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Day 25: Half Way

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Bill and Dong skiing past a bit of sastrugi.

The best day of the expedition,' was how Dongsheng described the day. Bill added, 'warm and beautiful.' With the Thiel mountains growing after every step and a deep blue sky, it was truly magnificent.

This is the Antarctica that makes us smile.

Today was special for another reason as we passed 85 degrees. We are now officially half way to the South Pole! We feel good about accomplishing that small goal. After all, it only took us 25 days to get here. Only.

When was the last time it took you 25 days to get anywhere let alone 25 days to get half way somewhere? In our increasingly faster world, it is refreshing for us to measure progress in days and weeks. So often we parse time into the smallest possible units, packing in more and more.

Here we can watch our shadows arc across the snow and even notice when the angle has changed. We ski towards distant mountains for days and watch them shrink behind us for, at times, weeks. In relation to the entire scale of our journey, it feels more like we are becoming a part of this landscape rather than simply traveling across it.

This makes us smile too.

In another few weeks or so we will know what it will feel like to be successful in reaching the pole or not. Until then, we will continue forward - enjoying small successes, bracing for hardships, and hopefully, understanding this place and it's effect on our lives.

On Tuesday, the Center for Biological Diversity's Climate Law Institute released a report demonstrating that President Obama has clear legal authority to commit the United States to reducing greenhouse gas pollution.

The report, titled "Yes, He Can: President Obama's Power to Make an International Climate Commitment Without Waiting for Congress", concludes that the President need not wait for Congress to act before taking strong action to reduce U.S. emissions.

The report was released at an event hosted by Greenpeace at the conference site. The take away: President Obama's hands are not tied by Congress's lack of action or the grossly inadequate cap-and-trade bills currently under debate. President Obama can lead, rather than follow, by using his power under the Clean Air Act and other laws to achieve deep and rapid greenhouse emissions reductions from major polluters. The Constitution and existing domestic environmental laws give President Obama all the power he needs to join with other nations in making a real commitment to solve the climate crisis.

The report also details the President's broad authority to reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions under existing environmental laws, including the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and National Environmental Policy Act. The release of the report follows an important finding by the Environmental Protection Agency issued earlier in the week that greenhouse gases endanger public health and welfare and the Center and 350.org's petition to the EPA of last week asking EPA to set a national pollution cap on greenhouse gases.

Remember, it's cool to be cold. Save the Poles. Save the planet.

For more information, please visit www.savethepoles.com

For information about guided Antarctic expeditions, please visit <http://www.antarctic-logistics.com/>

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