

# Paris Climate Accord Doesn't Go Far Enough - but Trump's Pullout Will Endanger Life on Earth

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*A large number of climate experts believe the Paris Climate Accord does not go nearly far enough in addressing the crisis of abrupt anthropogenic climate disruption (ACD).*

Nevertheless, in what is clearly both a symbolic move and a nod to his fossil fuel backers, Donald Trump will be pulling the US out of the agreement, according to several [reports today](#).

The US, along with nearly 200 other countries, agreed to voluntarily reduce its greenhouse gas emissions in 2015. Interestingly, given the ongoing Russia scandal that is plaguing the White House on a daily basis now, withdrawing from the Paris climate agreement will make the US and Russia the only industrialized countries that reject taking action to mitigate ACD.

Trump has claimed that ACD is a “hoax,” despite the fact that [97 percent](#) of the global scientific community agrees that humans are the cause of our warming planet. The [majority of the remaining 3 percent](#) of the scientific community has been shown to be taking funding from the fossil fuel industry.

Trump's move displays a callous disregard for the future of life on Earth. A recently [published study](#) showed that the depletion of dissolved oxygen in Earth's oceans is occurring much faster than previously believed. Hence, ACD is now recreating the conditions that caused the worst mass extinction event on Earth, the Permian mass extinction that took place approximately 250 million years ago and annihilated 90 percent of life. Dramatic oceanic warming and acidification were key components of this extinction event, and these conditions align with what we are seeing today.



Source: The Guardian / PolitiFact

In the US, a recent [report](#) states that it is “inevitable” that the contiguous US will lose all of its glaciers by 2050, a mere 33 years from now. Data from a January US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration report show that the federal government has increased its worst-case scenario for sea-level rise to up to an average of more than eight feet by 2100. That amount of sea level rise will render large parts of many global coastal cities, including several in the US, uninhabitable.

As Trump geared up to pull out from the Paris agreement, scientists have [stated the obvious](#): The Earth is likely to reach dangerous levels of warming even sooner if Trump withdraws the US from its promise to cut CO2 emissions.

Scientists have said that the US withdrawal could add up to 3 billion tons of CO2 into the atmosphere on an annual basis. Over time, that will be enough to melt ice sheets faster, trigger more extreme weather events and raise sea levels even more quickly.

[One group ran a worst-case computer simulation](#) showing what will happen if the US does not curb its emissions, and found that it would add up to half a degree of warming on its own by 2100.

## World Leaders Condemn the Withdrawal but Vow to Move Forward

Global leaders have condemned Trump's decision.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel [said](#) talks with Trump at the recent G7 conference in Europe regarding the Paris agreement were "very difficult, if not to say, very unsatisfactory." After meeting with Trump, Merkel said that Europe needed to unify and work together to take care of itself, given that the US is no longer working with its allies.

Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni also said that Europe needed to forge its own path.

"This takes nothing away from the importance of our trans-Atlantic ties and our alliance with the United States, but the importance we put on these ties cannot mean that we abandon fundamental principles such as our commitment to fight climate change and in favor of open societies and free trade," [he told the media](#).

In the US, Sen. Ed Markey (D-Massachusetts) [tweeted](#):

"Pulling out of #ParisAgreement is a massive moral, economic & leadership failure for Trump admin. Loss of business, jobs, & intl standing."

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres [said Tuesday](#) that ACD is undeniable and it is "absolutely essential" that the world fight the problem together, and stated that the US should stay on board with the agreement.

"If any government doubts the global will and need for this accord, that is reason for all others to unite even stronger and stay the course," Guterres [told the media](#) during an event at New York University. "The message is simple: the sustainability train has left the station. Get on board or get left behind."

## Environmental Groups Condemn Trump's Move

Earthworks' Executive Director Jennifer Krill said Trump's decision to exit the Paris agreement shows that this administration values fossil fuel industry profits over our health and well-being.

"President Trump's decision to exit the Paris Climate Agreement sends a dangerous signal to the rest of the world that the United States values fossil fuel industry profits over clean energy innovation and the health and well-being of our citizens," she said in the group's recent press release. "As the

second-largest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions, turning our back on international climate action damages not only our global reputation on this issue, but the people here at home who suffer from the air pollution that comes along with these emissions. The over 12 million people living within a half mile of an oil and gas facilities deserve action to reduce air pollution, not head-in-the-sand climate denial.”

Wenonah Hauter, the executive director of Food and Water Watch, went so far as to say that Trump’s move makes the US a “rogue nation.”

In a press release, Hauter acknowledged that the Paris accord falls short of the kind of action that is really necessary, but that it was “better than nothing.”

“By choosing to walk away from the table, the United States effectively becomes a rogue nation when it comes to matters of climate change, human rights and global leadership in general,” Hauter said. “Mr. Trump’s foolish, belligerent decision to abdicate responsibility at the federal level now makes real action on climate at the state and local levels even more critical.”

Hauter added that, for the sake of our planet and future generations,

“It is imperative that elected leaders at every rung of government — from the smallest town halls to the halls of Congress — do everything in their power to resist fossil fuels and help enable a clean energy revolution.”

May Boeve, executive director of the climate organization [350.org](http://350.org), said in a press release that today is a “shameful day,” and called Trump’s move a “travesty” and a “crime against the future of people and the planet.” She assessed the situation as a prioritization of profit over the will of the people.

“The choice they had was clear, and they decided to side with fossil fuel billionaires over the overwhelming majority of Americans who support the agreement,” Boeve said. “By exiting, the administration has isolated the United States from the rest of the world and defamed the US position as global leader on climate action and much more.”

*Dahr Jamail, a Truthout staff reporter, is the author of [The Will to Resist: Soldiers Who Refuse to Fight in Iraq and Afghanistan](#) (Haymarket Books, 2009), and [Beyond the Green Zone: Dispatches From an Unembedded Journalist in Occupied Iraq](#) (Haymarket Books, 2007). Jamail reported from Iraq for more than a year, as well as from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Turkey over the last 10 years, and has won the Martha Gellhorn Award for Investigative Journalism, among other awards.*

*His third book, [The Mass Destruction of Iraq: Why It Is Happening, and Who Is Responsible](#), co-written with [William Rivers Pitt](#), is available now on Amazon.*

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*Featured image: The New York Times*

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