

Trump's triumphant return to power promises to be a disaster for environmental protection, casting a pall over all else. Even so, if you're someone who cares about energy and environment, there are some things to be thankful for this year. Here are a few.

Falling prices of renewable energy. Solar photovoltaic costs have fallen by 90% in the last decade, onshore wind by 70%, and batteries by more than 90%.

Clean energy investment. The International Energy Agency reports that global energy investment this year will likely exceed \$3 trillion for the first time, with two-thirds going for clean technologies. According to Clean Investment Monitor, U.S. cleantech investment hit \$147 billion in the first half of this year, more than a 30% increase over the first half of 2023.

Peak carbon soon? According to some studies, global carbon emissions will peak this year and then start to decline. There are also indications that China's emissions may have peaked. This may all be overly optimistic, but at least we may be moving within eyeshot of peak carbon.

Voter Initiatives. Washington State voters rejected an effort to eliminate the state's cap and trade system, and California voters approved multibillion dollar environmental spending measure.

State politics. In North Carolina, Republicans lost their veto-proof legislative majority, which limits the legislature's ability to pass anti-environmental legislation and gives the Democratic governor more ability to move administratively.

Congressional politics. While the Republicans have won control of Congress, it wasn't a wave election that would entrench anti-environmentalism. In the Senate, Republicans seem to have picked up only one Senate seat in a swing state; the Democrats held onto the other four even though Trump carried all of the states. And in the House, Republicans were only able to add a handful of seats to their razor-thin majority. Hardly a wave election.