The environmental science community is welcoming the new Obama administration with open arms. That's no surprise, of course — there was never any love lost between environmental scientists and the George W. Bush administration.

But for the science community this transition is more than the departure of an enemy. So far, the new president is hitting all the right notes to sound like a friend.

Rick Weiss at Science Progress reports that before the election Obama sent a letter to federal employee unions pledging that "In an Obama administration, the principle of scientific integrity will be an absolute, and I will never sanction any attempt to subvert the work of scientists." That, of course, was a clear response to the findings of a series of polls by the Union of Concerned Scientists finding low morale among scientists at environmental agencies and the reports of the Department of Interior Inspector General on the activities of Julie MacDonald.

Since the election, Obama has tapped Steven Chu as Energy Secretary, John Holdren as Science Advisor, and Jane Lubchenco as NOAA Administrator, giving both science and the environment three powerful voices within his administration. Obama even mentioned science in his inaugural address, promising to "restore science to its right ful place."

All of this is welcome news, and an excellent start. Let's hope it doesn't end there. The administration should keep the momentum going with an executive order on scientific integrity, a government-wide commitment to allowing open communication, new rules on transparency with respect to the role of appointees in decisions, and new institutional firewalls between political appointees and career scientists.