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US will lag as global climate action marches on, says former agency head

Reuters | Apr 14, 2017, 02:59 PM IST



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(Representative image)

NEW YORK: The United States is falling behind as the rest of the world marches on toward climate action, the former head of the [US Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA) said on Thursday.

Proposed cuts to the US federal agency will hamper its work while other nations are tackling climate change by cutting carbon emissions, said [Lisa](#)

[Jackson](#), speaking at a conference in New York.

"Because I worked 25 years at the EPA, I sure would like to see EPA at the front of the parade," she said. "But the parade is not going to stop if the EPA is dragged to the back."

Of those 25 years, Jackson was EPA administrator from 2009 to 2013 under former President Barack Obama.

Jackson spearheaded the agency's crackdown on carbon dioxide emissions by declaring that the greenhouse gas endangered public health, giving the EPA the authority to regulate CO2 emissions from mobile and stationary sources.

That legacy is under threat by President Donald [Trump](#), a climate change doubter, who appointed former [Oklahoma](#) Attorney General [Scott Pruitt](#), a long-time foe of the EPA, to run the agency.

Pruitt, who has cast doubts on the science of climate change, has said the EPA should not regulate CO2 without a law passed by Congress authorizing it to do so.



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Trump also proposed last month a 31 percent cut to the EPA's budget, eliminating its climate change programs and trimming back core initiatives.

Jackson, now a vice president at US tech giant Apple, said at the event organized by [Columbia University](#) that it has become the responsibility of businesses to innovate with policies to limit greenhouse gases and adopt clean energy sources.

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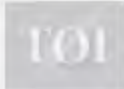
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"All of us must re-double ourselves," she said.

"I just don't see why we would cede the clean energy space to other economies, who are going to make a ton of money and create a ton of jobs while we sort of re-arrange the parade."

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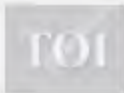
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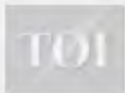
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