The Republicans have decided not to update their 2016 platform, but the Democrats now have a draft of their 2020 platform. The platform essentially calls for aggressively moving beyond Obama's actions (and eliminating Trump's). For those who are in a rush, I'll start with the takeaways.

# Key Points

Here are some of the most important aspects of the 2020 Platform:

- The 2020 Platform goes well beyond the 2016 Platform, which itself went further than the Obama Administration's actions.
- The 2020 Platform sets ambitious deadlines for cutting carbon, including a goal of net zero by 2050.
- The 2020 Platform also calls for a dramatic expansion of federal protection for public lands and water bodies.
- Most of the platform's proposals would require firm control of the Senate as well as the White House, in order to pass legislation.

Now, let's examine the platform a little more closely and how it compares with the 2016 version.

# Climate Change in the 2020 Platform

**The 2016 Platform.** It's useful to take a look back at the Democrats' 2016 platform to see how things have changed. The 2016 platform set the following goals:

- Reducing greenhouse gases more than 80% below 2005 levels by 2050.
- Getting 50% of U.S. electricity from clean energy sources by 2020.
- Reducing methane emissions from oil and gas by at least 40-45% below 2005 levels by 2025.

**How 2020 Compares.** Now consider the goals of the 2020 platform:

- Net-zero energy by 2050.
- Zero-carbon electricity by 2035
- Net-zero greenhouse gas emissions for all new buildings by 2030

- United States must do its “fair share” to reach the goal to, and for the United States to do its “fair share” to keep global warming less than 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial times.

To achieve these goals, the 2020 platform calls for:

- 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations by 2030 (about 20 times as many as today).
- 500 million solar panels and 60,000 wind turbines
- A carbon-adjustment fee at the borders to penalize countries that don’t keep their commitments under the Paris Agreement.

## Public Lands and Waters in the 2020 Platform

**The 2016 Platform.** Again, it may be helpful to start with the 2016 platform. Here were the key positions on America’s waters and public lands:

- Opposes drilling in the Arctic and off the Atlantic Coast.
- Proposes phasing down extraction of fossil fuels.
- Expanding renewable energy production on public lands.
- Reaffirming core protections of the Endangered Species Act.
- Establishing restrictions on discharges from the giant Pebble mine in Alaska.

**How 2020 Compares.** Once again, the 2020 platform goes big, calling for conserving 30% of America’s lands and waters by 2030 (compared with 12% today). It also calls for ending new permits for fossil fuel production on federal land and for reversing the Trump Administration’s new restrictions on environmental impact statements. Protections for national monuments like Bears Ears would be immediately restored.

Trump has dedicated himself to eliminating the environmental protections created in the Obama years. Biden wants to do another U-turn, but to accelerate far beyond what Obama did.