

# Climate Change 101

## A Conservative Perspective with a Focus on Solutions

Conservatives have been skeptical about climate action for good reason. Alarmist environmentalists have been trying to use it to push their broader political and economic agendas at the expense of actually addressing the problem. Yet, it is a real issue, and one that we cannot afford to ignore.

So what do we really know about climate change and what should be done about it?

### The Truth About the Science

- TRUE: Scientific evidence shows that climate change is occurring more than normal due to increasing human activity.
- TRUE: Scientific evidence suggests that limiting carbon emissions to 450 parts per million (ppm) will reduce the negative impacts on our climate and environment.
- TRUE: NASA research has found atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) to be historically high and that global sea levels have risen approximately 8 inches in the last [century](#).
- FALSE: Climate change will lead to global [destruction](#) in 10 - 20 years.

### The Cost of Climate Change

- The US Department of Defense's (DOD) Report on Effects of A Changing Climate to the Department of Defense [notes](#) that climate change increases geopolitical risk.
  - "The effects of a changing climate are a national security issue with potential impacts to Department of Defense (DoD or the Department) missions, operational plans, and installations."
- The Government Accountability Office's (GAO) analysis indicates that the [cost of climate change](#) to the US is estimated to manifest itself through:
  - Crop failures, lower agricultural yields, and decreased fishing harvests
  - Increased wildfires and heat-related mortality
  - Increased coastal infrastructure damage due to rising sea levels
  - Increased damage from tropical storms and extreme weather events at an increased annual cost of up to \$112 billion per year by mid-century.

### Mandates vs. Markets

- ***The Left's Alarmist Policies Would Amount to Economic Deforestation.*** The "Green New Deal" would wreck our economy, costing US taxpayers [almost](#) \$100 trillion and its mandates do very [little](#) to curb global emissions or temperatures.
- Markets incentivize efficiency and technological innovation. For example, the shale gas revolution has reduced U.S. emissions by 12% since 2005. In competitive energy markets like Texas, renewable energies such as wind are increasingly beating coal in terms of cost-efficiency, while maintaining very low electricity prices. Most of the latest innovations in next-generation nuclear, hydrogen, and carbon capture technology are propelled by the private sector.



## Haven't We Already Made a Lot of Progress? Yes.

- **On Clean Energy . . .**
  - The US has experienced record economic growth while [reducing](#) carbon emissions because of innovations in natural gas and renewable energy.
  - Renewable electricity in the US has [doubled](#) since 2008 and is now our fastest growing energy [source](#).
- **On Infrastructure Resiliency . . .**
  - Since 2007, over 282 miles of levee improvements and 36,000 acres of land have benefitted through mitigation efforts in [Louisiana](#).
- **On Agriculture Innovation . . .**
  - Farmers have become more [efficient](#) in their farming, producing more food using fewer land and resources.
  - U.S. farming has [reduced](#) per-unit greenhouse gas emissions since 1990.

## How To Accelerate Clean Energy Innovation in America

- 1. Accelerate American-Made Innovation**
  - a. [Increase](#) federal investments in R&D.
  - b. Restructure the US Department of Energy.
  - c. Reduce taxes and regulations on energy entrepreneurship and innovation.
- 2. Remove Regulatory Barriers to Clean Energy and Reduce Government Waste**
  - a. Reform the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
  - b. Streamline permitting for clean energy and energy efficiency projects, including: renewable energy, nuclear energy, hydropower, geothermal, and others.
  - c. Reduce government waste identified by the GAO annually.
- 3. Encourage Smart Adaptation & Mitigation Policies**
  - a. Encourage individual, local and state responsibility.
  - b. Adopt better forest management and building practices.
  - c. Reform the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to increase private sector participation and decrease federal taxpayers' liability.
  - d. Improve [infrastructure](#) along coastlines including levees, roads, bridges, waterways, and elevation of structures.

### Summary:

- Scientific evidence and data points to the fact that climate change is occurring faster than normal, in large part due to human activity.
- What the science does not justify, however, is the alarmism that progressive policies such as the Green New Deal promote. Moreover, such policies are counter-productive, placing higher tax and regulatory burdens on the American people, without really incentivizing innovation.
- We should address climate change through innovation, adaptation and mitigation, entrepreneurship, and free markets.

