

Projected effect of Trump Administration policy changes on US emissions

Policy	Obama Administration	Trump Administration	Projected effect of change
Climate Action Plan Renewable energy target	Target: double renewable energy by 2020 (from 2013)	Climate Action Plan rescinded	No effect, target expected to be reached independently of federal policies.
Climate Action Plan Energy efficiency target	Target: double energy productivity (defined as GDP per energy use) ¹ by 2030 in comparison to 2010	Climate Action Plan rescinded	Target will be missed with implemented policies—energy productivity in 2030 expected to be about 1.5 times higher than in 2010 (CAT calculation). Reaching target would have mitigated about 880 MtCO ₂ e in 2025 (12% of total 2005 emissions excl. LULUCF) and 1,175 MtCO ₂ e (16% of total 2005 emissions excl. LULUCF) in 2030 over current policy scenario (CAT calculation).
Clean Power Plan (CPP)	The CPP aims to reduce emissions from the power sector to 32% below 2005 levels by 2030 by setting targets for each state individually. Proposed in 2014, announced as a final rule in August 2015 after an extended phase of public consultation. The U.S. Supreme Court blocked the CPP in February 2016, and the D.C. circuit court with jurisdiction over the case paused litigation in April 2017. 19 states support the Clean Power Plan ² .	In response to President Trump's Executive Order on Energy Independence, the EPA is reviewing the CPP	If the CPP is rescinded and states or other actors do not compensate for it, emissions would be up to 200 MtCO ₂ e higher in 2025 (2.8% of total 2005 emissions excl. LULUCF) and up to 365 MtCO ₂ e higher in 2030 (5.3% of total 2005 emissions excl. LULUCF) compared to our current policy scenario (CAT calculation). Individual states, regions, cities and companies may step in to provide similar or even stronger incentives for energy efficiency, renewable energy and other low carbon energy as the CPP, but the possible effect was not quantified.
Performance standards for new, modified, and reconstructed electric generating units	Standards set in August 2015	In response to President Trump's Executive Order on Energy Independence, EPA is reviewing performance standards	Likely to have negligible effect on emissions (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2015).
Emissions standards for cars and light duty trucks	Emissions standards for light duty vehicles set for model years 2017–2025 in 2012 (final rule set standards for model years 2017–2021, and estimated standards for 2022–2025, which are to be finalized after a midterm evaluation)	EPA and NHTSA are reviewing emissions standards for model years 2022–2025	If the standards for 2022–2025 are rolled back and the fleet stays at the 2021 standard level, emissions could increase by 22 MtCO ₂ e in 2025 (0.3% of total 2005 emissions excl. LULUCF) and 76 MtCO ₂ e in 2030 (1% of total 2005 emissions excl. LULUCF) above our current policy scenario (CAT calculation).
Federal coal leases	Moratorium on new coal leases on federal lands began in January 2016	Department of the Interior lifted moratorium on new federal coal leases in March 2017	Impact on emissions unclear—250 coal plants have retired or committed to retire since 2010, leaving only 273 operating (Sierra Club, 2017). Competition from natural gas and the growth of renewable energy have contributed to US coal industry decline (Houser et al., 2017).
Climate Action Plan HFCs	Target: cut HFC use at home and abroad Implemented HFC reductions through the Significant New Alternatives Program (SNAP) in 2015	Climate Action Plan rescinded No action on SNAP rule	Emissions will follow current policy scenario, which includes SNAP rule.
Climate Action Plan Methane	Target: reduce methane emissions from oil and gas production by 40–45% below 2005 levels by 2025	Climate Action Plan rescinded	Target will not be met under the current policy scenario. Meeting the full target would have reduced emissions by 90–100 MtCO ₂ e in 2025 (~1.3% of total 2005 emissions excl. LULUCF) and 100–135 MtCO ₂ e in 2030 (1.4–1.9% of total 2005 emissions excl. LULUCF) from current policy scenario (CAT calculation).
Methane standards for new and modified oil and gas facilities	Standards implemented in May 2016	In response to President Trump's Executive Order on Energy Independence, EPA is reviewing final methane standards for new and modified oil and gas facilities.	If rule were to be rescinded, emissions could rise 9.2 MtCO ₂ e (~0.1% of total 2005 emissions excl. LULUCF) above current policy scenario in 2025 (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2016).
Methane reporting requirements	EPA sent out an Information Collection Request in 2016 that required the oil and gas industry to provide information on equipment and methane emissions at existing facilities	EPA withdrew the request in March 2017	The request would have built the foundation to regulate emissions from existing facilities. Withdrawing it makes it more difficult to introduce policies to limit these emissions in the future.
Social cost of carbon (SCC) for policy and regulatory assessments	First official US SCC estimate released in 2010—updated several times since	Trump Administration is reviewing estimates of the SCC and has withdrawn technical guidance documents for agencies on how to implement it	SCC gives benefits from reducing CO ₂ emissions a monetary value, which can be used in cost-benefit analyses to help justify policies that reduce emissions. If the Trump Administration assumes that there is no value in reducing CO ₂ emissions, it will make most new regulations to reduce emissions appear too expensive to justify (Kaufman, 2017).

References

- Houser, T., Bordoff, J., Marsters, P., 2017. Can Coal Make a Comeback?
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- Sierra Club, 2017. Milestone 250th and 251st American Coal Plants Announce Retirement.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2016. Oil and Natural Gas Sector: Emission Standards for New, Reconstructed, and Modified Sources. Washington D.C.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2015. Standards of Performance for Greenhouse Gas Emissions From New, Modified, and Reconstructed Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units; Final Rule. doi:10.1007/s10750-004-4538-3

Footnotes

¹ As defined by the U.S. Department of Energy

² https://www.eenews.net/interactive/clean_power_plan#legal_challenge_status