

Robert Kennedy, Jr., has [polled](#) surprisingly well so far. That may well be a fluke, but it may be worth taking a look at his views at this point. Unlike his views on vaccines, his views on climate change don't involve blanket denial of science. But they do involve some of the same populist fears of conspiracy by elites.

Let's begin with his deep distrust of EPA, which rivals that of the Republicans who want to abolish it although the reasons are quite different. Here's what he has [said](#) about the agency: "I've spent 40 years litigating against the agencies, the regulatory agencies in the United States, so I can tell you that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is effectively run by the oil industry, the coal industry and the pesticide industry."

What about climate regulation? This, too, seems to be suspect in his eyes. Kennedy has [said](#) that "climate issues and pollution issues are being exploited by, you know, the World Economic Forum and Bill Gates and all of these big, you know, mega-billionaires, the same way that Covid was exploited, to use it as an excuse to clamp down top-down totalitarian controls on society." In an [interview](#), he expanded on that thought to say:

"The crisis has been, to some extent, co-opted — by Bill Gates and the World Economic Forum and the billionaire boys' club in Davos — the same way that the Covid crisis was appropriated by them to make themselves richer, to impose totalitarian controls and to stratify our society, with very powerful and wealthy people at the top, and the vast majority of human beings with very little power and very little sovereignty over their own lives. Every crisis is an opportunity for those forces to clamp down controls."

If Kennedy thinks climate regulation is like the COVID response, that's quite a damning accusation given his worldview. As to COVID, he has said, "'intelligence agencies, pharmaceutical companies, social media titans, medical bureaucracies, mainstream media and the military ... are using a health crisis to impose totalitarian control worldwide.'" Along with Bill Gates, another of his villains is Anthony Fauci, whom he calls "a prominent face of the medical cartel and medical technocracy that is wrapped up in obliterating constitutional rights globally."

As to just what kinds of climate action he would like to see, the answer is unclear. Like many others, he is skeptical of nuclear power, carbon capture, and geoengineering. He opposed a Dutch effort to clamp down on excessive use of fertilizer, which produces both conventional air pollutants and greenhouse gases, because he thought it was unfair to small

farmers. But what he's actually in favor of isn't specified.

Despite his other oddities, maybe the strangest thing about his environmental views is this: The "environment" [tab](#) on his campaign website doesn't say a single word about climate change. Not a word. It does mention clean energy in passing, which it advocates only as a way of reducing "toxic waste, industrial poisons, and pesticides."

As someone who avidly supported his father and admired his work to clean up the Hudson, I find all of this especially sad. But I suppose his turn toward conspiracy theories is a sign of the times. Those theories have already had too much influence among conservatives. Let's hope that they are not starting to infect progressives as well.

July 16 update: Look [here](#) for a video and tweet expanding on RFK Jr.'s views about the use of the climate crisis to expand "totalitarian" control by elites.