

Climate Policy Update

November 21, 2023

Good afternoon!

This is Akin's newsletter on climate change policy and regulatory developments, providing information on major climate policy headlines from the past week and forthcoming climate-related events and hearings:

National

- **Treasury Expands Tax Credit for Clean Energy Projects** (*E&E News*)

Late last week, the United States Department of the Treasury released guidance on the Section 48 investment tax credit which “could provide credits of up to 70 percent for certain energy storage and other clean power projects.” Moreover, the guidance clarifies eligibility for offshore wind, battery storage, as well as small-scale solar and wind projects.

- **‘Not On Course’: US Emissions Set for 3% Decline in 2023** (*E&E News*)

Projections estimate that the U.S. is set to reduce emissions “as much as three percent in 2023 [...] reversing two years of flat or increasing output of planet-warming pollution.” However, the analyses illustrate that the U.S. is far from meeting its target under the Paris climate accord.

- **Democrats Tell DOE to Reboot Natural Gas Export Reviews** (*E&E News*)

Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Rep. Jared Huffman (D-CA)—among nearly 60 others—called on the Department of Energy (DOE) to “update how it decides whether licenses for natural gas export projects are in the public interest.” Specifically, the lawmakers stressed the importance of the Agency’s consideration of climate and economic analyses, as well as environmental justice impacts.

State and Local

- **Gov. Josh Shapiro Touts His Administration’s ‘GSD’ Attitude at Press Club Luncheon** (*Pennsylvania Capital-Star*)

At a Pennsylvania Press Club luncheon, Gov. Josh Shapiro (D-PA) was questioned about the Commonwealth’s participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) following a Commonwealth Court ruling that the Department of Environmental Protection lacks the authority to impose a tax. The Governor noted that—through his administration’s RGGI working group—he “heard from “a lot of different stakeholders, leaders in the environmental community, leaders in the labor community, [and] industry leaders.” Moreover, he previewed that his administration will likely have greater comments about the cap-and-trade mechanism in the near term.

- **Governor Hochul Announces Installation of First Offshore Wind Turbine for South Fork Wind** (Gov. Kathy Hochul)

Gov. Kathy Hochul (D-NY) announced the “completed installation of the first offshore wind turbine for South Fork Wind, a historic milestone for New York’s offshore wind development and what will be the first completed utility-scale wind farm in the United States in federal waters.”

- **At APEC, Governor Newsom Highlights California’s Low-Carbon, Green Growth Economy** (Gov. Gavin Newsom)

Gov. Gavin Newsom (D-CA) attended the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit to—in part—highlight the state’s climate cooperation with international partners. Of note, the Governor met with leaders from Australia, Canada, Singapore and the United Kingdom to discuss ongoing green partnerships.

International

- **Nations Are Getting Serious About Climate Action. Just Not Serious Enough, U.N. Says** (New York Times)

The United Nations (UN) Emissions Gap Report detailed that “the world’s nations are taking more concrete steps to tackle climate change than ever before, but they are still very far from making the sweeping changes needed to keep global temperatures at relatively safe levels.”

- **They’re Talking, But a Climate Divide Between Beijing and Washington Remains** (Politico)

Despite a surprise deal between the two nations and recent discussions between leaders, China and the U.S. “remain at odds on tough questions such as how quickly to shut down coal and who should provide climate aid to developing nations.”

- **EU Lawmakers Urge COP28 Climate Summit to Take Aim at Fossil Fuels** (Reuters)

The European Union (EU) urged “a global deal at the UN [Conference of Parties 28 (COP 28)] climate summit to phase out fossil fuels, aiming to add pressure on countries to tackle CO2-emitting oil and gas.”

Check out below for key quotes, federal agency news and a look at the week ahead in congressional hearings and think tank events:

Quotes of the Week

“We are seeing countries make progress on implementing the climate plans they’ve already announced [...] But those plans are still far from sufficient for meeting the Paris Agreement goals.”

– Anne Olhoff, Co-Author of the Emissions Gap Report ([New York Times](#) – November 20)

Congressional Hearings (November 20 - November 24, 2023)

Senate

No relevant hearings.

House of Representatives

No relevant hearings.

Federal Agency Climate News

Department of Energy

DOE Announces \$42 Million To Strengthen Reliability, Resiliency, And Affordability of America's Power Grid (November 21)

Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$169 Million to Accelerate Electric Heat Pump Manufacturing as Part of Investing in America Agenda (November 17)

Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$40 Million to Expand Clean Energy Workforce Training and Enhance U.S. Building and Manufacturing Efficiency (November 16)

Department of Interior

Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$51 Million from Investing in America Agenda for Water Resources and Ecosystem Health (November 15)

Environmental Protection Agency

Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$2 Billion to Fund Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants as Part of Investing in America Agenda (November 21)

Biden-Harris Administration Announces Availability of \$15 Million to Tackle the Climate Crisis by Cutting Hydrofluorocarbon Pollution as Part of the Investing in America Agenda (November 17)

Funding and Comment Opportunities

Climate Pollution Reduction Grants

Environmental Protection Agency

Close Date: April 1, 2024

Domestic Manufacturing Conversation Grants

Department of Energy

Close Date: December 7, 2023

Career Skills Training Program

Department of Energy

Close Date: November 27, 2023

Battery Materials and Battery Manufacturing Grants

Department of Energy

Close Date: March 19, 2024

Transmission Siting and Economic Development Program

Department of Energy

Close Date: April 5, 2024

D.C. Climate Events

The Oil and Gas Dilemma

United States Energy Association

Tuesday, November 21, 11:00 AM EST

African Solutions at COP28: A Turning Point?

Atlantic Council

Tuesday, November 21, 10:00 AM EST

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