CA-01

The power's there; U.S. parks want only to tap it; Renewable energy projects sit idle because of a squabble with SoCal Edison.

Cart, Julie . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]09 Jan 2012: A.1.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/914600923?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

A new $800,000 solar project at Death Valley National Park, photovoltaic panels at the state-of-the art visitors center at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and a solar power system at the U.S. Forest Service's new facility at Mono Lake are among dozens of taxpayer-funded projects across California on hold as the federal agencies try to hash out an agreement with SCE to tie the projects to the state's electrical grid. [...] we can get the interconnection agreement approved, the switch is off and we can't benefit.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Millions of dollars in renewable energy projects intended to provide power to facilities in California's national parks and forests are sitting idle because of a years-long squabble with Southern California Edison.

A new $800,000 solar project at Death Valley National Park, photovoltaic panels at the state-of-the art visitors center at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and a solar power system at the U.S. Forest Service's new facility at Mono Lake are among dozens of taxpayer-funded projects across California on hold as the federal agencies try to hash out an agreement with SCE to tie the projects to the state's electrical grid.

The apparent stumbling block involves contract restrictions imposed by federal law, but utilities elsewhere in California have signed similar agreements with the agencies with few problems or delays.

"There's 24-plus systems in the Southern California Edison area that have been installed in the last three years that we have not been able to negotiate an interconnection agreement on," said Jack Williams, who retired this month as the National Park Service's Oakland-based regional facilities manager. "We think we are close at times, but then nothing. We were successful with PG&E, but with Southern California Edison.... They have been a bit more difficult. We've raised the flag many times. It's an issue for all federal agencies."

An Edison spokesman declined to discuss the projects, citing ongoing negotiations.

The impasse has hindered the parks' ability to meet renewable energy goals at a time when federal agencies are rushing to comply with orders to reduce carbon footprints. Equally troubling, officials say, is the financial fallout: a projected saving of tens of thousands of dollars from utility bills hasn't been realized during the two years the park and forest services have been negotiating with Edison.

Parks officials at Death Valley had hoped the newly renovated visitors center would pare an estimated $31,828 from an annual electric bill of $45,724, a 70% drop in energy cost. At the Santa Monica Mountains, a solar plant designed to power a dormitory has been offline since October 2010.

"It is disappointing to see this big investment sitting idle when we could easily flip the switch and produce benefits," said park superintendent Woody Smeck, who called himself "an administrator here trying to do the right thing."

"We are purchasing electricity from SCE, whereas we could be using renewable energy from the sun and returning power to the grid. Until we can get the interconnection agreement approved, the switch is off and we can't benefit."

The stalemate is also affecting the Veterans Administration and the Department of the Navy, which require interconnection agreements or power purchase agreements with the regional utility. Gov. Jerry Brown's office has dispatched Michael Picker, the governor's advisor on renewable energy, to meet with all the parties in coming weeks to hammer out differences.

Federal agencies generally may not sign contracts that would leave them liable for unknown future damages because they would be committing money that Congress hasn't allocated. In some instances, government departments use contracts based on the federal torts process, the legal mechanism to bring liability claims against the government. But so far, the federal agencies have been unable to get SCE to agree to such contract provisions.

The forest service said it has been trying to draft an agreement using a standard U.S. General Services Administration utility contract, but that approach has not gained any traction.

In addition to the Mono Lake project, the forest service has been waiting for a year to connect its solar panels at the San Dimas Technology and Development Center, which houses the agency's top engineering and development center for wilderness firefighting equipment. The solar plant there would be subject to rebates for the excess power it generates, officials said.

If any national park can make solar power work, it would be Death Valley, one of the world's sunniest and hottest landscapes. But superintendent Sarah L. Craighead said the park's solar projects have been unplugged since she took the job 21/2 years ago.

"We have been trying to get these agreements in place for quite some time. Everything is just sitting in the queue. Some panels were put up as part of the stimulus package," she said, referring to the economic initiative begun in the early days of the Obama administration.

Craighead said attorneys in the Interior Department's solicitor's office had been called on to help resolve the issue.

"We want to turn these things on," she said.

Although Death Valley's solar projects have not been able to get connected, the park's concessionaire has managed to install a one-megawatt photovoltaic plant that will provide one-third of the power needed to run the park's hotels, restaurants, golf course, offices and employee housing.

Pacific Gas &Electric last summer connected Yosemite's $5.8-million photovoltaic project at El Portal. The project was completed in February 2011, and the park signed the interconnection agreement four months later.

The 2,800 solar panels should produce approximately 800,000 kilowatt-hours per year. Yosemite officials estimate the system will save $50,000 per year on electricity bills and generate an energy rebate of $700,000 from PG&E over the next five years.

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: THE SOLAR PANELS at the King Gillette Ranch. Federal agencies are rushing to comply with orders to reduce carbon footprints.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Francine Orr Los Angeles Times; PHOTO: WOODY SMECK, chief of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, stands next to solar panels at the King Gillette Ranch in Calabasas.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Francine Orr Los Angeles Times; GRAPHIC: MAP: Waiting to power up; CREDIT:Doug Stevens Los Angeles Times

**DETAILS**

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CA-02

Cigarettes' lessons for climate change; Successful anti-smoking efforts of decades past offer a blueprint for how we might tackle global warming.

Schendler, Auden . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]04 Mar 2012: A.30.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/926047667?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

[...] we implemented policy solutions. [...] we changed cultural norms through advertising, in many cases funded through tobacco taxes.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

In the 1970s it seemed like we had problems we could never fix -- and I'm not talking about white polyester disco suits and the band Air Supply. The '70s presented America with the residue of a catastrophic war, soaring inner-city crime rates, runaway inflation and subjugation to Middle East oil. To punctuate the dismal vibe, everybody smoked, or so it seemed if you were sitting on an airplane at the edge of the DMZ between the smoking and nonsmoking sections, gagging and hacking as the guy a foot away from you chain-smoked filterless Camels.

The very idea that an airplane could have a "nonsmoking section" any more than a tear-gas chamber could have a "no cry" zone encapsulates the cynicism and malaise of that time. It seemed as though we were stuck with systemic problems we could never solve. Which may explain why we wore the disco suits.

But then something funny happened. We tackled those problems.

A move toward more fuel-efficient vehicles, plus Alaskan oil and geopolitical changes, gave us a breather from the tyranny of oil. Slowly we began reviving our inner cities and battling crime. We got out of Vietnam and created military doctrines to prevent such things from happening again (at least in theory). And most emblematic, we made huge strides in kicking a habit that had been part of human culture for centuries: smoking.

How'd we do it? The answer is worth considering as we struggle with a problem even harder to solve but with many similarities: climate change. In this case, we're addicted to consuming the Earth's fossil fuels in a way that's not just deadly to individuals but to the whole planet.

There are limits to the parallels between smoking and climate change, of course. People can live quite well without smoking, while society does need to consume energy -- even if not in the amounts it now does or from such damaging sources. But there are nevertheless ways in which our experience with tobacco can help us grapple with the overwhelming problem of climate change.

First, let's examine some of the ironies here. As Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway point out in their book "The Merchants of Doubt," the fossil fuel industry and the hard right have used the same tactics as the tobacco industry to seed doubt about the danger of climate change. In fact, they've often used the same people and institutions to deliver that message. Although that's depressing (fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me), it's also hopeful, because we beat tobacco -- or at least we're winning, with smoking rates having dropped from 45% of the population in 1954 to less than 20% today.

First, we implemented policy solutions. The "sin taxes" levied on tobacco in most states made it increasingly difficult to afford the habit and created incentives to quit. Yes, those were regressive taxes, but some of the tax revenue has been used to support health and smoking-cessation programs.

Second, we used the courts to take on tobacco for willfully and knowingly hurting people. And we started to win those lawsuits.

Third, we changed cultural norms through advertising, in many cases funded through tobacco taxes.

And fourth, we embraced real, third-party, arbitrated science, blessed with the imprimatur of the U.S. surgeon general, as a tool for moving public policy forward.

And we won, even though nobody on an airplane in 1975 would have thought it possible. So let's consider how we might apply those same techniques to solving climate change.

For starters, a revenue-neutral carbon tax could serve as a market mechanism to not only incentivize efficiency and clean energy but also as a way to create a free market for the first time, one that puts a price on the external costs of carbon. Even Canada's oil-rich Alberta has such a tax. Such levies encourage efficiencies because reducing emissions leads to lower taxes.

As to legal action, we are already seeing a burgeoning movement to use the courts to hold polluters accountable for the harm they have done -- and continue to do -- to the air, the climate and our health. "Atmospheric trust litigation" calls on the judicial branches of governments to force emissions cuts based on their fiduciary responsibility to protect the public trust.

NASA climatologist James Hansen recently filed a statement to a British court in support of an effort seeking to disclose who is funding the Global Warming Policy Foundation, a London-based climate skeptic think tank. Meanwhile, there is a growing conversation about who is liable for climate change. Businesses, shareholders and insurance companies are taking notice.

We are also slowly but surely chipping away at cultural norms with advertising and other media. The movie "An Inconvenient Truth" was a watershed in this effort, but many other examples abound. The Prius has been marketed as not only energy-efficient but also cool. Marketing leaders, like Alex Bogusky of VW ad fame, are turning their energies toward getting people to think about climate. A good maxim is that when a social debate reaches a charged state at the dinner table, the battle is nearly won. Think about civil and gay rights.

Last, science is slowly but surely taking back the game. When the Wall Street Journal published a series of baseless lies about climate change in January, it was debunked rapidly and widely by third-party groups such as the Union of Concerned Scientists. Other science arbiters, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the National Academy of Sciences, have also made overwhelmingly clear the need for action.

Sure, there's a long way to go. Denial is rampant, and the money behind the effort to delay action is as plentiful as civilization has ever known. But one only need recall the despair of the "nonsmoking" section of an airplane to remember that often sea change laps at the edges of convention. It really is darkest just before the dawn.

We've come a long way, baby. But we've got a bit further to go, and the path forward is illuminated by the soft glow of cigarettes.

Credit: Auden Schendler is the author of "Getting Green Done and a board member of Protect Our Winters.

**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: THE BURNING of fossil fuels can be attacked using public policies, taxation, lawsuits and by changing cultural norms.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Andy Wong Associated Press

**DETAILS**

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CA\_03

Science over hype; To counter climate change skeptics, it's crucial to stick to the data.

Lemonick, Michael D . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]02 Aug 2012: A.13.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1030474200?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

[...]some of these changes are already happening. [...]our best hope is sticking with the science as it is, not as any one person or cause wishes it might be.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Last week, NASA announced that 97% of Greenland's vast ice sheet had undergone at least some surface melting this summer, compared with a normal melt area of about 50%. The 2012 figure, said the headline on the space agency's press release, was "unprecedented."

That's a powerful word in any context, but it's especially so when you're talking about the politically charged topic of climate change. If the melting was unprecedented, it would reinforce the idea that scientists are right about the dangers of human-generated greenhouse gases, and at the same time make it harder for skeptics to take potshots at the science.

The skeptics were naturally delighted, therefore, when it turned out that such widespread melting is anything but unprecedented. It happened most recently in 1889, and it happens, on average, every 150 years or so. This summer's surface melt has very likely been influenced by global warming, but it might have happened anyway. The same goes for the heat waves that have pummeled large parts of the nation this summer and the drought that's now destroying crops in the Midwest.

The drama and the hype -- alarmist headlines, crowing skeptics, backtracking scientists (or at least, publicists) and a confused public -- made me crazy. With one poorly chosen word, climate-change skeptics were handed an opportunity to sow more doubt and confusion about global warming.

I work at Climate Central, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and news organization, and a good part of my work is dedicated to putting an end to just that sequence of events. Our central mission is communicating to a general audience what the science is and what it is not.

For the record: The science clearly shows that climate is changing largely as a result of greenhouse gas emissions. The science is equally clear that without rapid and drastic cutbacks in greenhouse gas emissions, the changes are likely to threaten life, property and Earth's biosphere in all sorts of ways -- including melting glaciers and worsening weather crises -- by the end of century, and in many cases, much sooner. In fact, some of these changes are already happening.

But there is a lot science doesn't know as well, especially what the link might be (if any) between climate change and specific events. It doesn't know for certain what the future holds for, say, hurricanes. (The tentative conclusion: These storms could become fewer but more powerful.) It can't say precisely how high sea level will rise, or how fast.

And there are outliers, scientists with (and sometimes without) legit credentials who doubt the mainstream conclusions. Yes, scientific "facts" are mutable: As data accumulate, knowledge changes. But just because science adjusts itself to new information (or because outliers invariably exist), it doesn't make the mainstream wrong.

I'm not a scientist; I'm a science journalist. I translate the arcane terminology of experiments, data and theories into everyday English. In the current climate of global warming doubt -- in which any uncertainty is used to discredit mountains of confirming data, where even a typo might promote misunderstanding -- the job can be a minefield.

I just co-wrote a climate-change primer for Climate Central: 60 simple, bite-size dispassionate chapters about what scientists know on the topic, no more, no less. Accuracy is always the appropriate goal for a journalist, but for "Global Weirdness," we were hypervigilant.

Each chapter was reviewed, down to the comma, by at least one of Climate Central's doctorate-level staff scientists, and revised based on their critiques. Each chapter was then re-reviewed by at least one scientist outside our organization, drawn from a list of the world's most eminent experts, and revised again.

It was something like the peer review process that scrutinizes scientific findings before they are published. No writer (and no scientist) particularly likes to have his or her work picked apart in this manner, but it's the best way we know to get things right.

This doesn't mean our work won't come under criticism. The very fact that we take mainstream climate science seriously will paint us as partisan hacks in the eyes of those who insist the whole thing is a scam, and that includes some scientists with doctorates of their own. And we'll no doubt also be criticized by those who think we aren't scaring people enough. Without fear, they believe, people might not take action.

Who knows, the fear pushers might be right. But as convinced as I am that limiting greenhouse gases is important, I'm grateful for every time a critical scientist or editor has stopped me from making an "unprecedented" error.

In the end our best hope is sticking with the science as it is, not as any one person or cause wishes it might be.

After all, the truth is scary enough.

Michael D. Lemonick is a senior writer for Climate Central, a contributor to Time magazine and a coauthor of "Global Weirdness: Severe Storms, Deadly Heat Waves, Relentless Drought, Rising Seas, and the Weather of the Future."

Credit: Michael D. Lemonick is a senior writer for Climate Central, a contributor to Time magazine and a coauthor of "Global Weirdness: Severe Storms, Deadly Heat Waves, Relentless Drought, Rising Seas, and the Weather of the Future."

**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: SATELLITE DATA from last month show the surface melt on Greenland's ice sheet on July 8, left, and July 12.; PHOTOGRAPHER:AFP / NASA

**DETAILS**

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CA\_04

SCIENCE FILE; New clues in decline of Maya; Rainfall data bolster a theory about climate change's role in the society's rise and fall.

Morin, Monte . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]17 Nov 2012: AA.2.

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**ABSTRACT**

Argument has raged for decades over what doomed the ancient Maya civilization and spurred its people to abandon their awe-inspiring temples and pyramids in the rain forests of Mexico and Central America.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Argument has raged for decades over what doomed the ancient Maya civilization and spurred its people to abandon their awe-inspiring temples and pyramids in the rain forests of Mexico and Central America. Warfare, disease, social unrest and over-farming have all been cited as potential factors in the decline of a culture that was scientifically and culturally advanced for 750 years.

A new study bolsters the theory that large-scale climate change was responsible for the society's demise -- and argues that changes in global weather patterns were also responsible for its rapid rise.

Using data from a 13,500-year-old stalagmite taken from the floor of a recently discovered cave in Belize, scientists said they were able to assemble a precise record of rainfall for the region going back 2,000 years.

The ancient cave spire was created by rainwater as it leaked from the ceiling of Yok Balum cave and deposited dissolved minerals in a growing mass on its floor, drip by drip. By examining the ratio of atomic isotopes along the length of the stalagmite, researchers said, they were able to determine when portions of it formed and how much rainwater fell during each six-month period.

What they discovered was a period of abundant rainfall during the early days of the civilization, followed eventually by drought. The results were published in the Nov. 9 edition of the journal Science.

"Unusually high amounts of rainfall favored an increase in food production and an explosion in the population" beginning around AD 440, said study leader Douglas J. Kennett, an anthropologist at Penn State University. "This led to the proliferation of cities like Tikal, Copan and Caracol across the Maya lowlands."

By AD 700, that wet weather gave way to a "general drying trend that lasted four centuries and was punctuated by a series of major droughts," he said. "That triggered a decline in agricultural productivity and contributed to societal fragmentation and political collapse.... Maya kings lost their power and influence."

Researchers said the severe drought the Maya experienced was akin to the one that devastated Mexico in the 16th century and brought crop failure, famine and death. Kennett said such circumstances probably visited the Maya during their classic period, which lasted from AD 250 to 1000.

Though the study adds valuable detail to the ancient climate record, other Maya researchers said it was unlikely to end debate on the issue.

Boston University archaeologist William Saturno said he remained unconvinced that climate change was the primary driver of the civilization's collapse.

The worst period of drought detailed in the report was in Belize 100 to 300 years after the time Maya in that region stopped inscribing major monuments and essentially "went dark" as a culture, Saturno said. He called it a mistake to believe that drought in one area affected all areas of Maya civilization, which also covered parts of what is now southern Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

Saturno said he believed the growing popularity of climate change theory in Maya studies was based on worries about modern-day global warming.

"Oftentimes, we're look- ing at ancient societies as an analogue to our own," he said. "We want to drive home the point: If we destroy the environment, we'll reach a point where we can't recover."

The authors of the study wrote that the prolonged drying trend triggered balkanization and fueled brutal warfare. Saturno said he doubted it led to war but that it could well have undermined the Maya leadership.

"If you have a guy who controls the rain, you might agree to build pyramids in his honor," he said. "But if the rains don't come, you might start to say, 'Wait a minute -- this guy doesn't really control the rain.' "

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: A STALAGMITE taken from the Yok Balum cave in Belize helped researchers determine amounts of rainfall during various periods of the Maya civilization.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Douglas Kennett Penn State University

**DETAILS**

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CA\_05

ENVIRONMENT; Climate change an issue for bank; Activist investors place a resolution on greenhouse gases before PNC Financial.

Reckard, E Scott . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]21 Feb 2013: B.1.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1289247954?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

[...]it is the focus of a consumer boycott," the shareholder resolution says, adding: "PNC has ignored investors' requests to provide information detailing its [mountaintop removal] policy implementation or the lending impacts of this policy."

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Activist investors have succeeded for the first time in placing a shareholder resolution on the risks of greenhouse-gas emissions up for a vote at a major bank, a step toward making climate change an important consideration for corporations.

The resolution, which follows years of protests over banks financing certain coal operations, is to be included in proxy material being sent to shareholders of PNC Financial Services Group of Pittsburgh before the bank's April 23 annual meeting.

It asks PNC to assess and report back to shareholders on how its lending results in greenhouse gas emissions that can alter the climate, posing financial risks for its corporate borrowers and risks to its own reputation.

PNC is the only major bank based in Appalachia, a region where coal and gas extraction is a major business. It has long lent to mining companies, including those engaged in mountaintop removal, which involves blowing up peaks to reach coal seams below and has been blamed for degrading landscapes, destroying habitat and polluting streams.

In recent years, PNC has cultivated an environmentally friendly image, building energy-conserving branches, making loans for solar projects and offering incentives to small businesses to protect the environment.

The backers of the resolution said, however, that PNC had offered only vague responses to the risks posed by climate change. What's more, they said, the bank reneged on a promise made in 2011 not to extend credit to individual mountaintop removal projects or to mining companies that receive the bulk of their production from the controversial process.

"As a result, it is the focus of a consumer boycott," the shareholder resolution says, adding: "PNC has ignored investors' requests to provide information detailing its [mountaintop removal] policy implementation or the lending impacts of this policy."

PNC spokesman Frederick Solomon declined to comment on the resolution, saying the bank's board would respond in due time.

The sponsors of the resolution include Quaker and Roman Catholic groups and mutual funds focused on investments they deem to be socially responsible, including Domini Social Investments, Walden Asset Management and Boston Common Asset Management.

In the mid-2000s, the Securities and Exchange Commission excluded similar resolutions at banks and insurers, holding that they concerned "ordinary business" at the financial firms, said Meredith Benton, a portfolio manager at Boston Common.

But in 2010 the SEC issued guidance saying corporations should disclose to shareholders the potential effect of climate change on their business and their strategies for dealing with the risks. The agency said the issue had become a topic of intense public discussion and a target for national and international regulation.

As this year's annual meeting season approaches, numerous corporations have shareholder resolutions focusing on sustainability and climate change, along with hot-button social and environmental topics such as sexual orientation, lobbying and political contributions and genetically modified food ingredients.

But most other companies facing climate change resolutions this year are directly involved with carbon energy production: oil giants Chevron Corp. and Exxon Mobil Corp. and coal producer Alpha Natural Resources Inc.

PNC had asked the SEC to bar the climate change resolution on grounds that lending and investing were part of its day-to-day business, but the SEC declined.

"In arriving at this position, we note that the proposal focuses on the significant policy issue of climate change," the SEC said in a letter to George P. Long III, PNC's chief governance lawyer. "Accordingly, we do not believe that PNC may omit the proposal from its proxy materials."

SEC spokesman John Nester said the decision does not mean every financial company must consider the issue of climate change. The ruling was based on the particular facts of PNC's case, he said, including the nature of the bank's lending criteria and public statements, which demonstrated a "meaningful relationship" between climate change and its operations.

Many activist stockholders have become less confrontational over the years, holding discussions with corporations over social and economic issues instead of filing shareholder resolutions, said Laura Berry, executive director of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility in New York.

The center, a 41-year-old coalition of activist investors, said its members have filed 180 shareholder resolutions while engaging in 225 "corporate dialogues" this proxy season.

"Filing a proposal can appear to be confrontational and can lead to all sorts of interactions -- some more effective than others," Berry said. "Withdrawing a proposal is often viewed as a sign progress is being made."

In the case of climate change and banks, that potentially could take place -- not at PNC but at JPMorgan Chase &Co., said Benton, the Boston Common portfolio manager.

The sponsors of the PNC resolution have proposed a similar shareholder vote at JPMorgan Chase but may withdraw it after discussions with a team of employees focused on climate change at the New York bank "who have real chops and are working on these issues," Benton said.

By contrast, she said, discussions with PNC turned up no evidence of a "holistic response" to climate change issues. And despite the bank's pledge to cut back lending for mountaintop removal projects, she said, "they haven't changed their practices in any way."

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: ACTIVIST INVESTORS target PNC Financial Services Group for lending for mountaintop removal.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Pete Souza Chicago Tribune

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Banking industry; Shareholder voting; Climate change; Lending |
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CA\_06

Time to act on climate change

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**ABSTRACT**

[...]that's worth remembering when President Obama releases his expected proposal for reducing the carbon footprint, which will almost surely include new restrictions for coal-burning plants, the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Hurricane Sandy has come and gone, so it might seem crazy that New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg recently announced a $20-billion proposal to construct levees and shore up hospitals to protect his city from storms and rising seas. All government leaders should be so crazy. Though the need to adopt policies that sharply curb carbon emissions remains as important as ever, there also are unmistakable signs that decades of inaction on climate change are shaping the present, not just the future. A national task force convened in 2009 has outlined many of the ways in which governments must adapt to and cope with climate change, but Bloomberg is one of the very few to do something concrete about it.

Early predictions made by climate scientists -- back when much of the nation was still dubious about any kind of greenhouse effect and many denied it existed -- are coming true even more quickly than expected. Although no single weather event can be laid at the door of global warming, more extreme weather throughout the nation, such as tornadoes in the Midwest and hurricanes in the Northeast, already is upon us, as are worsening dryness and fire seasons in the West.

Not all of the effects of climate change are expected to be negative. Certain warm-weather crops will grow in states that were once considered too cold, scientists say. But even those will demand adjustments. Farmers who shift from one crop to another, for instance, will be forced to learn new techniques and make new investments in equipment.

All of this requires first admitting reality, then planning for it and investing in the infrastructure needed to protect against the worst effects and take advantage of the new possibilities.

These might be as sweeping as planning out sources of water for the West -- including desalination plants and more recycling and required efficiency in water use -- or as specific as a community identifying cooled buildings where the elderly and other fragile people can go during prolonged hot spells and providing transportation to get them there. It might also include planning for crop losses and other flood-related damage in the Northeast, where precipitation has increased 67% over the past 50 years, or building levees and drainage.

Expensive? Very. But the price of doing nothing would be far greater. And that's worth remembering when President Obama releases his expected proposal for reducing the carbon footprint, which will almost surely include new restrictions for coal-burning plants, the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases. Adjusting to climate change will require clear thinking and significant investment, but if the nation sticks its collective head in the sand, it will find that sand covered by rising seas.

**DETAILS**

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CA\_07

A dry and desperate state; New Mexico wonders: Is this climate change or a brutal aberration?

Cart, Julie . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]06 Aug 2013: A.1.

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**ABSTRACT**

Nevada is removing wild horses and stocks of cattle from federal rangelands, Wyoming is seeding clouds as part of a long-term "weather modification program," officials in Colorado say the state's southeastern plains are experiencing Dust Bowl conditions, and the entire western U.S. has been beset by more frequent and ferocious wildfires across an ever-more combustible landscape. Wildlife managers are hauling water to elk herds in the mountains and blaming the drought for the unusually high number of deer and antelope killed on New Mexico's highways, surmising that the animals are taking greater risks to find water.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Scientists in the West have a particular way of walking a landscape and divining its secrets: They kick a toe into loamy soil or drag a boot heel across the desert's crust, leaning down to squint at the tiny excavation.

Try that maneuver in New Mexico these days and it yields nothing but bad news in a puff of dust.

Across the West, changes in the climate are taking a toll. Almost 87% of the region is in a drought.

Nevada is removing wild horses and stocks of cattle from federal rangelands, Wyoming is seeding clouds as part of a long-term "weather modification program," officials in Colorado say the state's southeastern plains are experiencing Dust Bowl conditions, and the entire western U.S. has been beset by more frequent and ferocious wildfires across an ever-more combustible landscape.

But nowhere is it worse than in New Mexico. In this parched state, the question is no longer how much worse it can get but whether it will ever get better -- and, ominously, whether collapsing ecosystems can recover even if it does.

The statistics are sobering: All of New Mexico is officially in a drought, and three-quarters of it is categorized as severe or exceptional. Reservoir storage statewide is 17% of normal, lowest in the West. Residents of some towns subsist on trucked-in water. Others are drilling deep wells costing $100,000 or more to sink and still more to operate.

Wildlife managers are hauling water to elk herds in the mountains and blaming the drought for the unusually high number of deer and antelope killed on New Mexico's highways, surmising that the animals are taking greater risks to find water.

Thousands of Albuquerque's trees have died as homeowners under water restrictions can't afford to water them, and in the state's agricultural belt, low yields and crop failures are the norm. Livestock levels in many areas are about one-fifth of normal, and panicked ranchers face paying inflated prices for hay or moving or selling their herds.

The last three years have been the driest and warmest since record-keeping began here in 1895. Chuck Jones, a senior meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Albuquerque, said even the state's recent above-average monsoon rains "won't make a dent" in the drought; deficits will require several years of normal rainfall to erase, should normal rain ever arrive.

With water supplies at the breaking point and no relief in sight, a domino-effect water war has broken out, which might be a harbinger of the West's future. Texas has filed suit, arguing that groundwater pumping in New Mexico is reducing Texas' share of the Rio Grande. Oklahoma has successfully fended off a legal challenge from Texas over water from the Red River.

New Mexico's stretch of the once-mighty Rio Grande is so dewatered that, sadly but aptly, it is referred to as the "Rio Sand."

The question many are grappling with is whether the changes are a permanent result of climate change or part of cyclical weather cycle. Jones, a member of the governor's drought task force, is cautious about identifying three years of extreme drought as representing a new climate pattern for New Mexico. It could be a multi-year aberration.

Nonetheless, most long-term plans put together by cattle ranchers, farmers and land managers include the probability that the drought is here to stay.

John Clayshulte, a third-generation rancher and farmer near Las Cruces, removed all his cattle from his federal grazing allotment. "There's just not any sense putting cows on there. There's not enough for them to eat," he said.

"It's all changed. This used to be shortgrass prairies. We've ruined it and it's never going to come back."

Kris Havstad punched his boot into the sunbaked ground and grunted. Havstad, a range expert with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, joined a group of other biologists and land managers on a recent tour of government rangeland north of Las Cruces.

Federal scientists are grimly watching a rare ecological phenomenon unfold here, a catastrophic alteration known as "state change" -- the collapse of the vast Chihuahuan Desert grasslands ecosystem and its transformation into a sandy, scrub desert affording little forage for wildlife or livestock.

Carpeting the landscape in lush waves, Black Grama grass had long been the signature of the 140,000-square-mile Chihuahuan Desert. But overgrazing and persistent drought have hit hard here, reducing the grass to small, stiff tufts, sparsely spaced.

The 10,000-year-old desert is changing, scientists say. Grasses are in a cycle of collapse, overwhelmed by hardy and long-lived shrubs such as mesquite and creosote.

Havstad picks at a mesquite seed pod, noting that absent any grass, hungry livestock are consuming them. "They are not terribly nutritious," he said. "It's like being the last one at the buffet and the only thing left is snow peas."

With only shrubs available to eat, the land is losing its ability to feed the cattle that graze here. So little grass remains that a square mile -- 640 acres -- can sustain just three to five cows in current conditions. A healthy desert can handle five times as many.

This federal land and the adjacent Jornada Experimental Range offer a trove of data for climate study. The research station has kept monthly precipitation data since 1915, and the federal Bureau of Land Management has historical photographs of plots throughout the region that provide a time-lapse map of change.

In one spot, a photograph dating to the 1960s shows a lush grassy square. As the group of scientists flips through the pictures, over time the plot becomes stripped of vegetation.

Jim McCormick is the Bureau of Land Management's assistant district manager for the area. He said his staff had spent time and prodigious sums of money in a program to help the land recover from a century of harsh climate and cattle grazing.

"Then came the drought to undo all our work," he said.

The bureau oversees much of the region, which includes one of the largest public grazing areas in the country. The agency has asked ranchers to remove their cattle from a number of pastures for a year or two to allow the land to rest. In many cases, officials say, ranchers are taking their livestock off voluntarily.

But not all the damage can be blamed on cattle; nor can simply removing them heal the landscape. An altered climate is now the biggest driver pushing the landscape-wide alterations taking place across the West.

"In the old days, we used to think if we built a fence around it, it will be OK," said Brandon Bestelmeyer, who conducts research on the Jornada for the Department of Agriculture. "That thinking didn't take into account climate change. These kind of state changes are catastrophic changes. They can be irreversible."

As vegetation dies off and the process of desertification accelerates, Bestelmeyer said, the Chihuahuan Desert will expand. As Western cities continue their march into wildlands, the growing desert and the sprawling suburbs are on a collision course.

Bestelmeyer, a landscape ecologist, describes what's at stake: "If we lose the grasslands, grazing is over, and the generations of people who depend on grazing will lose their livelihoods."

Biodiversity will decline as wildlife and bird species move away or die off. Moreover, a denuded landscape loses its ability to transport water to recharge aquifers, a crucial resource in the desert.

Finally, he said, without vegetation to hold soils in place, dust and sand will be on the move and encroach onto roads, crops, homes and businesses.

"You don't want a Sahara here," Bestelmeyer said.

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: THE RIO GRANDE is so low in southern New Mexico that many locals around Las Cruces refer to it as the "Rio Sand." As an extended drought continues to bake the West, New Mexico is suffering the worst of it.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Michael Robinson Chavez Los Angeles Times; PHOTO: A QUICK KICK into the soil, scientists say, generally turns up a dusty puff of depressing news.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Michael Robinson Chavez Los Angeles Times; PHOTO: LAND ONCE RICH in grass can no longer support cattle. Scientists fear that ecosystems are collapsing.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Michael Robinson Chavez Los Angeles Times; PHOTO: A SIGN near Las Cruces sums up the mood. Many ranchers are pulling cattle from federal grazing land.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Michael Robinson Chavez Los Angeles Times; PHOTO: JOHN CLAYSHULTE casts a shadow over cracked ground where some of his pecan trees are planted.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Michael Robinson Chavez Los Angeles Times; PHOTO: RESERVOIR STORAGE is at 17% of normal statewide, the lowest in the West. At Elephant Butte, campers and boaters drive across the lake bed to reach the water.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Michael Robinson Chavez Los Angeles Times; GRAPHIC: includes MAP: Parched; CREDIT:RAOUL RANOA Los Angeles Times

**DETAILS**

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CA\_08

Experts set threshold for climate-change calamity; Emissions tipping point may be 25 years away

Barboza, Tony . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]28 Sep 2013: A.1.

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**ABSTRACT**

"Because the rates of emissions are growing, it looks like we could burn through the other half in the next 25 years" under one of the more dire scenarios outlined in the report.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Correction: Tuesday, October 01, 2013: Climate change: An article in the Sept. 28 Section A about a warning issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said scientists predict that a global warming threshold will be reached after 1 trillion tons of carbon dioxide are emitted into the atmosphere. It should have said 1 trillion metric tons of carbon.

The world's leading climate scientists have for the first time established a limit on the amount of greenhouse gases that can be released before the Earth reaches a tipping point and predicted that it will be surpassed within decades unless swift action is taken to curb the current pace of emissions.

The warning was issued Friday by a panel of U.N.-appointed climate change experts meeting in Stockholm.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimated that once a total of 1 trillion tons of carbon dioxide are emitted into atmosphere, the planet will exceed 3.6 degrees of warming, the internationally agreed-upon threshold to the worst effects of climate change.

"We've burned through half that amount" since preindustrial times, Michael Oppenheimer, a professor of geosciences and international affairs at Princeton University who reviewed the report and is a co-author of the panel's upcoming report on the effect of climate change, said in an interview. "Because the rates of emissions are growing, it looks like we could burn through the other half in the next 25 years" under one of the more dire scenarios outlined in the report.

Other scenarios show that the threshold will be reached later this century.

The finding constitutes a warning to governments to cut emissions of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas, which is generated by the burning of fossil fuels, industrial activity and deforestation.

Calling climate change "the greatest challenge of our time," panel co-chair Thomas Stocker said humankind's fate in the next 100 years "depends crucially on how much carbon dioxide will be emitted in the future."

In the report, the panel said it is 95% certain that human activity is the dominant cause of the global warming observed since the 1950s. That is up from 90% six years ago.

"Human influence has been detected in warming of the atmosphere and the ocean, in changes in the global water cycle, in reductions in snow and ice, in global mean sea level rise, and in changes in some climate extremes," the report said.

The report is the panel's fifth major assessment since 1990. It reaffirms many of the conclusions of past reports, but with greater confidence.

"The atmosphere and ocean have warmed, the amounts of snow and ice have diminished, sea level has risen and the concentrations of greenhouse gases have increased," the panel wrote in a 36-page summary of its findings, released Friday. "Each of the last three decades has been successively warmer at the Earth's surface than any preceding decade since 1850."

The panel's full 2,500-page report will be published Monday.

The report also addressed the so-called hiatus, a slowdown in the rise of surface temperature that has been observed over the last 15 years. That slowing of the increase in temperatures has been seized on by skeptics to cast doubt on the science of climate change.

The report touches the subject only briefly, saying that temperatures fluctuate naturally in the short term and "do not in general reflect long-term climate trends."

Brenda Ekwurzel, a climate scientist for the Union of Concerned Scientists, said the slowdown is more like a speed bump, a result of heat being trapped and circulated through the ocean and atmosphere in different ways rather than a fundamental change in the climate. She said surface temperature is just one of many expressions of climate change, including sea level rise, melting ice and ocean acidification.

"The global average temperature is one kind of a thermometer, but an even bigger thermometer is the ocean, which is absorbing most of the excess heat that climate change is creating," she said.

The report updates predictions of how temperature and sea level are expected to rise over the century.

The panel now expects sea level to rise globally by 10 inches to 32 inches by century's end, up from the rise of 7 inches to 23 inches it projected in 2007.

Those figures now include the contribution of massive ice sheets in Antarctica and Greenland that are creeping toward the ocean as they melt. The panel failed to account for that variable in its previous report, prompting criticism from the scientific community that its previous sea level rise projections were too low.

The panel also lowered the bottom of the range of temperature increase expected over the long term if carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere double. The planet would warm by at least 2.7 degrees even if aggressive action is taken to cut emissions, but temperatures could rise as much as 8.1 degrees in other scenarios.

"If no action is taken, no way will you be in the lower band," Michel Jarraud, secretary-general of the U.N.'s World Meteorological Organization said at the Stockholm meeting, which was webcast.

Roger Pielke Jr., a professor of environmental studies at the University of Colorado and a leading critic of the climate science establishment, praised the core science of the report, but said many of its conclusions, including the idea of a carbon dioxide limit, are neither new or surprising. He criticized the panel for not doing more to acknowledge uncertainty over how climate change will express itself in the near term.

"By not addressing the issues associated with the 'hiatus' in warming the IPCC missed an opportunity to clarify this issue, and also has guaranteed continuing allegations from its critics that is has dodged this issue," Pielke said.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry called the report "yet another wake-up call."

"Once again, the science grows clearer, the case grows more compelling, and the costs of inaction grow beyond anything that anyone with conscience or common sense should be willing to even contemplate," he said in a statement.

Environmental activists greeted the report with calls for government action.

"This IPCC climate science assessment tells us in the strongest possible terms that we ignore climate change at our great peril." Earthjustice President Trip Van Noppen said in a statement.

The assessment was written by more than 800 scientists from around the world. The panel does not conduct its own research, but collects and summarizes thousands of peer-reviewed scientific studies.

The report will inform negotiations toward a new international climate treaty to cut greenhouse gas emissions that is supposed to be reached by 2015.

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: WATER DRIPS from an iceberg. Calling climate change "the greatest challenge of our time," Thomas Stocker said humankind's fate "depends crucially on how much carbon dioxide will be emitted in the future."; PHOTOGRAPHER:John McConnico Associated Press; PHOTO: ACTIVISTS GATHER outside the U.N. panel's meeting and pose with a giant seesaw, showing its 95% certainty that humans cause climate change.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Jonathan Nackstrand AFP/Getty Images

**DETAILS**

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CA\_09

THE WORLD; 'How will I feed my family?'; Indonesia village shows how climate change threatens those who depend on sea.

Welch, Craig . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]12 Jan 2014: A.3.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1476555684?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

Hundreds of millions of people around the world rely on marine life susceptible to climbing temperatures and ocean acidification, the souring of seas because of carbon dioxide emitted by burning coal, oil and natural gas. [...]with many of the most at-risk coastal communities already facing poverty, marine pollution, overfishing and rising sea levels, the potential for calamity is high.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

He sat shirtless on his thin bamboo floor in a home built on posts rising out of the Banda Sea.

Tadi had just returned in his dugout canoe from scanning crevices in a nearby reef for octopus. He and his neighbors spend every day this way, scouring the ocean for something to eat or sell. Here, fishing is about survival.

Their stilt village has no industry, no land, no running water. They dive without oxygen tanks, wearing hand-carved wooden goggles, and carry spear guns hacked from logs with their machetes. They eat part of what they catch and sell the rest, using the money to buy everything else they need: boat fuel, root vegetables, rice, wood.

Without fishing, "how would I feed my family?" asked Tadi, who like many Indonesians uses only one name.

Now Tadi's community, like countless others across the globe, is on a collision course with the industrialized world's fossil-fuel emissions.

Hundreds of millions of people around the world rely on marine life susceptible to climbing temperatures and ocean acidification, the souring of seas because of carbon dioxide emitted by burning coal, oil and natural gas. That includes northwest oyster growers and crabbers in the frigid Bering Sea, who now face great uncertainty from shifts in marine chemistry.

But from Africa to Alaska, many coastal communities face a substantially greater risk. These cultures are so thoroughly dependent on marine life threatened by CO2 that a growing body of research suggests their children or grandchildren could struggle to find enough food.

The science of deciphering precisely who might see seafood shortages remains embryonic.

But with many of the most at-risk coastal communities already facing poverty, marine pollution, overfishing and rising sea levels, the potential for calamity is high.

"I can't tell you how many people will be affected," said Sarah Cooley, at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts, who studies links between acidification and food security. "But it's going to be a very big number."

Andreas Andersson, an acidification and coral reef expert with the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego, said, "These people are literally going to be fighting for their lives."

Among the most vulnerable to changing ocean conditions are people like Tadi and his 1,600 fellow villagers, even if they don't quite view it that way yet.

From his elevated perch sheltered from the midday sun, Tadi could see huts with wispy thatch roofs connected by the rickety planks of his village boardwalk. Everything stood a dozen feet above emerald waters.

Like many in his village, he's uncertain of his age. But for as long as he can remember, Tadi has netted, trapped, hooked or speared grouper, snapper, wrasses and parrotfish. Sometimes the men in his village disappear to the open sea for days to chase small tuna.

Women swarm the tide flats gathering clams, sea cucumbers, urchins and sea grass. They then paddle to a fish market on nearby Kaledupa Island, where even meaty catches fetch just a few dollars.

Among his peers, Tadi is considered one of the best spear fishermen. And no wonder: He said he stabbed his first fish when he was barely older than a toddler.

That childhood in the ocean left an impression. Every animal seemed huge. Sea life teemed wherever he looked.

"I could choose with my spear whatever fish I want," Tadi said through a translator. "I never caught any small fish."

Tadi taught his son, Laoda, to fish this way. Laoda has since taught his son, Adi.

The Sama people, or Bajau, are known as sea gypsies or sea nomads because they once lived mostly on boats. They roamed Southeast Asia between Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia, living off the sea, until governments began encouraging them to settle. Tadi's offshore village was built in the late 1950s.

Today, up to 1 million sea nomads are sprinkled throughout the Coral Triangle. Their lives are a blend of old ways and new.

Some divers in Tadi's village ruptured their eardrums as kids to make equalizing easier. Women dab their faces with rice paste for sunscreen. Villagers stack dead coral for support around the poles that hold their homes. Even fishing weights are sometimes homemade, forged by melting lead in aluminum cans over small open fires and pouring it into wooden molds.

Diesel generators provide electricity a few hours each night, and some residents use it to power televisions. Some fishermen wear expensive dive watches. On a mound of coral rubble beneath one hut is a surprisingly well-maintained billiard table.

After centuries of traveling far and wide, the Bajau's relocation concentrated their human waste and limited the range of their fishing.

This happened just as some in their village adopted the destructive practices of Asia's worst fishing fleets. A few here fish with coral-destroying bombs or cyanide. Some from the village and nearby islands gather colorful reef fish for sale to the aquarium trade. Commercial trawlers from elsewhere cause more damage. It all takes a toll.

"There's been a pretty substantial decrease in their catches per amount of effort since the 1990s," said Paul Simonin, a Cornell University graduate student who has tracked Bajau fishing data.

Tadi's neighbors and nearby island communities still land plenty of fish, but their reefs have seen better days. Everyone works a bit harder to find food.

And a coming storm from CO2 will only make things worse.

Scientists are still navigating the complex ways carbon dioxide can alter the marine world. But some effects are clear.

Rising temperatures already wreak havoc on corals. Warming water can cause corals to eject the algae that give them their vibrant color, weakening or killing reefs and turning them white. This process is known as bleaching. Without reductions in global emissions, by midcentury 90% of reefs are projected to see severe bleaching episodes every year.

Ocean acidification will compound the problem.

A quarter of the CO2 spewed by cars and power plants winds up in the ocean. That lowers the pH, makes the water more corrosive and reduces carbonate ions, which then makes it harder for marine creatures to build their shells and skeletons.

Acidification can directly harm animals throughout the food web, from microscopic plankton to some fish. It endangers corals, weakening their skeletons, inhibiting growth, and increasing the likelihood of bleaching. In fact, acidification even accelerates the dissolution and breakdown of the reef.

"Temperature has zapped a lot of reefs so far, but longer-term effects are likely to come from acidification," said Charles Sheppard, a professor at England's University of Warwick who studies climate-change effects on coral reefs.

These ocean changes may not directly hit the octopus and fish Tadi catches, but will almost certainly rearrange the foods available for those creatures to eat. And loss of coral, by itself, usually translates to fewer fish and marine creatures, often a substantial reduction.

Researchers working on reefs naturally bathed in CO2 in Papua New Guinea reported finding half as many small invertebrates -- crabs, shrimp, sand dollars, marine worms -- as on healthy corals.

"Think about a coral reef as a city, a lot of buildings and houses," Andersson said. "Without the houses, you have no inhabitants."

Scientists are still learning how much - or how little - marine life might adapt. Some corals appear more resilient than others, and bleaching doesn't always ruin healthy reefs, said David Kline, a coral and climate change scientist at Scripps.

But reefs across Southeast Asia, in particular, already are a fraction of what they once were, according to a 2007 analysis. And reefs taxed by pollution or overfishing are more susceptible to mat-forming algae. In the worst cases, after bleaching, this weedy slime can smother corals for good.

In the grassy shallows a few hundred yards from Tadi's hut, his neighbor Mbilia sat curled in her canoe, plucking sea urchins from the water and halving them with her machete.

She could not even contemplate a reef with almost no fish. The prospect, to her, seemed amusing.

"I am an old woman," Mbilia said. "I'm not thinking a lot about that."

Tadi and Laoda usually don't think about it much either. But there are days when fishing is so slow it's a possibility they just can't ignore.

"Sometimes we eat everything in one day," Laoda said. "But if we can't find anything, we don't eat."

Some Bajau don't believe humans can alter the marine world. Even harder to grasp is the possibility that actions now could cause future decay. For some here, successful fishing is dictated by the whims of testy sea gods.

"They do not see a cause-and-effect relationship the way we do," said Julian Clifton, a University of Western Australia professor who has studied Tadi's village. "The Bajau get characterized as backward because they don't get this idea. But their relationship with time is different from ours. They live in a sort of constant present."

If fishing worsens dramatically for Tadi, options appear limited. Fishermen could keep pushing out into the ocean, or the village could fold up and move away, or turn to fish farming. The first might be possible. The second two are much harder.

The Bajau are short on money and clout. They remain among the region's poorest coastal residents, an ethnic minority often disparaged by others. And by the time they could face real trouble, others around the world may have similar problems, straining resources that otherwise might help.

At least 6 million people in 99 countries fish coral reefs, according to research published in the journal PLOS One in June. An additional 400 million or more are tied indirectly to coral. Indonesia alone includes nearly 1,000 inhabited islands, many of which are populated by people dependent on reefs.

"In the 15 or 16 countries we've surveyed, 50 to 90% of their protein comes from fish," said Johann Bell, a fish expert helping Pacific Island nations deal with threats to seafood. "It's a huge problem. There are going to be many who just fall below the radar."

Credit: Welch writes for the Seattle Times.

**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: THE BAJAU in Indonesia travel everywhere by boat. Some women dab their faces with rice paste to protect against the sun. Their culture is so dependent on marine life threatened by CO2 that research says their children or grandchildren could struggle to find enough food.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Steve Ringman Seattle Times; PHOTO: LAODA hauls a reef fish to the surface after shooting it with his spear gun. He dives without oxygen.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Steve Ringman Seattle Times; PHOTO: JABIRA carves spear-fishing goggles out of wood with his machete and sells them around the village.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Steve Ringman Seattle Times

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CA\_10

SCIENCE FILE; Climate change abloom in wildflowers' timing; Their annual season in the Rockies has extended by more than a month in the last 40 years, new research shows.

Barboza, Tony . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]22 Mar 2014: AA.2.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1509166037?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

Earlier spring snowmelt and other climate shifts have changed the timing of blooms for more than two-thirds of 60 species of native wildflowers found in the mountain meadows, stands of aspen trees and conifer forest that were surveyed from 1974 to 2012, the researchers reported this week in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Climate change has lengthened the Rocky Mountain wildflower season by more than a month since the 1970s and altered the flowering patterns of more species than previously thought, new research shows.

Wildflowers at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory, which sits about 9,500 feet above sea level in Colorado, bloom almost immediately after the spring snowmelt and stick around until the first hard frost in the fall. But as temperatures rise, snow is melting earlier and frosts are occurring later.

Forty years ago, flowers bloomed from mid-May to early September. Now the season lasts from April to mid-September, according to a trio of researchers who collected data at the research station near Crested Butte, Colo.

Earlier spring snowmelt and other climate shifts have changed the timing of blooms for more than two-thirds of 60 species of native wildflowers found in the mountain meadows, stands of aspen trees and conifer forest that were surveyed from 1974 to 2012, the researchers reported this week in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. In that period, the wildflower season was extended by 35 days.

The study is the latest to document one of the strongest signs that global warming is shaking up the natural world. Scientists studying phenology -- the timing of seasonal events in nature -- are observing rapid shifts in when flowers bloom, trees leaf out and bees, birds and butterflies appear in the spring.

Scientists have documented the trend using historical records from writers and naturalists, including Henry David Thoreau, who in the 1850s began recording in his journal the first blooms of the season around Concord, Mass.

Previous studies largely have focused on the first appearance of flowers in the spring, but that probably underestimates the true extent of the changes they are going through because of a warming climate, the study published this week said.

To go beyond that, they observed wildflower species growing in 30 plots about the size of two dining room tables pushed together. They checked in on each plot about once every other day and recorded the blooms they saw throughout the growing season. They found that compared with 1974, by 2012 half of the species flowered earlier, more than one-third reached their peak blooms sooner, and 30% flowered later into the season.

"We don't know if it's good or bad for these plant species at this point," said study coauthor Amy Iler, postdoctoral biology researcher at University of Maryland in College Park.

The findings nonetheless raise many questions about how disruptive the changing bloom times might be to bees, birds and other pollinators as well as to other plants that are adapted to wildflowers' appearing at very specific times, she said.

"Climate change is reshuffling flowering plants over a short time period," Iler said. "So it might be changing things that were set in place by natural selection over a long time frame."

The study is the product of decades of work by David Inouye, a biology professor at the University of Maryland, who has amassed an exhaustive record by systematically counting wildflowers at the wilderness laboratory in the mountains of Colorado.

"It is probably the most detailed, long-term data set on flowering times that exists in the United States and perhaps even the world," said Richard Primack, a biology professor at Boston University who has used Thoreau's records to study the effects of climate change on plants and animals.

Primack, who was not involved in the study published this week, praised the paper as an "extremely innovative type of analysis" that would stimulate a flurry of new research.

"As soon as I read this paper I thought, my God, why didn't we analyze our data that way?" Primack said. "This study shows us that if you don't just focus on the first flowering date but also on the peak flowering date and the final flowering date, there's a much greater impact of climate change than we previously suspected."

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: COMPARED with 1974, half the species of flowers observed two years ago at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory in Colorado flowered earlier, and more than one-third reached their peak blooms sooner.; PHOTOGRAPHER:David Inouye

**DETAILS**

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CA\_11

Budgeting for climate change

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**ABSTRACT**

Both transit-oriented housing and the rail project, at least theoretically, should eventually reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled by Californians, an important step in reducing tailpipe emissions, and Steinberg's smart-planning emphasis has the added benefit of providing more housing as well as creating walking-friendly cities and less-crowded streets.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

A new federal report on climate change released by the White House does not focus, as previous reports did, on predictions about the future but instead offers stark descriptions of the here and now: shorter winters, intensified storms, deepening drought, more frequent heat waves. Growing seasons are changing and Western pine forests are falling to beetle infestations.

None of this should come as a surprise; the most recent report by the United Nations' climate change experts said pretty much the same thing on a global scale. But there has been a more discernible tone of alarm in such reports during the last several months. They press the point that the effects of climate change are evident and that more are coming -- faster than previously thought and faster than even progressive countries and states are preparing for. California is well positioned to do its part, thanks to AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, which became law in 2006. Not only has it put the state on the path to significantly reducing its greenhouse gases, but the law's cap-and-trade provision will provide billions of dollars for at least a decade to be dedicated to further fighting climate change.

How to spend this windfall? You can be sure there's no shortage of ideas in Sacramento. Gov. Jerry Brown wants to spend a third of it on the state's controversial high-speed rail project, which he first proposed in the 1980s. A proposal by state Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento) would reduce that to one-fifth -- but would spend an additional 40% of the money on affordable housing to be built near mass-transit lines, long a priority of his.

Both ideas have merit, though as this page has argued, the state should not commit significant sums of cap-and-trade money to high-speed rail until it is determined that the project is viable -- legally, financially and otherwise. Both transit-oriented housing and the rail project, at least theoretically, should eventually reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled by Californians, an important step in reducing tailpipe emissions, and Steinberg's smart-planning emphasis has the added benefit of providing more housing as well as creating walking-friendly cities and less-crowded streets.

But it doesn't make sense to tie up so much of the state's cap-and-trade income in long-term projects when climate scientists insist that we need to move quickly and decisively. Already California is hard-pressed to meet its climate goals for the years beyond 2020. Not only would the benefits of high-speed rail not be felt for more than a decade, but there are legitimate questions about whether the project will ever get done and, if it does, how much it will contribute to reducing carbon emissions.

There are ways to reduce greenhouse gases more quickly and measurably. Replace more diesel trucks, which would also reduce deadly particulate pollution, especially in low-income areas girdled by freeways. Expand existing public transit systems, making them quicker and more convenient. Help more California motorists afford hybrid or electric vehicles. Increase the state's commitment to solar energy and water conservation; the single biggest consumer of power in California is the State Water Project, which is responsible for the energy-intensive job of moving water around the state.

Carbon isn't the only greenhouse gas. Methane is about 30 times more potent at trapping heat over 100 years. Methane-capture equipment at the state's dairies and cattle operations, major producers of the gas, could significantly reduce this kind of pollution.

There are many ways of combating climate change with cap-and-trade money. Long-term strategies such as Steinberg's smart-planning proposal have an important place in the state's green portfolio, but they should not dominate it, earmarking the money for specific state projects for years into the future at a time when the state must redouble its efforts to meet short-term goals.

**DETAILS**

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CA\_12

U.S. Chamber warns of EPA rule; Report says upcoming climate-change plan could cost economy $51 billion a year.

Lee, Don . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]29 May 2014: B.2.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1529675304?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

Signaling growing industry opposition to the Obama administration's forthcoming proposal to curb carbon emissions from power plants, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce warned in a report Wednesday that the climate-change rule could cost the economy tens of billions of dollars in lost investment and millions of jobs.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Signaling growing industry opposition to the Obama administration's forthcoming proposal to curb carbon emissions from power plants, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce warned in a report Wednesday that the climate-change rule could cost the economy tens of billions of dollars in lost investment and millions of jobs.

The Environmental Protection Agency is expected Monday to unveil regulations that would push states to make significant cuts in pollution from coal generators, which account for about 40% of all greenhouse-gas emissions in the country.

Although the size of the proposed reduction has yet to be announced, the chamber's report estimated that such a rule could result in an average annual drop of $51 billion in economic output and 224,000 fewer jobs every year through 2030, with the Southeast feeling the biggest pinch.

The chamber said the numbers were based on modeling from the economic research firm IHS, using assumptions that the regulation would set a 42% reduction in greenhouse-gas emissions by 2030 from 2005 levels -- an aggressive percentage that is close to a target previously cited by President Obama.

Some analysts noted, however, that the chamber's economic analysis doesn't take into account the gains in productivity, among other benefits, in employing pollution-cutting technologies and shifting to cleaner sources of energy.

EPA spokesman Tom Reynolds took issue with the chamber's cost numbers. In a blog statement, he said the report assumes that under the proposal, states would need to require so-called carbon capture and sequestration technology for natural gas plants.

"That's not true," he wrote, noting that three-fourths of the chamber's cost estimates come from power plant construction.

Even if the chamber's projections are true, some economists said, a $51-billion drop in output amounts to peanuts for an American economy with an annual gross domestic product of about $15 trillion.

"It sounds ominous, but it's tiny," said Stephen Levy, director of the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy in Palo Alto. Of the estimated hit to jobs, he said: "We added 288,000 jobs last month alone."

The chamber's report is the latest in what could be a mounting campaign this summer to challenge the administration's proposal from groups representing energy and other U.S. industries, as well as politicians in coal-strong states.

The EPA rule on fighting coal pollution, a key element of Obama's initiative on climate change, is expected to be completed by June 2015.

This spring, the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, which represents coal mining companies, issued a report warning that the EPA proposal could cause electricity prices to rise in many states and cost nearly 3 million jobs.

In releasing the chamber's report, Karen Harbert, chief executive of the group's Energy Institute, wouldn't say what actions her organization was planning to take in response to the upcoming proposal.

"But should our analysis be overlooked or ignored," she said, "we will reserve all options."

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**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Environmental protection; Environmental regulations; Power plants; Cost estimates; Industrial plant emissions; Natural gas; Chambers of commerce; Economic impact; Economic growth; Gross Domestic Product--GDP; Business government relations; Emissions control |
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CA\_13

MONDAY BUSINESS; CAPITOL BUSINESS BEAT; Bill stirs climate change debate; Proposal by business- friendly Democratic lawmakers would slow California's efforts to curb global warming.

Lifsher, Marc . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]14 July 2014: A.8.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1544718412?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

"Having transportation fuels under the cap is essential for California to achieve its AB 32 greenhouse gas emission reduction goals," said David Clegern, a spokesman for the California Air Resources Board.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Political-economic fights at the Capitol never really end. They just morph into new incarnations.

Take, for example, the eight-year battle among industry, environmentalists and the administrations of Govs. Arnold Schwarzenegger and successor Jerry Brown over how to deal with threats of global warming.

Now, the conflict again is heating up. Just before their July recess, a group of business-friendly Democratic lawmakers introduced legislation to slow California's campaign to curb climate change.

Nine Assembly and Senate members, led by Assemblyman Henry T. Perea (D-Fresno), want to delay putting motor vehicle fuels under the state's system for buying and selling the right to release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

Perea and colleagues worry that requiring refineries to buy credits could add at least 15 cents to the price of an average gallon of unleaded gasoline, which tops $4 in many parts of the state.

To the frustration of environmentalists, the bill, AB 69, would postpone bringing vehicle fuel under "cap and trade" until Jan. 1, 2018.

"The cap-and-trade system should not be used to raise billions of dollars in new state funds at the expense of consumers, who are struggling to get back on their feet after the recession," Perea said. "In some areas of the state, like the Central Valley, constituents need to drive long distances and they will be disproportionately impacted by rising gas prices."

The Brown administration, while guarded in its comments, shows little interest in revising state plans to implement the state's landmark 2006 law to combat climate change, still known by its old bill number, AB 32.

"Having transportation fuels under the cap is essential for California to achieve its AB 32 greenhouse gas emission reduction goals," said David Clegern, a spokesman for the California Air Resources Board. The agency is charged with cutting carbon releases to 1990 levels over the next six years.

The governor's office hasn't said whether Brown would veto Perea's bill should it get to his desk.

Environmentalists and pro-AB 32 lawmakers have been quick to respond negatively to Perea's proposed legislation.

Oil companies should not be given an exemption from the law," 34 legislators wrote to Brown in a June 27 letter. "Business as usual is unsustainable when it comes to reliance on fossil fuels."

Good but not great

California's economy grew 2% last year, ahead of the national economy's more sluggish 1.8%, said Stephen Levy, director of the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy in Palo Alto. He cited data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

But the Golden State badly trailed rival Texas, which posted 3.7% growth, according to the bureau.

The nation's fastest-growing states in 2013 were North Dakota at 9.7% and Wyoming at 7.6%. Both states are enjoying energy-related booms.

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**DETAILS**

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CA\_14

THE NATION; Adding fuel to fire costs; Climate change may boost the annual bill by billions, study says.

Carcamo, Cindy; Muskal, Michael . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]17 Sep 2014: A.6.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1562298821?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

According to federal statistics released Tuesday, firefighters were battling 15 uncontained large fires, eight of which were in California.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

As wildfires burned in California, a study by several major environmental groups estimated that climate change could mean that future blazes will be much larger and add billions of dollars to already costly losses.

The 46-page study released Tuesday, titled "Flammable Planet: Wildfires and the Social Cost of Carbon," is part of an ongoing project by three groups to examine what it calls the missing risks, such as wildfires, that climate change can make more expensive. The groups are the Environmental Defense Fund, the Institute for Policy Integrity at NYU School of Law, and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

U.S. wildfires cost as much as $125 billion annually, but climate change could add as much as $60 billion to the bill by 2050, the study said. The projected cost increase is attributed to an expanding area in which wildfires burn -- estimated to be 50% to 100% larger by 2050. California "could experience a 36% to 74% increase in area burned by 2085 under a high emissions path," the study said.

"Climate change is here now, and its toll on our health and economy is rising every day," said Laurie Johnson, chief economist at NRDC.

"The current scientific consensus is that wildfire risk will increase in many regions of the world as climate change leads to warmer temperatures, more frequent droughts, and changing precipitation patterns," the study said. "Fires are expected to become more frequent and intense, and fire seasons are projected to last longer."

However, fire officials in several Western states said climate change wasn't solely to blame for the size and cost of fires. Other factors must be considered, they said, such as hundreds of years of overly aggressive fire suppression, leading to overcrowded forests that will continue to spark more intense wildfires.

"That problem only grew as we went from periods of abundant rainfall to average rainfall and then to drought," said Dan Ware, fire prevention and outreach program manager for New Mexico State Forestry.

Jim Paxon, who retired from the U.S. Forest Service in New Mexico in 2003 and served as a spokesman on major wild-land fires for 13 years, blamed lack of forest management -- not just climate change -- for an explosion of unwieldy and costly wildfires in the West.

Lack of prescribed burns and less timber cutting are major factors, said Paxon, who now serves as special assistant to the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

"I could spend hours showing some daylight on what it has cost us taxpayers since the demise of the timber industry at the hands of enviro-litigants," he said. "Now we have mega-fires as a partial consequence."

According to federal statistics released Tuesday, firefighters were battling 15 uncontained large fires, eight of which were in California. Between 7 million to 9 million acres are burned each year in the United States, while globally the damage is 865 million acres.

How to measure the full cost of a wildfire is complicated and becomes difficult depending on what is included in calculations. The cost includes direct market damages such as lost timber and property, nonmarket damages such as health effects, and added expenditures such as fire prevention, the study said.

"Research suggests that the total costs of a wildfire are typically 10 to 50 times its suppression costs," the study said. "Given that the United States spends roughly $2.0 [billion] to $2.5 billion on wildfire suppression per year, we estimate that the total cost of U.S. wildfires is presently between $20 billion and $125 billion annually."

Although most fire officials agree that the cost of fighting fires will probably keep increasing, there isn't consensus on the costs anticipated by 2050.

"The projection given in the report is concerning, but with millions of dollars dedicated to hazardous fuels mitigation, forest and watershed thinning treatments and prevention outreach, our hope is that will also mitigate costs spent on fire suppression," Ware said.

Paxon said the cost of fighting wildfires had increased dramatically since he started his career in 1969. It cost hundreds of dollars an acre to suppress wildfires when he first joined the agency. By 2000, it was in the tens of thousands, he said, because inappropriate forest management had led to enormous fires.

He called the new report "pretty extreme," saying that although fires change the vegetation and -- in the hottest blazes -- soil and watersheds may take decades to recover, millions of acres of forests are not "destroyed," as the study says.

Kent Hamilton, Rocky Mountain aviation safety manager for the U.S. Forest Service, said the complexities of fighting fires in modern times contributed to escalating costs. For instance, modern aircraft fleets for fire suppression are more expensive but more effective than in years past, increasing the margin of safety for the firefighters on the ground, he said.

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: A WILDFIRE approaches California's Bass Lake on Sunday. With intense fires more common, environmentalists blame global warming.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Darvin Atkeson YosemiteLandscapes.com

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Environmental protection; Costs; Prescribed fire; Studies; Climate change; Forest &brush fires |
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Document 15

Few states preparing for climate change; Study of efforts across the U.S. finds 14, including California, have plans ready.

Banerjee, Neela . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]11 Oct 2014: A.9.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1609887562?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

California, New York and Maryland are among those that have made the greatest progress toward the dozens of goals their plans set forth, such as cutting statewide greenhouse gas emissions, improving infrastructure, securing water supplies, battling wildfires or coping with rising sea levels.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Fewer than half of American states are working to protect themselves from climate change despite more detailed warnings from scientists that communities are already being damaged, according to a new online clearinghouse of states' efforts compiled by the Georgetown Climate Center.

Fourteen states have plans to prepare for the effects of climate change. California, New York and Maryland are among those that have made the greatest progress toward the dozens of goals their plans set forth, such as cutting statewide greenhouse gas emissions, improving infrastructure, securing water supplies, battling wildfires or coping with rising sea levels. Even those states have much work ahead of them, though.

An additional eight states and the District of Columbia are devising similar plans, and some counties and towns have plans in place. But more than half of states have not taken any steps to address the threats posed by climate change, leaving them vulnerable to predicted flooding, drought and wildfire, and leaving taxpayers on the hook for the cleanup.

The online clearinghouse georgetownclimate.org is meant to give communities a way to track what their state is doing to adapt to climate change. Lawmakers and regulators could also use the tool to glean ideas from states that are further along.

Vicki Arroyo, director of the Georgetown Climate Center in Washington, said she welcomed the progress that a "significant minority" of states had made on planning, but acknowledged that in much of the country, the work to deal with the effects of global warming had yet to begin.

"A number of states have started implementing changes that will actually make their communities more resilient. That's good news," Arroyo said. "Unfortunately, the research also shows that many states are still not treating this issue with the urgency that is called for."

In May, the third congressionally mandated National Climate Assessment sketched out sobering scenarios of global warming's effect on different regions of the United States. The Northeast and Midwest, for instance, would see a huge increase in heavy downpours that could lead to flooding and erosion. The Southwest, including California, would be more prone to extreme heat, drought and wildfire.

Other agencies, such as the U.S. Geological Survey, have shown that coastal communities in Oregon, California, the mid-Atlantic, eastern Florida and the Gulf Coast are highly vulnerable to damage from rising sea levels.

The states furthest along in their plans are those on the West Coast, including Alaska and Hawaii, in the Northeast, mid-Atlantic and Florida. Away from the coasts, only Colorado has a plan finalized. Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan are in various stages of planning. Illinois has no plan, although Chicago does.

The inaction throughout much of the country was the "unfortunate side effect" of the political polarization over climate change in the last decade, said Greg Dotson, vice president for energy policy at the Center for American Progress, a progressive think tank.

"People don't want to acknowledge that there's a problem with unavoidable consequences that you have to plan for," he said.

Laggard states might soon be prodded to act, thanks to an update in July to federal policies. States are now required to factor climate change into their disaster planning or risk losing an increased share of federal money the next time a natural disaster occurs.

Even in states that lack plans, individual communities are pushing ahead, the Georgetown website shows. Waveland, Miss., terribly damaged by Hurricane Katrina, is planning for future damage that higher sea levels, storm surges and flooding could bring. Tucson is planning for the effects of long-term drought on its water resources. Salt Lake City is also working to preserve its water resources and factoring in climate change as it selects additions to its tree canopy.

Still, those states that rolled out plans years ago are not far along in their work, according to the website.

California offers incentives to municipalities to integrate climate change in planning their water usage, for example. But the state has not mandated such planning, in part because mid-size and small communities lack the expertise and data to determine just how hard climate change will hit them, said Jessica Grannis, adaptation program manager for the Georgetown Climate Center.

Such challenges have slowed preparation for climate change in other states too, Arroyo said. This year, the Obama administration pledged to roll out data tools and apps that would help communities gather the information they needed to plan for future disasters.

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Document 16

BACK STORY; Slush gets buried in ideology; Politics, not drastic weather, colors view of climate change, study says

Mohan, Geoffrey . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]30 Nov 2014: A.2.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1628711543?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

The scientific consensus on climate, outlined in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's fourth report in 2007, is that "the warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice and rising global average sea level."

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Think that people in upstate New York will more strongly believe climate change is upon us after an early November blizzard dumped 7 feet of snow, which then was turned to slush by spring-like temperatures?

Think again.

Freaky seasons and drastic weather anomalies do little to convince most people that climate change is real -- political ideology does much more, according to a study in the journal Nature Climate Change.

The study, published online this month, found that people who saw the winter of 2012 as warmer than usual were right. It was, on any time scale. But that conclusion did not affect their views on the science behind climate change.

The results further undermine a fundamental assumption that has driven science communication since a U.N. panel first announced, in 1990, that evidence pointed toward an increasingly warming Earth because of the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

People may be hesitant to accept the consensus view now, scientists and policymakers have since assured, but that will change when their local climates starts changing.

"There's really little to no evidence of that" in the U.S., said sociologist Aaron McCright of Michigan State University, lead author of the study.

McCright found that Americans' perceptions of aberrant weather patterns matched the data. But he found that those individual perceptions did little to drive how strongly people believed climate change was underway, caused by man, and an immediate threat. Nor did that personal experience with abnormal climate influence whether Americans thought the scientific community agreed on those counts.

The scientific consensus on climate, outlined in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's fourth report in 2007, is that "the warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice and rising global average sea level."

It's no surprise to anyone -- least of all social scientists -- that America is deeply divided along party and ideological lines about climate (and healthcare, among other topics). But a growing body of evidence now suggests that ideology interferes with the assessment of science.

For example, in a study published this month, a Duke University social psychologist showed he could strongly shift conservatives' skepticism about climate change by associating the science with policies that either were antagonistic to their core beliefs (such as small government and unfettered markets), or aligned with them. Skepticism was higher when facts were presented in a context of government regulation, and lower in the context of free-market solutions.

Study coauthor Troy Campbell, a doctoral student at Duke's Fuqua School of Business, showed a similar shift in credulity among liberals with respect to crime statistics and gun ownership policies.

In other words, it appears that Americans are not coldly weighing the facts, then arguing over policy. Our ideologies and political affiliations are altering how we process facts. This example of "motivated" cognition appears to be driving denial of climate science, according to Campbell.

"People often say that we disagree about the facts, so that leads us to disagree about the solutions," Campbell said. "But what's actually happening is that people are disagreeing about the solutions, so we can never really have a good discussion of the facts. That's a tragic story."

Tragic, but all too familiar, McCright said. "It's something that we see a lot," he said of Campbell's study. "Whether you call it confirmation bias or motivated cognition, it is a pretty robust finding across many different studies."

McCright co-wrote another study, published this week, that matched more than a decade's worth of polling by Gallup with a database of region-specific climate anomalies compiled by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The researchers ran about 800 computer models to complete the most comprehensive and specific analysis to date of how personal experience and perceptions of local climate anomalies affect beliefs about climate change.

"We searched high and low to find different ways that the climate extremes could impact people's views of climate change and we found almost nothing," McCright said. "We found that, sure enough, political ideology and political party affiliation are the two dominant predictors in our models, which is sort of depressing. But this is the reality in the U.S."

On the upside, McCright said, people's perceptions about freakish spells of weather do match the data -- making it perhaps easier to talk about adapting to change, rather than about halting the warming trend.

Campbell, who is earning a marketing degree, suggests that divorcing descriptions of the problem from its potential remedies could filter out the interference of ideology, but he and McCright acknowledged that it is may be too late to do so on the topic of climate change. The association between climate problems and remedies is far too strong and pervasive, and is reinforced by political leaders and the media, both said.

On that front, the news is not so good either.

A Pew Research Center study last month showed that there is little to no overlap between where conservatives and liberals seek news -- at a time when ideologues of either stripe disproportionately drive public policy. The middle ground is eroding, the Pew studies show. And these new studies suggest this change is washing away our ability to agree on facts.

"It's like we have no common facts anymore," McCright said. "And climate change is symbolic of that."

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: CHRISTINE BLOOM has her work cut out for her this month after a ferocious storm in upstate New York.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Harry Scull Jr. Buffalo News

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Document 17

THE STATE; Billionaire outpaced all donors in midterms; Democrat Tom Steyer spent $74 million on campaigns in a bid to make climate change a top issue in politics.

Megerian, Chris . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]31 Dec 2014: AA.4.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1640950039?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

In the 2014 midterm elections, no one spent political cash like Tom Steyer, the Democratic hedge fund billionaire from San Francisco who has tried to make climate change a paramount issue in American politics.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

In the 2014 midterm elections, no one spent political cash like Tom Steyer, the Democratic hedge fund billionaire from San Francisco who has tried to make climate change a paramount issue in American politics.

He dropped more than $74 million into congressional and gubernatorial campaigns, almost three times the $27.7 million spent by the second-biggest individual donor, former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg.

Casino mogul Sheldon Adelson and business executive David Koch, two Republican mega-donors, gave $13.2 million and $6.2 million, respectively.

The numbers, compiled from documents filed with the federal government, were detailed by Politico this week. The analysis does not include money donated to nonprofits that aren't required to reveal their contributors.

Much of Steyer's money was spent through Nextgen Climate Action Committee, his political organization. Despite his deep pockets, however, his ability to push Democrats to victory in the midterms was limited.

The U.S. Senate changed to Republican control, and candidates backed by Steyer in battlegrounds such as Colorado and Iowa lost.

Some of his candidates won in places including Pennsylvania, Michigan and New Hampshire, but analysts have said they doubt climate change was an issue that drove voters to the polls.

Steyer and his allies have said this year's campaigns were just the starting point in a multiyear effort to raise the profile of environmental issues.

Steyer put a positive spin on the outcome of his efforts after hosting a conference this month in Oakland. And he expressed a desire to play an even larger role.

"If you look at the statistics about where we were, how people voted and whether they voted, you'll find out we were very successful," Steyer said. "I look at the last election and say, I'm sorry we weren't in more places."

Steyer, who also donated $284,000 to state campaigns in California this year, detailed his thoughts on how to keep the environment at the forefront of voters' minds.

"Human beings care about human beings, and they care about local issues, not global issues," he said. "If you wanted to discuss energy and climate with someone, you better be talking about how it affects human beings where they live and who they love."

Steyer added, "If you can't do that, it's not an issue."

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: DESPITE TOM STEYER'S deep pockets, his ability to push Democrats to victory in the midterms was limited. Above, Steyer at an L.A. high school in October.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Damian Dovarganes Associated Press

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Elections; Political parties; Political finance; Campaign contributions |
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Document 18

THE STATE; Climate change bills spark debate; Proposals by Democrats are welcomed by some unions but opposed by oil firms, utilities.

Megerian, Chris . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]11 Feb 2015: B.4.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1652991300?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

During Tuesday's news conference outside the Capitol, Senate leader Kevin de Leon (D-Los Angeles) said environmental regulations could spur innovation and help California's economy transition away from fossil fuels.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

The release of climate change proposals by Senate Democrats on Tuesday quickly spawned a heated debate over the direction of California's economy and the potential effect of new environmental regulations.

Some unions and companies welcome the legislation, saying it will lead to new jobs and foster a growing market in clean energy technologies. But oil companies, utilities and other business groups viewed the proposals with skepticism, if not outright hostility.

"This is not going to be easy," said Kathryn Phillips, director of Sierra Club California. "There will be a lot of negotiation."

The proposals largely reflect goals set by Gov. Jerry Brown during his inaugural address last month. One bill would require stricter limits on greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and another would require greater energy efficiency in older buildings, expanded generation of renewable energy and reduced gasoline use on state roads by 2030.

Other bills would create an advisory committee on job growth and order state pension systems, the two largest public pension funds in the country, to divest from coal companies.

During Tuesday's news conference outside the Capitol, Senate leader Kevin de Leon (D-Los Angeles) said environmental regulations could spur innovation and help California's economy transition away from fossil fuels.

"My Senate colleagues and I have seen clean energy jobs growing across California, and we want to make sure they reach every single district," De Leon said.

Sen. Ben Hueso (D-San Diego) described it as "the California gold rush of the modern era."

"It will be a tough lift," said Assemblyman Anthony Rendon (D-Lakewood), who joined De Leon on Tuesday to show his support. "People have concerns about dependability. People have concerns about costs. We take all of those concerns very seriously."

A coalition of oil companies reiterated their opposition to the "radical" goal of reducing gasoline use 50% by 2030, describing the Senate proposals as "attacks on an important industry."

In addition, utility companies have circulated an alternative energy proposal, and some business groups questioned the potential effect of higher electricity prices.

"The jobs you lose in manufacturing could outweigh the jobs you gain in the clean, emerging economy," said Dorothy Rothrock, president of the California Manufacturers &Technology Assn.

If the Senate proposals are enacted, meeting the targets will be left up to state agencies responsible for drafting and enforcing new policies. Assemblyman James Gallagher (R-Nicolaus) said that reduces accountability, and he's pushing legislation to give lawmakers the final word on regulations.

"Shouldn't we have some say in it?" Gallagher said.

De Leon disagreed, saying that would "politicize" the regulatory process.

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Document 19

Warming planet may threaten 1 in 6 species; If current trends persist, 16% of the world's creatures could die off because of climate change, research finds.

Kaplan, Karen . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]03 May 2015: A.17.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1677701366?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

About 1 in 6 species now alive on the planet could become extinct as a result of climate change, according to a new study published last week in the journal Science.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

About 1 in 6 species now alive on the planet could become extinct as a result of climate change, according to a new study published last week in the journal Science.

If present trends continue, Earth's temperature will wind up 4.3 degrees Celsius higher than it was before the onset of the industrial era. Should that scenario come to pass, as many as 16% of species around the world would be at risk of dying out, the study says.

Author Mark Urban, an ecologist and evolutionary biologist at the University of Connecticut, based his calculation on a meta-analysis of 131 previous studies that made predictions about how multiple species would fare in a warmer world.

Although the studies focused on different species in different parts of the world and used different modeling techniques to make their forecasts, Urban's statistical methods found that none of those variables mattered as much as "the level of future climate change."

For instance, 2.8% of species currently are at risk of global extinction, Urban wrote. But the hotter Earth gets, the more that risk rises.

If the world is able to stick to its target of making sure temperatures rise only 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, the global extinction risk would rise to 5.2%.

In the more realistic scenario that Earth warms by 3 degrees Celsius, an estimated 8.5% of species would be projected to become extinct.

And if things continue the way they are, the global extinction risk would nearly double, to 16%, Urban wrote. That's 1 out of every 6 species gone.

The average of all the scenarios is that 7.9% of species will become extinct as a direct result of climate change, according to the study.

The extinction risk isn't the same in all areas of the globe, Urban found. It appears to be lowest in North America, where about 5% of species are likely to disappear. (That figure could be higher or lower depending on how much temperatures rise.) Europe is a close second, with 6% of species at risk.

At the other end of the spectrum, South America could lose 23% of its species. That continent is particularly vulnerable because it has a lot of creatures that live in small ranges. If changing climate conditions make their homes uninhabitable, there's nowhere for them to go where they could find equivalent conditions.

In Australia and New Zealand, as many as 14% of species could disappear, Urban wrote. As in South America, the animals that live Down Under have the misfortune of inhabiting niche environments with no ready alternatives. The fact that they live on islands further limits their ability to seek comfort by moving into new ranges.

The analysis also revealed that the faster Earth's temperature rises, the more species will die out as a result. If temperatures rise more gradually, animals will have more time to adapt -- and better odds for success.

"Extinction risks from climate change are expected not only to increase but to accelerate for every degree rise in global temperatures," Urban wrote. "The signal of climate change-induced extinctions will become increasingly apparent if we do not act now to limit future climate change."

Urban noted that the species that go extinct aren't the only ones that will be forced to reckon with climate change.

"Even species not threatened directly by extinction could experience substantial changes in abundances, distributions, and species interactions," he wrote. That "could affect ecosystems and their services to humans."

The 131 studies that were used to make these estimates did not take into account such complex factors as the way climate change may prompt species to change they way they interact with each other. Nor did they attempt to predict how species might evolve to adapt to their new realities.

Still, the results offer a "sobering estimate of climate change-induced biodiversity loss," University of Washington biologist Janneke Hille Ris Lambers wrote in a commentary that accompanies Urban's report.

The study is only one of many that makes the case that "climate change will have enormous impacts on the organisms with which we share our planet," she wrote. Despite the uncertainties inherent in making these kinds of predictions, she added, "we should not wait ... before taking action, preferentially by curbing emissions."

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**DETAILS**

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Document 20

Dalai Lama's birthday bash; He will speak about climate change and wisdom at UC Irvine.

Hamilton, Matt . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]04 July 2015: B.1.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1693309250?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

On Monday, his actual birthday, he will lead two discussions at UC Irvine about climate change and wisdom, which Tibetan Buddhists believe accumulate with time.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

As Tibetans around the world celebrate the Dalai Lama's birthday Sunday, the wide-eyed monk in saffron and burgundy robes will be in Anaheim, kicking off a three-day Global Compassion Summit.

What draws Tenzin Gyatso -- revered as a living Buddha -- to the U.S. and, specifically, Orange County, for his special day?

The answer rests with a bald, soft-spoken monk whose assignment for the last decade has been to serve as the Dalai Lama's personal emissary for peace.

Lama Tenzin Dhonden, who lives in Lake Elsinore, is part attache, part advance man. Among his duties: organizing lectures and national tours, vetting speakers and finding partners that, he says, "do a great job for humanity."

When not assisting the Dalai Lama, the 50-year-old Dhonden lectures in San Diego twice a week on consciousness and near-death experiences.

Dhonden hatched the idea for a jubilee-style 80th birthday, and the task of finding the right space fell on his shoulders.

"[In] New York, life is very busy. People walk fast. Not enough time to think," Dhonden said recently as he sipped tea in an El Segundo coffee shop. "In California, people like to take time and have more time. People like to find out what really happens in the world, what is the truth about."

Such seekers have helped elevate the profile of the 14th Dalai Lama, who fled Tibet in 1959 and settled among the Himalayan foothills.

But rather than stay in his refuge, he has traveled -- meeting with heads of state, lecturing at universities -- and written dozens of books. During eight decades of public life, he's dispensed simple teachings tailored to glide across national and ideological boundaries.

He preaches what he calls a "religion of kindness," amassing acolytes and friends eager to pay tribute to the Nobel Peace Prize winner, even as he minimizes his work.

"My small contribution, insignificantly small contribution, [is] promotion of human value," he said during an interview via satellite from his compound in Dharamsala, India. "I cannot say some ... great thing achieved."

Dhonden, who takes that humility in stride, said his goal was to craft a three-day celebration worthy of the man he so admires.

It was the Million Acts of Kindness campaign in Anaheim's public school system that caught Dhonden's eye when he began searching for the right location, he said. The program tabulates caring deeds, like saying "please" or planting a garden on school grounds.

"If you really want to change the city, it has to do with the culture, healing the city from within," Mayor Tom Tait said.

Dalai Lama's emissary arranged for the mayor and his wife, Julie, to travel to Dharamsala this spring for a three-day visit. There, Tait gave the Dalai Lama a token that bears the city's motto: "Anaheim -- City of Kindness." The Dalai Lama frequently removed it from his pocket to show it off, Tait said.

The Southern California summit will open with the Dalai Lama's address on "the transformative power of creativity and art" at the Honda Center. On Monday, his actual birthday, he will lead two discussions at UC Irvine about climate change and wisdom, which Tibetan Buddhists believe accumulate with time.

The university, which has hosted the Dalai Lama twice before, has an endowed scholarship program in his name that centers on ethics and public affairs.

Half of the 10-person organizing committee for the Global Compassion Summit are UC Irvine administrators.

Thomas A. Parham, UC Irvine's vice chancellor for student affairs, said the topic of sustainability suits the campus. UC Irvine has been recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency for its food waste recycling and recently added a zero-emission bus to its fleet.

"The world is in desperate need of more love, compassion and empathy," Parham said. "If you look at the Dalai Lama's values and virtues, there's a high degree of congruence with our campus."

The summit is scheduled to close Tuesday morning, with the Dalai Lama leading a 90-minute dialogue on values-based education, a session that likely will include Anaheim's kindness campaign.

"If you really want to change this world," Tait said recently as he and Dhonden met students in the library at Gauer Elementary School, "start with education, start with the kids."

The focus of the Dalai Lama's visit is his message, Dhonden said, because Tibetan tradition places scant value on birthday celebrations. Rather, elders are accorded respect and aging is honored. Death is inevitable and contemplated daily.

Just don't think it's coming soon for the Dalai Lama, Dhonden said: "He will live 114 years."

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: LAMA Tenzin Dhonden, responsible for choosing the location of the celebration, chose California for its slower pace and because residents "like to find out what really happens in the world, what is the truth about."; PHOTOGRAPHER:Jay L. Clendenin Los Angeles Times; PHOTO: LAMA TENZIN DHONDEN, personal emissary of peace for the Dalai Lama, said his goal was to craft a three-day celebration worthy of the man he so admires.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Jay L. Clendenin Los Angeles Times

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Document 21

SACRAMENTO NOTEBOOK; Brown targets GOP hopefuls; Governor asks the 2016 presidential candidates to detail climate change plans.

Megerian, Chris . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]06 Aug 2015: B.2.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1701705665?accountid=13360)

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**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Gov. Jerry Brown tried to elbow his way into presidential politics Wednesday, calling for the Republican candidates to detail their plans to address climate change.

"Continuing to question the science and hurl insults at 'global warming hoaxsters' and 'apostles of this pseudo-religion' won't prevent severe damage to our health and economic well-being," Brown wrote in a letter sent to each presidential hopeful. "Americans, their children and generations to come deserve -- and demand -- better."

Brown, a Democrat, said California's drought and wildfires were evidence that the effects of climate change are being felt now, calling it "the new normal."

"Lest you think this movement is limited to Democrats and only embraced within our borders," the governor added, "the conservatives in England, the moderates in Germany and even the communists in China are on board."

Many of the Republican candidates, who are set to hold their first debate Thursday, have either denied the science surrounding climate change or opposed stiffer steps to address the problem.

It's a key issue for Brown, who has pushed stronger regulations in California and taken shots at Republicans on the issue before. In March, he said Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, a candidate, had shown "such a level of ignorance" that he "has rendered himself absolutely unfit to be running for office." More recently, Brown labeled politicians who deny the existence of climate change "troglodytes."

Brown, 77, ran for president three times: in 1976, 1980 and 1992. Asked this year whether he would run again if he were a decade younger, his response was clear. "Yes, I would."

Then, the governor added, "If I could go back in a time machine and be 66, I might jump in. But that's a counterfactual, so you don't need to speculate on that."

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**DETAILS**

| **Identifier / keyword:** | BROWN, EDMUND G JR (JERRY) PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS (2016) PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES REPUBLICAN PARTY GLOBAL WARMING POLITICS |
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Document 22

Conflicted on climate change law; Legislators weigh costs against health benefits in poor areas that often bear the brunt of pollution.

Mason, Melanie; Megerian, Chris . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]08 Sep 2015: A.1.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1709935081?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

Supporters of the legislation say that cutting greenhouse gas emissions from transportation and power plants would reduce asthma and respiratory diseases associated with polluted air. Senate leader Kevin de Leon (D-Los Angeles), who is the author of the most contentious climate change bill, on gasoline use and renewable energy, supports the addition of new board members.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

The "wanted" poster with pictures of five state lawmakers appeared in the pages of a Spanish-language newspaper in Southern California last week.

"Would these politicians be willing to confront the petroleum industry and fight for Latino families?" the ad said in support of tougher environmental rules. "Help us make sure these elected politicians stay responsible to the community."

The five are among the Latino or African American Democrats representing low-income districts who have not taken a side in the fierce tug of war over climate change measures that has been dominating the Capitol.

They represent places with perhaps the most at stake in California's environmental policies -- communities choked by pollution but wary of the higher costs that can come with new regulations.

One measure would set new targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions; another would reduce the use of gasoline on state roads and require more electricity to come from renewable energy.

Lawmakers have only a few days left to weigh the issues. With Republicans opposed, the fate of the legislation rests in the hands of undecided Democrats.

Assemblyman Ian Calderon (D-Whittier), one of the lawmakers named in the ad, said he knows that people in his mostly Latino district rank the environment as a top concern. "But does it continue to stay a No. 1 issue for them when their gas prices go up and their utility bills go up?" he said.

The question of what best serves these districts has become a key issue in the climate debate.

Supporters of the legislation say that cutting greenhouse gas emissions from transportation and power plants would reduce asthma and respiratory diseases associated with polluted air. They also say investments in green power could foster new jobs in areas with high unemployment.

"What we would ask these legislators is to do the right thing," said Arturo Carmona of Presente.org, the Latino advocacy group that ran the newspaper ad. "They have an unprecedented and historic opportunity to stand with working families, with communities of color."

Opponents argue that such neighborhoods could be harmed by higher prices of fuel and electricity. Zero-emission vehicles are often too costly for low-income residents, who are more likely to drive older cars with worse gas mileage and would be hit hard if the cost per gallon rose.

Fueling the debate are questions of whether the environmental movement is serving low-income, minority families.

Solar panels and electric vehicles "are great, but they don't come to our neighborhoods," said Assemblyman Jim Cooper (D-Elk Grove).

Assemblyman Reggie Jones-Sawyer (D-Los Angeles), who heads the Legislative Black Caucus, said environmentalists should work more closely with minorities.

"What are you doing to make sure that we have a clean environment and that our water is clean and the oil drilling in our neighborhoods is clean and efficient?" he has asked them. "Many times we would get no response."

Jones-Sawyer has suggested that designated seats for representatives of low-income communities be added to the California Air Resources Board, a top regulatory agency for handling pollution. But he said Gov. Jerry Brown's office opposed the idea.

An administration official said "no door has been closed" in the climate change talks.

Senate leader Kevin de Leon (D-Los Angeles), who is the author of the most contentious climate change bill, on gasoline use and renewable energy, supports the addition of new board members.

A Latino who grew up poor, De Leon has been working to show the benefits of environmental regulations and programs to minority communities.

He touts the prospect of new jobs in a green economy. He hosted a Capitol event at which a Latino family from Stockton was presented with a Toyota Prius, paid for with the help of a state program, to replace an aging truck.

Last month, De Leon spoke in English and Spanish to an environmental group and reminded the audience that he represents "one of the poorest and most polluted districts in the state."

If the Legislature approves his bill, "we will be healthier and much more prosperous," he said. "We can do this. Si se puede!"

Dan Schnur, director of USC's Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics, said economic benefits from green policies can be a tough sell.

"Those are longer-term economic benefits," he said. But "if you're living in a more challenged economic environment, green jobs may seem more abstract compared to the cost of filling a gas tank."

Some Latino and black lawmakers give little weight to opponents' predictions of surging fuel or electricity prices if the legislation passes.

"Those arguments have been made in the past and have clearly not panned out," said Democratic Assemblyman Miguel Santiago, whose district in downtown Los Angeles is crisscrossed by freeways and dotted with industrial zones.

"At the end of the day," he said, "people's health is more important and supersedes all those other arguments."

Environmental advocates fear that lavish campaign donations may also affect the opinions of lawmakers whose votes on the climate measures could be decisive.

The five named in the ad, for example, have received at least $260,000 combined from oil companies, according to the National Institute on Money in State Politics.

"We're very concerned that's compromising their representation of our communities as it relates to issues around the environment," Presente.org's Carmona said.

Calderon brushed off the notion that business interests could sway his decision.

"It isn't about who gives money; it's about my community and my constituents," Calderon said.

"I have to worry about them," Calderon said.

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(BEGIN TEXT OF INFOBOX)

Ethnic makeup of legislators' districts

Many state lawmakers whose votes are crucial in the fight over controversial climate change bills represent low-income, heavily minority districts.

\*--\* Name District % Latino % % Asian % White %houses Afric less$50 an ,000yr Ameri can Roger West Covina 64 3 13 19 42 Hernandez Henry T. Fresno 68 5 8 17 66 Perea Sebastian Los Angeles 31 25 12 29 48 Ridley-Tho mas Mike A. Carson 62 26 7 3 44 Gipson Ian Whittier 68 2 11 18 39 Calderon

Source: Political Data Inc.

**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: SENATE LEADER Kevin de Leon, left, the author of a contentious climate change bill, is working to show the benefits of environmental regulations and programs to minority communities. Assemblyman Ian Calderon, right, says constituents are concerned about the environment, but also about the cost of gasoline and utilities.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Marcus Yam Los Angeles Times; PHOTO: SENATE LEADER Kevin de Leon, left, the author of a contentious climate change bill, is working to show the benefits of environmental regulations and programs to minority communities. Assemblyman Ian Calderon, right, says constituents are concerned about the environment, but also about the cost of gasoline and utilities.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Marcus Yam Los Angeles Times

**DETAILS**

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Document 23

Climate change hears a cattle call; At TomKat Ranch, a billionaire plots to upend agribusiness as usual

Halper, Evan . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]03 Oct 2015: A.1.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1718563168?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

Since the cows were AWOL, Taylor was talking over by the farm's makeshift chicken pen, where scores of fluffy chicks chirped like mad on the parched field.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Tom Steyer's crusade to force politicians to confront climate change is well known, manifesting itself in millions of dollars of campaign funding, including the windfall he raised for Hillary Rodham Clinton recently in his San Francisco home.

Less well known is the billionaire's crusade to force farmers to confront it.

At an 1,800-acre cattle ranch that Steyer and his wife, Kat Taylor, own near Half Moon Bay, they are plotting to upend agribusiness with the same precision -- and even some of the same tools -- that served Steyer well in the hedge fund business.

They are also surprising some allies in the climate movement by cattle ranching at all. Many see the presence of massive numbers of cows on the planet as incompatible with efforts to contain global warming.

The couple have a different take.

"We would continue raising cattle even if no one ever ate another steak," said Taylor. That's how beneficial she and Steyer think these large farm animals can be. They want the cows to mimic the ancient migratory patterns of wild ungulates and naturally fertilize and aerate soil to reverse the mass erosion believed to be accelerating climate change.

Steyer and Taylor are among the ultra-rich climate activists whose impatience with the impact of food production on the environment has them moving beyond writing checks for research projects and scientific institutes to personally picking up cattle prods and pitchforks.

Former Oracle Chief Executive Larry Ellison, the world's fifth-richest man, purchased nearly the entire Hawaiian island of Lanai with futuristic plans to revive a long-defunct pineapple-growing industry there by desalinating seawater with solar and wind power.

On a farm in Arizona, Howard G. Buffett, son of the world's third-richest man, Warren E. Buffett, is fine-tuning climate-friendly growing techniques with the help of a couple of oxen, which he brought on board to demonstrate how the practices could work on subsistence farms in Africa that have no tractors.

Back at TomKat Ranch, cattle are encouraged to roam the way large mammals had in the wild for thousands of years, in the hope of re-creating ecosystems in which the patches of land they temporarily visit are enriched by all the accompanying organisms, rather than degraded.

During a recent visit, the cattle had roamed so far into the hills that ranch hands were unable to get a reporter out to see them. Steyer playfully suggested hopping on the ATVs parked nearby, but a handler reminded him that, well, he was a billionaire with a busy agenda and time was short.

The goal, Steyer explained, is to "sequester a lot of the carbon in the soil and, from a greenhouse gas standpoint and carbon standpoint ... be a net plus."

Steyer, Taylor and a staff of scientists and farmers are riding herd not just over cattle, but also accountants from PricewaterhouseCoopers. The number crunchers are meticulously analyzing whether there is merit to the couple's theory about how cattle ranching and climate interact.

"We are picking apart the whole operation, looking at all the supply-chain effects, adding data collection, recruiting a data consortia," said Taylor, the inspiration behind the ranch. Since the cows were AWOL, Taylor was talking over by the farm's makeshift chicken pen, where scores of fluffy chicks chirped like mad on the parched field.

Steyer waved to a worker named Annie. "Her daughter got married here a year ago," he said. "As her wedding gift, she raised and killed 100 chickens for the wedding dinner."

The chickens feast on the insects attracted by the cattle herd's manure. Self-sustainability is religion here. The billionaires who own the place won't even buy food for the fish that swim around its aquaponic vegetable growing tanks. Instead, they have a partnership with a firm called Inka Biospheric Systems, which recycles waste on the farm into homemade fish food.

By trade, Taylor is the leader of a community bank oriented toward low-income borrowers, but she talks about potential for green innovation in farming with the granular detail of a doctoral student in agricultural science. Conversation with her jumps from nematodes to rhizomes to how "the animals stamping with their hooves and manuring stimulates the microbial community to get ever busier."

As they strolled through the postcard-pretty property, Steyer would chime in every so often to bring the conversation back to 60,000 feet.

"There are huge questions here," he said from across the large table in one of the outbuildings that didn't look like much from the outside, but inside could have been the photo shoot set for a Restoration Hardware catalog. "This could be a very good thing, or it could be a very bad thing. Determining what it actually means in the real world, not what people hope it means or fear it means, is pretty important."

The couple initially purchased the ranch in 2002 to help preserve the landscape, provide educational opportunities for local students and boost the farm-to-fork movement.

Its previous owners were an Austrian count and countess who held parties and family reunions on the property until the count died of a heart attack and the countess was too heartbroken to return. It fell into terrible disrepair, Taylor said, used as a dumping ground for cars and other objects, its topsoil stripped and sold.

The vision for the land evolved as Taylor and Steyer grew increasingly interested in conservation theory that holds that herds of large, heavy animals like bison running across the earth had once helped churn rich plant material into the soil, creating a hospitable environment for what Taylor calls a "massively symbiotic symphony of nature."

Regardless of whether the grazing technique helps the environment, the couple know it is not going to be widely embraced unless it makes business sense. The audit will examine whether the practice can be scaled beyond boutique operations like Leftcoast Grassfed, the ranch's organic beef business that serves mostly farm-to-fork enthusiasts.

"You can think of this ranch as a big scientific experiment," Steyer said. "We have the hypothesis and we are trying to rigorously test and measure it."

Agriculture will be refashioned in the coming decades, predicts Ellison, who has been more circumspect about his plans for Lanai. His desalination project, he told an Oracle conference last year, "is supposed to be a model for the next generation."

Out in Arizona, Buffett's approach is decidedly less radical.

He's a firm believer that the chemicals and other products made by giant companies like Archer Daniels Midland -- where he once worked -- are essential to growing enough food, particularly on increasingly parched land.

Buffett is the son of a billionaire investor, but his passion is not high finance -- it's farming. He's been a farmer for decades. The foundation he created, funded with some $2 billion from his father, is focused on global food security and sustainability.

Key to his work on the Arizona exhibition farm are Ike and Earl, the oxen. They were not easy to find, Buffett said, as the only practical purpose for oxen in America tends to be for history buffs who want to demonstrate how life was lived in times past. "I thought for a while we were the only ones in Arizona who had them," he said. "But there is a guy a couple of hours from here, and he has all the old yokes and equipment and shows up at agriculture fairs."

Like Steyer and Taylor, he says farmers need to adopt new thinking on what they do to their soil. He's an evangelist for no-till farming, in which fields are left unplowed and covered with plant residue to keep it nutrient-rich and lessen the need for synthetic fertilizers. Such soil, he says, is a sponge for carbon dioxide that would otherwise be released into the atmosphere and accelerate global warming.

"I can prove all day long that this works," he said. "When someone argues with me, I just reverse the question. I ask what solutions they have. How are they going to help farmers survive climate change?"

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: TOM STEYER and Kat Taylor are surprising some allies by raising cattle; many see the massive numbers of cows on the planet as incompatible with efforts to contain global warming. The couple have a different take.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Peter DaSilva For The Times; PHOTO: ACTIVIST Tom Steyer's wife, Kat Taylor, with one of the cows on their 1,800-acre ranch in Pescadero.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Peter DaSilva For The Times

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Farmers; Cattle; Climate change; Farms |
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Document 24

Batteries: The next frontier; Innovation is speeding up as the technology is increasingly seen as key to the fight against climate change.

**Publication info:** Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]27 Nov 2015: C.2.

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**ABSTRACT**

"If you are serious about eliminating combustion of fossil fuels to power anything -- a house, a city, a state -- you can't do it without [energy] storage," which usually means batteries, said Jay Whitacre, a Carnegie Mellon University battery expert and inventor.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

One of the key technologies that could help wean the globe off fossil fuel is probably at your fingertips or in your pocket right now: the battery.

If batteries can get better, cheaper and store more power safely, then electric cars and solar- or wind-powered homes become more viable -- even on cloudy days or when the wind isn't blowing. These types of technological solutions will be one of the more hopeful aspects of United Nations climate talks that begin next week in Paris.

"If you are serious about eliminating combustion of fossil fuels to power anything -- a house, a city, a state -- you can't do it without [energy] storage," which usually means batteries, said Jay Whitacre, a Carnegie Mellon University battery expert and inventor.

Former Vice President Al Gore, former U.S. Geological Survey chief (and current editor-in-chief of the journal Science) Marcia McNutt and others point to better batteries as one of the bright spots in the fight against climate change.

Although batteries have been around more than 200 years, this year the technology has amped up.

In October, an international team of scientists announced a breakthrough in overcoming major obstacles in next-generation energy storage and creating a battery that has five to 10 times the energy density of the best batteries on the market now. In September, Whitacre won a $500,000 invention prize for his eco-friendly water-oriented battery. And in April, Elon Musk announced plans for his Tesla Motors to sell high-tech batteries for homes with solar panels to store electricity for nighttime and cloudy day use, weaning the homes off dirtier power from the burning of coal, oil and gas.

"The pace of innovation does seem to be accelerating," said J.B. Straubel, chief technical officer and co-founder of Tesla with Musk. "We're kind of right at the tipping point where the current performance and lifetime of batteries roughly equal that of fossil fuels. If you are able to double that, the prospects are huge."

At its massive Nevada "gigafactory," Tesla has started producing Powerwalls to store energy in homes. They can't make them fast enough for customers worldwide.

In November, a Texas utility announced it was giving wind-generated electricity free to customers at night because it couldn't be stored. That's where Tesla hopes to come in -- not just in cars, but in homes. Within 10 years, Straubel figures it will be considerably cheaper (and cleaner) to get energy through wind and solar power and store it with batteries than to use coal, oil or gas.

"What has changed is the Gigafactory," said Venkat Srinivasan, deputy director of the Joint Center for Energy Storage Research at the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab. "Two years ago I didn't think anyone would have thought you'd invest $5 billion in a big [battery] factory."'

Tesla is using existing technology, just mass producing and marketing it. That's one of two key changes in the field. The other is work to make the battery itself much more efficient.

Start with that lithium ion battery in your pocket. It was invented by John Goodenough, a professor at the University of Texas. His next task is a safer battery that uses sodium, a more plentiful element that can produce a faster charge.

"Now I hope to help free yourself from your dependence on fossil fuels," he said on the same October day he was awarded part of a $1-million innovation-in-alternative-fuels prize from Israel.

"I believe in the next year there will be a breakthrough," he said. "I'm hopeful, but we're not there yet."

Glenn Amatucci, director of the energy storage research group at Rutgers University, called it "a race against time. Every day and every hour is critical in terms of getting an advance."

But Goodenough is in a special hurry, working more than eight hours a day on his battery: He's 93.

There are many teams around the world working on breakthrough batteries of various types. One of the most promising materials is lithium oxygen, which theoretically could store five to 10 times the energy of a lithium ion battery, but various factors hurt its efficiency. Then, last month, a team led by Clare Grey at the University of Cambridge announced in the journal Science that they had, on a small scale, overcome one obstacle so that its efficiency could compete with lithium ion batteries.

The potential gains in this technology are high, but it is still at least seven years from commercial availability, Grey said.

At Carnegie Mellon and Aquion Energy, Whitacre is honing a water-oriented battery with sodium and carbon. Others are looking at magnesium.

Tesla's Straubel sees all sorts of battery possibilities.

"It's an ongoing revolution," Straubel said. "It's a critical piece in the whole puzzle in how we stop burning fossil fuels completely."

Credit: Associated Press

**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: AT ITS MASSIVE NEVADA "GIGAFACTORY," Tesla has begun producing Powerwalls to store energy in homes. Above, Tesla Chief Executive Elon Musk introduces the product in April at an event in Hawthorne.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Luis Sinco Los Angeles Times

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Document 25

U.N. CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT; Setting the pace; Brown and his predecessor put a bipartisan spin on a fight they share

Megerian, Chris . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]07 Dec 2015: B.1.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1744604808?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

In the other was his predecessor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, the Republican movie star who is fond of finding ways to compare political issues to his championship bodybuilding career.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

It was like the debut of a environmentally themed buddy cop drama, with a political odd couple joining together against a common foe.

In one chair was California's current governor, Jerry Brown, the cerebral Democrat known for dropping Latin phrases into Capitol news conferences.

In the other was his predecessor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, the Republican movie star who is fond of finding ways to compare political issues to his championship bodybuilding career.

It's hard to imagine two more different people serving back-to-back in the same political office, but on Sunday they sat for a joint interview to put a bipartisan spin on fighting climate change, a key issue for both of them.

"It's important for people to know that Republicans can work with Democrats and vice versa," Brown said.

Schwarzenegger added, "That is a very important message for the international community, that they should not look at [climate change] in a political way."

Both Brown and Schwarzenegger are in Paris for the United Nations summit, which is aimed at producing a new international accord for stemming global warming. It was a packed day for the current governor.

Before meeting with his predecessor, Brown led an event at the U.S. ambassador's residence in Paris. Fifteen leaders of cities, states and provinces from around the globe signed on to an agreement pledging to set tougher standards that national leaders are expected to agree to.

"Start signing," he told the local representatives, who let out a chuckle, picked up their pens and complied.

Called the Under 2 Memorandum of Understanding, the agreement seeks to keep global temperatures from rising more than 2 degrees Celsius. Brown helped devise the sub-national effort, which is expected to have 100 signatories by the end of the week.

Brown delayed his trip by a day to travel to San Bernardino in the wake of Wednesday's mass slayings. He arrived Saturday in Paris, where he plans to participate in nearly two dozen events related to the climate summit. On Monday he has half a dozen items on his schedule, among them a roundtable convened by California billionaire and philanthropist Tom Steyer that includes California business leaders.

Although the two California governors first bumped into each other Saturday night -- Brown was leaving a documentary screening; Schwarzenegger was signing autographs -- they met again Sunday at the Four Seasons.

In an upstairs meeting room, they sat next to each other with ornate coffee cups and a tray of pastries on the table in front of them. A documentary crew filmed as they spoke to reporters.

Brown was wearing a suit with no tie; Schwarzenegger wore a plaid sport coat and boots with the seal of California.

Although they said bipartisan consensus was possible, it's Schwarzenegger's Republican Party that has been the most opposed to taking any action on climate change, sometimes even denying it is happening.

Schwarzenegger said the lack of national action on the environment was a symptom of broader dysfunction.

"Is anything getting done in Washington?" he said. Schwarzenegger signed into law the landmark 2006 legislation that created California's cap-and-trade program and provided the foundation for much of the state's efforts against climate change.

Brown has occasionally criticized Republican climate deniers as "troglodytes," a word he used again during the interview. (Shortly before leaving for the trip, Brown wrote to officials in Texas and West Virginia and accused them of seeking to score political points in their recent attempt to cast doubt on the legality of one of President Obama's key climate change initiatives.)

"This is a creature that lives in caves," he said. "As people hear that word, they're going to say, what does all that mean? And when they think about it, they may want to walk outside their caves and see the sunshine."

After the interview, they headed to a restaurant for a reception for the summit's large California delegation.

As they exited the hotel, one bystander jumped ahead of Brown to get into position to take a picture of Schwarzenegger.

"Go ahead," Brown said.

Once at the reception, Schwarzenegger gave a speech that touted his solidarity with Brown on climate change.

Gesturing to the current governor, the former Mr. Olympia said, "It is like one mind in two bodies."

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: ACTOR and former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, in Paris for the U.N. summit, signs autographs as he leaves his hotel after a meeting with journalists.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Christophe Petit Tesson EPA

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Climate change; Global warming; Politics; Governors |
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| **Location:** | California |
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| **Identifier / keyword:** | SCHWARZENEGGER, ARNOLD BROWN, EDMUND G JR (JERRY) GLOBAL WARMING INITIATIVES POLITICAL PARTIES BIPARTISANSHIP |
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Document 26

State investigates Exxon Mobil on climate change; Kamala Harris wants to know whether the oil company lied to investors about risks.

Penn, Ivan . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]20 Jan 2016: A.1.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1758057423?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

Lieu said he has sent letters to U.S. Atty. Gen. Loretta Lynch and the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission calling for federal investigations of securities fraud and violations of racketeering, consumer protection, truth in advertising, public health, shareholder protection or other laws.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

California Atty. Gen. Kamala D. Harris is investigating whether Exxon Mobil Corp. repeatedly lied to the public and its shareholders about the risk to its business from climate change -- and whether such actions could amount to securities fraud and violations of environmental laws.

Harris' office is reviewing what Exxon Mobil knew about global warming and what the company told investors, a person close to the investigation said.

The move follows published reports, based on internal company documents, suggesting that during the 1980s and 1990s the company, then known as Exxon, used climate research as part of its planning and other business practices but simultaneously argued publicly that climate-change science was not clear cut.

Those documents were cited in stories by reporters for Columbia University Energy and Environmental Reporting Fellowship, published in partnership with the Los Angeles Times. The nonprofit InsideClimate News also published several stories based on the documents.

Shortly after the news reports, Harris' office launched the investigation in response to the findings, the person said. New York's attorney general also is investigating the oil company as a result of the published reports.

Exxon Mobil did not respond to several requests for comment made by telephone and email.

A spokesman for Harris declined to confirm the investigation.

U.S. Rep. Ted Lieu (D-Torrance), who has called on federal authorities to investigate Exxon Mobil, praised Harris' decision.

Lieu said the investigation means that any damages won from Exxon Mobil could benefit Californians.

"I commend ... Harris for taking this action," he said.

Lieu said he has sent letters to U.S. Atty. Gen. Loretta Lynch and the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission calling for federal investigations of securities fraud and violations of racketeering, consumer protection, truth in advertising, public health, shareholder protection or other laws.

Lieu said he hopes the decision by Harris, representing a state with the eighth-largest economy in the world, will prompt other states and the Justice Department to investigate.

"I think this action will be taken very seriously by Exxon Mobil," Lieu said.

Richard Keil, an Exxon Mobil spokesman, previously said that the company denies any wrongdoing in regard to the climate-change reports.

"We unequivocally reject allegations that Exxon Mobil suppressed climate change research contained in media reports," Keil said in a statement issued in response to the letters sent in October by Lieu and Mark DeSaulnier (D-Concord). Keil issued a statement with the same quote in early November when the New York investigation became public.

Exxon Mobil continues to face calls from several current and former U.S. lawmakers for criminal investigations based on the media reports. They include Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders and Al Gore.

It is unclear what approach Harris intends to take in California's investigation.

Harris' office is casting a wide net and looking at a variety of issues, according to the person familiar with the matter.

Legal experts say the SEC requires that companies disclose the risks of climate change to their business operations but that the agency has taken almost no action to enforce it.

The moves by California and New York are seen as a step to fill that void.

Exxon Mobil already has received a subpoena for documents dating from 1977 from the office of Eric Schneiderman, New York's attorney general.

Schneiderman has at his disposal New York's Martin Act, a law that gives the state's attorney general broad power to prosecute companies for financial fraud.

Unlike federal securities law, the New York statute does not require the state to prove that a company intended to defraud -- only that it misrepresented relevant information or withheld it from investors.

The law applies to any company doing business in the state.

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: EXXON MOBIL, which operates a refinery in Torrance, above, has issued statements denying news reports that it suppressed climate-change research.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Christina House For The Times; PHOTO: ATTY. GEN. Harris began the investigation after published reports.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Irfan Khan Los Angeles Times

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Climate change; Petroleum industry; Attorneys general |
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| **Company / organization:** | Name: Exxon Mobil Corp; NAICS: 447110, 211111 |
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Document 27

THE OSCARS / THE ACTORS; Tying work to a greater cause; Leonardo DiCaprio discusses climate change from the stage after winning for 'Revenant.'

Brown, August; King, Susan . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]29 Feb 2016: U.8.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1768522164?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

After enduring freezing winters, horse-carcass sleeping bags and a gruesome bear attack, Leonardo DiCaprio has finally won his first Oscar.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

After enduring freezing winters, horse-carcass sleeping bags and a gruesome bear attack, Leonardo DiCaprio has finally won his first Oscar.

Following 20-plus years of disappointments at the Academy Awards, DiCaprio notched a lead actor win for his performance in "The Revenant." The film, directed by Alejandro G. Inarritu, follows the early 19th century trapper Hugh Glass as he seeks revenge for his son's murder and his own abandonment on the frontier.

His long-sought-after win was greeted by a heartfelt standing ovation by the appreciative crowd. DiCaprio seized the moment with a speech that was both personal and political.

DiCaprio thanked his brother in this endeavor, Tom Hardy, and the cinematic genius of Inarritu. But he also used his acceptance speech to talk about climate change, explaining that the production had to go to the tip of South America to find enough snow to complete "The Revenant."

"Climate change is real," he said. "Let us not take this planet for granted. I do not take this evening for granted."

DiCaprio had been nominated four other times before, thrice for lead actor, but it took his grueling role in "The Revenant" to push him over the top.

"Any time you're recognized it feels good, but especially for a film like this, which has been a different experience," DiCaprio, 41, told The Times in an interview before his win for the same role at the Golden Globes. "I've made no qualms about saying that making this movie is the hardest thing I've ever had to endure."

By any calibration, DiCaprio is one of the Hollywood's leading movie stars. Most of his films, including "The Revenant," have been box-office hits and he's worked with some of the world's greatest directors, including Martin Scorsese, James Cameron and Inarritu.

DiCaprio, a Los Angeles native, was first nominated as a supporting actor for 1993's "What's Eating Gilbert Grape?" His role as the troubled young Arnie Grape earned widespread praise, and helped launch his remarkable career.

DiCaprio's prior Oscar snubs include one of the academy's most famous. He didn't get an acting nomination for "Titanic," which won for best picture and director in 1998 and is still one of the highest-grossing films of all time.

His other acting nominations include nods for roles in 2004's "The Aviator," 2006's "Blood Diamond" and 2013's "The Wolf of Wall Street," for which he was also nominated as a producer for best picture.

However, other 2016 awards shows strongly hinted that this would be DiCaprio's year to finally land atop the Oscars for lead actor. He won the comparable prizes at this year's Golden Globes and Screen Actors Guild awards.

In the lead actor category this year he beat out Bryan Cranston in "Trumbo," Matt Damon in "The Martian," Michael Fassbender in "Steve Jobs" and Eddie Redmayne in "The Danish Girl."

The cast and crew of "The Revenant" endured a notably difficult shoot, using only natural light in frigid settings in Canada and South America.

DiCaprio also had the populist wind at his back. In the run-up to the Oscars, the hashtag "#prayforleo" emerged as a trend, where fans created images of his famous roles with Oscar statues edited in as costars.

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**DETAILS**

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Document 28

CalPERS nudges energy companies; The pension fund calls on Exxon and Chevron to disclose the financial risks of climate change.

Shalev, Asaf . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]13 Apr 2016: C.4.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1780423556?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

"The world is a different place, and you can't manage what you can't measure," said Anne Simpson, a CalPERS investment director. Since 1990, Exxon Mobil's executives have repeatedly opposed similar campaigns by activist shareholders.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

The California Public Employees' Retirement System is joining a growing number of investors calling on Exxon Mobil Corp. and others to disclose the financial risks of climate change and climate change policies.

Shareholders of Exxon Mobil, Chevron Corp. and seven other energy companies will soon gather for annual meetings where votes will be cast on climate risk disclosure.

The proposals ask the companies to evaluate and disclose the potential financial fallout of recent international commitments to hold the planet's rise in average temperatures below 2 degrees Celsius.

This limit was set at last year's climate summit in Paris, where almost 200 nations committed to slowing warming of the Earth's atmosphere.

CalPERS and 31 investors, including New York City's pension funds and BNP Paribas Investment Partners, want to know how much of the companies' petroleum reserves must stay in the ground to meet greenhouse gas emission limits.

"The world is a different place, and you can't manage what you can't measure," said Anne Simpson, a CalPERS investment director.

Since 1990, Exxon Mobil's executives have repeatedly opposed similar campaigns by activist shareholders. But with heightened interest following the Paris agreement, this year's vote could reveal a shift in investors' mood, analysts said.

"This is part of a broader call by investors for disclosure on how companies are going to adapt to a 2-degree future," said Shanna Cleveland, a senior manager at Ceres, a nonprofit working with businesspeople on climate issues. "CalPERS has really stepped in to play a leadership role ... working to get the message out to other major shareholders."

The response from Exxon Mobil directors to the shareholder proposals will be included in the proxy statement distributed Wednesday, said Alan Jeffers, a spokesman for the Irving, Texas, company.

"Addressing climate change, providing economic opportunity and lifting billions out of poverty are complex and interrelated issues requiring complex solutions," Jeffers said. "There is a consensus that comprehensive strategies are needed to respond to these risks."

Chevron's board recommended that shareholders vote against the proposal, arguing in the proxy statement that "setting unilateral, long-term [greenhouse gas] emissions targets tied to global emissions reduction trajectories is not prudent" because it would put the San Ramon, Calif., company at a competitive disadvantage.

As of June 30, CalPERS owned 12.7 million Exxon Mobil shares valued at more than $1 billion and 8.3 million Chevron shares valued at more than $800 million.

Exxon Mobil and Chevron have long maintained that global economic growth in the coming decades will exhaust their existing oil and gas reserves. The companies' share price depends, in part, on the potential future earnings from those fossil fuel reserves.

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business@latimes.com

Credit: Asaf Shalev is a reporter with Columbia University's Energy &Environmental Reporting Project.

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Climate change; Petroleum industry; Proxy statements; Shareholder voting; Environmental policy; Greenhouse gases; Disclosure; Energy industry; Natural gas reserves; Oil reserves |
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| **Company / organization:** | Name: Exxon Mobil Corp; NAICS: 447110, 211111 |
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Document 29

THE NATION; Delegates in place, Trump rejects climate change pact

Finnegan, Michael . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]27 May 2016: A.6.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1791545915?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

Hours after effectively clinching the Republican presidential nomination, Donald Trump vowed Thursday to withdraw the United States from the historic Paris agreement among 195 nations to cut greenhouse gas emissions in an effort to stop global warming.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Hours after effectively clinching the Republican presidential nomination, Donald Trump vowed Thursday to withdraw the United States from the historic Paris agreement among 195 nations to cut greenhouse gas emissions in an effort to stop global warming.

Trump, who has often dismissed the science on climate change as a hoax that threatens American jobs, promised to cut all U.S. spending on United Nations global warming programs.

Speaking at an oil and gas industry conference in Bismarck, N.D., he laid out an energy agenda that would rely heavily on fossil fuels and rescind Obama administration regulations aimed at addressing climate change.

"In a Trump administration, political activists with extreme agendas will no longer write the rules, because that's what's happening now," Trump said.

Trump's energy speech came shortly after the Associated Press reported that a handful of unbound delegates had agreed to back him at the Republican National Convention in July, giving him one more than the 1,237 delegates he needed to win the nomination.

"North Dakota, you brought us over the line, folks, and I will always remember that," Trump said as he pointed to his delegates in the audience.

On Instagram, Trump posted a photo of himself celebrating on his private jet with a McDonald's burger and fries.

At a news conference before the speech, Trump struck back at President Obama for telling reporters in Japan on Thursday that world leaders were rattled by Trump's ignorance of world affairs and cavalier attitude.

"If they're rattled in a friendly way, that's a good thing," said Trump, who has often accused China, Mexico and Japan of ripping off America in what he describes as rotten trade deals.

Trump accused Obama of doing "a horrible job."

"He shouldn't be airing what he's airing where he is right now," Trump said.

Looking ahead to the general election, Trump struck an aggressive posture, saying a newly released State Department inspector general's report faulting Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server while she was secretary of State was shocking and devastating.

"This was all bad judgment -- probably illegal," he said. "We'll have to see what the FBI says about it."

In response, Clinton called Trump an "unqualified loose cannon."

"He's talking about breaking up our alliances, letting more countries get nuclear weapons, banning all Muslims from coming to America," she said. "That is a recipe for fewer friends and more enemies, and it will make us less safe."

"This is not a reality show," she added. "It's not just politics. It's really serious. The entire world looks to the United States for leadership and stability."

Intruding into the Democratic contest, Trump said at his news conference that he would be willing to debate Clinton's Democratic rival, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, but only if the event could raise $10 million to $15 million for charity such as women's health groups.

"I think it would get very high ratings," he said. "It should be in a big arena somewhere, and we could have a lot of fun with it."

Trump also made light of the suggestion that it was offensive to use the nickname "Pocahontas" for Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who has identified herself as part Native American. Warren is a fierce critic of the New York business mogul.

"Is it offensive? You tell me," Trump said to a reporter. "Oh, I'm sorry about that."

"I think she's as Native American as I am, OK? That I will tell you," he said. "But she's a woman that's been very ineffective, other than she's got a big mouth."

--

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: DONALD TRUMP laid out a fossil-fuel-heavy energy agenda at an oil and gas industry event in Bismarck, N.D., after learning he had reached 1,238 delegates.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Spencer Platt Getty Images

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Greenhouse effect; Womens health; Nominations; Climate change; Press conferences |
| --- | --- |

| **Location:** | Japan United States--US |
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| **Identifier / keyword:** | TRUMP, DONALD J REPUBLICAN PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES DELEGATES GLOBAL WARMING AIR POLLUTION CONTROL TREATIES |
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| **Publication title:** | Los Angeles Times; Los Angeles, Calif. |
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Document 30

CLIMATE CHANGE; A new push to revive state's cap-and-trade; With a key legislative debate looming, governor's panel issues a plan to bolster and extend the emissions program.

Dillon, Liam . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]14 July 2016: B.1.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1803670576?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

Cap-and-trade functions by forcing companies to buy permits in order to pollute, providing a financial incentive for power plants, oil refineries, manufacturers and other businesses to reduce their emissions.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

In advance of a political showdown in the state Legislature, Gov. Jerry Brown's administration has made its first formal effort to extend the life of the program central to California's bid to combat climate change.

The California Air Resources Board, which is controlled by the governor, released a plan that would continue the state's cap-and-trade program to cut carbon emissions beyond 2020, the date when the program currently expires.

Cap-and-trade functions by forcing companies to buy permits in order to pollute, providing a financial incentive for power plants, oil refineries, manufacturers and other businesses to reduce their emissions. Money from the program finances high-profile projects, such as the state's bullet train and electric car subsidies, alongside other efforts to cut pollution, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

The new plan would provide stronger links to similar programs in Canada, better align with federal clean-power standards and give the state a mechanism to meet Brown's aggressive greenhouse gas reduction targets through at least 2030, according to a report from the board.

"Despite California's marked progress, greater innovation and effort is needed to avoid the worst consequences of climate change," the report said.

The plan released Tuesday represents somewhat of an insurance policy in case the governor and lawmakers fail to reach a deal next month that would cut through the many political and legal challenges facing the cap-and-trade program.

Brown wants new legislation to extend cap-and-trade beyond 2020 and is negotiating with oil companies, part of an expected major debate over the issue when the Legislature returns from recess in August.

An extension of the cap-and-trade program might also require approval from two-thirds of lawmakers, the threshold required to approve new taxes. Doing so would insulate cap-and-trade from pending legal arguments that contend it's currently an unconstitutional tax because the original 2006 law to authorize the program passed with only a majority vote.

Clearing any legislative hurdle is a tall order, with previous efforts to expand the state's climate change programs opposed not only by Republicans, but also business-aligned Democrats in the Assembly. Should a new law not pass, the plan released Tuesday formalizes Brown's intention to continue cap-and-trade, albeit with less legal certainty.

Senate President Pro Tem Kevin de Leon (D-Los Angeles) praised Brown and the Air Resources Board for moving to continue cap-and-trade, but said the Legislature also needs to act.

"The governor is doing his job," De Leon said after a Tuesday news conference in Sacramento to tout the clean energy industry. "Now it's time that the Legislature do its job by making sure that we bring predictability, that we stabilize the markets, that we continue to invest in vulnerable communities throughout the state of California."

Beyond the political and legal wrangling over cap-and-trade, the program has faced financial problems. The cap-and-trade auction in May produced only $2.5 million in revenue instead of the $150 million that state officials had expected. Tuesday's plan aims to create greater certainty for investors about the climate program's future.

The 14-person Air Resources Board -- all but two members are appointed by Brown -- must still sign off on the cap-and-trade extension before it takes effect. A final vote is expected in spring 2017.

--

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Times staff writer Patrick McGreevy contributed to this report.

**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: A PLAN by the California Air Resources Board would continue the cap-and-trade program to cut carbon emissions beyond 2020, when the program is to expire. That may require approval by two-thirds of lawmakers.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Rick Loomis Los Angeles Times; PHOTO: MONEY FROM cap-and-trade funds electric car subsidies and other climate-related projects, particularly in disadvantaged communities.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Ricardo DeAratanha Los Angeles Times

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Emissions trading; Climate change; Emission standards; Industrial plant emissions; Legal arguments; Governors; Legislatures |
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| **Location:** | California |
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Document 31

Emissions bill clears a big hurdle; Controversial climate change measure is approved by the Assembly amid heavy pressure by lobbyists.

Megerian, Chris; Mason, Melanie; Dillon, Liam . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]24 Aug 2016: B.1.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1813502972?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

After the vote, Brown issued a statement referencing Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, who has called climate change a hoax, and thanking lawmakers for "rejecting the brazen deception of the oil lobby and their Trump-inspired allies who deny science and fight every reasonable effort to curb global warming."

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

A controversial measure to extend California's target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions was approved by the Assembly on Tuesday, clearing a major hurdle in a battle at the Capitol over the future of the state's environmental programs.

White House officials and Gov. Jerry Brown cranked up the pressure on Assembly members to support the legislation, while oil industry lobbyists huddled with sympathetic lawmakers in an attempt to stall an effort that once seemed unlikely to gain traction this year.

The legislation would require slashing greenhouse gas emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, an easier target than the current goal of hitting 1990 levels by 2020.

"When it's all said and done, this is a simple bill, but an extremely significant one," said Assemblyman Eduardo Garcia (D-Coachella), who introduced the measure on the floor. "It represents a new chapter of the state's climate policy."

The measure, Senate Bill 32, must receive a final vote in the Senate before it can go to Gov. Jerry Brown for his signature. It is the sequel to Assembly Bill 32, a landmark 2006 law that laid the groundwork for California's extensive array of environmental initiatives, including the cap-and-trade program, which provides a financial incentive to reduce emissions by forcing companies to buy permits to pollute.

"Today's action sends an unmistakable signal to investors of California's commitment to clean energy and clean air," said a statement from state Sen. Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills), who wrote both measures.

The issue has been the subject of intense lobbying in Sacramento, especially after signals this month from Brown and some lawmakers that there may not be enough political support to pass the measure before the end of the legislative session Aug. 31.

After the vote, Brown issued a statement referencing Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, who has called climate change a hoax, and thanking lawmakers for "rejecting the brazen deception of the oil lobby and their Trump-inspired allies who deny science and fight every reasonable effort to curb global warming."

Assemblyman Ken Cooley (D-Rancho Cordova), one of more than a dozen Assembly members who supported the legislation Tuesday after abstaining or voting against it last year, said he's confident lawmakers will have greater say over state regulations than they have in the past. White House officials reached out to Cooley and a few of his colleagues recently to talk to them about supporting the measure, he said.

"It just signals that clearly the White House views the leadership of California as an important part of a global conversation," he said. "It rose to the level where they were looking to reach out to members."

Democratic donor and environmentalist Tom Steyer was also in the Capitol during Tuesday's debate talking to lawmakers.

"You're dancing to the flute of a rich hedge-fund billionaire who is running for governor," Assemblyman James Gallagher (R-Plumas Lake) told his colleagues who were supporting the legislation, a nod toward Steyer's rumored political ambition.

Steyer said it was only a coincidence that he was present Tuesday. Asked about Gallagher's comment, he said, "Normally when I hear something like that, I think, 'Wow, those guys have run out of actual arguments and now they're trying to sling dirt.' "

Oil companies and manufacturers that opposed the legislation are now turning their attention to a related measure, Assembly Bill 197, which would increase legislative oversight of regulators and crack down on pollution from refineries and other sources.

If it's blocked, the new emissions reduction target from Senate Bill 32 won't take effect.

Despite some concerns from fellow Democrats, Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon (D-Paramount) said his caucus would support Assembly Bill 197, which is scheduled for a hearing Wednesday morning.

"It's really about oversight, it's really about accountability," he said.

Tuesday's vote came shortly after the latest report of revenues collected under cap and trade.

In the program, permits are traded on a market or sold in an auction. Although overall demand for permits increased, revenue is expected to be less than $10 million, even lower than the dismal results from the May auction.

Supporters have noted that revenue is not the best way to measure the success of a program intended to lower emissions, but the money has become an important part of the political conversation. Brown is counting on some of the money to help pay for the bullet train from L.A. to San Francisco, and lawmakers are working on plans to divvy up the rest among projects in their districts.

Rendon said he hopes approving new legislation this year will restore some confidence to the cap-and-trade market.

"We're trying to let people know that we're dedicated to battling climate change in California and that what this program has done for the economy, it's going to continue to do so for quite some time," he said.

However, the legislation would not address legal uncertainty stemming from a lawsuit over whether the cap-and-trade program has amounted to an unconstitutional tax. Eliminating that concern would require a two-thirds vote in each house of the Legislature, the threshold needed to approve taxes and fees.

Catherine Reheis-Boyd, president of the Western States Petroleum Assn., said in a statement that problems will only worsen because the measure advanced Tuesday "fails to address fixes to cap-and-trade, which sends the wrong signals to the market."

The Brown administration has said more work will be necessary -- possibly with a ballot measure in 2018 -- to address the issue.

"Shoring up the cap-and-trade program -- either through the Legislature or by the voters -- will provide that certainty and will continue billions in funding for vital programs, especially in disadvantaged communities with the dirtiest air," said a statement from Nancy McFadden, a top aide to Brown.

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**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: ASSEMBLY SPEAKER Anthony Rendon, right, accompanied by Assemblyman Eduardo Garcia, talks to reporters after the Assembly passed the emissions bill.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Rich Pedroncelli Associated Press

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Emissions; Bills; Greenhouse effect; Emission standards; Legislation; Environmental policy; Greenhouse gases; Climate change; Legislators |
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Document 31

TRAIL GUIDE; Ad spending gets serious; Pronouncing 'Nevada,' a national split on climate change, and more

Lee, Kurtis; Mascaro, Lisa; Finnegan, Michael; Rushton, Christine . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]08 Oct 2016: A.2.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1826845233?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

[...]wide gaps emerged between liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans on whether other policies can make a big difference: an international agreement to limit carbon emissions, tougher fuel efficiency standards for cars and trucks, and corporate tax incentives to encourage businesses to reduce their carbon footprint. [...]really, a running mate Evan McMullin named a running mate for his conservative independent presidential bid -- again.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

As the running mates of Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump faced off in the lone vice presidential debate of the election, the campaigns continued to work tirelessly ahead of election day, now less than five weeks away. Clinton and her allies are spending big on television advertisements, while Trump offered his opinion -- which drew strong scorn -- of how to pronounce "Nevada." (Note: It's not Ne-VAH-duh.)

Here's a sampling of this week's news from Trail Guide -- the go-to place on latimes.com for news of the 2016 presidential campaign. (And for timely updates on Twitter, follow @latimespolitics.)

--

Clinton outspending Trump on airwaves

Clinton and her allies, such as the super PAC Priorities USA Action, are outspending Trump and his supporters on television ads by a 4-to-1 ratio, according to a report released Tuesday by NBC News and Advertising Analytics, a firm that tracks ad spending by political campaigns.

Clinton and her backers have doled out $189 million, compared with $50 million by Trump and his supporters, the report said. In way, however, Trump is catching up. Clinton and her backers held a 5-1 edge in spending in September.

Clinton and Trump are each spending much of their cash in Florida, a crucial battleground state with 29 electoral votes.

Clinton and her supporters so far have spent about $46.5 million in the state, compared with $14 million by Trump and his backers, such as the National Rifle Assn., according to the report. This week alone in Florida, Clinton and her allies are spending $4.2 million. Trump and his backers: $2.8 million.

An average of several polls from Florida shows Clinton outpacing Trump by about 3 percentage points.

-- Kurtis Lee

--

Central Park Five are guilty, Trump says

Trump indicated this week that he still believes the five men exonerated after being convicted as teenagers in the 1989 rape of a Central Park jogger are guilty.

The case against the men, all minorities, and the assault that left the victim, who is white, in a coma, transfixed a nation reeling from rising big-city crime rates.

At the time, Trump took out full-page ads in New York newspapers calling to "bring back the death penalty" and said the "murderers" should "suffer."

But the five said their confession was coerced, and in 2002, another man, serial rapist Matias Reyes, confessed to the assault. His DNA matched evidence from the crime scene.

Trump said this week he wasn't buying it.

"They admitted they were guilty," Trump said in a statement to CNN's Miguel Marquez. "The police doing the original investigation say they were guilty. The fact that that case was settled with so much evidence against them is outrageous. And the woman, so badly injured, will never be the same."

The five were all convicted on various charges and spent between six and 13 years in prison. In 2014, a federal judge approved a $41-million settlement for their wrongful conviction.

-- Lisa Mascaro

--

Sharp divisions on global warming

Americans remain deeply polarized on climate change, but broadly support increased reliance on solar and wind energy, a new poll found.

The partisan split extends "across a host of beliefs about the expected effects of climate change, actions that can address changes to the Earth's climate, and trust and credibility in the work of climate scientists," the nonpartisan Pew Research Center survey reported.

The Pew survey is one of the most comprehensive independent polls documenting attitudes on global warming in recent years.

It found 76% of liberal Democrats said that cuts in power plant pollution can make a big difference in addressing climate change, while 29% of conservative Republicans agreed.

Similarly wide gaps emerged between liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans on whether other policies can make a big difference: an international agreement to limit carbon emissions, tougher fuel efficiency standards for cars and trucks, and corporate tax incentives to encourage businesses to reduce their carbon footprint.

Clinton has vowed to press forward with President Obama's climate agenda and build upon it.

Trump rejects science showing that carbon pollution from the burning of fossil fuels is warming the planet and endangering civilization.

If he is elected, he plans to withdraw the U.S. from the nearly worldwide Paris climate treaty mandating reductions in carbon emissions and lift all Obama administration restraints on the burning of coal, oil and gas.

-- Michael Finnegan

--

Finally, and really, a running mate

Evan McMullin named a running mate for his conservative independent presidential bid -- again.

The long-shot candidate announced Thursday that Mindy Finn, a digital media strategist and founder of Empowered Women, will join his campaign. McMullin is running as an alternative conservative option to Trump.

But Finn's name won't make it onto some state ballots in November after McMullin's campaign mistakenly submitted the placeholder name "Nathan Johnson" to meet qualifying deadlines.

The fake name sparked a social media search for the "real" Nathan Johnson in early September.

-- Christine Rushton

--

What's in a name?

It's the attention to detail on the campaign trail that often means so much to voters -- like pronouncing the name of the state the way its residents do. Trump touched down in Nevada this week and got it wrong.

Not only did he repeatedly pronounce the name Ne-VAH-duh, like out-of-staters often do, he insisted he was right.

"Nobody says it the other way," he told a rally in Reno.

In fact, most Nevadans prefer calling their state Ne-VAD-uh.

Reaction was quick, fierce and from the highest levels of power.

"It's pronounced Nev-AD-a," tweeted Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nev.).

-- Lisa Mascaro

--

Quote of the week ...

"See, I told you his hair wasn't orange."

-- First-grader at the International Christian Academy in Las Vegas when Trump visited the school

**Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: IN HENDERSON, Nev., Les Kohen holds his 3-month-old son, Matthew, at a Donald Trump campaign rally. Trump drew ire for his pronunciation of "Nevada."; PHOTOGRAPHER:Marcus Yam Los Angeles Times

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Climate change; Presidential elections; Political campaigns; Carbon; Political advertising; Parks &recreation areas |
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Document 32

How the U.S. proposes to reduce emissions and limit climate change; The strategies include fossil fuel cutbacks, renewable energy and carbon sequestration.

Yardley, William . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]17 Nov 2016: A.4.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1840606485?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

Slashing fossil fuels and rapidly expanding renewable energy The largest gains, by far, in reducing greenhouse-gas emissions would come from rapidly scaling down the use of fossil fuels to provide electricity for homes, buildings and industry, and fuel for transportation.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Plant hundreds of millions of trees. Drastically reduce the burning of fossil fuels for electricity and transportation. Perfect and employ new technology to capture and store carbon.

These are among the aggressive steps that U.S. officials outlined Wednesday as probably necessary to limit the worst effects of climate change. Presented at the United Nations climate conference in Marrakech, Morocco, the proposal has a futuristic name that evokes its ambition: The Mid-Century Strategy for Deep Decarbonization.

The outline is not a formal policy but a road map showing ways the U.S. can reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change by at least 80% below 2005 levels by the year 2050. That would significantly escalate the Obama administration's current plan to reduce emissions between 26% and 28% by 2025.

The strategy would depend on a blend of technological advances, market forces and government policies -- and that blend can be flexible depending on how all three evolve and which ones work best. Here are some highlights from the 111-page report:

Slashing fossil fuels and rapidly expanding renewable energy

The largest gains, by far, in reducing greenhouse-gas emissions would come from rapidly scaling down the use of fossil fuels to provide electricity for homes, buildings and industry, and fuel for transportation. (Read: electric vehicles are the future.) This would be done by expanding wind, solar and nuclear power, modernizing the electric grid to make it more flexible to transmit new forms of energy and expanding regional plans that put a price on carbon, such as California's cap-and-trade program. The plan proposes doubling current levels of investment in clean energy technology by 2050.

Sequestering carbon

This would require a blend of changes in land use to increase the so-called land sink that captures carbon naturally and through new technologies that could capture carbon emissions.

The report projects that the U.S. would need to add about 50 million acres of forests, vastly expanding the volume of trees that can store carbon that is emitted into the air. For perspective, the Tongass National Forest in Alaska, the country's largest national forest, is about 26 million acres. The plan says this could be done on federal land and through policies that encourage private landowners to plant forests. It also says that farming can be improved to increase carbon sequestration in fields and that urban growth must be controlled to limit land loss.

The report proposes new investment in experimental technologies that would remove carbon from the air, but it emphasizes that these mechanisms must not have damaging side effects. If they are not successful, the goals of the plan potentially could be met through reductions from other efforts.

Reduce non-carbon emissions that contribute to climate change

This includes methane, which is often released in the production of natural gas and oil. (Just this week, the Obama administration finalized new rules intended to reduce methane leaks in energy production.) It also includes reducing nitrogen-based fertilizers and finding ways to reduce methane from livestock farming. It also presumes reductions in hydrofluorocarbons, which are emitted from air conditioners and refrigerants.

The Trump factor

The report has been developed over many months, long before Donald Trump became president-elect. He has called climate change a hoax and said he would "cancel" the Paris climate accord. It notes that the Obama administration has taken substantial action to reduce emissions, but it also emphasizes that future administrations will have to do their part.

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**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Emissions; Climate change; Fossil fuels; Carbon; Natural gas |
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| **Location:** | United States--US |
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| **Identifier / keyword:** | UNITED STATES GLOBAL WARMING AIR POLLUTION CONTROL ALTERNATIVE ENERGY INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS |
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Document 33

Oyster die-off may be tied to climate change

Greene, Sean . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]18 Dec 2016: B.5.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1849820288?accountid=13360)

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**ABSTRACT**

Government agencies and environmental groups hope the filter-feeding, reef-building bivalves could protect the shoreline from erosion and sea level rise, as well as reinvigorate the underwater ecosystem.

**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Climate change could supercharge the powerful storms often hailed for bringing drought-busting rains to California.

The storms, called atmospheric rivers, are long stretches of water vapor that "flow" from the tropics up to the West Coast. In California, they can deliver up to half of the state's annual precipitation in just 10 to 15 days, as well as destructive floods and landslides. Sometimes, the deluges from atmospheric rivers can deal ecological damage too.

A new study describes how a series of atmospheric rivers in the winter of 2010-11 contributed to a massive die-off in the San Francisco Bay's struggling oyster population. The findings, published in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B, are the first to demonstrate the ecological impacts of the storms -- an example of the extreme climatic events expected to increase in size and frequency with climate change.

In California, climate models project that both intense droughts and floods, linked to strengthening El Nino and La Nina events, will increase by 50% by the end of the century. The reasoning is warmer air has an increased capacity to store moisture and energy, which could be unleashed in the form of bigger and badder storms.

While some ecological effects of climate change have been well-documented -- such as warmer temperatures driving range shifts in plants and animal species -- the impacts of extreme weather have proved difficult to study because of their unpredictable nature. However, scientists may have seen a preview of what's to come over five years ago.

On March 16, 2011, torrents of freshwater discharged into the San Francisco Bay from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. At its peak, 220,000 cubic feet of water rushed into the bay per second. The influx coincided with a drop in the bay's salinity, which proved catastrophic for the little Olympia oyster.

A previous study tested the range of environmental conditions -- such as air and water temperature, acidity, dissolved oxygen and salinity -- in which oysters can survive. Oysters match their internal body salinity with their external environment -- when the surrounding water gets less salty, they seal themselves up. They can stay this way for about eight days, until they asphyxiate or build up too much waste in their bodies.

Before the deluge, China Camp State Park was home to one of the most abundant populations of the mollusks in the northern San Francisco Bay, with about 180 oysters per square foot stuck to the shoreline and below the tide. (That's 30 times more oysters than in the second-most populated site.)

The numerous China Camp oysters likely provided other populations around the bay with "recruits" -- larval oysters that float through the water until they find a hard surface to latch onto and grow.

In the 1850s, the booming population along the West Coast -- especially in San Francisco -- could not get enough of the little oysters, which have a coppery taste compared with those often served in restaurants today.

Around the late 1800s or early 1900s, the fishery collapsed, and people began farming Pacific oysters introduced from Asia. The West Coast's only native oyster species, the once-abundant bivalve has struggled to recover since.

For many years, the San Francisco Bay has been the site of ambitious oyster restoration projects. Government agencies and environmental groups hope the filter-feeding, reef-building bivalves could protect the shoreline from erosion and sea level rise, as well as reinvigorate the underwater ecosystem.

But the findings this week suggest more trouble could be in store for the diminutive Olympia oyster as climate change threatens to bring supercharged precipitation events to Northern California.

The March 2011 event wasn't the biggest freshwater discharge into the bay -- storms in January 1997 and January 2006 dumped 16,000 and 10,000 cubic meters per second into the bay, respectively. Although oyster data from that time is sparse, surveys found a relatively abundant population at China Camp in 2003. A November 2006 count found no living oysters, but many shells belonging to the dead mollusks.

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**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Oysters; Climate change; River ecology; Salinity; Precipitation |
| --- | --- |

| **Location:** | California San Francisco Bay |
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Document 34

Trump's moves are 'irrelevant' to California; Acting on its own on climate change, the state is ahead of the game. There is anxiety among some firms.

Megerian, Chris . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]29 Mar 2017: A.10.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1881641811?accountid=13360)

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**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Although California's leaders may protest President Trump's announcement Tuesday that he's scrapping the Clean Power Plan, his decision is expected to have little effect on a state already marching toward renewable energy.

In fact, greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generation in the Golden State are already below what the federal government would have required by 2030, and they're expected to drop even further.

"Rollback of the Clean Power Plan is pretty much irrelevant to California," said Frank Wolak, a Stanford University economist who has advised state leaders on climate regulations.

The federal rules, enacted by former President Obama as part of his campaign against climate change, were intended to push states away from coal and toward cleaner energy sources. But that was already underway in California. Los Angeles, one of the last places in the state to rely on coal, was already planning to stop importing electricity from out-of-state coal plants by 2025.

In addition, state law requires California to generate half of its electricity from renewable sources such as solar and wind by 2030, and state Senate leader Kevin de Leon (D-Los Angeles) has suggested pushing even further.

When it comes to fighting pollution and climate change, there are some areas where California relies on the federal government. For example, they share authority on regulating vehicle emissions, and Trump's preparation to roll back federal rules has caused alarm here. However, there's less of a concern when it comes to generating electricity.

Trump's moves have caused some anxiety among California companies that are developing clean-energy technologies and looking for new markets to sell them.

Bob Keefe, executive director of Environmental Entrepreneurs, said the Clean Power Plan would have been "a huge economic catalyst."

"President Trump is basically telling California's more than 40,000 clean-energy businesses and the 500,000 workers they employ that they don't matter to him," he said.

It's an open question how Trump could affect various efforts for California to integrate its electricity grid with neighboring states, an idea that has failed to gain traction so far. Advocates of the concept say regional cooperation could expand the market for renewable energy, but the lack of federal pressure to cut emissions could dampen enthusiasm in places such as Utah and Wyoming, which rely on coal.

"They don't have the Clean Power Plan bearing down on them," said Don Furman, who directs the Fix the Grid campaign that's seeking closer relationships among West Coast states.

Ralph Cavanagh, an attorney at the Natural Resources Defense Council, said he didn't expect changes to the Clean Power Plan to harm efforts to create a regional electricity grid, because of the falling cost of renewable energy.

"The rationale is stronger today than it was yesterday," he said.

--

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**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Alternative energy; Electricity; Emissions; Electricity distribution; Clean technology; Renewable resources; Climate change; Coal |
| --- | --- |

| **Location:** | Wyoming California Los Angeles California Utah |
| --- | --- |

| **People:** | de Leon, Kevin Obama, Barack |
| --- | --- |

| **Company / organization:** | Name: Environmental Entrepreneurs; NAICS: 813312; Name: Stanford University; NAICS: 611310 |
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Document 35

CANNES FILM FESTIVAL; It's Al Gore, the sequel; Undaunted by Trump, he has hope regarding climate change in a new documentary.

Turan, Kenneth . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]24 May 2017: E.1.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1901582043?accountid=13360)

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**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

It has not been a very good year for those concerned about climate change. The U.S. is considering leaving the landmark Paris climate pact, a hostile appointee leads the Environmental Protection Agency and right-wing websites chortle, "Trump's Latest Move Will Make Al Gore Fry."

But is Al Gore himself despondent or depressed about it all? Not in the slightest.

"I've been inoculated in the year 2000," he says, combining a burst of genial good humor with a reference to his presidential election loss to George W. Bush. "I now have a resistance to being disheartened. The antibodies are still thriving in my bloodstream.

"As we all learn, one of the hidden secrets of the human condition is we learn the most from our most painful experiences."

To spend time with Al Gore is to meet a man enough at ease with himself to dress as if for a Senate hearing in white shirt, suit and tie even though he's in the south of France; a warm, engaged, surprisingly funny individual whose innate courtesy has him personally hang a reporter's sports coat on a nearby hotel room hanger.

Yes, he does tend to stay on message when he talks, and he likes to draw graphs in the air with his hands ("I'm going to get a little geeky for a moment," he apologizes with a smile. "I'm sorry, it's a failing").

But he combines this with good-humored self-awareness and a fiercely committed intelligence.

"If you think I'm earnest now, you should have seen me earlier," he says. "You can't change who you are. At times I've tried, but I'm old enough to stop worrying."

Gore is in Cannes to promote the worldwide release of an impassioned and involving new documentary, "An Inconvenient Sequel." Due in U.S. theaters on July 28, it brings us up to speed on where the battle against climate change stands more than a decade after the Oscar-winning documentary "An Inconvenient Truth."

"I'm here for a lot of to-ing and fro-ing," Gore says. "I think I've done 75 seven-minute interviews -- Japan, Russia, Brazil, everywhere.

"The day before yesterday I was live on [the French cable channel] Canal Plus when the interpreter talking in my earpiece was evacuated from his building because of a bomb scare. The questioner was going a mile a minute in French, but because of those 75 seven-minute interviews, I picked up enough key words to fight my way through it."

Gore has been concerned with climate change since he took a class with pioneering global warming theorist Roger Revelle as a college student in the 1960s. Not only did Gore "never imagine when I was a young man that this would become an all-consuming body of work for me," he also never anticipated that the work would involve the movies.

More than that, he was frankly dubious about both of his films.

"I was quite reluctant to do the first film for a foolish reason. Honestly, this will sound silly to you," he says. "When I was a student, trying to take a shortcut in a Shakespeare class, I would pop in videotapes of plays that had been filmed and found it didn't work. I was afraid translating my climate change slide show to a movie might produce a similar result."

Gore was skeptical about doing "An Inconvenient Sequel" for a different reason.

"I had doubts you could tell essentially the same story again with any hope of success," he explains. "Once again I was dead wrong."

A pair of factors, Gore explains, made the difference with the new film, co-directed by Bonni Cohen and Jon Shenk. First was the fly-on-the wall / cinema verite philosophy of the filmmakers, who for two years shadowed their protagonist everywhere, even watching as he changed soaking-wet socks.

"You forget they're there," he says, "to the point where when I saw the movie there were a lot of scenes where I had no idea or no memory of them having filmed it, which was a little uncomfortable."

The other factor was Gore's belief that "though the crisis is worse, we now have the solutions we need" in wind and solar power, whose costs are dropping dramatically as use increases.

One of the film's high points, in fact, is Gore's visit to Georgetown, Texas, "the reddest city in the reddest county" in that notoriously red state, a place that for strictly economic reasons now gets all its energy from wind and solar.

"I love that scene," he says. "So many people who would never ever want to use the phrase 'global warming' are now looking at the economic practicalities, at the hard-nosed economic rationale for the change. It's being fought, but the buggy whip makers made a similar effort a century ago."

Though Gore doesn't like to dwell on it, he admits he is not tireless, that there's an exhaustion factor to all the work and travel he does.

As you might suspect, friends and family do tell him not to work so hard, to take some time off.

His response: "I will do that soon. We're almost there."

Do they roll their eyes?

"Yes, and maybe mutter, 'I've heard that before.' "

Gore perseveres because of "the sense of mission, if you'll forgive an overly lofty word," he says. "It's a privilege to have a task that justifies pouring every ounce of energy into it, that creates a sense of joy, that gives energy back. This may come off wrong, but it's like the line one of the runners says in 'Chariots of Fire.' 'When I run, I feel God's pleasure.' "

Not that it always makes the battle easier. Given that "it can be difficult for people to wrap their minds around the existential threat we're facing," he says, the result is "those of us who work on climate crisis have an internal struggle between hope and despair.

"But the German economist Rudi Dornbusch said, 'Things take longer to happen than you think they will, and then they happen faster than you thought they could.'

"We still have the ability to avoid catastrophic consequences," Gore insists. "The task is to summon political will."

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Caption: PHOTO: AL GORE in the new "An Inconvenient Sequel," which returns to the topic of climate change after 2006's "An Inconvenient Truth."

PHOTOGRAPHER: Cannes Film Festival

PHOTO:"I HAD DOUBTS you could tell essentially the same story again with any hope of success," says Al Gore of "An Inconvenient Sequel." "I was dead wrong."

PHOTOGRAPHER:Stephanie Cornfield

Credit: FILM CRITIC

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| --- | --- |

| **Location:** | Brazil Russia United States--US France Japan |
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| **People:** | Bush, George W |
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| **Company / organization:** | Name: Canal Plus; NAICS: 515120, 517110; Name: Environmental Protection Agency--EPA; NAICS: 924110 |
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Document 36

THE NATION; Toxic waste vs. climate change; Will EPA consider the science as it focuses on Superfund sites?

Yardley, William . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]14 June 2017: A.5.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1909090860?accountid=13360)

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**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

The pioneers who built Seattle polluted and plumbed the lower Duwamish River for a century, straightening its wild curves and saturating its sediment with toxic chemicals from an asphalt plant, Boeing manufacturing facilities and other industries.

The damage was so severe that the last five miles of the river before it empties into Elliott Bay were designated a federal Superfund cleanup site in 2001 -- an official stamp of devastation that came all too late in the view of Native American tribes that once fished for salmon here.

Now, even as progress has been made in the $342-million cleanup, the river and the effort to clean it face a new threat: climate change. Scientists say that rising seas could flood riverbanks by midcentury and that potential increases in storm-water runoff and downstream flows could bore into sediment and release toxins sealed below.

The challenges are not isolated to the Duwamish. Experts say that Superfund sites across the country -- including Portland Harbor in Oregon, naval bases in Virginia and landfills in the Midwest -- are at risk from the increasingly extreme weather and rising sea levels associated with climate change, and that methods for cleaning them may need to be rethought.

Under President Obama, the Environmental Protection Agency began doing just that, proposing technical guidelines in 2015 to make Superfund cleanups more resilient to climate change.

Yet how the Trump administration will address the dual threat of past and future is unclear.

Scott Pruitt, the new EPA chief, has said cleaning up Superfund sites is at the top of his "back to basics" approach for the agency. He has promised to streamline the process, including by getting directly involved with large projects.

Like President Trump, Pruitt questions the scientific consensus that human activity is driving climate change. He has had information about climate science removed from the EPA's website and played a prominent role in Trump's recent decision to withdraw from the Paris climate accord.

Environmental groups worry Pruitt will favor inexpensive methods that fail to withstand the test of time.

"Climate change impacts everything," said Gregg Small, executive director of the nonprofit Climate Solutions, based in Seattle. "You cannot solve any problem if you are not dealing with climate change, because it exacerbates every other problem in the environment."

The Superfund program was once among the nation's highest-profile environmental efforts. For four decades, it has identified and sought to remediate sites contaminated by industrial waste, runoff, mining, chemical use and other types of pollution.

Rivers and ports have frequently been designated Superfund sites, as have older manufacturing locations. Cleanups may involve removing acres of contaminated soil and replacing it with healthy soil, "capping" a site with a layer of new soil, or letting nature slowly break down pollutants.

But an increasing understanding of climate change presented new questions. Would capped toxins at a Superfund site stay sealed in more extreme weather? What if storm water surged into an area more powerfully than in the past? What if floods forecast to occur once in a century happened once every couple decades?

"A system that was designed for remedial action under one set of circumstances may fail completely under other circumstances," said Peter deFur, a Virginia-based consultant on Superfund cleanups.

"Nobody knows what Pruitt means by 'back to basics,'" he said. "If it means requiring air permits, water permits, cleaning up Superfund sites -- that's great, we want to do that. But if 'back to basics' means forgetting about climate change, we're going to fail."

Those concerns have also been raised within the EPA. On March 28, Michael Cox, a longtime climate change expert for the agency, helped lead a workshop on how the climate might affect the cleanup of the Duwamish. Three days later, Cox retired -- and made his feelings known in a blistering open letter to Pruitt that was circulated widely within the agency and eventually made it to the news media.

"You will continue to undermine your credibility and integrity with EPA staff, and the majority of the public, if you continue to question this basic science of climate change," Cox wrote.

In an interview this month, Cox said prioritizing Superfund cleanups could not be separated from accepting climate science.

"If we're spending hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars on cleanups, I sure hope we're looking out 50, 60, 70 years to make sure they are resilient to the changing climate," he said. "Why in the heck would we spend close to half a billion dollars on something that's not going to stand up over time? It doesn't make any sense."

Dave Schuchardt, the Superfund program manager for Seattle Public Utilities, was among dozens of federal, state and local officials who attended the March workshop. Schuchardt said in an interview that stronger storm and river flows projected under climate change can "scour" away at layers of soil intended to seal in toxins.

"As we work through that set of decision points, we'll want to consider how this particular river might be affected by climate change and how it might or might not affect the scouring situation," Schuchardt said.

EPA officials in Washington did not respond to repeated requests for comment for this story.

Dagmar Cronn, who lives in a house overlooking the Duwamish, spent two years watching Boeing spend millions removing waste from the river. She said she was pleased with the work, even as she has seen the river wash away trees on her bank and erode her property.

But Cronn, 70, also imagined unprecedented sea levels and storm flows churning the riverbed and the toxins it contains. "They could all be picked up and carried God knows where," she said.

Caption: PHOTO: A STRETCH of the Duwamish River in Seattle is listed as a Superfund site. Some fear the Trump administration's resistance to climate science threatens to undo multimillion-dollar cleanup efforts nationwide.

PHOTOGRAPHER:Rob Hotakainen Getty Images

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Manufacturing; Environmental cleanup; Superfund Amendments &Reauthorization Act 1986-US; Climate science; Climate change |
| --- | --- |

| **Location:** | Elliott Bay Virginia Oregon Duwamish River Seattle Washington |
| --- | --- |

| **People:** | Obama, Barack |
| --- | --- |

| **Company / organization:** | Name: Boeing Co; NAICS: 336411, 336413, 336414; Name: Environmental Protection Agency--EPA; NAICS: 924110 |
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Document 37

ENVIRONMENTAL WATCH; Gore praises Brown's work in climate change activism; Former vice president lauds cap-and-trade program at a forum in San Francisco.

Megerian, Chris . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]25 July 2017: B.2.

[ProQuest document link](https://search.proquest.com/docview/1922787141?accountid=13360)

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**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

It has been a decade since Al Gore released "An Inconvenient Truth," the Oscar-winning documentary that catapulted the onetime presidential candidate to the front lines of climate change activism. Now he's back with "An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power," which follows the former vice president as he travels the world to talk about global warming.

He spoke Monday at an event organized by the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco.

Gore didn't neglect the big news in California: Last week, lawmakers voted to extend the state's cap-and-trade program, the centerpiece of its fight against global warming. The vote was noteworthy not only because it solidified the only program of its kind in the country, but also because it received bipartisan support.

Gov. Jerry Brown, who has been seeking the mantle of global climate leadership, was a driving force behind the measure. "He just got this amazing legislative victory last week," Gore said.

For some people, Gore's public image is inseparable from his dire predictions on climate change from "An Inconvenient Truth." But he's also looking on the bright side by highlighting approaches that can stem the potential devastation of global warming. Some of that optimism was on display Monday.

"We're going to win this," Gore said when talking about avoiding catastrophic effects of climate change. At another point, he said: "The U.S. is likely to meet the commitments made by former President Obama regardless of Donald Trump."

That's an optimistic reading of the landscape. Under the Paris accord, the U.S. needs to reduce emissions at least 26% below 2005 levels by 2020. But now it's on course for a reduction of 19% or less, according to an analysis from the Rhodium Group, a research organization that tracks climate policies.

The San Francisco crowd broke out in laughter when the moderator, Greg Dalton of the Climate One discussion forum, asked Gore, "Are more Republicans in Congress in the gay closet or the climate closet?"

Gore said many Republicans know climate change is a threat but "they're scared to death" of primary challenges "if they depart from the orthodoxy."

"I think the dam may break soon," he said.

Gore drew a connection between climate activism and other social movements that faced resistance. "The climate denial is no more ferocious than the resistance to civil rights in the South," he said. "And yet, it gave way."

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Caption: PHOTO: A DECADE after releasing his Oscar-winning documentary "An Inconvenient Truth," Al Gore is back with "An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power."

PHOTOGRAPHER:Michael Nigro Sipa USA

**DETAILS**

| **Subject:** | Global warming; Environmental policy; Climate change |
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| **Location:** | California United States--US San Francisco California |
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| **People:** | Trump, Donald J Obama, Barack |
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Document 38

Harvey's lessons for Trump; Heed the experts, Mr. President, on the link between climate change and the disaster in Texas.

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**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

As rains fell and floodwaters rose in Houston, President Trump took to Twitter with an "oh, gosh" tweet: "Wow - Now experts are calling #Harvey a once in 500 year flood! We have an all out effort going, and going well!"

How refreshing it is when the president directs our attention to the words of experts -- people who ascertain facts, study the issues, dissect the causes of problems, and put their biases and suppositions aside to figure out solutions.

If Trump himself were to consult the experts -- such as, you know, climate scientists -- he would learn that global warming is real. He'd also learn that although warming did not cause Hurricane Harvey, it certainly makes such storms stronger, more unpredictable and quicker to intensify. Experts -- there's that word again -- say that warmer air temperatures mean more evaporation of moisture from the seas to the skies, and thus more rainfall from storms. Warmer seas -- including the Gulf of Mexico -- intensify storms, from their size to their wind speeds, and amplify storm surges. (In southeast Texas, the flat geography allows a surging Gulf to intrude farther inland.)

Another wrinkle, according to atmospheric scientist Michael E. Mann: Climate change modeling suggests that human-propelled global warming could lead to weaker prevailing winds and a jet stream tracking father north. And that appears to have been what led Harvey to park over southeast Texas and dump more than 40 inches of water in places rather than spreading the rain (and pain) around or drifting back out over the Gulf.

Trump flew to Corpus Christi early Tuesday for a personal look at the damage, caused primarily by winds and the surging Gulf. To his credit, the president opted not to visit Houston. Much of that area is still underwater, and a presidential drop-in would only tie up crucial assets necessary for rescuing people sheltering in sodden homes. But we hope that what he sees on his visit (or on TV) spurs some second thoughts about whether human activity -- namely, the burning of fossil fuels -- is creating a less habitable world. This week, with tens of thousands of people missing, stranded or in need of food, water or shelter, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott called Harvey "one of the largest disasters America has ever faced."

Ironically, the president two weeks ago rescinded Obama administration standards requiring the federal government to account for the impact of climate change when designing and building new infrastructure projects. Of course, that makes no difference to the current status of Houston, but Harvey's terrible impact certainly spotlights the foolishness of ignoring climate change. Experts (ahem) in Trump's own Pentagon know that climate change is real, and they recognize that more extreme heat, droughts, floods and famines threaten international stability while rising seas imperil military bases -- especially, of course, naval installations.

But rising seas also threaten civilian shipping ports, coastal neighborhoods and sensitive freshwater estuaries. Saline ocean water is already seeping into the Everglades, threatening the freshwater supply of millions of people in southern Florida. Infrastructure must be adapted to account for such changes. And not just in the U.S. Globally, populations in coastal zones are increasing faster than in inland areas, and many of the world's megacities are built on coasts or in low-lying deltas.

This is the hot, hard reality the world faces, and as we've noted before, Trump, along with his Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt, Energy Secretary Rick Perry and other proponents of increasing fossil fuel production, are leading the nation in a dangerous direction. This can't be written off as merely an issue of honest policy differences; their beliefs and agenda imperil the health and safety of the people they have sworn to protect. As difficult as it might be for someone so incapable of introspection and reevaluation, the president needs to understand that he has subscribed to fake science, and that he must alter his course.

We remain optimistic that other actors -- the nations of the world, states such as California and local governments, corporations and consumers -- will continue to change their behaviors to help confront the problem. But this would be a far more winnable battle if the world wasn't also forced to fight ignorance in the White House, and a president content to whistle past the flooded graveyard.

CREDIT: Editorial Desk

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Document 39

The deadly fires up north; Like the hurricanes before them, the raging blazes should send a dire message about climate change.

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**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

Big deadly fires are nothing new to California, particularly during fire season when the Santa Ana or Diablo winds blow hot and dry, making tinder out of trees and bushes that have been baking all summer long.

But the firestorm now raging through Northern California isn't the typical wildfire. For one thing, it's not just one fire but close to two dozen. For another, these fires are not only threatening hard-to-reach rural or mountains area, but they also have torn through suburban neighborhoods. More than 3,500 homes, commercial buildings and other structures have been reduced to ash. The Tubbs fire jumped across the 101 Freeway in Santa Rosa, for heaven's sake.

The flames moved so fast that they caught people unaware and unprepared to flee. As of Wednesday, when the wind picked up and shifted the flames toward more populated communities, the death toll stood at 21 people, with more than 500 still missing. By Thursday morning, fire officials believe, some of the individual fires may meet and merge into one mega-fire.

At this point the fires rank collectively as the deadliest blaze in California since the Oakland Hills fire in 1991, which claimed 25 lives. The fires also have burned more structures than the Oakland Hills fire, the Cedar fire that raged through rural communities in San Diego County in 2003, or the Station fire that burned through the Angeles National Forest in 2009. When this is over, it may well be the state's worst fire catastrophe in recorded history by any measure.

This is not just bad luck. Coming on the heels of other large-scale natural disasters -- Houston inundated by a slow-moving tropical storm, swaths of Florida and the Caribbean ripped to shreds by a monster hurricane, much of Puerto Rico leveled by an equally powerful hurricane, a handful of Western states swept by massive fires that burned up millions of acres -- one can't help but see a disturbing pattern emerge. Those superstorms that scientists warned would result from climate change? They are here. The day of reckoning isn't in the future. It is now.

We don't yet know what started the fires in Northern California, but we have a good idea of what made them so destructive. Authorities blame a combination of factors: winds so strong they knocked down power lines, extremely dry conditions, and an abundant supply of combustible material from a years-long drought that killed millions of the state's trees or left them vulnerable to insect infestations. Ironically, this year's unusually rainy winter probably contributed to the problem by producing burnable new growth.

All of those factors are exacerbated by the warming world. Hotter summers yield more fuel for fires and stronger winds to fan the flames. And this summer was California's hottest on record, a milestone dramatically illustrated when San Francisco hit 106 degrees on Sept. 1 during a statewide heat wave.

Similarly, scientists say climate change doesn't cause hurricanes, but it can make them bigger and more destructive. Higher air temperatures mean more evaporation and heavier rains outside of drought zones, and warmer seas intensify the size and fury of the storms themselves. It's a double whammy that has contributed to an unusually severe hurricane season this year.

Burning fossil fuels is not the only human activity that aids and abets the destruction wrought by wildfires and hurricanes. So does the relentless march of humans to develop land in danger spots -- a 500-year flood plain, an unstable hillside or a historical fire corridor. And in California, aggressive fire suppression has impeded the natural burn cycle in the state's wooded areas so that there's more fuel when the massive fires do take hold.

"These kinds of catastrophes have happened and they'll continue to happen." Gov. Jerry Brown observed at a news briefing Wednesday. "That's the way it is with a warming climate, dry weather and reducing moisture."

California is fortunate to have a governor who understands the perils of ignoring climate change and is aggressively pushing policies to mitigate its future harm. Unfortunately, that puts him at odds with a head-in-the-sand president who blithely disregards the obvious connection between the warming climate and the multiple federal disaster areas he's been forced to declare in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and, now, California.

CREDIT: Editorial Desk

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Document 40

THE YEAR IN REVIEW; BUILDING TYPE; WHAT'S NOW NORMAL; Floods and wildfires affect more people as climate change worsens and we build in disaster-prone areas

Hawthorne, Christopher . Los Angeles Times ; Los Angeles, Calif. [Los Angeles, Calif]17 Dec 2017: F.9.

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**LINKS**

**FULL TEXT**

It has been a year of flood and fire for the American city. In late summer, Houston virtually disappeared under water as Hurricane Harvey dumped 33 trillion gallons on U.S. soil. Not long after, with the deadly wine-country fires barely out, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Diego counties caught fire, burned and kept burning. The Thomas fire, which started near Santa Paula, is now the fifth largest by acreage in California history -- and within shouting distance of the biggest ever.

In a certain sense these disasters seem familiar, or at least regionally appropriate. Houston, a city whose bayous thread through its neighborhoods like veins, is fundamentally a wet place. Los Angeles, accustomed to bracing for fire as soon as the Santa Anas begin to blow, is fundamentally an arid one -- if not quite "a desert that faces an ocean," as Carey McWilliams put it with slight exaggeration, then certainly a landscape that spends each year getting drier and more flammable as the months pass.

What's changed is the numbing regularity of these events, the way they crowd together on the calendar in much the same way wildfires have been crowding together on the map of Southern California in recent weeks. (And the way they spread out on the calendar too: It used to be the case that by December the Santa Anas were done for the year. This year they revved up just as Angelenos were pulling boxes of Christmas lights from the attic.) Thanks to the combination of climate change and several decades of American overconfidence about planning and land use, we're on the doorstep of an era when dramatic disasters, floods and wildfires chief among them, threaten to become routine.

What do I mean by "overconfidence"? I mean that in nearly every corner of the country we have expanded our metropolitan regions into the path of, instead of away from, risk. Houston has for many decades seen nearly every flood plain as developable. Los Angeles has had the same attitude about many hillsides and canyons -- even some that have burned again and again for centuries on end.

That attitude is the flip side of American pragmatism. A can-do spirit can be a death sentence when the thing you're getting done is environmental folly. And the risks are simply higher now. One recent study found that hurricanes as strong as Harvey are three times as likely in the age of climate change as before; another estimated that climate change had increased that storm's rainfall by 38%. California's five biggest wildfires have all taken place in the last 14 years.

In an odd way we've already begun to adjust. One remarkable aspect of the recent wildfires has been the expectation among people in other parts of the country that with so much territory on fire and so much smoke in the air, life in Los Angeles must have come to a standstill. In fact, especially in the parts of the city east of big smoke plumes, life went on under blue skies and in pleasantly though not exceptionally warm temperatures. The fires barely put a dent in our routines.

On Labor Day weekend of 2005, less than a year after I started working as architecture critic for The Times, I flew to New Orleans to cover the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. I spent my nights there sleeping on the floor of a neon-lit sports bar inside the Hyatt Regency, the only big hotel in town with power.

For all of New Orleans' history of flooding, there was something that seemed exceptional about that disaster: about its scale, about the way the eye of the hurricane, instead of skirting the city as had happened so many times before, this time seemed to steer itself right toward the Superdome. It seemed a water-driven equivalent, in a certain way, of 9/11: a once-in-a-generation, or even once-in-a-lifetime, jolt to the regularity of city life.

I was wrong to see it that way, of course. Even within a couple of days of exploring New Orleans, my tattered and dog-eared copy of Peirce Lewis' seminal "New Orleans: The Making of an Urban Landscape" under my arm, it became clear that much of the destruction in and around the city was an example of urban-planning chickens coming home to roost. Beginning with the invention of a new pump in 1913 that made it possible to drain the swampy neighborhoods between the heart of New Orleans and Lake Pontchartrain, the city built aggressively in long-empty terrain. It made its housing stock absurdly vulnerable to the very flooding for which the city, much of which lies below sea level, has been famous since its founding.

To compound the effect of disasters and how we understand them, volatility is increasing in nearly every part of contemporary life. The chaos of flooding and fire is now redoubled by the chaos of the media and political landscapes. How do you make sense of the culture when the exceptional morphs into the predictable?

Last week, for example, all of the following things happened within a single 24-hour news cycle. A would-be suicide bomber, reportedly inspired by ISIS, tried to blow himself up in Manhattan. Mario Batali, a chef, and Ryan Lizza, a journalist, were the latest prominent men to be accused of sexual misconduct. Ed Lee, the mayor of San Francisco, died suddenly of a heart attack at age 65. And Alabama voters got ready to head to the polls in a wild special election for U.S. Senate -- a race featuring a Republican candidate whose Svengali, Stephen K. Bannon, promotes a political philosophy that has been aptly described as "maximum chaos."

As all of this was going on the seemingly inexhaustible Thomas Fire was creeping over some very dry hills and bearing down on the town of Carpinteria.

A few days earlier that fire, which began about 10 miles inland, reached the ocean near Ventura's Solimar Beach. That seemed a perfectly chilling way to mark the end of 2017. Fire, chewing up earth and fueled by fast-moving air, meeting water. The four classical elements all working together in service of Disaster, new patron saint of our increasingly vulnerable metropolitan regions.

--

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Caption: PHOTO: FIRE bears down on oceanfront homes north of Ventura on Dec. 6. Blazes of historic proportions plagued 2017.

PHOTOGRAPHER:Al Seib Los Angeles Times

Credit: Architecture Critic

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