



FOREIGN POLICY ON CLIMATE CHANGE UNDER THE TRUMP'S PRESIDENCY: PARIS AGREEMENT

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Abstract

The issue of climate change is scorching to discuss; Greenhouse Gas Emissions produced by humans themselves have a major impact on the earth. The Paris Agreement was created to slow the pace of climate change by binding participating countries to commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. During the Barack Obama administration, foreign policy believed in and supported the Paris Agreement's cooperation in inhibiting the pace of climate change. In contrast to the next period, which was continued by President Donald Trump, who had a realistic nature and was skeptical of climate change. This is one of the supporting factors in understanding the United States' foreign policy towards the Paris agreement under the Trump presidency.

Keywords: the United States, Climate Change, Paris Agreement

1. Introduction

Climate change is caused by an increase in the temperature of the earth's surface. Climate change has been a constant threat. The threat of climate change cannot be avoided by human activities, which do not want to protect the environment and exploit natural resources in excess. Greenhouse Gas Emissions are currently produced from industrialized countries, with increasing greenhouse gas emissions making the



earth's condition increasingly threatened (Global Warming). Climate change has a high potential to reduce the quality of human life on earth. Therefore, climate change is considered a global issue that must be addressed immediately to facilitate economic and social development by the community's welfare.

After the cold war that hit the international world, the international political system changed, prioritizing hard power issues and penetrating soft power issues such as environmental issues. The environment issue has become a topic that is very often discussed in international forums since it became the agenda of the United Nations Conference on the environment in 1972 in Stockholm, Sweden, known as the Stockholm Conference. Then over time, the countries in the world agreed to solve the problem of climate change by establishing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) under the control of the United Nations. The UNFCCC which came into force in 1994, is a forum for a conference to discuss climate change by world participants/leaders. The UNFCCC has a framework for regulating actions aimed at stabilizing and slowing the pace of climate change by regulating the increase in greenhouse gas emissions to prevent the problem of climate change from becoming more widespread.¹

This annual meeting is known as the Conference of the Parties (COP). World leaders as members gathered to discuss and negotiate to make a more detailed rule to regulate the process of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Then the COP meeting, which was considered a significant development, was found in the 3rd COP meeting. COP 3, held in Kyoto, Japan, resulted in the existence of a set of regulations known as the Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol is an agreement between countries involved in the UNFCCC and is an agreement that regulates actions to prevent the threat of

¹ UNFCCC Web. What is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change?. accessed on October 28, 2021, <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-convention/what-is-the-united-nations-framework-convention-on-climate-change>



climate change. The Kyoto Protocol was agreed to in 1997 and entered into force in 2005.²

A press release made by the UNFCCC in Kyoto, Japan, on December 11, 1997, stated that:³

“After 10 days of tough negotiations, ministers and other high-level officials 160 countries reached agreement early this morning on a legally binding Protocol under which industrialized countries will reduce their collective emissions of greenhouse gases by 5.2%.”

According to the press release, by the Kyoto Protocol, all developed countries are obliged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5.2%. Through the Kyoto Protocol mechanism, it is explained as follows (1) Emissions Trading, (2) Green Environment Development Mechanism, and (3) Joint Implementation.⁴ The Kyoto Protocol has provided a scheme for participating countries that have developed industries as well as countries in transition to a market economy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These countries are known as Annex I parties, which consist of the United States, Japan, European Union countries, and so on.

The implementation of a regime must bind and influence a certain focus which is the goal of the formation of the regime. This explains whether a regime is effective from the regime's performance. The Kyoto Protocol, as an international regime engaged in the environmental sector, is seen as incapable of working effectively. The small thing that makes the Kyoto Protocol seen as a less effective regime is the matter of ratification. The Kyoto Protocol as an international treaty does not have compulsive

² United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. What is the Kyoto Protocol?. Accessed on October 26, 2021. https://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol

³ Press Release UNFCCC. Industrialized countries to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 5.2%. Kyoto, December 11, 1997. accessed on October 28, 2021, <https://unfccc.int/cop3/fccc/info/indust.htm>

⁴ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. What is the Kyoto Protocol?. Accessed on October 28, 2021. https://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol



enforcement mechanisms. Despite these international agreements, states cannot be forced to stop their harmful activities.⁵

Then from the beginning of the design of the Kyoto Protocol, some things were not understood, namely that there were countries that signed the Kyoto Protocol but did not ratify it. For example, the United States is a developed industrial country and a country that signed the Kyoto Protocol but the United States did not ratify the agreement. Indeed, the United States did not provide a clear reason why the country did not ratify, but this is one of the shortcomings of the Kyoto Protocol that causes its performance to be seen as less binding.

After the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement was formed to solve climate change. This agreement was produced at the 21st COP of the United Nations Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC) from November 30 to December 12, 2015. The Paris Agreement is binding with a shared commitment to combat climate change. The Paris Agreement strived to answer the challenges that the previous agreement could not appropriately handle. The Kyoto Protocol, even though it is legally binding and provides penalties for breaches of the agreement, is not able to contain the rate of global temperature rise and climate change because it only affects developed countries. Developing countries do not have an obligation to reduce their gas emissions, and even countries with large forest areas are provided with financial assistance not to cut their forests. The Kyoto Protocol provides the right impetus for environmental restoration but is not yet the answer as countries can take advantage of the agreement.

Based on the results of the Paris Agreement, countries are given the responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions rapidly. In addition, it was also agreed that countries in the world are committed to maintaining the threshold for increasing the earth's temperature. The Paris Agreement aims to increase the ability to adapt to the

⁵ Gupta, S., Hall, S., Mabey, N., & Smith, C. (2005). *An argument in the greenhouse: The international economics of controlling global warming*. Routledge.



negative impacts of climate change, towards climate resilience and low-emission development, without threatening food production and preparing to fund for low-emissions and climate-resilient development.

The main goals and objectives of the Paris Agreement apply to all countries that have signed the agreement, but the Paris Agreement provides different responsibilities for developed and developing countries. Developed countries are required to take the lead in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and provide funding, while developing countries are given the flexibility to contribute according to their national capabilities. The Paris Agreement, which is supported by 195 countries, has the two largest producing countries in the world, and the United States is the second-largest emitter after China. The results of research released by the World Resource Institute (WRI) stated that the United States was in second place with the production of carbon dioxide emissions reaching 5.82 billion tons of CO₂ emissions. This is because the United States relies on the economy from industrial sectors.⁶

During the Barack Obama administration, the US was the main actor who campaigned for the importance of the issue of climate change. The United States ratified the Paris Agreement by its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). The US reduces emissions 26-28% below 2015 emissions by 2025, including land-use change and forestry emissions.⁷ But the Obama administration's agenda of trying to maintain and must contribute to curbing climate change has stopped. Supporting Donald Trump, the US president-elect after Obama, on climate change is urgently needed with Obama's decision. Trump as US President, said that the Paris Agreement was against US national interests and wanted the US to leave the Paris Agreement. The official stance of the Trump administration was finally announced on June 1, 2017.

⁶ World Resource Institute (WRI). (2012). Cina dan Amerika, Penghasil Emisi Karbon Terbesar Dunia. Accessed on October 28, 2021. <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2016/11/14/cina-dan-amerika-penghasil-emisi-karbon-terbesar-dunia>

⁷ Dr. techn. Marzuki. (2017). Paris Agreement Tanpa Amerika Serikat? Departement of Physics Universitas Andalas. Accessed on October 28, 2021 <http://fisika.fmipa.unand.ac.id/news-events/articles/item/114-paris-agreement-tanpa-amerika-serikat.html>



Donald Trump announced that his country would leave the 2015 Paris Agreement, the US through its President.⁸

2. Literature Review

In this study, researchers obtained several sources to be a reference in research, including:

2.1. Keluarnya Amerika Serikat Dari Kesepakatan Paris 2015 (Written by Henni Wahyuni)

Paris Accord is one of the international environmental regimes that are trying to slow down the pace of climate change, with America as one of the pioneers during negotiation. However, after the change of American leadership in 2016, President Trump decided to quit the Paris Accord. This decision was taken as part of his campaign in 2016, due to the argument that Paris Accord is hurting America's Economy. This research aimed to explain the reasons America by its new President Donald Trump, quit the Paris Accord. The concepts used to perform analysis in this research are national interest and international regime. The data analysis technique used is qualitative analysis. America's exiting from the Accord was part of Trump's campaign, under consideration of the national interest of the US, concerning the economic and political interest. The President himself argued that staying in the Paris Accord would only lead the US to its own demise, by losing its competitive edge in the world. Economic interest and internal and external political interest played a major role in making this decision. Although Americans themselves had very differing opinions and chose to stay in the Paris Accord by doing whatever they can to help slow down climate change.

⁸ Maya Saputri. Presiden Trump Putuskan AS Keluar dari Perjanjian Paris. Tirto.id 2 Juni 2017. Accessed on October 29 <https://tirto.id/presiden-trump-putuskan-as-keluar-dari-perjanjian-paris-cpQS>



2.2. Implikasi Mundurnya Amerika Serikat dari Kesepakatan Paris (Written by Rizki Roza)

President Donald Trump has withdrawn the US from the Paris Agreement. Trump's view of the Paris Agreement is aimed at weakening, harming, and impoverishing the United States. Trump claims the US commitment to the Paris Agreement has led to job losses and reductions. The different treatment of developed and developing countries seems to influence Trump's attitude. Given their status as a developing country, despite being the world's largest carbon emitters, China and India are not required to commit as the United States has, so Trump is of the view that the Paris Agreement is unfair and harms US national interests. Although many parties remain optimistic about the Paris Agreement without US support and many countries remain committed to cooperating, Indonesia needs to encourage China and India to invite the US to recommit to the Paris Agreement, given that these two countries are quite influential in Trump's decision.

2.3. US Withdrawal From The Paris Agreement: Reasons, Impacts, And China's Response (Written by Hai-Bin Zhang, Han-Cheng Dai, Hua-Xia Lai, Wen-TaoWang)

Applying qualitative and quantitative methods, this article explains the driving forces behind US President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, assesses the impacts of this withdrawal on the compliance prospects of the agreement, and proposes how China should respond. The withdrawal undercuts the foundation of global climate governance and upsets the process of climate cooperation, and the impacts are



manifold. The withdrawal undermines the universality of the Paris Agreement and impairs states' confidence in climate cooperation; it aggravates the leadership deficit in addressing global climate issues and sets a bad precedent for international climate cooperation. The withdrawal reduces other countries' emission space and raises their emission costs, and refusal to contribute to climate aid makes it more difficult for developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Cutting climate research funding will compromise the quality of future IPCC reports and ultimately undermine the scientific authority of future climate negotiations. China faces mounting pressure from the international community to assume global climate leadership after the US withdraws, and this article proposes that China should reach the high ends of its domestic climate targets under the current Nationally Determined Contributions; internationally, China should facilitate the rebuilding of shared climate leadership, replacing the G2 with C5. Meanwhile, China needs to keep the US engaged in climate cooperation.

3. Research Methods

The type of research used is descriptive research. Where the author describes the reasons for the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement and explains the reasons for making the decision. As for this research, the researcher will use the foreign policy formulation process proposed by James N. Rosenau. In the Adaptive Model of Foreign Policy, it is explained that foreign policy is at two levels, namely the internal environment (domestic politics) and the external environment (Relations with other countries, the International System, International Issues and



others) which ultimately makes the country have to adapt and make choices. its foreign policy.⁹

In the context of this research, the researcher will use one of the models in the adaptive model of foreign policy is preservative adaptation. This model describes the response given by a country in the face of demands or encouragement from domestic and international aspects, in other words, the foreign policy produced by a country is the result of the internal (domestic) encouragement or demands of the country and external demands/pushes against the country. The type of data used in this study is secondary data, namely data obtained from literature studies and data from browsing through the internet. This study formulates problems in understanding the United States' foreign policy towards the Paris agreement under the Trump presidency.

4. Results and Discussion

Every foreign policy issued by a country will always have an element of national interest in it because the national interest is one of the foundations of the formation of foreign policy.¹⁰ The issue of climate change is one of the issues that should be considered important by the United States because this issue can directly or indirectly affect several basic aspects of the United States' national interest. Climate change has affected the United States economy, where many agricultural fields have failed to harvest due to climate change and decreased fishing activities. In addition, floods caused by climate change have disrupted the people's economic activities of the United States.

Barack Obama, on September 3, 2016, has the Paris Agreement. The United States is one of the members of the Paris Agreement from 194 other participating countries that attended the UNFCCC in December 2015. The status of the United States and

⁹ Rosenau, J. N. (1974). *Comparing Foreign Policy: Theories, Findings, and Methods*. Sage Publications.

¹⁰ Rosenau, J. N. (1980). *The scientific study of foreign policy* (Vol. 1). New York: Nichols Publishing Company. 283



China, which are the two largest carbon emitters, about 40% of total global emissions, provides excellent support for this agreement. Through Obama and cooperation with China. The US is seen as the main factor that led to the initial success of the agreement. Human agreements are a legacy of the Obama Administration in this environment seeking to reduce the negative impact of industrial activities on the environment. The Obama administration's eco-friendly agenda seeks to protect and maintain a better world for the next generation. As the nations of the world unite to pledge globally to curb climate change, Obama and his administration are encouraging many other countries to set their sights and goals on achieving these targets.

On November 8, 2016, four days after the Paris Agreement entered into force in the United States, Republican Donald Trump was elected President of the United States. Many conservative Republicans debate the extent of human involvement in climate change. Trump is a climate change skeptic, saying in 2012 that he believed the concept of global warming was created by China to undermine America's competitiveness. During Trump's 2016 election campaign, Trump vowed to revitalize the coal industry, which he claims has been hampered by environmental regulations. On June 1, 2017, United States President Donald Trump announced that the United States would cease all participation in the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change mitigation. Trump declared that the Paris Agreement would damage the US economy and put the US at a permanent disadvantage. During the presidential campaign, Trump had promised to withdraw from the agreement, saying the withdrawal would be done to help American businesses and workers. Trump also stated that the withdrawal would be consistent with his America First policy.¹¹

4.1. Why Trump Decided to Withdraw from the Paris Agreement

¹¹ Wahyuni, H. (2018). Keluarnya Amerika Serikat Dari Kesepakatan Paris 2015. *eJournal Ilmu Hubungan Internasional*, 2018, 6 (4) 1787-1806



During the 2016 presidential campaign, Donald Trump took the stance that he would be skeptical and would even deny the issues over climate change and the decisions that would be made from the Paris Agreement once Trump was elected. However, with his election victory, Trump lowered his ego in position and stated that he has an "open mind" on the issue of climate change.¹² Trump is considering his decision that when his decision to leave the Paris Agreement will reap strong criticism both from within and outside the country until it is time for Trump to issue a policy to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. The driving force behind the decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement.

First, the Trump Administration is closely linked to the fossil fuel industry and other interest groups that can determine Trump's US politics. The fossil fuel industry is very influential in the politics of the Trump administration and the Republican Party. It has been reported that Trump himself, Vice President Pence, and EPA Administrator Pruitt are all personally associated with the petrochemical mogul Koch Industries.¹³ After the US withdraws from the Paris Agreement, the Trump Administration will seek to repeal the Climate Regulations to benefit energy companies including Koch Industries. Scott Pruitt as EPA Administrator who led the legal struggle against the Clean Power Plan during Barack Obama's presidency, repeatedly denied the anthropogenic causes of global warming and insisted on withdrawing from the Paris Agreement. As of May 25, 2017, twenty-two senators have campaigned and earned more than US\$10 million in oil, gas, and coal since 2012.¹⁴

¹² Milman, O., 2016. Paris Climate Deal: Trump says he now has an 'Open Mind' about Accord. The Guardian. Accessed on October 31 <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/22/donald-trump-paris-climate-deal-change-open-mind>

¹³ Mayer, J., 2017. In the Paris Climate Agreement withdrawal, the Koch Brothers' campaign becomes overt. The New Yorker, June 5, 2017. Accessed on October 31 <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/in-the-withdrawal-from-the-paris-climate-agreement-the-koch-brothers-campaign-becomes-overt>

¹⁴ McCarthy, T., Gambino, L., 2017. The Republicans who urged Trump to pull out of Paris Deal are big oil darlings. The Guardian, June 1 2017 Accessed on October 31 <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jun/01/republican-senators-paris-climate-deal-energy-donations>



Second, political, and social polarization, Trump is currently emboldening to decide to withdraw based on the alignments of social tensions and ideological antagonisms that define the United States today which leaves little room for bipartisan cooperation.¹⁵ On August 21, 2017, the Charlottesville riots were just the latest incident to prove the current polarization. Seeing that his constituents would not react negatively to him, Trump boldly announced his decision to withdraw and hoped it would help him in the next election.

Third, Trump is skeptical about climate change and refuses to recognize the fundamental principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities in global climate cooperation. He has also never publicly admitted that climate change is happening and mostly man-made, a consensus shared by most Americans. Scientist. Trump stated that "The Paris Agreement is very unfair to the US at the highest level in his exit speech. Compared China's and India's mitigation commitments to the US, disregarding shared but differentiated responsibility principle. It would be challenging to change Trump's adamant ideas on climate change and international affairs.

Fourth, Trump's inappropriate emphasis on America First deviates significantly from Obama's foreign policy philosophy. On the economic front, Obama believes the Paris Agreement improves America's climate security, boosts America's low-carbon economy and renewable energy industry, and is essential to safeguarding jobs and sustaining America. Competitive advantage. On the contrary, Trump believes the Paris Agreement is undermining the US. competitive advantage and affects both employment and the traditional energy industry. Politically, Obama believes the Paris Agreement will strengthen the US. leadership in international affairs, while Trump believes the deal weakens US sovereignty. As a climate skeptic, Trump places an overwhelming emphasis on

¹⁵ Jonathan, H., & Sam, A. (2015). The Top 10 Reasons American Politics are so Broken. *Washington Post January, 7.*



the economic costs of mitigation and denies its environmental and economic benefits, consistent with his nationalist and isolationist America First worldview. Fifth, Trump harbors personal acrimony against Obama and enjoys destroying Obama's political legacy; During the 2016 presidential campaign, Trump and Obama openly attacked each other with a high degree of hostility. "In the past there have been cases where the current president and a past president didn't get along at all," said Timothy Naftali, a historian at New York University; "What's different this time is that the two show it. That the animation is so clear". Known for his strong personality, Trump takes a stance that is anything but Obama and chose to reverse most of Obama's policies after taking office, including joining the Paris Agreement, one of Obama's strongest political legacies.¹⁶

5. Conclusion

Trump's decision was driven by domestic US politics and his personal preferences rather than the burden on the US imposed by the Paris Agreement. Under the American tripartite system; The President, Congress, and the Supreme Court share the power to make climate policy, and as the growing benefits of clean energy and increasing popular pressure (Gallup, 2017) have forced politicians to take action on climate change, the Trump administration is facing an uphill battle in overthrowing climate regulation. Obama era (Brian, 2017). There is still uncertainty about what can be achieved with climate deregulation under the Trump Administration.

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¹⁶ Liptak, K., & Jones, A. (2017). With latest jabs, Trump—Obama relationship reaches historic nastiness. *CNN News*. Accessed on October 31. <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/06/28/politics/trump-obama-relationship/index.html>



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