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The Great Reject: How the Trump Administration and Global Pushback Dismantled the Green Agenda

A Post-COVID Assessment of Climate Skepticism and Energy Realism

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Abstract

This paper outlines a historic shift in global climate policy and public perception, detailing the rapid deflation of the "Great Reset" and net-zero agendas as of 2026. It argues that the climate movement has hit its lowest point of influence in fifty years due to three primary drivers: the collapse of institutional appeal to authority following COVID-19 overreach, an administrative paradigm shift under the second Trump administration that directly challenges UN climate frameworks, and the pragmatic energy demands of the artificial intelligence boom.

By examining mainstream corporate media reports, institutional pullbacks from ESG metrics, and structural failures at the UN COP30 summit, this summary demonstrates how the climate narrative was decisively inverted from climate emergency framing to a focus on energy security and economic affordability.

Keywords: Greenhouse effect; radiative forcing; climate skepticism; net-zero; energy security; ESG breakdown.

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1. Introduction

For several decades, global governance institutions, led by the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the United Nations, successfully maintained a dominant narrative regarding an impending climate emergency. This ideological framework peaked with proposals for "The Great Reset" and strict net-zero timelines designed to restrict traditional energy, agricultural practices, and consumer freedoms.

However, as of 2026, the structural power of the climate movement has experienced an unprecedented deflation, entering what can be described as "The Great Reject". This summary synthesizes the primary arguments, administrative actions, and cultural shifts that have effectively dismantled the global climate agenda with minimal institutional pushback.

2. Theoretical Background: The Institutional Collapse of Authority

The primary catalyst for the widespread resurgence of climate skepticism was the unintended socio-political blowback from the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns.

2.1 The Destruction of Expert Consensus

Prior to 2020, public climate policy heavily relied on an "appeal to authority," utilizing top-down institutional mandates and assertions of scientific consensus to marginalize dissenting viewpoints. This dynamic collapsed due to the overreach of public health officials during the pandemic. High-profile figures, typified by Dr. Anthony Fauci's assertion of "I am the science," inadvertently incentivized massive public skepticism toward official narratives.

This institutional distrust rapidly translated from public health to climate science. Media gate-keeping and aggressive online censorship created an environment where independent researchers, popular media figures (e.g., Joe Rogan), and former climate activists actively re-examined established narratives, expanding the reach of climate skepticism to mainstream audiences.

2.2 The Real-World Energy Bottleneck of Artificial Intelligence

Simultaneously, the global push for a rapid transition away from hydrocarbons faced an insurmountable physical bottleneck: the tech-sector boom in artificial intelligence (AI). High-profile corporate leaders and institutions, including BlackRock's Larry Fink, were forced to publicly acknowledge that the massive, continuous power demands of AI data centers cannot be sustained by intermittent renewable sources such as solar and wind.

This realization triggered a quiet but profound capital flight among prominent billionaires and tech companies toward dispatchable power sources, specifically nuclear energy and traditional hydrocarbons, rendering the rigid tenets of the Green New Deal untenable.

3. Administrative Dismantling of the Climate Apparatus

Unlike preceding conservative administrations that adopted a conciliatory approach toward international climate science, the administrative strategy executed in 2025–2026 actively rejected the foundational premises of the global apparatus.

3.1 International Treaty Withdrawals

The defining structural action of this period occurred following public appeals at the UN COP30 summit in Belém, Brazil, resulting in the United States officially initiating a full withdrawal from the foundational 1992 UN Rio Earth Summit Treaty. While exiting secondary compacts like the Paris Agreement can be easily reversed by executive order, withdrawing from the legally binding 1992 framework alters international law.

Legal analysts note that re-entry would require a future administration to renegotiate a new treaty and secure a two-thirds ratification vote in the U.S. Senate, effectively cutting off the primary legal avenue for global climate compliance.

3.2 Domestic Policy and Bureaucratic Reform

Domestically, the administration targeted the core bureaucratic mechanism of climate regulation: the EPA's 2009 Endangerment Finding, which classified carbon dioxide as a pollutant under the Clean Air Act. By repealing and structurally undermining the legal basis of this finding, the administration successfully curtailed the power of unelected federal regulators to enforce carbon caps without explicit congressional authorization.

Parallel institutional shifts occurred across federal agencies:

- **Department of Defense:** Dismantled its widespread net-zero initiatives and diversity offices, refocusing entirely on raw military readiness.

- **NASA:** Reassigned its climate science divisions to secondary positions, restoring its organizational focus entirely to physical space exploration.
- **U.S. Congress:** Defunded more than 60 international sustainable development bodies, including the UN Green Climate Fund, the UN Population Fund, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

4. Supporting Evidence: Corporate and Financial Realities

The collapse of the climate movement is heavily documented not by skeptical blogs, but by the defensive reporting of mainstream corporate media outlets.

4.1 Financial Industry Retraction

Six years after Wall Street institutions pledged tens of trillions of dollars to enforce Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria and net-zero banking alliances, those efforts have largely collapsed. Driven by aggressive legal challenges from a coalition of state Republican Attorneys General and a lack of viable economic returns, major financial institutions—including JPMorgan Chase—withdrawn from international climate banking alliances. Major corporations quietly abandoned their public 1.5 °C warming targets as the systemic liabilities of green mandates became clear.

4.2 Failure of State Mandates and Technical Realities

Despite multi-trillion-dollar global investments over the last two decades, hydrocarbons continue to account for over 80 % of primary global energy consumption, a reality explicitly detailed by mainstream financial press outlets like Reuters.

Simultaneously, consumer demand for electric vehicles (EVs) sharply declined, leaving heavy federal and state EV mandates functionally unviable. This economic reality caused a noticeable shift among regional political figures, such as New York Governor Kathy Hochul, who deprioritized strict climate metrics to safeguard basic electrical grid security and energy affordability.

4.3 The Institutional Satire of COP30

The underlying contradictions of the climate apparatus were put on full display during the United Nations COP30 summit in Belém, Brazil. Hosted in an underdeveloped region where roughly 80 % of local residents lacked basic plumbing infrastructure, the summit was marked by severe logistical and systemic failures. Activists and UN delegates publicly demanded the installation of heavy air conditioning inside the massive temporary venue complexes while simultaneously advocating for the restriction of air conditioning use globally.

Furthermore, international press outlets like the BBC confirmed that the Brazilian environmental ministry authorized the clear-cutting of tens of thousands of acres of pristine Amazon rainforest to construct a highway exclusively designed to transport international delegates to the summit. Combined with the immediate breakdown of the venue's sanitation systems and the rapid depletion of meat products in the event's food courts, the summit served to demonstrate the persistent hypocrisy of the international green leadership.

5. Conclusions

As documented by international polling data, public concern regarding climate change has dropped to its lowest recorded levels since the late 1980s. By refusing to accept the core premises of institutional consensus and directly confronting the narrative with aggressive deregulatory action, the current political paradigm has successfully decoupled energy security from climate ideology.

While the multi-billion-dollar academic, corporate, and political structures supporting the climate movement will inevitably seek to regroup—potentially through the integration of climate narratives into public health frameworks—the current era represents a definitive structural defeat for the net-zero agenda. Decades of unfulfilled climate model tipping points, paired with the immutable economic necessity of affordable domestic energy production, have delivered a decisive, structural blow to the global climate movement.

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