

Sanders' Climate Revolution Would Cut 80% of Emissions by 2050

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A national energy policy that prioritizes the health and well-being of people and planet above the profits of the fossil fuel industry is what voters can expect should [Sen. Bernie Sanders](#) be elected President of the United States next year, according to the candidate, who on Monday [unveiled](#) his [plan](#) to combat the rising crisis of climate change.

The plan calls for a tax on carbon, an end to fossil fuels subsidies, and “massive investments” in energy efficiency and a system powered by non-nuclear, sustainable sources such as wind and solar, enabling a swift transition to a clean energy economy. Sanders estimates these measures would cut U.S carbon pollution by 40 percent by 2030 and over 80 percent by 2050.

While many of his competitors have been ambivalent, if not derisive, on the issue, the Senator from Vermont unequivocally declared global warming “the single greatest threat facing our planet.”

He asserts that the reason the U.S. has failed to take meaningful steps to solve the crisis is because a “small subsection of the one percent are hell-bent on doing everything in their power to block action.”

In order to derail Big Oil's influence on U.S. climate policy, Sanders said he would “ban fossil fuel lobbyists from working in the White House,” and overturn the Supreme Court's [Citizens United](#) ruling that has “enabled billionaires to increasingly control the political campaign finance system.”

Sanders also addresses a number of the more controversial aspects of current U.S. energy policy. His plan: calls for an

outright ban on offshore and Arctic oil drilling, as well as mountaintop removal coal mining; supports state efforts to ban [fracking](#); blocks natural gas exports and legislative efforts to lift the crude oil export ban; places a moratorium on nuclear power plant license renewals; and increases fuel economy standards, among other things.

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–Bill McKibben

Further, Sanders describes what he called a Clean Energy Workforce of “10 million good-paying jobs,” under which citizens will be trained to meet the demands within the new energy system.

What’s more, Sanders vowed to bring “climate deniers to justice,” citing the recent [revelations](#) that for decades ExxonMobil knew and suppressed information related to global warming.

“Right now, we have an energy policy that is rigged to boost the profits of big oil companies like Exxon, BP, and Shell at the expense of average Americans. CEO’s are raking in record profits while climate change ravages our planet and our people—all because the wealthiest industry in the history of our planet has bribed politicians into complacency in the face of climate change,” Sanders said.

“Enough is enough. It’s time for a political revolution that takes on the fossil fuel billionaires, accelerates our transition to clean energy, and finally puts people before the profits of polluters,” he added.

Sander’s climate plan was met with strong support from the environmental community, which has long-called for similar action.

Annie Leonard, executive director of Greenpeace U.S. said the plan illustrates Sanders' commitment against "the corporate and 1% money that has held back climate policy for far too long. Sanders has issued a powerful call for climate justice and decisive action to keep fossil fuels in the ground and support the communities who are suffering from climate and environmental impacts."

Bill McKibben, co-founder of 350.org, said: "Bernie's vision of a transformed America is powerful, because it recognizes both the ecological need and the human priority."

"Even more important than the plan is the credibility of the planner," added McKibben, a fellow Vermonter, noting Sanders' legislative record on climate issues. "Bernie has shown with years of committed action that he will not just talk about this stuff on the campaign trail, he will do it in the Oval Office."

Sanders' plan comes as global leaders begin their second week of negotiations on a global agreement at the [COP21](#) climate summit in Paris, which environmental campaigners [say](#) has been compromised by the outsized influence of powerful corporations and world's wealthiest nations.

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