

President Trump Signs Executive Order Withdrawing the United States From Paris Agreement

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On January 20, 2025, President Trump signed an executive order (the EO), "[Putting America First in International Environmental Agreements](#)." See Exec. Order 14162. The EO directs the United States to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement and similar commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Paris Agreement has been adopted by 195 nations. Its stated goal is to mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to the effects of climate change, and providing financial resources to smaller nations to meet these objectives. Under the terms of the Paris Agreement, the United States' withdrawal will take effect in one year.

The EO also revokes and rescinds the U.S. International Climate Finance Plan, an executive order (Exec. Order 14008) signed by former President Biden on January 27, 2021. That plan sought to direct American financial resources to assist developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The stated purpose behind the EO is to keep the United States out of international agreements that stifle the economic and environmental objectives of the United States. The Trump Administration's new stated policy is instead to coordinate international energy agreements that prioritize economic efficiency and American prosperity.

IMPLICATIONS

The United States withdrawal from the Paris Agreement is largely symbolic in effect. Few nations are meeting the commitments, with the UN Climate Change Executive Secretary releasing a report in October 2024 noting that "current national climate plans files miles short of what's needed." Of greater significance is what the EO and this withdrawal signals for the Trump Administration's broader efforts in the energy and environment.

The EO represents the first step in the Trump Administration's declared goal to engage in major deregulatory efforts with respect to greenhouse gas regulation and to move away from a mandated transition to particular forms of energy. For instance, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is directed to review its 2009 finding that greenhouse gases endanger the public health and welfare that must be regulated under the Clean Air Act. If the EPA reverses the endangerment finding and stops regulating greenhouse gases as an air pollutant under certain sections of the Clean Air Act—that could materially alter the regulatory landscape relating to energy production.

Removing the EPA's obligation to regulate greenhouse gases could be just the beginning of the Trump Administration deprioritizing wind and solar energy and reprioritizing extractable resources. President Trump also indicated on his first day in office his intent to undo the Biden Administration's regulations mandating great deployment of electric vehicles. See Exec. Order 14154. In line with this, the Trump Administration will also likely continue deregulating infrastructure for natural resources, such as fossil-fuel-powered energy plants and pipelines for moving fuels.

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