[Urgent Appeal]

Climate at Risk: How the Trump Administration's Anti-Climate Policy Threatens Humanity

Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba ,
Foreign Minister Tsuyoshi Iwaya ,
Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Yoji Muto ,
Minister of the Environment Keiichiro Asao

Since its inauguration in January, the Trump administration has implemented a series of executive orders that have caused significant disruption worldwide, including in Japan. While the administration's "tariff policy" has attracted considerable global attention and concern, we believe that its "anti-climate policy" constitutes a far more serious threat to the long-term future of humanity and must be addressed with utmost urgency.

Since the latter half of the 20th century, the United States has maintained global leadership, backed by its immense political, economic, and technological capabilities. Concurrently, it holds the greatest historical responsibility for the climate crisis, having discharged the largest cumulative emissions of greenhouse gases, the primary drivers of climate change.

Nevertheless, the Trump administration continues to pursue an "anti-climate policy" that disregards this responsibility and is founded on misinformation and a lack of scientific basis. We are deeply concerned that the continuation of such policies will, in the long term, undermine the stability and survival of human society as a whole, including that of the United States. The reasons underpinning our concerns are detailed below.

We therefore urge the Japanese government, together with the business sector and civil society, to refrain from endorsing the Trump administration's "anti-climate policy." Instead, it is imperative that Japan persistently advances efforts to realize the objectives of the Paris Agreement—an essential framework for effective climate policy—drawing upon the collective knowledge and experience humanity has accumulated to date.

1. The Systematic Undermining of Climate Science and Its Consequences

The Trump administration has implemented a series of actions that seriously undermine efforts to address climate change. These include eliminating references to "climate change" in official discourse, discontinuing the U.S. Global Change Research Program, and significantly reducing the budgets of administrative and research institutions concerned

with climate change. In addition, the administration has seriously compromised the integrity of climate science through the dismissal of scientists, restrictions on the dissemination of research findings, and other forms of interference, encroaching upon the domain of science, which must remain an inviolable repository of truth.

These actions taken have already raised grave concerns. Among them are the potential loss of critical long-term Earth observation data from sources such as the Mauna Loa Observatory and satellite systems; the disruption of data aggregation processes, resulting in gaps in essential datasets and statistics; the weakening of disaster preparedness due to the suspension of early warning systems; and delays in the formulation and implementation of emissions reduction strategies in developing countries, exacerbated by the scaling back of international collaborative research. If disruptions to scientific research infrastructure—such as those affecting researchers, institutions, professional communities, and global bodies like the IPCC—continue, the damage could be long-lasting and hard to undo. Even if the current administration were to end abruptly, rebuilding the lost infrastructure would require considerable time and effort, potentially delaying global climate action for years.

As it is strongly believed that "greenhouse gas reduction efforts over the next ten years will be critical for the future of humanity," there is growing concern that the United States—having led global climate science for the past 80 years and played a central role in international cooperation—is now adopting regressive policies that may stall climate research and policy efforts worldwide. This reversal, in turn, risks accelerating climate change itself. The extensive body of climate science research represents a collective international public good, providing benefits for all of humankind. Anti-scientific policies that lack rational justification are nothing short of a desecration of "science"—a crystallization of human wisdom built over generations—and can be seen as a modern-day act of "Book burning during the Qin Dynasty," a reckless and regressive assault on knowledge.

The risks posed by anti-scientific policies extend far beyond immediate concerns. As scientists have consistently cautioned, the Earth's climate system is already accelerating the frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters in many parts of the world. Should current greenhouse gas emissions remain unchecked, there exists a grave danger that the climate system could undergo irreversible transformations spiraling out of control. In social networks where "fakes" often overshadow "facts", the growing acceptance of anti-scientific attitudes poses a serious threat to climate action, risking not only delays but even reversals in progress. This trend could accelerate climate change, deepen global poverty and

inequality, and sideline effective policy in favor of short-term, populist agendas. The long-term sustainability of humanity would be placed in serious jeopardy.

It is imperative to confront and eliminate the roots of this betrayal of scientific integrity before they develop into full-scale crises. To that end, the global scientific community must stand united in communicating evidence-based knowledge to both governments and the public. Simultaneously, national governments must avoid following the United States down this misguided path and instead continue advancing robust emissions reduction policies. Citizens, too, must discern truth from false and engage in informed, responsible action. Only through such collective commitment we can place climate science and policy back on a sound and sustainable course.

2. Retreat from International Climate Cooperation

On his first day in office, President Trump announced the U.S.'s withdrawal from the Paris Agreement again. The United Nations has already been notified, and the withdrawal is expected to take effect on January 27, 2026. Concurrently, all U.S. financial contributions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have been suspended. These actions represent a significant regression in the global effort to address climate change and risk eroding the fragile consensus underpinning international climate cooperation.

Historically, industrialized nations—having contributed disproportionately to cumulative greenhouse gas emissions—bear an obligation to assist developing countries in both mitigation and adaptation efforts. The United States, however, appears to be abandoning this responsibility. Specifically, it has reneged on its pledge to contribute 30% of the $10 billion capitalization of the "Green Climate Fund (GCF)", relinquished its seat on the board of the newly established "Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD)", and withdrawn from "Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPs)" intended to assist countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam. Moreover, the dismantling of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has led to the discontinuation of climate programs that had totaled approximately $600 million as of 2023.

This shift in U.S. climate diplomacy has already begun to reverberate across key platforms of international economic governance. At the IMF–World Bank Spring Meetings in April and the Asian Development Bank Annual Meeting in May, the U.S. administration called for a shift in policy, urging less emphasis on renewable energy and advocating a renewed

consideration of financing fossil fuel projects. Such policy shifts threaten to weaken global climate architecture and delay essential investments in renewable infrastructure and climate resilience, particularly in developing countries.

In light of these developments, other developed nations must assume greater leadership in advancing international climate action. The upcoming G7 Summit in Canada presents a critical opportunity to reaffirm collective commitments. In doing so, developed countries must recognize that supporting developing countries for their climate actions is not merely humanitarian aid but a long-term investment in global sustainability and stability.

3. Denial of Renewable Sources and Resurgence of Fossil Fuels

The United States, as the largest historical contributor to cumulative greenhouse gas emissions since the Industrial Revolution and currently the second-largest emitter after China, bears a profound responsibility for addressing climate change. Nevertheless, under President Trump's leadership, a series of executive orders have been enacted to dismantle the decarbonization initiatives pursued by the Biden administration. This policy reversal signals a retreat from global climate commitments and a relinquishment of the U.S.'s international obligations. The abrupt shift not only undermines domestic climate progress but also erodes international cooperation and diminishes support for developing nations, exacerbating the global climate crisis. The specific policies include the following:

(Expanding Fossil Fuel Production)
Under the declaration of a "National Energy Emergency," the Trump administration actively promoted the development of fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas, and coal with its "Drill, Baby, Drill" policy. This included rolling back regulatory measures on energy production and introducing support measures, such as tax breaks, for fossil fuel companies. Additionally, the administration increased permits for oil drilling on public lands and offshore oil fields and resumed plans for the development and export of liquefied natural gas (LNG).

(Weakening Environmental Regulations)
The Trump administration is rolling back several environmental regulations. For instance, it has moved to eliminate taxes and penalties on methane emissions, a potent greenhouse gas primarily released during oil and gas production. Under the Biden administration, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a rule in December 2024 imposing a

$900-per-ton fee on large-scale methane emitters. Relaxing these regulations could encourage oil and gas companies to increase production, leading to higher methane emissions. Additional anticipated rollbacks include weakening vehicle emissions and fuel efficiency standards, which may slow the transition to electric vehicles (EVs); loosening restrictions on power plant emissions and fossil fuel extraction; lifting the freeze on LNG export permits; and fast-tracking project approvals. Further changes may involve revising climate-related disclosure rules and potentially banning ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) investments.

(Reducing Clean Energy Support)
President Trump has directed a freeze on climate-related subsidies and loan disbursements under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). This action includes cuts to tax credits for the purchase of EVs, grants for EV charging infrastructure, and subsidies for renewable energy sources such as wind power. Additionally, he has ordered a temporary suspension of leasing public lands for wind power development. With support for renewables likely to decline, offshore wind projects could face potential suspension.

(Blocking State-level Fossil Fuel Reduction Laws)
As part of several measures to counter carbon mitigation policies led by Democratic-controlled states, the Trump administration issued an executive order in April aimed at blocking the enforcement of state laws to reduce fossil fuel use and combat climate change. This order directed the U.S. Attorney General to identify state laws addressing climate change, ESG initiatives, environmental justice, and carbon emission reductions, and to take actions to block them. However, the two Democratic governors of New York and New Mexico, co-chairing the U.S. Climate Alliance, have stated that the executive order does not strip states of their authority.

In response to these developments, the Japanese government is reportedly considering increasing imports of LNG to help reduce its trade surplus with the United States. However, this approach risks deepening long-term dependence on fossil fuels. We strongly urge the Japanese government to resist aligning with the U.S.'s regressive climate policies and instead pursue an adequate and forward-looking climate strategy.

4. Interference in Education: Undermining the Sustainability of Human Society

Climate change influences the lives and socioeconomic activities of all people, both now and in the future. Therefore, regardless of gender, race, nationality, or generation, everyone should be equally engaged in matters related to climate change. Accordingly, climate policy must be grounded not only in scientific evidence but also in the ethical principle of environmental justice. Environmental justice is nurtured through education and learning, and the right to access it must be equally granted to all people.

However, the Trump administration is attempting to radically alter the traditionally liberal U.S. education system by intervening even in people's ethics and values. For example, it issued an executive order banning the teaching of DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) in public schools. The administration also shut down the specialized environmental justice office within the EPA, labeling it as part of the DEI policy. Furthermore, the administration has abolished DEI programs and frozen funding to several universities, such as Harvard, that refused to penalize students protesting against Israel by labeling them as anti-Semitic. It has even proposed banning new student visas and expelling current ones from such institutions. The conflict between the administration and universities has become increasingly severe.

In addition, the Trump administration is pushing to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education and transfer its authority to individual states, thereby abandoning the federal government's fundamental responsibility for education. The banning of DEI and the pressure against it shake the very foundations of democracy. In a multiracial nation like the United States, such actions deepen inequality and division, while also undermining the ethical basis of climate policy. Such tightening of control over universities constitutes a violation of their autonomy, independence, and self-governance. Abandoning national responsibility for education will only exacerbate educational inequality, accelerate further marketization of education, and hinder equal access to learning.

The Trump administration's interference in education is a desecration of the accumulated wisdom of humanity. It distorts individual humanity, weakens public interest and engagement in critical societal issues such as the climate crisis, which require sustained commitment, and ultimately threatens the sustainability of not only the United States but human society as a whole. These policies must be urgently reviewed and reversed.
We strongly urge the Japanese government not to align itself with the U.S.'s anti-climate stance, but instead to promote climate policies that contribute to a sustainable human

society, grounded in sound science and the ethics of "*coexistence*" and "*harmony*" that have long been cultivated in Japan.

The Executive Members of the "Citizens and Scientists Alliance Concerned About Climate Change"

Jusen Asuka, Professor, Tohoku University,
Seiji Ikkatai, Professor Emeritus, Musashino University,
Saburo Kato, President, Institute of Environmental Civilization,
Shuzo Nishioka, Counselor, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES),
Konoe Fujimura, Representative, Japan Association of Environment and Society for the 21st Century,
Kazuo Matsushita, Professor Emeritus, Kyoto University,
Toshihiko Masui, Director, Social Systems Area, National Institute for Environmental Studies,
Takako Momoi, Director, Tokyo Office, Kiko Network, and
Hideyuki Mori, Advisor, Japan Association of Environment and Society for the 21st Century.