

Trump Strikes Again: White House Cancels NASA Research on Greenhouse Gases

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The Trump administration has taken yet another step against the global scientific community. This time NASA has fallen prey to this tyranny. The White House recently decided to stop funding [NASA's Carbon Monitoring System \(CMS\)](#). This plan will affect not only the research community but also the entire living world. Closing down the CMS will threaten the ability of countries to [measure global carbon flows](#). It will also jeopardize plans to monitor carbon emissions reductions, which are an important part of the Paris Climate Accords. Let us learn more about what this change will mean for the fight against climate change.

Trump Continues His War against Science

President Trump is less than halfway through his term. However, he has already taken several decisions negatively impacting the global scientific research community. These include slashing a number of scientists advising the government and [closing NSF offices overseas](#). His administration has also issued gag orders to scientific bodies to stop public communications.

He is a known skeptic of global warming; his administration policies and budget choices reflect his views. President Trump also [withdrew the U.S.](#) from the Paris Climate Accords last year. He explained his move that the deal would kill jobs and hinder the oil, gas, coal and manufacturing industries. Now, the Trump administration has decided to withdraw funding from NASA's CMS.

Why did President Trump withdraw funding? NASA spokesman Steve Cole cited "budget constraints and higher priorities within the science budget" as the reason. But others think the budget cuts are part of a bigger plan to [attack climate science](#) in general. Phil Duffy, president of the Woods Hole Research Center in Falmouth, Massachusetts, called the CMS an obvious target for President Trump. The move fits President Trump's pattern of criticizing global cooperation and climate science.

What is the Carbon Monitoring System (CMS)?

The CMS remotely [tracks carbon dioxide and methane emissions](#). These are the major greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. By tracking these emissions, the CMS tells us if the atmospheric carbon and methane are increasing or decreasing. The CMS did not only measure emissions. It also measured the amount of carbon stored in forests. This measurement has helped to limit deforestation in developing countries.

The information from CMS can tell us which countries are meeting their targets for carbon reduction under the Paris Climate Accords. Energy and environment professor Kelly Sims Gallagher explains that without being able to [measure emissions reductions](#), one cannot be confident that countries are adhering to the agreement.

What's Next for Carbon Monitoring?

While the CMS will not receive any new funding, NASA still plans to build several new space-based carbon observatories. The Orbiting Carbon Observatory (OCO-3) will be attached to the International Space Station later this year. It will [monitor changes in carbon dioxide concentrations](#) on the earth's surface throughout the day. This information will be helpful for climate change scientists and researchers. The OCO-3 is a precursor to the Geostationary Carbon Cycle Observatory, which will monitor carbon dioxide emissions from a commercial satellite from 2022. These projects all received funding from the U.S. Congress this year. However, given the current political environment, their future is uncertain.

Phil Duffy predicts that leadership on climate science and carbon monitoring will pass to Europe. Europe already [has one carbon-monitoring satellite](#) and plans to build more soon. But Europe is not alone in preparing for the future. China continues to [make rapid advances](#) in renewable energy technology. The rest of the world is more focused on mitigating climate change than ever. It is time US Congress takes a call on the steps taken by president Trump that will later prove harmful to the academic community.

What do you think of the White House decision to pull funding from the CMS? What will the future hold for enforcement of the Paris Climate Accords? Please share your thoughts with us in the comments section below.

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