



## Financial Spots

# Obama: Climate talks should include 'legally binding' mechanism

Betsy Taylor

December 10, 2015

He told them that he was there personally as the one in charge of the globe's largest economy and the second-largest emitter of greenhouse gases to tell them that America is not only aware of what it has to do concerning climate change, but that it also is going to do something about it.

"If you had said to people as recently as two years ago that we'd have 180 countries showing up in Paris with pretty ambitious targets for carbon reduction, most people would have said you're insane, that's a pipe dream", the president said.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce wrote in a letter to lawmakers that the Clean Air Act "was never meant to regulate carbon dioxide, and it remains poorly designed for such a task ..."

When many leaders of countries worldwide are sitting down in Paris at the United Nations climate summit to hammer out substantive measures to save the planet, Republicans in Congress are playing their usual "against everything game".

In the meantime, Michaels warns that while most other countries aren't going to really do anything, Obama's proposed policies are much more stringent. But he says to hold each other accountable, it's critical that "periodic reviews" of those commitments be legally binding.

Among those in attendance at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris, which run from now through December 11, are what the Huffington Post called "the leaders of the world's worst pollution countries".

Dr. Patrick Michaels, a past president of the American Association of State Climatologists, now works for the Center for the Study of Science at the Cato Institute.

Speaking in Paris Tuesday, Obama said parts of a global climate agreement should be legally binding. He has always been a champion of climate change awareness and the fight against global warming.

Dealing with climate change, and defying terror: "They're very different threats, but they're both very serious". Meanwhile, French President Hollande heard from 12 African leaders who described the Sahara Desert encroaching on farmland, forests disappearing from Congo to Madagascar and rising sea levels swallowing homes in West African river deltas.

US President Barack Obama (above, left) sits with French President François Hollande during a Mission Innovation event at COP21, United Nations Climate Change Conference, in Le Bourget, outside Paris. And Schwarzenegger's landmark legislation and other laws have increased energy costs so high that 15 percent of people in the central county of Tulare and other counties suffer "energy poverty", meaning 10 percent or more of their incomes go to energy, according to a recent Manhattan Institute report. "The world owes an ecological debt to the African continent". But inscribing the emissions target in the Paris deal would probably require the president to submit the pact to the GOP-controlled Congress, where it would be unlikely to win ratification.

African leaders, meanwhile, stressed the need to address shrinking resources in the troubled Lake Chad region, where the Islamic extremist group Boko Haram carries out regular attacks. Some say the increasing desperation is driving people into the extremists' ranks.

No matter the decision in Paris over the coming weeks, students can look to the leadership of the Students for Sustainability Energy and Climate Committee for ways to implement sustainability in and around the UA campus.