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2018 SAW A GLOBAL REVOLT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES

Michael 12:01 PM 12/31/2018 | ENERGY Bastasch | Energy Editor



 2018 saw a global revolt against policies aimed at



TRENDING

- fighting global warming
- Australia, Canada, France and the U.S. have all seen push back against global warming policies
- That included weeks of riots in France against planned carbon tax increases

Despite increasingly apocalyptic warnings from U.N. officials, 2018 has seen a number of high-profile defeats for policies aimed at fighting global warming. Politicians and voters pushed back at attempts to raise energy prices as part of the climate crusade.

It started in June with election of Ontario Premier Doug Ford. Ontario residents overwhelmingly voted Ford's conservative coalition into power on a platform that included axing the Canadian province's capand-trade program.

Ford said his first priority upon taking office would be to "cancel the Liberal cap-and-trade carbon tax." Ford then joined a legal challenge led by Saskatchewan against Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's policy of a central government-imposed carbon tax on provinces that don't have their own.

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Carbon tax opponents called
Trudeau's plan an attempt to "use
the new tax to further redistribute
income, which will increase the costs
of this tax to the economy."

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Roughly ten thousand miles away in Australia another revolt was brewing. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull saw his power base crumble within days of failing to pass a bill aimed at reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

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Ontario Premier Doug Ford speaks to the press following the First Ministers' Meeting in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, December 7, 2018.

REUTERS/Christinne Muschi.

Turnbull's so-called National Energy Guarantee to reduce energy sector emissions was opposed by a group of conservative members of Parliament led by former Prime Minister Tony Abbott.

Turnbull tried to delay the vote on his climate bill in response to the opposition but was too late. Turnbull stepped down in late August and has since been replaced by Scott Morrison.

Back in the U.S., \$45 million was being pumped into the battle over a Washington state carbon tax ballot measure. Democratic Gov. Jay Inslee, who has 2020 presidential ambitions, supported the measure though refiners, but other opponents outspent carbon tax

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supporters.

The Inslee-backed measure called for taxing carbon dioxide emissions at \$15 a ton in 2020, which would increase at \$2 a year above the rate of inflation until the state meets its emissions goals. (RELATED: Greenpeace's Iconic 'Rainbow Warrior' Ship Chopped Up On A Third-World Beach, Sold For Scrap)

However, Washington voters rejected the carbon tax measure in the November election despite Inslee's support. It was the second time in two years that Washington voters rejected a carbon tax ballot initiative.



Washington Governor Jay Inslee speaks during a rally at the beginning of the March For Science in Seattle, Washington, U.S. April 22, 2017. REUTERS/David Ryder.

The November elections also saw

Q

the defeat of a group of Republican lawmakers in the House Climate Solutions Caucus. Among those defeated was caucus co-chair Florida GOP Rep. Carlos Curbelo, who introduced carbon tax legislation in luly.



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Ly to his Democratic challenger Debbie Mucarsel-Powell.

Shortly after the U.S. elections, it became clear trouble was brewing across the Atlantic in France. French President Emmanuel Macron's economic reforms, which included planned fuel tax increases, were not winning over much of the population.

Macron spent years styling himself as a staunch supporter of efforts to tackle global warming, including the Paris agreement. Indeed, raising taxes on diesel and gasoline was part of Macron's plan to meet France's Paris accord pledge.

It backfired. Angered over the new carbon taxes on fuel, tens of thousands of protesters, called "yellow vests" for the vests drivers

are required to have in their cars, took to the streets calling for an end to the taxes and for Macron to resign.



French President Emmanuel Macron attends a joint news conference with President of Burkina Faso Roch Marc Christian Kabore (not seen) at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France, December 17, 2018. REUTERS/Benoit Tessier/Pool.

Macron initially resisted, arguing France needed to do more to address global warming, but the French government capitulated in December and scrapped the planned tax increases. Macron also said he'd increase the minimum wage and begged companies to raise salaries, if possible.

Macron's backpedaling on climate policy couldn't have come at a worse time for the climate-conscious president. The U.N. annual climate summit was being held in Poland as Macron conceded to the "yellow"

vests."

France's carbon tax revolts sent a clear message to Democratic lawmakers across the Atlantic Ocean. Democrats will take control of the House in 2019 and want to make global warming a central part of their agenda.

Democrats and even environmentalists distanced themselves from carbon taxes in the wake of French riots. However, farleft Democrats are pushing "Green New Deal" legislation, which could become the largest expansion of government in decades.

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