

ANGLAIS
Epreuve de Langue Vivante LVA (synthèse)

En vous appuyant uniquement sur les documents du dossier thématique qui vous est proposé, vous rédigerez une synthèse répondant à la question suivante :

The Trump Administration's environmental policy: a damaging one?

Votre synthèse sera précédée d'un titre et comportera entre 450 et 500 mots (titre inclus). Le nombre de mots rédigés (titre inclus) devra être indiqué à la fin de votre copie.

Liste des documents :

- 1) "Trump will withdraw US from Paris climate agreement", *The New York Times*
- 2) "Denying Hurricane Harvey's climate links only worsens future suffering", *The Guardian*
- 3) "EPA chief Scott Pruitt tells coal miners he will repeal power plant rule Tuesday: 'The war against coal is over'", *The Washington Post*
- 4) "Growing number of Americans fault climate change for severity of hurricanes", *The Washington Post*
- 5) A cartoon, *The Mercury News*

Trump Will Withdraw U.S. From Paris Climate Agreement

The New York Times, June 2017

WASHINGTON — President Trump announced on Thursday that the United States would withdraw from the Paris climate accord, weakening efforts to combat global warming and embracing isolationist voices in his White House who argued that the agreement was a pernicious threat to the economy and American sovereignty.

In a speech from the Rose Garden, Mr. Trump said the landmark 2015 pact imposed wildly unfair environmental standards on American businesses and workers. He vowed to stand with the people of the United States against what he called a “draconian” international deal.

“I was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris,” the president said, drawing support from members of his Republican Party but widespread condemnation from political leaders, business executives and environmentalists around the globe.

Mr. Trump’s decision to abandon the agreement for environmental action signed by 195 nations is a remarkable rebuke to heads of state, climate activists, corporate executives and members of the president’s own staff, who all failed to change his mind with an intense, last-minute lobbying blitz. The Paris agreement was intended to bind the world community into battling rising temperatures in concert, and the departure of the Earth’s second-largest polluter is a major blow.

The president’s speech was his boldest and most sweeping assertion of an “America first” foreign policy doctrine since he assumed office four months ago. He vowed to turn the country’s empathy inward, rejecting financial assistance for pollution controls in developing nations in favor of providing help to American cities struggling to hire police officers.

In Mr. Trump’s view, the Paris accord represents an attack on the sovereignty of the United States and a threat to the ability of his administration to reshape the nation’s environmental laws in ways that benefit everyday Americans.

Under the accord, the United States had pledged to cut its greenhouse gas emissions 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025 and commit up to \$3 billion in aid for poorer countries by 2020.

By stepping away from the Paris agreement, the president made good on a campaign promise to “cancel” an agreement he repeatedly mocked at rallies. As president, he has moved rapidly to reverse Obama-era policies aimed at allowing the United States to meet its pollution-reduction targets as set under the agreement.

In his remarks, Mr. Trump listed sectors of the United States economy that would lose revenue and jobs if the country remained part of the accord, citing a study — vigorously disputed by environmental groups — asserting that the agreement would cost 2.7 million jobs by 2025.

But he will stick to the withdrawal process laid out in the Paris agreement, which President Barack Obama joined and most of the world has already ratified. That could take nearly four years to complete, meaning a final decision would be up to the American voters in the next presidential election.

Denying Hurricane Harvey's climate links only worsens future suffering

The Guardian, September 2017

Human-caused climate change amplified the damages and suffering associated with Hurricane Harvey in several different ways. First, sea level rise caused by global warming increased the storm surge and therefore the coastal inundation and flooding from the storm. Second, the warmer atmosphere holds more water vapor, which intensifies extreme precipitation events like the record-shattering rainfall associated with Harvey. Third, warmer ocean waters essentially act as hurricane fuel, which may have made Harvey more intense than it would otherwise have been.

Ten days before Hurricane Harvey hit, the Trump administration rolled back the Federal Flood Risk Mitigation Standard. The policy was implemented by the Obama administration, and required taxpayer-funded public infrastructure projects to plan for future flooding risks. Much infrastructure within and around Houston is now underwater, and accounting for future flooding risks when replacing it would be smart. But the Trump administration considered this policy a burdensome regulation, claiming that the infrastructure permitting process has too many “inefficiencies.” Apparently those “inefficiencies” include saving taxpayer money by reducing future flood losses.

Those who oppose climate policies will often argue that we can simply adapt to the consequences of human-caused climate change. Most recently, New York Times columnist Bret Stephens suggested that Harvey will just be a “speed bump” for Houston’s economy, and that the world should follow Houston’s example of “environmental resilience” by following “the path of its extraordinary economic growth.” The people in Texas suffering from having lost their homes and possessions probably aren’t comforted that Stephens considers Harvey a “speed bump” for the local economy (which coincidentally is probably not true). As renowned glaciologist Lonnie Thompson put it:

Global warming is here and is already affecting our climate, so prevention is no longer an option. Three options remain for dealing with the crisis: mitigate, adapt, and suffer.

There will be some of each, but the more we mitigate the problem by cutting carbon pollution, the less we will have to adapt to and suffer from the consequences of climate change. However, even adaptation takes action. We can take some steps to adapt to rising sea levels, but denying the problem by rolling back regulations aimed at doing just that shifts us further toward the suffering part of the equation. Economic growth has many benefits, but by itself does not move us in the direction of climate mitigation or adaptation.

EPA chief Scott Pruitt tells coal miners he will repeal power plant rule Tuesday: ‘The war against coal is over’

The Washington Post, October 2017

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt told coal miners in Kentucky on Monday that he will move to repeal a rule limiting greenhouse-gas emissions from existing power plants, assuring them, “The war against coal is over.”

“Tomorrow, in Washington, D.C., I’ll be signing a proposed rule to withdraw the so-called Clean Power Plan of the past administration, and thus begin the effort to withdraw that rule,” Pruitt said.

EPA spokeswoman Liz Bowman said in an interview Monday that Pruitt chose to speak about his plans in Kentucky because coal workers have a direct economic stake in policies aimed at curbing emissions from coal burning. “He’s speaking directly to people in coal country about how the rule negatively affected the whole industry,” Bowman said.

Reaction to the announcement was sharply divided, with environmental and public health advocates decrying it, and industry groups welcoming the move.

“With this news, Donald Trump and Scott Pruitt will go down in infamy for launching one of the most egregious attacks ever on public health, our climate, and the safety of every community in the United States,” Michael Brune, the executive director of the Sierra Club, said in a statement. “He’s proposing to throw out a plan that would prevent thousands of premature deaths and tens of thousands of childhood asthma attacks every year.”

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association chief executive Jim Matheson, one of the utility groups that challenged the Obama-era rule, said rescinding the regulation would provide his members with the flexibility to use their existing plants to provide “reliable, affordable power” to local customers. Sixty-two percent of coop-owned generation is coal-fired, according to the association, while natural gas accounts for 26 percent, nuclear power 10 percent and renewables 2 percent.

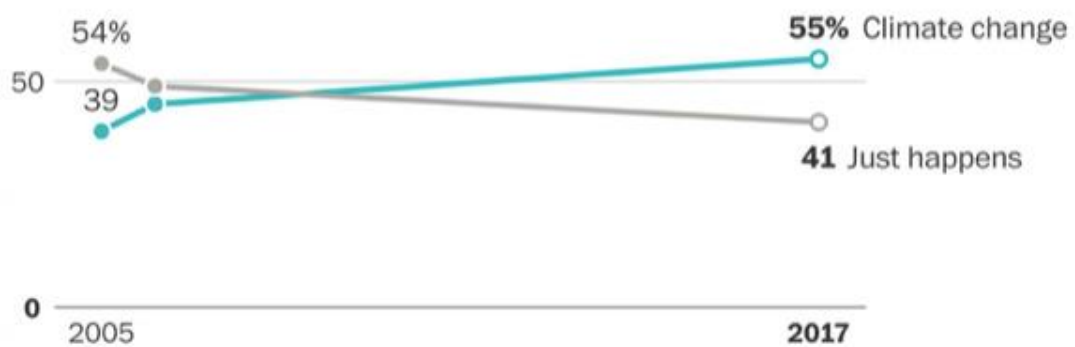
Monday’s announcement that the EPA would seek to rescind the Clean Power Plan, with no promise of replacing it, brought promises of even more legal fights ahead. Attorneys general of multiple states — California, New York and Massachusetts among them — vowed to challenge the Trump administration’s decision.

The EPA’s latest proposal to repeal the Clean Power Plan comes months after President Trump issued a directive instructing the Environmental Protection Agency to begin rewriting the controversial 2015 regulation, as part of a broader effort to obliterate his predecessor’s efforts to make combating climate change a top government priority.

A central piece of Obama’s environmental legacy, the Clean Power Plan aims to slash the greenhouse-gas emissions that scientists agree are fueling the planet’s rapid warming. It also was an integral part of the commitment U.S. officials made as part of a historic international climate accord signed in late 2015 in Paris, from which Trump has said he intends to withdraw.

Growing number of Americans fault climate change for severity of hurricanes

Q: Do you think the severity of recent hurricanes is most likely the result of global climate change, or is it just the kind of severe weather events that happen from time to time?

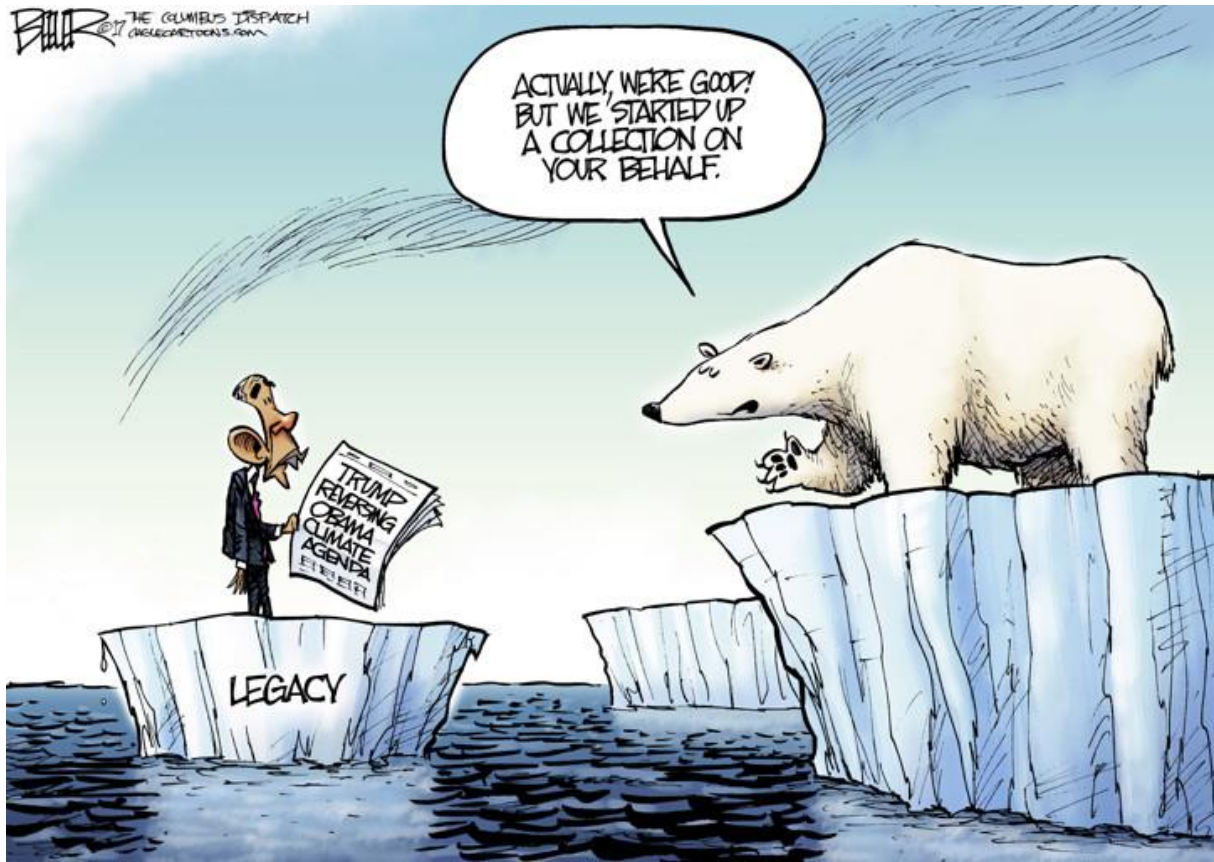


2006 poll wording "hurricanes like Katrina"; 2005 wording is same as 2017

Source: Washington Post-ABC News poll Sept. 18-21 among random sample of 1,002 adults reached on cell and landline phones. Error margin +/- 3.5 points.

EMILY GUSKIN/WASHINGTON POST

The Washington Post, September 2017



The Mercury News, April 2017

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