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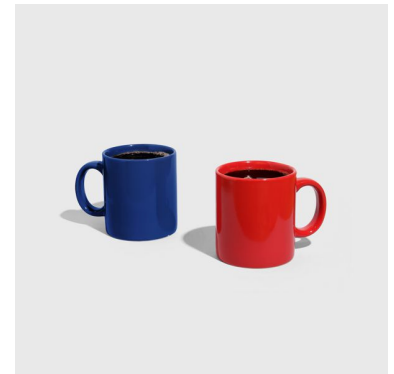
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Illustration: Aïda Amer/Axios

**President Trump's status** as one of the last holdouts on climate change has been decades in the making. And now the world is seeing the results.

**What's happening:** When the G20 leaders put out their statement Saturday reaffirming their commitment to the Paris climate accord, the United States was the only nation that didn't sign it. Trump has said he will withdraw from the detail, but he technically can't until 2020 — in fact, the day after the

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their own government's report on climate change to a remarkable degree.

**Why it matters:** Trump's position has been years in the making.

- **A small but influential** set of organizations and people have been pushing misinformation for years — and Trump has been listening.
- **Determining where** inaccurate information comes from helps to correct the record,

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particularly on such a complex issue where the whole planet is at play.

- **Driving the news:** This latest report, which the Trump administration released on Black Friday, is one in a string of new consequential reports reaffirming humans' impact driving Earth's temperature up, the consequences of that and how difficult it will be to reverse course.

**Here is a snapshot** of some notable influencers in the Trump era who push inaccurate information on climate change — including disputing that humans have a big role (we do) and dismissing Earth's temperature rise as a problem (it is).

## Steve Milloy and Myron Ebell

**Both men helped run Trump's transition team** at the Environmental Protection Agency, and their positions on climate change are among those that most dispute the scientific consensus.

- Milloy runs the website [junkscience.com](http://junkscience.com) and has had ties to the oil and tobacco industries.
- Ebell is a senior fellow at the

Competitive Enterprise  
Institute, a conservative think  
tank.

**For the record:**

- Ebell says he acknowledges human activity is the primary cause of Earth's temperature rise but doesn't think it's a problem.
- Milloy said he disputes the characterization that he pushes misinformation on climate change.

## The Heartland Institute

**Certain conservative think tanks** and advocacy groups, including Ebell's group and the Heartland Institute, have been pushing misinformation about climate science for decades. This E&E News story from October showed the White House reached out to the Heartland Institute for insight, whose work has concluded climate change isn't a problem.

**For the record:** James Taylor, a senior fellow at the institute, said by phone: "I think your reporting is inaccurate."

**Bob Murray, CEO of coal  
producer Murray Energy**

**Murray**, who operates the largest privately held coal producer in the U.S. and is close to Trump, says Democrats are pushing a false narrative for political purposes.

- “You’re wrong about this scientific consensus,” Murray told me in an interview Thursday. “What you need to do is stimulate thinking among people who are knowledgeable.”

## Oil companies

**Some oil and gas companies**, including ExxonMobil, have in the past funded organizations that push misinformation about climate change.

- Most of that has stopped by now, but nonetheless the money has had an impact and is one of the reasons the Republican Party largely ignores or denies basic climate science.

**For the record:** A request for comment to Exxon wasn’t returned.

## Sen. James Inhofe of Oklahoma

**The Republican** has been one of the most vocal politicians seeking to dispute climate science consensus. In a 2012 MSNBC interview, Inhofe said

he initially thought climate change “must be true until I found out what it would cost.”

- Inhofe’s former aides work across the Trump administration, including acting Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Andrew Wheeler and several other officials working for Wheeler.

**For the record:** Inhofe said through a spokeswoman that he doesn't think the extent of humans' role is settled.

**The facts:**

- Nearly all scientists agree Earth is warming, that it’s driven largely by human activity and that the repercussions will be more negative than positive.
- Scientists have calculated that at least 92% of warming between 1951 to 2010 was due to human activities.
- Uncertainty and scientific debate does, however, exist over the severity of impacts a warmer world is already bringing and is projected to bring.

**The bottom line:** On climate science, there aren't two reasonable sides. One is the scientific consensus, and the

other is a small but vocal faction of people trying to fight it.

**Go deeper:**

- What's driving our climate and energy divide
- A look at the climate science sent to Trump: E&E News story from October
- How GOP leaders came to view climate change as fake science: NYT story from June 2017

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CLIMATE CHANGE >

