

# Biden's climate plan could reduce global warming by about 0.1°C

November 12 2020, by Marco Tedesco

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"From words to deeds" could and should be Joe Biden's slogan for climate. Now that the United States, and the world with them, have (at least temporarily) averted the danger of a presidency that would have brought our planet to its knees, it is time to look forward and take action. In that regard, Biden's election could reduce global warming by about 0.1°C, making the goals of the Paris Agreement more attainable.

The Paris Agreement was signed in 2015 by 195 countries, including the United States, and aims to contain the increase in the average global temperature within 1.5°C above the pre-industrial average. The United States' exit from the [agreement](#), which officially took place on November 5, was one of the Trump administration's strategies to undermine the work of its predecessor and, at the same time, favor the economic interests of fossil fuel corporations and lobbies.

Biden can—and hopefully will soon—bring the United States back into the agreement, although this can happen no earlier than February 19, at least a month after his inauguration, as the agreement provides that the request remains filed and under observation for a month.

In the [election campaign](#), Biden pledged to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, with an investment of \$1.7 trillion to reduce U.S. emissions over the next 30 years by about 75 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide. According to the [Climate Action Tracker](#) (which evaluates governments' activities regarding [greenhouse gas emissions](#), and how these activities can influence the achievement of the Paris Agreement), this reduction would be sufficient to avoid a temperature increase of about 0.1°C by 2100. The undertaking is obviously not easy, as the United States is the largest economy in the world and the second largest producer of greenhouse gasses. Its status as a major polluter, together with Trump's international stance, has increasingly isolated the United States, leaving room for countries such as China, which recently announced a zero-emissions target by 2060, to become world leaders on tackling climate change.

According to the Climate Action Tracker, China's initiatives would prevent global temperatures from rising between 0.2°C and 0.3°C. China is joined by Japan, South Korea and the European Union. The "return" of the United States in international climate-related efforts would have enormous consequences on our planet, as the "coalition" of countries

committed to achieving zero emissions around 2050 is responsible for more than half of global emissions. Of course, goodwill is not enough, especially since Biden will likely face stiff opposition from Republicans, both regionally and nationally, as he tries to "clean up" the chaos Trump has created over the past four years.

It is also good to remember, in this regard, that part of the battle is fought through legal appeals and judicial challenges which, in the end, will be resolved by a strongly conservative Supreme Court built ad hoc by Trump.

Unfortunately, even at best, the commitments of the United States and China would be sufficient to reduce [global warming](#) to only about 2.3°C above pre-industrial levels—well above the 1.5°C limit imposed by the Paris Agreement. Thus, an even greater effort is needed. The image that these countries evoke, especially the United States, is that of a newborn learning to take its first steps in an environmentalist world that, given the situation, requires running faster and faster even before learning to walk. There aren't many alternatives anymore.

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