

Climate Policy Update

June 28, 2023

Good evening!

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 Department Says Nearly 200 Clean Energy Projects Announced Since the IRA** (*The Hill*)
Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Wally Adeyemo noted that almost 200 clean energy projects have been rolled out since the passage of the *Inflation Reduction Act* (P.L. 117-169; IRA). Moreover, he called for the “need to strengthen the security of the renewable energy supply chain.”
- **Biden Administration to Spend \$450 Million on Higher-Blend Biofuels** (*Reuters*)
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will invest \$450 million to “expand the production and availability of transportation fuels that are blended with higher volumes of biofuels.” This comes as the Biden administration seeks to reduce transportation-related carbon emissions.
- **Environmental Groups Ask Biden to Crack Down on Methane Emissions from Landfills** (*The Hill*)
Over a dozen environmental advocacy groups are imploring the Biden administration to address emissions associated with landfills. The petition argues that the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) rules “do not go far enough to control these emissions.”
- **Biden Admin Eyes \$5B Fossil Fuel Build-Out in Puerto Rico** (*E&E News*)
The Army Corps of Engineers is slated to invest \$5 billion on “temporary fossil fuel power plants and infrastructure repairs in Puerto Rico.” Environmental advocates have pushed back on the plan, as it may hinder Puerto Rico's goal of achieving 40 percent renewable energy by 2025.
- **Lawmakers Aim to Fix Drought Impacts Across the West** (*E&E News*)
To address drought across the West, Sens. Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Jeff Merkley (D-OR) reintroduced the *Water for Conservation and Farming Act* (**S. 963**) to establish a Bureau of Reclamation fund for water recycling and dam projects and support water projects in under resourced communities.

State & Local

- **Michigan Lawmakers Begin Fractious Debate on Climate Bills** (*E&E News*)

Michigan lawmakers kicked off debates on H.B. 4759, which would codify Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's (D-MI) climate plan requiring that the state would get "60% of its electricity from renewable resources by 2030."

- **West Virginia Bets on Hydrogen in Gamble to Save Coal Plant** (*E&E News*)

With the backing of Gov. Jim Justice (R-WV) and Sen. Joe Manchin (R-WV), Omnis Global Technologies is seeking to convert Pleasants Power Station to "run on hydrogen, eliminating a major source of planet-warming greenhouse gases."

- **Oregon County Sues Oil Companies Over Deadly 2021 Heat Wave** (*The Hill*)

Multnomah County in Oregon sued "17 oil companies and related institutions, alleging pollution from fossil fuels contributed to a 2021 heat wave that killed dozens of Oregonians."

- **Oregon Lawmakers Make a Play for More Federal Climate Money** (*E&E News*)

Oregon legislators "passed more than \$90 million in new climate spending [...] which could position to state to access as much as \$1 billion from the *Inflation Reduction Act*." These policies include the establishment of energy performance standards for new commercial buildings; resiliency hubs to address climate hazards; an extended residential solar rebate program; subsidies for medium- and heavy-duty zero-emissions vehicles, and training programs to install energy-efficient systems.

- **Climate Change Made the Texas Heat Wave More Intense. Renewables Softened the Blow.** (*Inside Climate News*)

Despite expectations that the United States South will continue experiencing heat waves, Texas has avoided rolling blackouts with thanks to solar energy and batteries. Moreover, a recent analysis found that "global warming made the extreme heat in Texas last week at least five times more likely to occur."

International

- **A Fight to Improve London's Air Quality, One Vehicle at a Time** (*New York Times*)

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, is slated to "extend London's Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) to every borough of the capital in an effort to improve air quality and prevent illnesses and deaths caused by air pollution."

- **New Rules Aim to Clamp Down on Corporate Greenwashing** (*Reuters*)

The International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) published global rules to pressure companies to "disclose how climate change affects their business."

- **Lack of Funds Risks Europe Missing Climate Goals, Auditors Say** (*Reuters*)

The European Court of Auditors identified a gap in funding which may risk the European Union's (EU) ability to meet its 2030 climate change targets.

- **Carmakers Owe Compensation for Emissions Cheating Devices, German Court Rules** (*Reuters*)

A German court ruled that "carmakers must pay compensation for diesel vehicles fitted with illegal emissions controlling devices."

- [EU Warns of Rising Climate-Fueled Conflict, Risks of Geoengineering](#) (US News)

The EU anticipated calling on countries to address “‘spill over’ effects from increased climate change-driven conflicts.” The draft document additionally cautions about new risks associated with “large-scale technological interventions that alter the climate as potential route to tackle global warming.”

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

“For batteries—where we must work with allies and partners to obtain the critical minerals we need—the IRA requires that purchased EV final assembly occur in North America in support of manufacturing jobs at home [...] This approach is already working. Since the IRA passed, nearly 200 new clean energy projects totaling \$83 billion have already been announced in the U.S.”

– *Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Wally Adeyemo* ([The Hill](#) – June 22)

Congressional Hearings (June 26 - June 30, 2023)

Senate

No relevant Senate hearings.

House of Representatives

No relevant House hearings.

Federal Agency Climate News

Department of Energy

[Biden-Harris Administration Invests \\$25 Million to Expand Weatherization Assistance Program and Cut Costs for More Americans](#) (June 27)

[DOE Announces Over \\$21 Million to Advance Commercialization of Clean Energy Solutions](#) (June 22)

Environmental Protection Agency

[EPA Finalizes New Renewable Fuel Standards to Strengthen U.S. Energy Security, Support U.S. Rural Economy, and Expand Production of Low-Carbon Fuels](#) (June 21)

White House

[Biden-Harris Administration Driving Forward on Convenient, Reliable, Made-in-America National Network of Electric Vehicle Chargers](#) (June 27)

Funding and Comment Opportunities

[Powering Affordable Clean Energy](#)

Department of Agriculture

Close Date: September 29, 2023

[Empowering Rural America](#)

[Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program](#)

Department of Energy

Pre-Award Information: April 28, 2023

Close Date: July 31, 2023

Department of Agriculture

Close Date: August 31, 2023

[Clean Energy Demonstration Program on Current and Former Mine Land](#)

Department of Energy

Concept Papers: May 11, 2023

Close Date: August 31, 2023

[Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas](#)

Department of Energy

Concept Papers: April 14, 2023

Close Date: June 28, 2023

D.C. Climate Events

[Youth Activism and Climate Engagement](#)

Middle East Institute

Tuesday, June 27, 10:00 AM EDT

[Post G7 Summit: Advancing Industrial Decarbonization and Climate-Aligned Trade](#)

Atlantic Council

Tuesday, June 27, 10:00 AM EDT

[How Extreme Weather Events Are Testing Disaster Preparedness and Resilience](#)

Washington Post

Wednesday, June 28, 2:00 PM EDT

[Assessing Insurance Regulation and Supervision of Climate-Related Financial Risk](#)

Brookings Institute

Tuesday, June 27, 10:00 AM EDT

[Policy Roadmap to Accelerate Responsible Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage Deployment](#)

Resources for the Future

Tuesday, June 27, 2:00 PM EDT

[Critical Minerals: From When They Will Come?](#)

Washington International Trade Association

Thursday, June 29, 10:00 AM EDT

For more information, please contact your regular Akin lawyer or advisor, or:

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