

Biden's election and the implications on climate actions

For the past four years, the world has watched with disappointment as Donald Trump's presidential administration has systematically weakened global climate actions. Now, the world is hoping that the election of Joe Biden can change the prospects of action. So what are the implications of his policy on climate efforts around the world?

Biden's plans on climate change

During his election campaign, Biden has proposed specific yet ambitious [plans](#) for climate actions. Under the Biden administration, the US is likely to have the most progressive position on [climate change](#) with significant implications on international efforts to deal with the problem.

Mr Biden is proposing a [clean](#) energy revolution that aims to achieve a 100% [clean energy economy](#) and reach net-zero emissions no later than 2050. He aims to achieve a power sector that's free from [carbon pollution](#) by 2035 — in a country with the largest reserves of coal on the planet (Ketchell 2020).

Furthermore, two trillion is being pledged over four years to encourage clean energy deployment and accelerate the [energy transition](#) to [renewables](#). Plans include spending heavily on public transport, investing in [electric vehicle](#) manufacturing and charging points, and giving consumers financial incentives to trade up to [cleaner cars](#) (McGrath 2020).

Leadership in global climate action

Biden confirms that re-joining the Paris climate agreement would be one of his first acts as president.

In his plan on climate change, one key component is to rally the rest of the world to meet the threat of climate change. Re-entering Paris Agreement will lead to a major diplomatic push to raise the ambitions of countries' climate targets.

“I KNOW THAT CLIMATE CHANGE IS THE CHALLENGE THAT’S GOING TO DEFINE OUR AMERICAN FUTURE — AND I KNOW MEETING THIS CHALLENGE WILL BE A ONCE-IN-A-CENTURY OPPORTUNITY TO JOLT NEW LIFE INTO OUR ECONOMY, STRENGTHEN OUR GLOBAL LEADERSHIP, AND PROTECT OUR PLANET FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.”

JOE BIDEN, JULY 14, 2020

Taken from <https://joebiden.com/climate-plan/>

Pressure for energy transition

Biden’s plan shows that he will not only recommit the US to the Paris Agreement on climate change. He will go much further than that. He will lead an effort to get every major country to ramp up the ambition of their domestic climate targets.

Referring to China as the “*largest emitter of carbon in the world*”, Biden’s plan declares to [stop China](#) from subsidizing coal exports, outsourcing carbon pollution, and financing infrastructure projects involving fossil fuels through its Belt and Road Initiative.

Evidently, the energy transition will be a huge challenge for all countries. It will be particularly difficult for countries heavily dependent on the exploitation and export of fossil fuels.



The Biden Administration will impose [carbon](#) adjustment fees or quotas on carbon-intensive goods from countries that are failing to meet their climate and environmental obligations. This will certainly put pressure on many countries that are trading with the US.

To take [Australia](#) as an example, the US is [Australia's third-largest trading partner](#) after China and Japan. It means that the US might start hitting Australian goods with a carbon fee at the border. It will definitely put pressure on the Australian government to re-think its domestic climate actions (Ketchell 2020).

For more articles and discussions about climate change actions, visit the [THRIVE Project](#) website and examine the [THRIVE Platform](#) tool.

References:

Ketchell (2020), "Biden says the US will rejoin the Paris climate agreement in 77 days. Then Australia will really feel the heat", The Conversation, available at <<https://theconversation.com/biden-says-the-us-will-rejoin-the-paris-climate-agreement-in-77-days-then-australia-will-really-feel-the-heat-149533>>.

Foley (2020), "Security Implications of Biden's Plan for Climate Change", available at <<https://www.americansecurityproject.org/security-implications-of-bidens-plan-for-climate-change/>>.

McGrath (2020), "Joe Biden: How the president-elect plans to tackle climate change", BBC News, available at <<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-54858638>>.

Thompson (2020), "Here's How Scientists Want Biden to Take on Climate Change" The Scientific American, available at <<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/heres-how-scientists-want-biden-to-take-on-climate-change/>>.

Ketchell (2020) "Climate change: Joe Biden could ride a wave of international momentum to break deadlock in US", The Conversation, available at <<https://theconversation.com/climate-change-joe-biden-could-ride-a-wave-of-international-momentum-to-break-deadlock-in-us-149121>>.