous R&D efforts are needed to fill the pipeline of next-generation energy technologies. It is difficult to estimate the carbon savings that will accrue from these technologies; however, our effort to characterize their features suggests that an aggressive pace of carbon reductions over the next quarter century can be sustained, with a sufficient investment in R&D. Our analysis of R&D potential for the year 2020 focuses on opportunities for improved energy-efficiency and renewable energy technologies. The potential long-term contributions of carbon sequestration, advanced coal technologies, and nuclear power may also be significant. However, the treatment of vigorous R&D initiatives to improve these supply options after 2010 is beyond the scope of this report.

For an assessment of the broad range of R&D opportunities to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, based on a 30-year planning horizon, the reader is referred to a report by 11 DOE national laboratory directors (DOE National Laboratory Directors, 1997). That effort examines the potential of science and technology-based developments in energy efficiency, clean energy, and carbon sequestration to produce carbon reductions in each of the next three decades.

Renewable energy technologies will likely play a crucial role in limiting carbon emissions over the long term. Low-carbon energy supply options are needed to fuel domestic and international economic development without stimulating further global warming. Although renewable resources account for only 7% of the nation’s total energy consumption at present, many believe that they are at the beginning of a long-term growth trajectory. With continuing technological development and cost reductions, renewables could become preferred energy resources some time within the next several decades. Early evidence of this transition is seen in the continuing adoption of renewable power systems, including especially wind farms and biomass power systems, even in the face of low gas-fired power generation costs and considerable uncertainty in today’s electric energy sector.

With a vigorous and sustained program of research, development and deployment, biomass, wind, photovoltaics, geothermal, and solar thermal technologies could deliver significant quantities of electricity in 2020, thereby substantially displacing carbon emissions. For example, the use of forestry and agricultural residues in biomass power systems continues to be an attractive power option where those residues exist. The successful development of higher-efficiency biomass gasification systems would make this technology competitive in a wider range of applications, including for power systems using dedicated feed stock supply systems. At the same time, biological and agricultural research on biomass production will lead both to higher biomass yields and better species for energy conversion purposes in the future.

A second area in which a vigorous and sustained R&D effort could spawn a range of key improvements is in wind power systems. Potential improvements include:

- Advanced blade shapes that increase wind power capture while reducing stress loads,
- Elimination of gearboxes through development of direct-drive generators,
- Variable speed turbines, and
- Better resource prediction that will increase the value of wind power to power systems operators.

A third area of renewables development that is at the beginning of a long-term growth path is the use of renewables in buildings. Solar daylighting, passive solar designs, solar water heating, and geothermal heat pumps already are cost-competitive in many applications, but are not yet widely used. R&D advances could substantially accelerate their market penetration. In addition, building-integrated photovoltaic products will benefit directly from advances in materials research. The ultimate vision is that many buildings will become “net energy generators” through a combination of renewable energy and energy-efficiency technologies.

In the next quarter century, improved energy-efficiency technologies will result from a combination of incremental advances and fundamental breakthroughs. Incremental improvements in all sectors can be achieved by the greater reliance on more precise and reliable sensors and controls or on lower-cost sensors and controls, often integrated into industrial processes, transportation systems, and buildings. Advanced manufacturing technologies, including rapid prototyping and ultraprecision fabrication, also offer broad opportunities for continuous incremental improvements in energy efficiency and renewable energy. Breakthroughs in bioprocessing, separations, superconductivity, catalysts, and materials can have wide-ranging impacts on energy efficiency and carbon emissions by the year 2020. Examples of specific technology opportunities are described in this report, by sector.

Six R&D areas offer great promise to reduce significantly the energy requirements of our nation’s buildings in 2020:

- Advanced construction methods and materials,
- Adaptive building envelopes,
- Multi-functional equipment,
- Integrated, advanced lighting systems,
- Improved controls, communications and measurements, and
- Self-powered buildings.

In addition to the broad application of better process modeling, sensors, and controls in industry, many process/industry-specific opportunities for efficiency gains exist. These are described for each of DOE’s targeted industries of the future: pulp and paper, chemicals, petroleum refining, glass, aluminum, iron and steel, and metal casting.

Many of the advanced technologies that have the potential to significantly improve the energy efficiency of transportation need considerable R&D investment before they can become commercially available in the year 2020. For example, to achieve fuel economies in the 60-80 miles per gallon (MPG) range and remain affordable and safe, light-duty vehicles will need:

- Breakthroughs in manufacturing processes for composite materials,
- Large reduction in fuel cell costs and/or cost reductions and performance gains in batteries,
- Utra-low rolling resistance tires,
- High-efficiency accessories, and

- Highly aerodynamic designs.

Opportunities for R&D to lead to improvements in the energy efficiency of other transportation modes are also described in this report.

In all, the continued adoption of energy efficient and renewable energy technologies and a steady flow of technology improvements from collaborative R&D programs with industry could make such environmentally friendly technology an attractive option for domestic and global energy economies in the future. With strong public-private partnerships to support the necessary R&D and market transformation activities, ample cost-effective energy products and practices will be available in 2020.

1.5 ASSESSMENT OF COSTS, ENERGY SAVINGS, AND SOURCES OF CARBON REDUCTIONS

The business-as-usual scenario projects an increase of 390 MtC/year between 1990 and 2010. In our efficiency scenario, in which the nation actively pursues policies and programs to promote market acceptance of energy efficiency while expanding commitments to research and development, energy-efficient technologies reduce this growth in carbon emissions by 120 MtC/year. Under a carbon cap and trading system, in which permits for carbon sell for either $25 or $50/tonne C, very substantial carbon reductions appear possible. Detailed results for these cases, showing the sources of the carbon reductions, are contained in Table 1.4. (Summaries of these results were presented in Figures 1.2 and 1.3.) Results indicate that, for the $50/tonne HE/LC case, there is a potential to roughly return to 1990 levels of carbon emissions in 2010. Almost two-thirds of the increase in carbon emissions is eliminated in the case with a $25/tonne carbon charge (Table 1.4).

The estimates in Table 1.4 include ranges for most of the electricity supply options and the other low-carbon technologies. There are no ranges for the efficiency technologies because the models used to estimate their penetration are nonstochastic. When selecting a single estimate for the $50/tonne case, numbers from the low end of the ranges were generally selected in order to be cautious. Because we did not conduct an integrating analysis in which supply options compete against one another, we felt it important to minimize potential overlap by entering the supply options in conservative quantities. Also note that several renewable resources that could play a greater role by 2010 are omitted from Table 1.4; these resources include include photovoltaics, geothermal, solar thermal, and landfill gas.

One should not ascribe too much significance to specific entries in Table 1.4 There are many different technologies, both on the supply and demand side of the energy system, that will compete to achieve carbon reductions in an environment in which policies and economic signals favor such reductions. Thus, for example, Table 4.1 shows advanced turbine systems in industry cutting carbon emissions by 17 MtC/year in 2010, co-firing coal with biomass reducing emissions by the same amount, and other low-carbon supply technologies (wind, nuclear plant extensions, hydropower expansion, and power plant efficiency) contributing 24 MtC/year. The actual choice of technology depends on how the economics of the different systems evolve over time, how the industry to supply technology develops, the nature and speed of deregulation within the utility industry, and numerous other factors that cannot be known today. As such, we do not intend the results in Table 1.4 to be taken as a prediction of one technology over another to achieve carbon reductions. In this instance, we have posited one of many possible mixes of supply technologies. These same comments apply to the demand-side sectors and technologies.

In Table 1.5 we summarize the expected technology costs in 2010, as well as the cost of implementing a carbon permit system. While these costs are necessarily uncertain, they are our best estimates and, in our view, as likely to be high as to be low. We note, however, that we have focused our analysis on technology costs, and have not assessed the viability of specific policies or programs to achieve market acceptance. As described below, we do account for program and policy costs in an approximate manner.

Appendix A-2 describes the calculations used to derive the direct costs and energy cost savings of the cases. The costs considered include the incremental technology investment by consumers and businesses, fuel price increases, and the estimated cost of federal, state, and local programs required to achieve the carbon emission reductions. These constitute the direct costs of the scenarios. The highest of these by far is the incremental investment costs. However, the generally higher first cost of these technologies is counterbalanced by substantially lower operating costs. The benefits considered are limited to the savings in operating (energy) costs from the technology investments.

Table 1.4 Potential Annual Reductions in Carbon Emissions in 2010, Compared to the Business-As-Usual Forecast for 2010 (MtC)

		High-Efficiency/Low-Carbon Case		
	Efficiency Case	$25/tonne	$50/tonne*	
Buildings				
Energy efficiency	25	42	59	
Fuel cells		2	3	
	25	44	62	
Industry				
Energy efficiency	28	44	62	
Advanced turbine systems		5	17	(14-24)
Biomass and black liquor gasification, cement clinker replacement, and aluminum technologies		5	14	(13-16)
	28	54	93	
Transportation				
Energy efficiency	61	74	87	
Ethanol	12	14	16	
	73	88	103	
Utility Supply Options				
Coal plant retirements and carbon-ordered dispatching		25	55	
Converting coal-based power plants to natural gas		9	40	(25-66)
Co-firing coal with biomass		5	17	(16-24)
Wind		2	7	(6-20)
Extending the life of existing nuclear plants		3	5	(4-7)
Hydropower expansions		2	4	(3-5)
Power plant efficiency		2	8	(7-13)
		48	136	
Total	**126**	**234**	**394**	

*Numbers in parenthesis are ranges, as documented in the text of the report. See Appendix A-1 for a description of the derivation of the results in this table.

We have presented the direct and most easily quantified of the costs and benefits, but have not attempted a full benefit-cost calculation. We do not account for indirect effects of policies (e.g., the reallocation of investment dollars to efficiency investments). We do not account for the increased cost of some R&D programs that are needed to achieve the scenario results nor do we count the benefit of reduced carbon and other pollutant emissions. Also, we have not analyzed any possible redistribution of wealth that could arise from a carbon trading system or other policy to increase the price of carbon-based fuel.

Considering only these direct costs and energy-saving benefits of the scenarios, we have analyzed the economics of carbon emission reductions from two different perspectives in order to establish a credible range of costs. In the first, which we label "optimistic," we evaluate direct costs and energy-saving benefits with a real discount rate that approximates the cost of capital *for efficiency investments* for the different end-use sectors: 7% for buildings, 10% for transportation, and 12.5% for industry.

The lowest discount rate, for buildings, is based on the fact that the money for residential buildings is derived from home mortgages or home improvement loans. The higher rate for industry reflects the fact that energy-efficiency investments have to compete with investments for other projects. These discount rates are not those that describe current market behavior, but rather are reflective of costs of capital if the market did invest in the energy-efficiency measures. For the “optimistic” case, we assume costs for efficiency measures brought about by utility, federal programs, and state programs (e.g., demand-side management programs by utilities, federal market transformation programs) to be 15% of technology costs. We also assume that at least half of the efficiency occurs as a result of federal policies (e.g., standards or carbon permit charges) which add very low direct program costs. Thus, the overall costs of implementation are taken to be about 7% in the "optimistic" case. The electric supply-side technologies are assumed to add an incremental cost of $30/tonne carbon in 2010, based on an average estimate of the incremental costs of the technologies from the appropriate sections of this report.

These programs and policies are not specified in this study, but the broad nature of the actions could include technology R&D partnerships such as the current Partnership for a Next Generation of Vehicles and Industries of the Future; energy efficiency codes and standards; expanded partnerships, technical assistance, and information programs to accelerate the adoption of energy-efficient technologies; incentives through the tax system directed at investments in energy-efficient technology in industry; and a variety of non-federal programs to accelerate market diffusion of energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies.

The second perspective, which we label “pessimistic,” assumes that there are hidden costs associated with achieving widespread market acceptance of many of the efficiency and low-carbon technologies, even after the imposition of a carbon charge and the implementation of major policies and programs to promote a low-carbon future. In this perspective, we evaluate costs and benefits at a real discount rate of 15% for buildings and 20% for transportation and industry. Program costs are increased to 30% of the cost of efficiency measures, an estimate that is a high bound compared with federal, state, and utility experience. Overall implementation costs (programs and directed policies) are taken to be 15% of technology investments in this case. Other data and assumptions in this case are the same as for the “optimistic” case.

The results of the economic analysis are presented in Table 1.5. Estimated direct costs are $25-$50 billion per year for the efficiency scenario and $50 to $90 billion per year for the high-efficiency/low-carbon scenario. Estimated energy savings per year in 2010 are $40 to $50 billion per year in the efficiency case and $70-$90 billion per year for the high-efficiency/low-carbon case. The costs, which are a small portion of annual gross private domestic investment of about $1.4 trillion in 2020, are likely to be more than balanced by savings in energy bills. Thus, net costs to the U.S. economy are estimated to be near or below zero in this time frame.

The range of estimates in Table 1.5 reflects our attempt to "bound" optimistic and pessimistic assessments. There are clearly other ways in which these bounds could be described, just as there are many scenarios that could have been analyzed. We reflect a lower or pessimistic bound in three ways. First, we assume the investments in energy efficiency yield only 80% of the estimated energy savings. Second, we value costs and benefits at discount rates noticeably higher than the likely cost of capital. Third, we increase the estimated cost of programs and policies to twice that of typical experience today. It is worth noting that if the implementation costs were taken to be much higher than we believe to be reasonable – 50% of investments costs for programs and 25% overall – this would add about $10 billion per year to the costs of the high-efficiency/low-carbon in the pessimistic case.

Table 1.5 Estimated Costs and Energy Savings of the Efficiency and High-Efficiency/Low-Carbon Scenarios : Optimistic and Pessimistic View Estimates (billions of 1995$, annualized)

	Efficiency Case[a]			**High-Efficiency/Low-Carbon Case**[b]		
	Direct Costs[d] (billion 1995$)	Energy Savings[c] (billion 1995$)	Carbon[c] Savings MtC	Direct Costs (billion 1995$)	Energy Savings (billion 1995$)	Carbon Savings MtC
Energy Efficiency						
Buildings	7-14	14-17	20-25	14-26	26-33	49-62
Industry	3-5	6-7	22-27	8-13	12-15	74-93
Transportation	16-30	22-27	58-73	23-43	32-40	82-103
Power Plant Retirement and Redispatch	0	0	0	2	0	44-55
Electricity Repowering	0	0	0	2	0	32-40
Other Low-Carbon Technologies	0	0	0	2	0	33-41
Total	**25-50**	**40-50**	**100-125**	**50-90**	**70-90**	**310-390**

[a] Energy efficiency category includes ethanol in transportation.

[b] Energy savings and carbon savings in the HE/LC case are relative to BAU case.

[c] In the "pessimistic" case, we have assumed that only 80% of the carbon savings are achieved, even though the technology and implementation costs are unchanged. The range on carbon savings represents this assumption.

[d] Direct costs include the incremental technology investment cost and the cost of programs and policies required to achieve the carbon emission reductions. Costs are calculated from differing viewpoints: the "optimistic" case uses discount rates that vary between 7% and 12.5% for the different sectors, as described in the text. For the "pessimistic" case, the discount rates used to annualize costs vary between 15% and 20%. Also in this case, the cost of implementing programs (30%) and an overall package of programs and policies (15%) is taken to be twice that of the "optimistic" case.

In addition to these costs, one needs to calculate the impact of the cases on natural gas demand. In all of these cases, natural gas replaces very large quantities of coal. Higher natural gas demand would result in higher natural gas prices, which in turn would increase the cost of substituting natural gas for coal in power production, etc. As it turns out, our scenarios have somewhat reduced gas demand compared with the BAU case (or with AEO97 baseline for 2010, on which the price of natural gas in our work is based). Specifically, demand for natural gas in the HE/LC ($50/tonne) case declines in 2010 by 2 quads compared with the business-as-usual case. This is the result of declines of 0.5 quads for buildings, 1.0 quads for industry, and 0.5 quads for electricity. The latter occurs because of the balance among three factors: increase in gas demand because of the large-scale substitution of natural gas for coal, decrease of gas demand because of the use of many low-carbon technologies that do not use natural gas (wind, nuclear power plant extensions, power plant efficiency upgrades, hydropower expansion, co-firing with biofuels), and the large increase in cogeneration, which reduces demand for natural gas for heating applications.

The sum of the second and third effects are somewhat greater than the first, and thus total natural gas demand associated with electricity generation declines. This could reduce the cost of natural gas, a benefit that we have not included in the analysis.

The $50/tonne carbon charge, while not constituting a direct cost, does represent a potentially large transfer payment. The magnitude of the transfer payment, as well as the losers and winners from the transfers, depends on the nature of policy and its implementation as a cap and trade system or some alternative. The amount of money that could be in play is very large: $50/tonne times 1.3 billion tonnes per year equals $65 billion per year.

In short, while there will surely be winners and losers for these energy-efficiency and low-carbon scenarios, our analysis shows that their net economic costs – under a range of assumptions and alternative methods of cost analysis – will be near or below zero.

The achievability of the cases depends on many factors. In all cases, carbon reductions require the nation to embark on an aggressive set of policies and programs. Such efforts could occur in response to an international agreement on climate change or to other events that result in a national determination to reduce the growth of carbon emissions. In the high-efficiency/low-carbon cases, we assume a vigorous national program of research, development, demonstration, and diffusion, and a trading regime for carbon with a domestic permit price of either $25/tonne or $50/tonne carbon. Without some scheme that provides strong incentives for switching from coal to natural gas, and for deploying other low-carbon technologies, much of the potential for carbon reductions will not be realized.

Government policies and programs that encourage and/or require the adoption of energy-efficiency and low-carbon technologies will be needed, along with incentives for industry to invest more in these technologies. Additional private and public investments are necessary, not only to accelerate the introduction of new technologies into the market before 2010 but also to ensure the availability of technologies for the period after 2010. The transportation and utility sectors are especially dependent on early technological advances to achieve the scenario results in 2010.

There is no assurance that these and other driving forces will cause the scenarios we have described to take place. Our major conclusion is that technology can be deployed to achieve major reductions in carbon emissions by 2010 at low or no net direct costs to the economy. Cost-effective energy efficiency alone can take the nation 30 to 50% of the way to 1990 levels. Two additional utility sector measures can reduce carbon emissions by another 30% at an estimated cost of $50/tonne carbon: carbon-based dispatch and conversion of existing power plants from coal to natural gas.[5] Finally, we identify several additional technologies that can contribute up to 20% of the estimated carbon reductions, also for less than $50/tonne. A next generation of advanced energy-efficiency and renewable energy technologies promises to enable the continuation of an aggressive pace of energy and carbon reductions over the next quarter century.

1.6 REFERENCES

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ENDNOTES

[1] The five national laboratories participating in the study were: Argonne National Laboratory (ANL), Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL), National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL). LBNL and ORNL were the co-leaders of the effort.

[2] The differences between the AEO97 BAU case and ours for 2010 are (1) 1.2 quads higher use of oil in transportation (32.3 instead of 31.1 quads) because auto fuel economy does not increase and (2) lower use of oil for electricity generation (declines from 1.5% of generation to 0.1%) and slightly higher use of natural gas and coal. In all other regards, including price of all fuels and delivered energy, our reference case and the AEO BAU case are essentially identical.

[3] See Section 2.2.3 for a definition of cost-effective energy efficiency technology.

[4] $50 per tonne of carbon corresponds to 12.5 cents per gallon of gasoline or 0.5 cents per kilowatt-hour for electricity produced from natural gas at 53% efficiency (or 1.3 cents per kilowatt-hour for coal at 34% efficiency). $25 per tonne would cut these gasoline and electricity price increments in half.

[5] The cost curve for repowering is relatively flat; as such, considerable additional reductions are possible at a cost not too different from $50/tonne. The results are highly sensitive to the price differential between coal and natural gas; at a lower (higher) price differential, a higher (lower) permit price of carbon is needed.