

Effective Measures at Tackling Climate Change: An Analysis of the Divestment Movement

Summary Sheet

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[Climate Change — Effective Responses](#)

Climate Change and National Security : The Challenge

- Climate change is real and it is a direct challenge to our national security.
- Scientists now agree that that era of global climate stability is ending, the earth's temperatures are warming, and it is due to human activity: the emissions from the burning of fossil fuels.
- The global rise in temperature directly correlates with the increased emissions of CO2 stemming from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution where levels were 40% lower.
- As climate change intensifies we can expect to see more extreme weather events, drought, flooding, and food and water scarcity.
- Where the United States is concerned, climate change poses three core national security threats: global instability, military infrastructure and homeland security.
- Climate change will place more stress on civilian and military institutions around the world, increasing demand on the U.S. military.
- Climate change poses direct threats to critical infrastructure, the lives of citizens, the economy, and energy security

The Origin and Objective of the Divestment Movement

- In an effort to disrupt fossil fuel production and continued carbon emissions, the global divestment movement conceived the notion of encouraging certain organizations and institutions to divest their shares in fossil fuel companies.
- The divestment movement in the U.S. is focused primarily on divestiture from universities and colleges with holdings in fossil fuel companies.
- The stated tactics of the divestment movement are to send a message to fossil fuel companies that fossil fuel dependency is fleeting, to stigmatize these companies against future investments and mergers, and to encourage public opinion in favor of renewable energy sources.

Effectiveness: How Divestment Fails to Address Climate Change

- Divestment will not cause any meaningful financial impact to fossil fuel companies, but could hurt the universities and colleges dependent on fossil fuel share dividends.
- Stigmatization of fossil fuel companies will not lower national demand for fossil fuels.
- Divestment does not take into account the restrictive factors that prevent a speedy and efficient transition to a renewable and emission-neutral economy.
- Fossil fuels remain the lifeblood of the American economy. Until alternative means can match the energy demand for industrial, commercial, residential and transportation uses.
- Divestment is not an effective method to tackle climate change via lowering emissions, but investment in next generation energy solutions is.



The North Dakota National Guard responding to flooding. N.D. Air National Guard photo

Alternative Solutions for Combating Emissions and Climate Change

- Alternative measures that could be a more effective focus than divestment include: voter education, support for more carbon-free energy systems, and rallying for government intervention.
- This high demand for action relies on many different elements in order to be successful: government, corporate, market-based initiatives and regulatory action.
- Campaigning for effective solutions, like pricing carbon emissions, is a viable means for decreasing emissions and shifting towards a decarbonized economy.
- Investment from the U.S. government in alternative and renewable energy would assist the transition towards more carbon-free energy sources.

The threats of climate change are serious and imminent. Responding to the threats requires seriousness and dedication.

For more, please visit:

<http://www.americansecurityproject.org/climate-energy-and-security/climate-change/climate-change-effective-responses/>

The American Security Project (ASP) is a nonpartisan organization created to educate the American public and the world about the changing nature of national security in the 21st Century.

Gone are the days when a nation's security could be measured by bombers and battleships. Security in this new era requires harnessing all of America's strengths: the force of our diplomacy; the might of our military; the vigor and competitiveness of our economy; and the power of our ideals.

We believe that America must lead in the pursuit of our common goals and shared security. We must confront international challenges with our partners and with all the tools at our disposal and address emerging problems before they become security crises. And to do this we must forge a bipartisan consensus here at home.

ASP brings together prominent American business leaders, former members of Congress, retired military flag officers, and prominent former government officials. ASP conducts research on a broad range of issues and engages and empowers the American public by taking its findings directly to them via events, traditional & new media, meetings, and publications.

We live in a time when the threats to our security are as complex and diverse as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, climate change, energy challenges, and our economic wellbeing. Partisan bickering and age old solutions simply won't solve our problems. America – and the world – needs an honest dialogue about security that is as robust as it is realistic.

ASP exists to promote that dialogue, to forge that consensus, and to spur constructive action so that America meets the challenges to its security while seizing the opportunities that abound.



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