Climate of Change: Russian Political and Economic Factors and Their Impacts on the Kyoto Protocol Decision

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President Vladmir Putin of Russia has historically been labeled as particularly unconcerned with environmental issues. But with his recent decision to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, a treaty formed in 1997 by the United Nations to curb harmful greenhouse emissions, it seems that President Putin is taking a step in the opposite direction. Through close analysis of the political apparatus of both the former Soviet Union and the current Russian Federation as well as the economic incentives involved, it becomes clear that Putin's decision was primarily motivated by substantial economic interests rather than environmental concern. The presentation will closely detail how the European Union and its invitation for Russia to join the World Trade Organization affected the economics of Putin's decision to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.