

Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton Are Weak on Climate Change

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The outcome of this year's presidential election could have major implications in the global fight to combat climate change.

U.S. citizens head to the ballot box November in order to elect their country's next president, while global temperatures for 2016 are on track to be the hottest-ever on record.

In the United States, people are taking global warming more seriously than at any point in the past eight years, according to a March Gallup poll which found that 64 percent of the population are worried about global warming – marking an increase of 10 percent from last year.

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In his Republican presidential nomination acceptance speech last week in Cleveland, Trump vowed to eliminate government-imposed environmental regulations in order to jump-start the U.S. economy, which he argued “is costing our country as much as \$2 trillion a year.”

“We are going to lift the restrictions on the production of American energy. This will produce more than \$20 trillion in job-creating economic activity over the next four decades,” Trump stated.

Throughout his electoral campaign, Trump has repeatedly advocated for offshore drilling. He has also expressed his support for the Keystone XL pipeline and is a firm supporter of fracking as a strategy to end dependence on imported oil.

Meanwhile, Trump campaign officials have told the media in recent weeks that Harold Hamm, Oklahoma oil and gas mogul, is currently being considered as the country's energy secretary if Trump becomes elected to the White House.

Trump's vows to overturn federal restrictions on oil and gas development were also echoed in a speech by Hamm at the RNC earlier this month, in which he advocated for expanded drilling and said too much environmental regulation threatened to limit U.S. oil production.

According to reports, Trump has tapped U.S. Congressman Kevin Cramer of North Dakota, a known climate change skeptic and drilling advocate, to help draw up his campaign energy platform, and picked Indiana Governor Mike Pence, also a climate skeptic, as his running mate.

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Following the Republican National Convention, Cramer told members of the media that if elected Trump is unlikely to make climate change a top priority.

"I will tell you this, I think it's quite clear that climate change is not a top-10 worrisome issue for Donald Trump," E&E news quoted Cramer saying.

Trump made headlines yet again in December 2015 when he told a group of supporters at a rally in South Carolina that climate change is a "hoax".

"So, Obama's talking about all of this with the global warming and the -- a lot of it's a hoax, it's a hoax. I mean, it's a moneymaking industry, OK? It's a hoax, a lot of it," he said.

Meanwhile, in an interview with Reuters last May, Trump vowed to renegotiate the terms of the U.N. global climate accord, which was agreed upon in Paris in December by nearly 200 nations.

Trump's Democratic rival Hillary Clinton has promised to bolster regulation and increase use of renewable fuels to combat climate change if elected.

However, during her time as Secretary of State, Clinton advocated for fracking abroad around under the department's Global Shale Gas Initiative.

In emails discovered by The Intercept last May, while leading the State Department Clinton worked closely with fossil fuel companies in order to put pressure on foreign leaders to promote fracking abroad, including in Romania, Bulgaria and Morocco.

Greenpeace estimates that Hillary Clinton's campaign and the Super PAC supporting her have received more than \$6.9 million from the fossil fuel industry.
