



Written by [James Murphy](#) on March 29, 2018

The Myth of the Paris Climate Accord

Shortly after President Donald Trump announced the U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord on June 1 of last year, European leaders responded by saying, “We deem the momentum generated in Paris 2015 irreversible.” But more and more, that “momentum” appears to be mere imagination. Apparently, very few nations are on pace to meet their voluntary carbon-emission reduction goals. The International Energy Agency released a [report](#) last week claiming that global carbon emissions rose by 1.4 percent in 2017.



What this means for humanity is the subject of debate. While most shrug and say, “So what?” some predict a climate apocalypse. In a bizarre attempt to quantify the difference between a 1.5°C increase and a 2°C increase in global temperature, a [paper published in *Nature Climate Change*](#) makes the absurd prediction that that fraction of a degree would result in 150 million premature deaths worldwide. So, three times as many people will die than died in WWII because of a hypothetical increase of a fraction of a degree in global temperature? Ok, then.

Like the Kyoto Protocol before it, the Paris Climate Accord is quickly becoming an irrelevant joke. Currently, out of 196 signatories, only seven (Morocco, Gambia, Bhutan, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, India, and the Philippines) are considered by [Climate Action Tracker](#) to be on target to hit their self-imposed emission goals.

In case you wondered, the United States, the Russian Federation, and Saudi Arabia are considered “Critically Insufficient” in meeting their metrics, according to Climate Action Tracker.

Adopted by consensus on December 12, 2015 and signed amidst great hoopla in April of 2016, the Paris Climate Accord was supposed to be the mechanism that held the increase in global average temperature to less than 2°C by having countries voluntarily limit fossil-fuel use to levels they felt they could achieve. The agreement also looks to increase adaptability to climate change and foster “climate resilience.” Wealthy countries, such as the United States, would offer poor countries financial assistance to meet arbitrary carbon-reduction goals set by the poor countries themselves.

What could possibly go wrong?

But despite the triumphant aura surrounding the accord, it never had any teeth. The agreement is non-binding and dependent on the honor system to meet its goals. The agreement did not have treaty status and had no enforcement mechanisms. But that didn’t stop the talking heads from waxing apocalyptically about the announced withdrawal of the United States.

On CNN, political chameleon David Gergen said, “Today we’ve walked away from the rest of the world and it’s one of the most shameful acts in our history.”

“This will be the day that the United States resigned as the leader of the free world,” said CNN gadfly Fareed Zakaria.



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Senator Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), the leader of America's "loyal" minority, called the decision a "failure of historic proportions."

Pretty strong words, especially when you realize that the agreement that the talking heads are defending had zero chance of achieving its stated goals, according to the UN itself. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) declared that, even if all the stated goals in the accord were met, global mean temperature would rise by at least 3°C, a full degree higher than the stated goal of the agreement.

As of today, despite Trump's announcement of withdrawal, the United States remains an official signatory of the Paris Accord. The reason for this is murky, but it appears to be a product of the agreement itself. Apparently, there are mechanisms and a "waiting period" included in the accord, which makes official withdrawal impossible until 2020.

The proposed withdrawal of the United States from the agreement is completely insignificant, as was the signing of it in the first place. The Paris Accord was always more symbolism than substance. Leaders from around the world could point to the agreement as evidence that we are "doing something," even though nothing is really being done. The Paris Accord was never anything more than a hollow political statement.

It's not really fair to say that the [Paris Climate Accord](#) is showing cracks, because to show cracks would mean the agreement had some substance to begin with. Even its most ardent supporters understood that the agreement was only a "first step" and in actuality did next to nothing in terms of actually meeting the stated goals.

Climate change has become the ultimate bogeyman: something the global community can come together to address, a common interest. The Paris Accord was never meant to solve global warming. It was more of a globalist trial balloon, gauging the ability of the nations to come together on a shared issue. Once again, the balloon has popped.

Photo of climate activists in polar bear costumes at Paris Climate Accord: AP Images



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