



## **One Page Extra #15**

Donald Trump's ascendance as president-elect of the United States has caused many environmentalists and world leaders to raise concerns over the future president's stance on climate change -- a global issue he has called a "hoax." Trump vowed in a speech at a petroleum conference in North Dakota last May to cut off funding to United Nations climate change programs. He added that he would nix the U.S.'s involvement in the Paris climate agreement, an accord that entered into force last week. Trump said the international agreement to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, "gives foreign bureaucrats control over how much our energy and how much we use right here in America."

Travis Nichols, a spokesman for Greenpeace, an international non-governmental environmental organization, told ABC News that Trump's beliefs don't change the facts about climate change. "The U.S. elections matter, but they don't change science. This is going to be a problem that millions of people are dealing with and fighting against no matter who is president," Nichols added. "Climate change is not a hoax, climate change is real -- 97 percent of climate scientists say that it is real."

"One way or another, Donald Trump will have to deal with the reality of climate change," Nichols said. "He will have to deal with the weather, the rise in sea levels, and the worldwide extremism that climate change produces because of resource scarcity." Nichols added that it is "unclear what he means when he says he is going to 'cancel' the Paris climate agreement." "Obviously, he cannot cancel a multilateral treaty signed by 190 nations," Nichols said, noting that it would be possible, however, for Trump to take action to inhibit the U.S. from meeting the pledges it agreed to. However, "he can't, on his own, cancel the Paris climate agreement," Nichols said. "Our leaders in the military recognize this as one of the most urgent threats facing the United States," Nichols said of climate change. "So, I think that President Trump would be forced to listen to the experts in science, and the Department of Defense on what he can do to tackle climate change so it doesn't make our problems worse."

Trump's projected win of the Electoral College comes as the U.N.'s climate talks are currently taking place in Marrakesh, Morocco. Erik Solheim, the head of the U.N. Environmental Program, told ABC News that they congratulate Donald Trump on his victory and look forward to working with his administration in the future, adding simply that "science is not decided by elections, science is very clear," in response to Trump's comments calling climate change a "hoax." Solheim added that they "will all wait and see, and judge American politicians on their actions, not on the different statements they made during the campaigns," in response to Trump's threats to pull funding from U.N. environmental programs. As for the American president-elect's vow to withdraw from the Paris agreement, Solheim said the U.S. "can only withdraw in the long term," and the earliest that this would be possible is in 2021. "So, we of course expect Donald Trump to honor agreements made by previous governments," Solheim said. Solheim added that investments in renewable energy and reducing greenhouse gasses are "an enormous opportunity for business," saying that ultimately the American people would suffer most if the U.S. were to withdraw from the Paris agreement. "The developing world is now in the lead for many climate actions," Solheim said, describing how some of the most recent advancements in sustainable energy have been led by businesses and developing nations. "We call upon the United States to be part of that leadership."

Hilda Heine, the president of the Marshall Islands, an archipelago nation that is already beginning to feel the effects of rising sea levels, called on Trump to step up and combat climate change when he becomes president. "Now that the election campaign has passed and the realities of leadership settle in, I expect he will realize that climate change is a threat to his people and to whole countries which share seas with the U.S., including my own," Heine said in a statement, according to The Associated Press.

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