



2024 Global elections & climate trends monitor

18 December 2024

Greetings,

With the year coming to an end, so does our newsletter. 2024 was marked by the largest number of elections in human history, with around 2 billion eligible voters. Collectively, these elections revealed both the resilience and vulnerabilities of democracy, with many regions registering a swing to the right. The implications for global climate action remain uncertain, but the challenges ahead are undeniable.

Throughout the year, this newsletter has highlighted stories on key political and environmental developments as countries headed to the polls, including France, India, Mexico, South Africa, South Korea, the EU, the UK, and the US. As we step into 2025 – a year likely to bring even more geopolitical challenges – the need for collective action has never been more urgent.

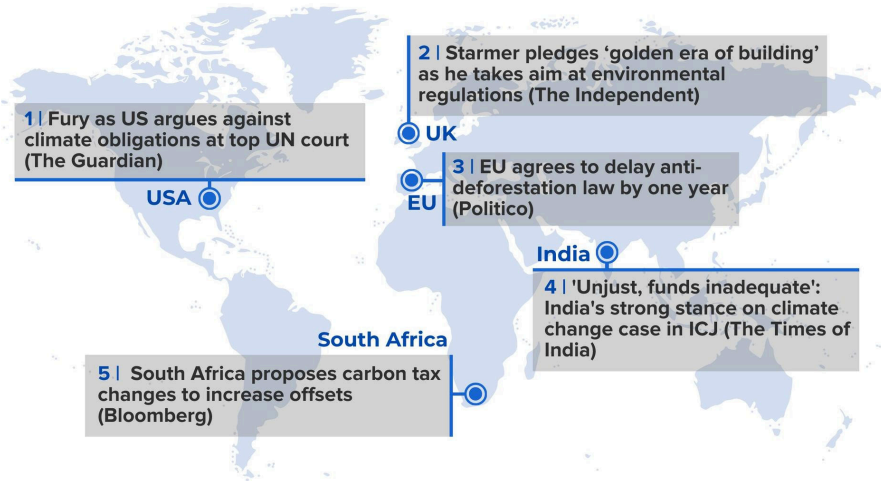
One last time, we invite you to join us in reflecting on how climate change is reshaping political landscapes worldwide. To everyone who has contributed, and to you, our readers, thank you for supporting this project.

If you have a moment, we would really appreciate you filling in [this short feedback form](#), which will help us improve future monitoring projects.

Until next time,
Filipe Ferreira

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Key climate and election developments



Links: [1](#) | [2](#) | [3](#) | [4](#) | [5](#)

Climate politics

- **[Huge election year worldwide sees weakening commitment to act on climate crisis \(The Guardian\)](#)**
"Among sweeping rightwing electoral victories across the globe, the 'big loser of the elections has been climate'."
- **['We will not go quietly into the sea': Hearings for world's biggest climate case conclude at the ICJ \(Euronews\)](#)**
"Vanuatu and other vulnerable states gave impassioned evidence - aided by a few European allies. Now they wait for the World Court's opinion."
- **[Negotiators fail to reach an agreement on a plastic pollution treaty. Talks to resume next year \(NPR\)](#)**
"Negotiators working on a treaty to address the global crisis of plastic pollution for a week in South Korea won't reach an agreement and plan to resume the talks next year."
- **[Trump's energy secretary pick preaches the benefits of climate change \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)**
"Chris Wright, President-elect Donald Trump's nominee for energy secretary, says that climate change poses only a modest threat to humanity."
- **[Biden admin tells Supreme Court to stay out of climate lawsuits \(Politico\)](#)**
"The Biden administration is urging the Supreme Court to reject bids from oil and gas companies and Republican allies who want to quash a flood of lawsuits that seek to hold the fossil fuel industry financially accountable for the effects of climate change."
- **[EU expected to release simplified sustainability reporting law in February 2025 \(Forbes\)](#)**

"Following an informal meeting of Council leadership in mid-November, Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, announced her intention to revamp three key sustainability regulations to reduce the burden on businesses."

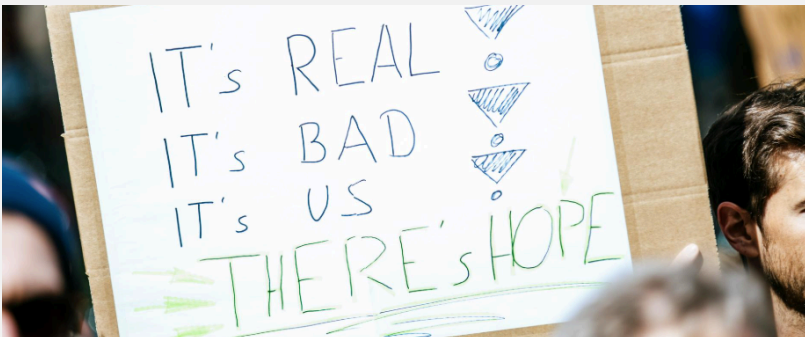
- [EU should ban space mirrors and other solar geoengineering, scientists say \(The Guardian\)](#)

"European Commission scientific advisers say technology to offset global heating could wreak havoc on weather."

Climate impacts

- [EU climate monitor says 2024 'certain' to be hottest year on record \(Al Jazeera\)](#)
"Europe's climate monitor says 2024 is "effectively certain" to be the hottest on record and the first year above the 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7F) climate benchmark, a critical threshold to protect the Earth from dangerously overheating."
- [Climate change's more than €550 billion price tag is pushing up insurance costs, report says \(Euronews\)](#)
"Climate change has been behind over a third of all weather-related insurance losses over the last 20 years, a new report from the campaign group Insure Our Future has found."
- [Climate risks have hit financial system: RBI \(Times of India\)](#)
"The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has warned that climate risks are impacting the financial system, causing asset damage, business disruptions, and loan losses."
- [Cyclone Chido: Are European countries throwing their overseas territories to the climate wolves? \(Euronews\)](#)
"The storm is one of the most powerful to ever hit the French overseas territory. It brought winds of more than 200kph flattening entire neighbourhoods and cutting off power and communications to many communities."
- [UK 'not ready' for extreme weather like Storm Darragh \(BBC\)](#)
"The government is 'not ready' for the sort of extreme weather brought by Storm Darragh, the new head of the Climate Change Committee has warned."

Looking ahead to 2025



Markus Spiske, Unsplash

As 2024 draws to a close, 2025 looks set to present newly-elected governments with a challenging political landscape. Ongoing conflicts in Europe and the Middle East mean [climate priorities will likely take a backseat](#) as tensions rise, overshadowed by more immediate security and humanitarian concerns. Adding to this, the electoral success of right-wing parties, with their [tendency to deprioritise environmental policies](#), threatens to undermine efforts for meaningful global climate progress. Experts point to pivotal moments such as COP30 and the G20 summit, and the impact of a Trump presidency, as key factors that will shape the direction of climate action in the year ahead.

Key articles on what to expect from climate and politics in 2025

[Experts: What does a Trump presidency mean for climate action?](#) (Carbon Brief)

Following the US election, Carbon Brief asked experts what impact Donald Trump's return might have on climate action and international relations. Most expressed serious concerns. During his first term, Trump withdrew the US from the Paris Agreement, rolled back environmental regulations, and prioritised fossil fuels. Experts expect his second term to follow a similar path, especially when considering his ["drill, baby, drill"](#) rhetoric. Despite these concerns, [Li Shuo](#), Director of the China Climate Hub, highlights that the global transition to clean energy will remain on track, driven by falling costs and the growing competitiveness of green energy. According to Li, economic forces – not politics – will drive climate progress, with China and the EU likely stepping into the lead.

[Trump may thwart Federal climate action, but opportunities for progress remain](#) (World Resources Institute)

The World Resources Institute suggests that the Trump presidency may shape efforts to secure [climate funding in 2025](#), but highlights [COP30](#) as crucial for advancing finance commitments.

[Climate financing and the Loss and Damage Fund](#) (Oxford Economics)

Oxford Economics writes that climate financing and the loss and damage fund will be a central issue in 2025. At COP29, the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) pledged \$300 billion in annual climate finance for 2035, which, while a step forward, still fell well short of addressing financing needs. According to the article, the [Loss and Damage Fund](#), set to begin in 2025, offers a potential lifeline for vulnerable countries, but its exclusion from the NCQG raises concerns about its long-term viability, with funding and effectiveness still uncertain. While private investments in sustainability are increasing, significant obstacles remain in ensuring these funds drive equitable decarbonisation and address inefficiencies in existing climate finance mechanisms.

[COP30 in Brazil will be pivotal](#) (Chatham House)

COP30, which will be hosted in Belém in Brazil, will be a crucial moment for addressing financing gaps and [keeping the global transition to a net-zero economy on track](#). Ana Yang, Director of Chatham House's Environment and Society Centre, writes that with new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) due in February, COP30 faces mounting pressure for governments to "prevent runaway climate change, ensure the energy transition and double down on the Paris Agreement," especially following the divisive climate finance outcomes from COP29 in Baku. Another important moment in the climate finance talks will be the [G20 summit in South Africa](#) in November 2025.

[South Africa's G20 Presidency: Paving the way for sustainable finance and debt reform in global governance](#) (African Policy Research Institute, APRI)

APRI views the South African G20 presidency, the first ever on the African continent, and the African Union's new permanent seat, as a strategic opportunity to spotlight Africa's debt challenges and push for systemic reforms. However, balancing the need for climate finance with the pressing issue of economic resilience, especially in debt-burdened countries, will not be an easy task.

Elections in 2025

While 2025 will not be as election-filled as 2024, elections will still play a crucial role in shaping the year ahead. In Germany, snap elections in February are expected to significantly [influence the country's climate agenda](#). The collapse of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's coalition government over disagreements on energy transition policies has left crucial decisions on 2030 climate targets unresolved. Clean Energy Wire writes that the new government will need to find a delicate balance between [advancing Germany's climate goals and addressing growing public concerns about the costs](#) of the energy transition.

Other key elections include Canada, where Prime Minister [Justin Trudeau faces declining public support](#), and Australia, where [two unpopular leaders will clash](#). In Belarus, [President Alexander Lukashenko is poised to seek a controversial seventh term](#) next month, while in South Korea, political uncertainty continues following the impeachment of President Yoon Suk Yeol, [leaving the country without a leader](#).

Energy and transport

- [US considers new Russia oil sanctions to weaken Putin ahead of Trump \(Bloomberg\)](#)
"The Biden administration is weighing new, harsher sanctions against Russia's lucrative oil trade, seeking to tighten the squeeze on the Kremlin's war machine just weeks before Donald Trump returns to the White House."
- [Chinese car makers turn to hybrids to avoid EV tariffs from the EU \(Euronews\)](#)
"Following higher EU tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles, car makers such as BYD, SAIC and Geely have increased their hybrid exports to Europe, in an attempt to boost their European market share in this way."
- [EU looks to geothermal in drive for energy security, document shows \(Reuters\)](#)
"European Union countries plan to promote geothermal energy as they hunt for ways to replace Russian gas and bring down energy prices, a draft EU document showed."
- [India's steel expansion could hinder net zero emission goal, GEM says \(Reuters\)](#)
"India's plans to ramp up coal-powered steelmaking capacity could impede the country's goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2070, Global Energy Monitor (GEM) said in a report on Tuesday."
- [Biden's approval of an oil lease sale will keep the door open to drilling in Alaska's Arctic refuge \(AP News\)](#)
"The Biden administration has approved plans for a sale of oil and gas leases in Alaska that leaves open the door for drilling in a portion of the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge."
- [Qatar to invest \\$1.3 bn in climate tech in Britain, Rolls-Royce to benefit \(Business Standard\)](#)
"Qatar will invest 1 billion pounds (\$1.3 billion) in climate technology in the United Kingdom, with engineering company Rolls-Royce set to benefit from some of the cash to support its energy transition, the British government said on Wednesday."

Climate movement

- [UN human rights expert raises concerns about US charges against climate protesters \(The Guardian\)](#)

"A leading UN human rights expert has expressed dismay after the US government failed to respond to questions about the criminal crackdown on peaceful climate protesters."

- [**Young campaigners win landmark climate case to stop new coal power in South Africa \(Euronews\)**](#)

"Civil society organisations said the government's plan to add 1500MW of new coal-fired power was expensive, unnecessary, and a limitation of children's right to a healthy environment."

- [**Britain leads the world in cracking down on climate activism, study finds \(The Guardian\)**](#)

Research shows UK police arrest environmental and climate protesters at three times the average global rate.

Commentary

- [**What does the EU's rightward shift mean for green policy? | By Lee Harris and Patrick Temple-West \(Financial Times\)**](#)

"EU lawmakers yesterday reached a deal to delay a law on deforestation in global commodity supply chains. In an ongoing saga, the law has faced opposition from businesses, farm groups, foreign governments and rightwing parties including the Alternative for Germany (AfD) — and has tested Europe's ambitions to clean up the supply chains of major commodities."

- [**Everyone is asking what the future of U.S. climate policy will be | By Justin Worland \(Time\)**](#)

"With the 2024 election and U.N. climate conference firmly in the rearview mirror, climate policy discussions have hit a feverpitch in the U.S. capital as companies, advocates, and officials try to figure out the new rules of the road. And there are no easy answers."

- [**What Trump's Cabinet picks and advisers say about climate change | By Lisa Friedman \(The New York Times\)**](#)

"President-elect Donald J. Trump's cabinet choices and key advisers run the gamut from people who acknowledge the threat of climate change to those who deny the scientific consensus that emissions from the burning of fossil fuels are dangerously heating the planet."

- [**Climate activists need to radically change their approach under Trump | By Arnab Datta \(The New York Times\)**](#)

"Donald Trump's return to Washington might seem like a terrifying moment for the fight against climate change. The incoming administration is not just hostile to the energy transition; it's also expected to pull the United States out of the Paris climate agreement, roll back a wide range of pollution regulations and promote domestic fossil fuel production — decisions likely to worsen global warming."

