



Policy for the Planet Episode Catalog

Solving the climate crisis requires a historic global collective effort. Launched in 2024, **Policy for the Planet** is a seasonal, biweekly podcast that explores how countries are responding to the complex international economic and health challenges that face policymakers in the United States as well as nations across the globe.

[Monica de Bolle](#) is a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics and best-selling author in her native Brazil who has written about these aspects of global warming. With her unique experience and perspective, she converses with economists, health experts, political scientists, and practitioners to illuminate policy choices in an accessible way.

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Policy for the Planet is produced by the [Peterson Institute for International Economics](#) (PIIE).

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Episode 1: The overlooked costs of climate action

Guest: Jean Pisani-Ferry (PIIE)

October 29, 2024

As countries attempt to reduce carbon emissions, they must consider the price tag of rebuilding energy systems, housing, infrastructure, and more. Jean Pisani-Ferry (PIIE), former top adviser to President Emmanuel Macron of France, joins to discuss how the world will pay for the green transition.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Jean Pisani-Ferry](#).

Jean Pisani-Ferry's [*The Green Frontier: Assessing the Economic Implications of Climate Action*](#)

Jean Pisani-Ferry's report to the French prime minister, "[The economic implications of climate action](#)"

Episode 2: How worried should we be about climate refugees?

Guest: Michael A. Clemens (PIIE)

October 29, 2024

The rise in extreme weather events is forcing more people to leave their homes, but what about those left behind? Renowned immigration expert Michael A. Clemens (PIIE) joins to discuss how climate affects migration, common misconceptions, and how immigration policies need to adapt.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Michael A. Clemens](#).

Episode 3: The global race for electric vehicles

Guest: Mary E. Lovely (PIIE)

November 12, 2024

Electric vehicles have surged in popularity in recent years. But not all consumers are ready to hit the EV pedal. In this episode, Mary E. Lovely (PIIE) explains how the auto industry is changing; challenges for supply chains, the environment, and workers; and

ultimately, what it will take to get more people to switch to EVs, especially in the United States.

Show Links

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Mary E. Lovely](#).

Episode 4: What is China's role in climate action?

Guest: Joanna Lewis (Georgetown University)

November 26, 2024

China is the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases even as it faced new records for extreme temperatures in 2023. Its domestic response has prioritized measures to adapt to climate change rather than reduce emissions, but what other steps is it taking? Joanna Lewis (Georgetown University) joins to discuss China's green innovation, how to foster cooperation on climate, and the impact of decoupling policies on China's efforts.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Joanna Lewis](#).

Joanna I. Lewis, [*Green Innovation in China: China's Wind Power Industry and the Global Transition to a Low-Carbon Economy*](#)

[Joanna's Network 20/20 interview](#)

Episode 5: How the changing climate is eroding public health

Guest: Hayden (University of Colorado, Colorado Springs)

December 10, 2024

The warming of Planet Earth poses an array of public health challenges beyond excessive heat. The rising threat of prevalent vector-borne diseases is the subject of this conversation with Mary Hayden (University of Colorado, Colorado Springs), with a focus on the perils for developing countries, and whether the globe is ready for another public health crisis.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Mary Hayden](#).

Episode 6: Measuring AI's damage to climate and health

Guest: Shaolei Ren (University of California, Riverside)

December 17, 2024

There has been much hype over AI and its potential benefits, but what about the vast computing power necessary to develop and train deep learning models? Shaolei Ren (University of California, Riverside) joins to discuss the effects of the AI supply chain on the environment and public health, and the regulatory actions taken to mitigate its negative impacts.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Shaolei Ren](#).

Monica de Bolle's blog, "[AI's carbon footprint appears likely to be alarming](#)"

Shaolei Ren's Ted Talk, "[AI consumes a lot of water — but why?](#)"

Shaolei Ren's paper, "[The Unpaid Toll: Quantifying the Public Health Impact of AI](#)"

Episode 7: What sparked Europe's green transition?

Guest: Jacob Funk Kirkegaard (PIIE)

January 7, 2025

Europe has emerged as a global leader in climate action, but what makes Europe's approach so effective? And how did the Russia-Ukraine war unexpectedly become a catalyst for a faster green transition? Jacob Funk Kirkegaard (PIIE; Bruegel) joins to discuss carbon pricing, Europe's adoption of renewable energy and electric vehicles, and whether Europeans support these efforts.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Jacob Funk Kirkegaard](#).

Episode 8: Climate efforts hinge on carbon taxes

Guest: Kimberly Clausing (PIIE)

January 21, 2025

As the world grapples with climate change, carbon pricing has emerged as a proven policy tool for discouraging the use of fossil fuels. But raising the price of fuel, gasoline, and other fossil-based energy remains politically tough. Kimberly Clausing (PIIE; UCLA) joins to discuss how carbon pricing works, what makes it effective, why the US lags behind other nations in adoption, and how carbon taxes could bring us closer to the green transition.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Kimberly Clausing](#).

Kimberly Clausing speaking at “[The green transformation and structural change: PIIE-IMF conference panel](#)”

Kimberly Clausing and Catherine Wolfram’s blog, “[Putting progress over protectionism in climate policy](#)”

Episode 9: Where climate change meets war

Guest: Cullen S. Hendrix (PIIE)

February 4, 2025

How does climate change exacerbate armed conflicts—and how do conflicts get in the way of climate efforts? Cullen S. Hendrix (Peterson Institute for International Economics) joins to examine the economic and security implications of climate change, with examples from the war in Ukraine, Syria, and other regions. He also discusses research on how weather patterns affect political risk and securing supply chains of critical minerals in conflict-heavy areas, and why there’s room for optimism.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Cullen S. Hendrix](#).

Cullen S. Hendrix’s Working Paper, [The El Niño Southern Oscillation and Geopolitical Risk](#)

Cullen S. Hendrix’s blog, “[Graphite from East Africa could help the US build green tech, but the region faces instability](#)”

Episode 10: Can liquefied natural gas actually help climate efforts?

Guest: Daniel Yergin (S&P Global)

February 18, 2025

The United States has become the world's biggest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports, a trend certain to continue under President Donald Trump, but will this surge hurt or help the cause of climate change? Renowned energy expert and Pulitzer Prize-winning

author Daniel Yergin (S&P Global) joins to discuss the future of LNG exports and how LNG could play a useful role in the green transition.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Dan Yergin](#).

Daniel Yergin's, [*The New Map: Energy, Climate, and the Clash of Nations*](#)

Episode 11: Tariffs won't stop the EU's climate agenda

Guest: Cecilia Malmström (PIIE)

June 3, 2025

We spoke last year on this podcast about the European Union's ambitious climate agenda. The world has changed since then! A new US president determined to impose tariffs on Europe poses tough new challenges for Europe's goals. Joining is Cecilia Malmström (PIIE) to discuss the changes in Europe since October and provide an update on the EU's climate agenda, industrial policies, and the desperate need for climate-focused collaboration.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Cecilia Malmström](#).

Register and listen to Cecilia Malmström's [Trade Winds](#)

Episode 12: Is the US renewable energy push dead?

Guest: Kristina Costa (PIIE)

June 17, 2025

The current political establishment's opposition to climate change incentives makes it easy to assume businesses are going along. But that's far from the case. Kristina Costa (formerly at the White House and Department of State) joins to discuss the status of the

Inflation Reduction Act enacted under President Biden, renewable energy, and how IRA's new incentives that pushed the renewable agenda are not dead.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Kristina Costa](#).

Episode 13: How frozen seeds in an Arctic mountain could avert a food crisis

Guest: Cary Fowler (Svalbard Global Seed Vault; former Department of State)

July 1, 2025

Climate change is jeopardizing the future survival of millions of different kinds of seeds needed by growers to meet global food demands. Cary Fowler (Svalbard Global Seed Vault; former Department of State), a founder of the little-known Svalbard Global Seed Vault, where millions of seeds are conserved inside a mountain in Norway, explains why drastic steps are needed to preserve biodiversity and meet future food security challenges.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Cary Fowler](#) and the [Svalbard Global Seed Vault](#).

Episode 14: Higher temperatures are fueling the rise in bird flu

Guest: Shayan Sharif (University of Guelph)

July 15, 2025

An outbreak of bird flu in the United States and Canada is ravaging chicken flocks and driving up egg prices. What's causing the spread? Dr. Shayan Sharif (University of Guelph) joins to explain how climate change is affecting migratory birds and leading to more cases of bird flu globally.

Resources

[Download this episode's transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Shayan Sharif](#).

Episode 15: Climate storytelling faces a crisis

Guest: Dan McDougall (Documentarian)

July 29, 2025

Telling stories about the challenges of climate change has never been harder. The world is beset by other problems as the news cycle churns from crisis to crisis.

Communicating the urgency of dealing with climate needs fresh approaches. Dan McDougall (Documentary producer) joins to tell us about the climate storytelling crisis, how to engage audiences, and how to better frame stories for policymakers.

Resources

[Download the episode's transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Dan McDougall](#).

Dan McDougall's article, "[The tiny algae at ground zero of Greenland's melting glaciers](#)"

Dan McDougall's article, "[Life on thin ice: Mental health at the heart of the climate crisis](#)"

Episode 16: India must pursue its own climate change course

Guest: Arvind Subramanian (PIIE)

August 12, 2025

India's poverty and tropical heat pose extraordinary challenges as its population faces rising temperatures, less rainfall, and torrid weather. But India is also uniquely positioned to deal with global warming internally. Arvind Subramanian (PIIE) joins to discuss the steps that India can take to tackle climate change and provide lessons for the world.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Arvind Subramanian](#).

Episode 17: The looming water security crisis

Guest: Aaron Salzberg (consultant, formerly at the US Department of State)

August 26, 2025

Access to water, a vital necessity for every walk of life, is increasingly jeopardized by the malign effects of climate change, from pollution to melting glaciers, erratic rainfall, and droughts. Finding science-based solutions is only a first step to protect humanity from water scarcity. Aaron Salzberg (consultant, formerly at the US Department of State) joins to talk about how declining water supplies are disrupting livelihoods—from

displacing populations to interrupting trade routes—and how science must be mobilized to mitigate a potentially looming crisis.

Resources

[Download the episode's transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Aaron Salzberg](#).

Episode 18: How to combat disinformation on climate science (UPCOMING)

Guest: Naomi Oreskes (Harvard University)

September 9, 2025

In the age of the Internet, artificial intelligence, social media, and instant access to knowledge, disinformation has become a challenge in public discourse on climate change. Naomi Oreskes (Harvard University) joins to discuss how attacks on climate science contribute to polarization, the demonization of science, and how to combat these trends.

Resources

[Download the episode's transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Naomi Oreskes](#).

Naomi Oreskes, [The Big Myth](#).

Episode 19: How Ukraine's critical minerals could help rebuild its economy

Guest: Elina Ribakova (PIIE)

September 23, 2025

Ukraine has been defending itself from Russia's attack for more than three years, forcing it to struggle with a wartime economy. Negotiations to end the fighting have gone nowhere, but it is not too early to think about a resolution at some point. How will Ukraine rebuild if the countries reach a ceasefire? Elina Ribakova (PIIE) joins to discuss how Ukraine could pivot to a reconstruction with a green transition, taking advantage of its critical minerals resources while aiding Europe's efforts on defense spending.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript \[PDF\]](#)

Learn more about [Elina Ribakova](#).

Episode 20: Can climate efforts create jobs?

Guest: Ben Beachy (Global Fund for a New Economy)

October 7, 2025

Is it possible to pursue climate efforts, create jobs, and achieve social justice at the same time? That was the challenge that the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 was designed to meet. Ben Beachy (Global Fund for a New Economy), an architect of the Act, explains the accomplishments and disappointments experienced by the Biden administration over one of its signal efforts, and policy strategies for the future in the wake of legislative rollbacks.

Resources

[Download the episode transcript PDF.](#)

Learn more about [Ben Beachy](#).

Episode 21: The imperiled future of the Panama Canal

Guest: David A. Gantz (Baker Institute for Public Policy, Rice University)

November 18, 2025

The Panama Canal suffered severe droughts in 2023 and 2024. Lower water levels disrupted vital US commercial trade routes for liquefied natural gas and other products. The canal's disabled state opens an opportunity for China, which is investing in infrastructure throughout Latin America, causing concern in Washington. With weather patterns changing, is the canal doomed? In this episode, host Monica de Bolle asks David A. Gantz (Baker Institute for Public Policy, Rice University) whether anything can be done to save the canal. There are alternatives being explored—some of them surprising, expensive, and potentially realistic. If the United States is to combat Chinese influence in Latin America, he argues, investing in the Panama Canal is a vital and urgent priority.

Resources

[Download the transcript PDF.](#)

Learn more about [David A. Gantz](#).

Learn more about [Monica de Bolle](#).

Episode 22: How China expanded its electrical grid with low carbon energy

Guest: David Fishman (Lantau Group)

December 2, 2025

China's population, a little over four times as large as the United States, and its economic ambitions are driving a gargantuan need for electricity. But China has been able to meet that need by expanding its electrical grid well beyond what any other country has achieved. How? Host Monica de Bolle is joined by David Fishman (Lantau Group) to discuss how China has used renewables and low-carbon energy to bolster its grid and what the United States and other countries can learn from its expansion.

Resources

[Download the transcript PDF.](#)

Learn more about [David Fishman](#).

Learn more about [Monica de Bolle](#).

Episode 23: Can Brazil's fiscal policy address environmental concerns?

Guest: Cornelius Fleischhacker (World Bank)

December 16, 2025

Brazil has made many attempts to reform its fiscal problems, while never adequately addressing its increasingly burdensome government debt. At the same time, the country is home to the Amazon rainforest and is one of the world's biggest food producers, making its role vital in global climate efforts. Could Brazil be a global test case for green fiscal policies, delivering both fiscal and climate sustainability? Host Monica de Bolle is joined by Cornelius Fleischhacker (World Bank) to discuss potential paths for Brazil to tackle its fiscal problems while encouraging more climate-friendly policies.

Resources

[Download the transcript PDF.](#)

Read the full World Bank report: [*Double Dividend Policies to Achieve Fiscal and Environmental sustainability: A Public Finance Review for Brazil*](#)

Learn more about [Cornelius Fleischhacker](#).

Learn more about [Monica de Bolle](#).

Episode 24: Europe's fight against mosquito-borne viruses

Guest: Diana Rojas Alvarez (World Health Organization)

January 6, 2026

Europe faces a new challenge: Mosquito-borne viruses, such as chikungunya, zika, and dengue, are now prevalent throughout the region, driven by warmer temperatures. Europe must combat these potentially debilitating diseases through education and prevention. Diana Rojas Alvarez (World Health Organization) joins host Monica de Bolle to explain why mosquitoes have moved so far north and the steps Europe has taken.

Resources

Learn more about [Diana Rojas Alvarez](#).

Learn more about [Monica de Bolle](#).

Episode 25: The geopolitics behind critical minerals

Guest: Cullen S. Hendrix (PIIE)

January 20, 2026

The US drive for critical minerals is now fueled by national security concerns instead of climate mitigation. Policymakers speak of shoring up global supply chains for these minerals to protect US defenses, an objective that has stoked geopolitical tensions. The old goal of promoting batteries and renewable energy has fallen by the wayside. Host Monica de Bolle is joined by Cullen S. Hendrix (PIIE) to discuss why the Trump administration adjusted its stance on critical minerals, how the globe responded to the new and aggressive approach, and what it means for the green transition.

Resources

[Download the transcript PDF](#)

Learn more about [Cullen S. Hendrix](#).

Learn more about [Monica de Bolle](#).

Episode 26: Can local policies relieve climate activism fatigue? Germany's case

Guest: Clemens Helbach (German Embassy, Washington)

January 20, 2026

Climate advocates face many barriers to progress: activism fatigue, misinformation, and a growing skepticism about global cooperation. Can countries get the public more engaged? Host Monica de Bolle is joined by Clemens Helbach (German Embassy, Washington) to discuss how Germany is pursuing local community actions, such as wetland protection and drone-assisted forest rehabilitation. The goal? To reawaken public interest by improving health, safety, and lives across the country.

Resources

[Download the transcript PDF](#)

Learn more about [Clemens Helbach](#).

Learn more about [Monica de Bolle](#).