

The Great Climate Charade

Why governmental climate plans are a complete joke.

[Angus Peterson](#)



(Image Credit: [Vecteezy](#))

It's time to face the brutal truth: [governments worldwide are complicit](#) in the [worsening of climate change](#). The very institutions tasked with protecting us and ensuring a livable future are doing little more than spinning empty promises into PR-friendly talking points. While they continue to pander to oil companies and maintain a suicidal allegiance to the growth-at-all-costs ethos of capitalism, the planet teeters ever closer to [irreversible collapse](#).

The illusion of progress is perhaps the cruelest joke of all. Governments trumpet their climate plans and [ambitious “net zero” pledges](#), but a closer look reveals a yawning chasm between rhetoric and reality. Despite decades of warnings from scientists, grassroots activists, and even a mounting body count of climate disasters, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are not falling fast enough — if at all.

This is not an accident. It's a feature, not a bug, of the systems we live under.

Empty Promises, Ballooning Emissions

Let's start with the so-called climate plans. For over two decades, policymakers have crafted measures ostensibly designed to curb emissions and keep the world below the [catastrophic 1.5°C warming threshold](#). A recent evaluation of these measures published by researchers at the [Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research](#) has laid bare just how ineffective they are.

According to this analysis, most climate policies enacted by governments have [failed to achieve meaningful reductions in GHG emissions](#).

Let that sink in for a minute. These are the policies we were told would save us. Instead, emissions have continued to grow at an alarming rate, as governments around the globe prioritize economic growth over environmental sustainability.

Take, for example, the farcical reliance on carbon pricing mechanisms. Carbon taxes and cap-and-trade systems sound good on paper, but in practice, they've done little to deter the big polluters driving the climate crisis. Oil companies and heavy industries receive carve-outs and exemptions that render these policies toothless. The same companies that fund political campaigns can write off their pollution as a mere cost of doing business.

Governments are complicit not just through inaction, but through active sabotage of real solutions. Subsidies for fossil fuels, which should have been phased out years ago, remain intact. In 2022 alone, global fossil fuel subsidies soared to nearly \$1 trillion. That's \$1 trillion poured into the pockets of the very industries that are killing the planet.

The Hidden Hand of Corporate Influence

Why are governments so ineffective? The answer is simple: they are beholden to corporate donors, especially Big Oil. Political campaigns in most major democracies are fueled by the dirty money of corporations whose profits depend on endless extraction and consumption. As long as this [incestuous relationship persists](#), no politician will take the bold actions required to cut emissions dramatically.

Corporate lobbying is the hidden hand that ensures every climate policy is watered down, riddled with loopholes, and ultimately ineffective. For every dollar spent on

renewable energy initiatives, the fossil fuel industry spends ten on ensuring its dominance. Their influence isn't just a nuisance; it's a death sentence for the planet.

And yet, politicians from both major parties in countries like the United States continue to talk about “balance” — as though balancing the interests of oil companies and the survival of humanity were a sane proposition.

The Cult of Economic Growth

Underlying this betrayal is the sacrosanct belief in economic growth. Economic growth is not just a goal; it is treated as an existential necessity by virtually every government in the world. The result is a global economy that chews through finite resources like there's no tomorrow — because under this system, there might as well not be.

Infinite growth on a finite planet is a recipe for collapse. Every dollar of GDP is correlated with more resource extraction, more emissions, and more environmental degradation. Despite what greenwashing narratives would have you believe, there is no such thing as sustainable growth in the way it is practiced today.

Yet governments cling to it, propping up markets and industries that should have been dismantled decades ago. Growth-at-all-costs is their rallying cry, even if it means sentencing future generations to unlivable conditions. And your children? They're collateral damage in this suicidal quest for profit.

The Choice Not to Have Children

For many, the realization of governmental complicity has led to private reckoning. Some individuals are taking the deeply personal step of choosing not to have children. This decision is borne of a grim calculus: bringing fewer people into the world is one of the most effective ways to reduce GHG emissions.

A study published in *Environmental Research Letters* quantified the emissions associated with individual lifestyle choices. It found that having one fewer child [reduces GHG emissions more than virtually any other action](#) a person can take. The numbers are stark. No amount of cycling to work or cutting back on meat can compare.

Some critics, including reports like the one from [Founder's Pledge](#), claim this focus on reproductive choices is misguided. They argue that other actions, [like planting trees](#),

have greater long-term benefits. But let's be clear: these arguments hinge on the fantasy that governments will meet their climate pledges. As we've established, they won't. To pin humanity's hopes on such an assumption is the height of folly.

The Delusion of Technological Fixes

Meanwhile, governments and corporations alike push the narrative that [new technologies will save us](#). Carbon capture and storage, geoengineering, and renewable energy transitions are touted as the silver bullets that will allow us to continue our current lifestyles without consequence.

But these technologies are, at best, decades away from large-scale deployment, and at worst, pie-in-the-sky fantasies. Carbon capture technology has proven so inefficient and expensive that even oil companies — its biggest proponents — use it mostly as a PR tool. Geoengineering, with its potential for catastrophic unintended consequences, is an ethical and practical minefield.

Even renewable energy, the most viable path forward, is being co-opted by the same growth-driven paradigm that brought us here. Instead of reducing consumption, governments and corporations see renewables as a way to power ever-expanding economies. The result? More mining, more [habitat destruction](#), and more emissions from production.

A Legacy of Ruin

For the educated and economically comfortable families reading this — [the ones who play by the rules](#), recycle diligently, and make thoughtful consumer choices — it's time to face a harsh reality. Your individual efforts, while commendable, are a drop in the ocean compared to the systemic change needed to avert catastrophe.

The governments you elect, the corporations you patronize, and the economic systems you participate in are all complicit in creating the disaster unfolding around us. They won't save us. They never intended to.

Every climate pledge, every summit, every earnest press release about “ambition” is part of a grand charade designed to placate and distract. Meanwhile, the clock is ticking. The ice is melting. The forests are burning. And your children will inherit a world diminished beyond recognition.

The Takeaway — No Solutions in Sight

This isn't a call to action. Action requires hope, and hope is in short supply. Instead, consider this an unvarnished accounting of where we stand. Governments have failed us. Corporations have failed us. The system, as it exists, is rigged to ensure failure.

The climate crisis will not be solved by the same institutions that created it. It will not be solved by empty promises or by hoping for the best. It is a runaway train, and the people at the controls have no intention of hitting the brakes.

For your children, and for all the children [who will inherit this bleak future](#), it's time to reckon with the truth. There is no one coming to save us.