# Reprieve! Binding Paris treaty now voluntary mush

## But Obama still wants to send US energy use and living standards backward

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Paris climate talks this week descended into madcap all-night negotiations, as delegates desperately tried to salvage some kind of agreement beyond empty promises to do something sometime about what President Obama insists is the gravest threat to our planet, national security and future generations.

He gets far more energized about slashing energy use than about Islamist terrorism, even after the Paris and San Bernardino butchery. Determined for once to lead from upfront, he took a 500-person greenhouse gas-spewing entourage to the City of Light, to call for preventing increasing droughts, floods, storms, island-swallowing rising acidic ocean levels and other disasters conjured up by alarmist computer models.

Legally binding carbon dioxide emission targets were too contentious to pursue. So was modifying the concept of "differentiated responsibilities." It holds that countries that historically caused the recent atmospheric carbon dioxide build-up must lead in cutting their emissions, while helping developing countries eventually do likewise, by pouring trillions of dollars in cash and free technology into the Green Climate Fund for supposed climate change adaptation, mitigation and compensation. Developing countries had insisted on that massive wealth redistribution as their price for signing any binding document.

Although China now emits far more CO2 and other greenhouse gases (GHG) than the USA or EU, it refused to fast-track reducing those emissions. China and wealthy petro-states also opposed paying into the

Climate Fund. Other major bones of contention were likewise never resolved.

*Thus, in the end, what we apparently got out of Paris is voluntary emission caps, voluntary progress reviews, no international oversight of any voluntary progress, and voluntary contributions to the Fund.*

Of course, the entire climate cataclysm mantra is based on the claim that carbon dioxide has replaced the solar and other powerful natural forces that have driven climate change throughout Earth and human history. Now, merely tweaking CO2 emissions will supposedly stabilize climate and weather systems.

President Obama fervently believes this delusion. He will likely use the voluntary Paris gobbledygook to say America somehow has a "moral obligation" to set an example, *by de-carbonizing, de-industrializing and de-developing the United States.* Thankfully, Congress and the states will have something to say about that, because they know these anti-fossil fuel programs will destroy jobs and living standards, especially for poor, working class and minority families.

The impacts would be far worse than many news stories and White House press releases suggest. Those sources often say the proposed climate treaty and other actions seek GHG reductions of 80% below predicted 2050 emission levels. The real original Paris treaty target is 80% below *actual 1990 levels.*

*That means the world would have to eliminate **96%** of the greenhouse gases that all humanity would likely release if we reach world population levels, economic growth and living standards predicted for 2050. The United States would likely have to slash it CO2 and GHG reductions to zero.*

Moreover, current 2050 forecasts already assume and incorporate significant energy efficiency, de-carbonization and de-industrialization over the next 35 years. They are not business-as-usual numbers or extrapolations of past trends. Further CO2 reductions beyond those already incorporated into the forecasts would thus be increasingly difficult, expensive, and indeed impossible to achieve.

As we explain in a MasterResource.org analysis, there is a strong positive relationship between GDP and carbon-based energy consumption. Slashing fossil energy use that far would thus require decimating economic growth, job creation and preservation, and average per-person incomes. *In fact, average world per capita GDP would plummet from a projected $30,600 in 2050 to a miserable $1,200 per year.*

*Average per capita GDP in 2050 would be less than what Americans had **in 1830**!* Many futuristic technologies would still exist, but only wealthy families and ruling elites could afford them.

That would be catastrophic for jobs, health and welfare in developed countries – and lethal to millions in poor nations, who would be denied the blessings of electricity and fossil fuels for decades to come. That is indefensible, inhumane and immoral. And for what?

Mr. Obama and the alarmists in Paris insisted that drastic GHG reductions will hold global temperature increases to 2 degrees Celsius (3.5 F) and prevent climate and weather disasters. Now some even claim that the upper safety limit is actually 1.5 degrees C (2.7 F), which would require even more draconian energy and emission cutbacks. Otherwise, Earth could become uninhabitable, they assert.

Nonsense.

EPA's own analyses suggest that its fully implemented Clean Power Plan would bring an undetectable, irrelevant reduction of perhaps 0.02 degrees Celsius (0.05 F) in average global temperatures 85 years from now – assuming carbon dioxide actually does drive climate change.

In the Real World, climate changes regularly, and recent climate and weather trends and events are in line with historic experience. In fact, average global temperatures haven't risen in nearly two decades; no category 3-5 hurricane has struck the USA in a record ten years; Greenland and Antarctic ice are at record levels; and still firmly alkaline sea levels (8.1 pH) are rising at barely seven inches per century.

Many scientists believe the sun and other powerful natural forces may soon usher in a new era of *colder temperatures*, regardless of whether atmospheric CO2 rises above 0.40% (400 ppm). That would pose much greater threats to human health, agriculture and prosperity (and wildlife) than global warming.

We must never forget: Fossil fuels facilitated successive industrial revolutions and enabled billions to live better than royalty did a century ago, helped average incomes to increase eleven-fold, and helped average global life expectancy to soar from less than 30 in 1870 to 71 today.

Carbon-based energy still provides 81% of world energy, and supports $70 trillion per year in world GDP. It will supply 75-80% of global energy for decades to come, Energy Information Administration, International Energy Agency and other studies forecast. Carbon-based energy is essential if we are to bring electricity to the 1.3 billion people who still do not have it, and end the rampant poverty and lung, intestinal and other diseases that kill millions of people in poor countries every year.

Furthermore, thousands of coal-fired power plants are built, under construction or in planning around the world. China and India will not consider reducing GHG emissions until 2030, and even then it will be voluntary and dependent on how their economies are doing. That means

atmospheric carbon dioxide levels will continue to climb, greening the planet and spurring faster crop, forest and grassland growth.

President Obama and the 40,000 climate alarmists gathered in Paris largely these inconvenient realities, and whitewashed the adverse consequences of anti-hydrocarbon policies. Even binding targets would have had minimal or illusory health, climate and environmental benefits.

Instead, they would have horrendous *adverse effects* on human health and environmental quality, while doing nothing to prevent climate change or extreme weather events. What alarmists wanted in Paris would have let unelected, unaccountable activists and bureaucrats decide which industries, companies, workers, families, states and countries win the Climate Hustle game, and which ones lose.

And it's not just President Obama, who wants to slash America's carbon dioxide emissions by 26-28% below 2005 levels by 2025 – and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050! Every Democrat presidential candidate demands similar actions: Hillary Clinton wants one-third of all US electricity to come from wind and solar by 2027; Bernie Sanders wants 80% by 2050; Martin O'Malley wants 100% by 2050.

Obligating the United States to slash its fossil fuel use, and send billions of taxpayer dollars annually to dictators, bureaucrats and crony industrialists in poor countries would be disastrous. Thank goodness it did not happen. But we are not out of the woods yet.

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