

Season of Creation 2026 - Supplement
All Saints Episcopal Church - Skowhegan, Maine

AI Research of
Our Federal Government's Current Climate Policies



Policy: The current administration and EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin, federal agencies have pivoted from emissions reduction to "**unleashing American energy**" through the rapid expansion of domestic oil, gas, and coal production.

The present administration has utilized executive orders and direct administrative directives to roll back federal climate policies, fast-track fossil fuel production, and restrict state-level environmental regulations.

Below is a breakdown of the key executive orders and related major administrative directives that exacerbate climate change by increasing greenhouse gas emissions.

Fossil Fuel Expansion & National Emergencies

Declaring a National Energy Emergency: Implemented on his first day in office, this directive utilizes the National Emergencies Act to expedite fossil fuel projects, speed up

drilling/mining approvals on public lands, and bypass typical environmental review processes.

Fast-Tracking LNG Exports: Reverses previous pauses and expedites the review and construction of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) export terminals, locking in multi-decade infrastructure for fossil fuel extraction. [\[1, 2\]](#)

Promoting Energy Independence (EO 13783): This foundational order dismantled the Obama-era Clean Power Plan, lifted the moratorium on federal coal leasing, and revoked restrictions on methane emissions for the oil and gas sector. [\[1, 2\]](#)

Targeting Climate Science & Vehicle Emissions

Rescinding the Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding: Directed by the administration and executed alongside the EPA, this policy officially revoked the 2009 scientific finding that greenhouse gases imperil public health. This eliminated the primary legal obligation for the federal government to regulate carbon pollution, subsequently dismantling vehicle emission standards through the 2027 model year. [\[1, 2\]](#)

Loosening HFC Refrigerant Rules: Directed the EPA to terminate strict emission and leak-repair rules for hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)—refrigerant gases that possess significantly higher global-warming potential than carbon dioxide. [\[1, 2, 3\]](#)

Restricting Clean Energy & Climate Funding

Halting Offshore Wind Leasing: Temporarily blocked the issuance or renewal of all wind energy leases on the Outer Continental Shelf.

Freezing Climate Initiative Funds: Ordered federal agencies to immediately pause the disbursement of unspent funds from the **Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)** and the **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)**, halting billions aimed at clean energy transitions.

Withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement: Re-instated the official exit of the United States from the international accord aimed at keeping global warming below 1.5°C. [\[1, 2, 3, 4, 5\]](#)

Restricting State Authority & Environmental Justice

Protecting American Energy From State Overreach (EO 14260): Restricts individual states from enforcing local climate laws, carbon taxes, and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) initiatives. It mandates the Attorney General to halt state actions that "burden" fossil fuel development.

Dismantling Environmental Justice Programs: Executive orders like **EO 14148** defunded and shuttered environmental justice offices across federal agencies, eliminating programs like Justice40 which funneled green infrastructure investments into vulnerable frontline communities. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#) [\[4\]](#) [\[5\]](#)

The table below contrasts the former federal targets against current 2026 administrative policy, which has effectively **abolished national emissions reduction goals**. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#)

Comparison of Federal Climate Policies

Climate Metric	Democratic Policy	Republican Policy
Paris Agreement Status	Rejoined; aligned with a 1.5°C global warming limit.	Officially withdrawn from the international treaty.
2030 Emissions Target	50–52% reduction in greenhouse gases below 2005 levels.	Annulled ; policy changes mean emissions are projected to flatline at ~3% below current levels.
2035 Emissions Target	61–66% reduction in greenhouse gases below 2005 levels.	Annulled via the elimination of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

Net-Zero Goal	Achieve a net-zero emissions economy-wide by 2050.	Abolished ; the administration does not recognize a federal net-zero target.
Power Sector Target	100% carbon pollution-free electricity by 2035.	Replaced with long-term mandates to procure power from coal-fired plants .
Vehicle Fleet Target	50% electric vehicle sales share by 2030.	Eliminated clean vehicle standards through the 2027 model year.

Where Climate Targets Stand Today

Climate-change-amplified weather events have driven significant, costly damages across the United States. [\[1\]](#)

Flooding and Severe Storms

Destructive flash floods: Warmer atmospheric vapor triggered severe flash flooding that submerged infrastructure in states like Texas and New Jersey. [\[1\]](#)

Emergency evacuations: Severe flash flooding in Missouri overwhelmed regional infrastructure, forcing the helicopter evacuation of over 200 people from a summer camp. [\[1\]](#)

Torrential rainfall records: Slow-moving storm systems unleashed unprecedented rainfall, such as a historic 7-inch deluge in Albany, NY that triggered severe drainage failures. [\[1\]](#)

Wildfires and Drought

Massive land acreage burned: Driven by low winter snowpacks and dried-out vegetation, early-summer wildfires scorched over 1.6 million acres in Oregon and 200,000 acres in Washington. [\[1\]](#)

Air quality degradation: Intense wildfire smoke triggered severe "Code Red" air quality alerts across the Northeast and Midwest, forcing widespread cancellations of outdoor activities. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

Expanding agricultural drought: Rapidly evaporating soil moisture left roughly 46% of the lower 48 states in distinct drought conditions, threatening crop yields and shrinking groundwater levels. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

The cascading effects of climate-driven weather events carry distinct financial tolls and severe biological disruptions. Researchers emphasize that treating economic losses and ecological degradation as separate issues is an oversight, as **biodiversity loss is now the single largest driver of global environmental damage bills**. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#)

Economic Impact

Billion-dollar disaster escalation: The United States sustained **12 distinct billion-dollar weather events in just the first half of 2026**, accumulating over \$31.9 billion in short-term damages. [\[1\]](#)

Real estate and infrastructure loss: Coastal real estate values face sharp declines from compounding sea-level rise, while flash floods routinely compromise regional power grids, roadways, and wastewater networks. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#)

Plummeting labor productivity: Sustained summer heat creates hazardous conditions for outdoor industries (construction, agriculture), reducing overall labor capacity and trimming up to 0.7% of regional GDP per degree Fahrenheit of warming. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

Surging insurance and energy costs: Extreme temperatures force continuous air conditioning usage, straining energy grids and driving up consumer utility bills, while commercial insurance markets face systemic instability due to rising climate risks. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

Ecological Impact

Accelerating biodiversity loss: Rapidly shifting biomes leave native plants and animals unable to adapt, resulting in localized extinctions and severe damage to foundational ecosystems like the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#) monitored coral reefs.

Mass marine bleaching: Escalating marine heatwaves cause widespread coral bleaching and trigger massive die-offs in commercial fisheries, fracturing the base of the marine food web.

Soil degradation and canopy loss: Lengthened fire seasons and intense agricultural droughts bake vital nutrients out of topsoil, preventing natural forest regeneration and converting carbon-absorbing forests into net carbon emitters.

Hydrological disruptions: Shrinking mountain snowpacks and rapidly evaporating reservoirs contaminate freshwater supplies, creating severe water imbalances for both human infrastructure and local wildlife.

Earth and Humanity by 2100

If global greenhouse gas emissions continue entirely unchecked, the [United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#) projects global warming will reach approximately **2.8°C to 3°C above pre-industrial levels by 2100**. This trajectory bypasses critical ecological tipping points, fundamentally altering the planet and human civilization: [\[1, 2\]](#).

Complete ecosystem collapse: The world's coral reefs will face near-total extinction. Vast expanses of the Amazon rainforest risk transitioning into dry, fire-prone savannahs, irreversibly destroying global carbon sinks.

Rapidly rising oceans: Sea levels are projected to rise between 2 and 4 feet by 2100. This will submerge massive swaths of coastal geography, accelerate coastal erosion, and permanently poison freshwater aquifers with saltwater.

Permafrost thaw loops: Thawing Arctic permafrost will release billions of tons of trapped methane and carbon dioxide. This creates an unstoppable, self-reinforcing warming loop independent of human activity.

Systemic food and water scarcity: Simultaneous crop failures across major agricultural regions will destabilize the global food supply. Over 2 billion people will face severe, chronic water scarcity, decimating livelihoods reliant on livestock and farming.

Mass displacement and geopolitical conflict: Uninhabitable heat and lost coastlines will trigger unprecedented migration crises. Hundreds of millions of climate refugees will be forced to displace, stoking political instability, resource border wars, and systemic strain on global healthcare infrastructure.

Resources: Join the Citizens' Climate Lobby - Waterville Chapter

Interested in solving climate change? We're regular people from Maine who are working together to get climate laws passed.

https://citizensclimatelobby.org/chapters/ME_Waterville/

The BTS Center – Spiritual Leadership for a Climate-Changed World

<https://thebtscenter.org/>

Center for Action and Contemplation - Albuquerque NM

Fr. Richard Rohr Daily Meditations

<https://cac.org/daily-meditations>

Episcopal Diocese of Maine

Creation Care Team

<https://episcopalmaine.org/ministries/advocacy/creation-care/>

Creation Care Ministries - Washington, DC

"Caring for God's planet and People"

<https://www.creationjustice.org/>

