

U.S. can't take on climate change by itself

“The U.S. can't go it alone.”

For many years policy wonks in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere have told Americans the U.S. shouldn't take on major international issues by itself.

Whether it's fighting terrorism or procuring fair trade deals, we've been told that the U.S. should join coalitions and not go it alone.

Add climate change to that list. President Joe Biden is making the battle against climate change a signature issue of his administration. He has formed a high level climate office, canceled the Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada, stopped oil and gas drilling on federal land, rejoined the Paris Climate Agreement and injected climate into almost every policy-level discussion in the federal government.

Fair enough — as long as the U.S. economy in general and agriculture in particular aren't sacrificed.

Farmers and ranchers are especially worried. On the one hand, they are told by some climate and anti-agriculture activists that they are a major contributor to climate change. Such accusations have been proven wrong, by the way.

On the other hand, farmers and ranchers are told they are a best hope for fighting climate change. By using their land and crops to sequester carbon, they will keep it from getting into the atmosphere and intensifying the greenhouse effect, trapping solar heat.

As a result of the mixed signals, farmers worry their voices — and their livelihoods — could be lost amid the climate change rhetoric.

A recent statement puts the climate issue in a completely different light.

John Kerry, the administration's lead person on climate issues, told the BBC that the U.S. could reduce its carbon emissions to nothing and it wouldn't have a significant impact on the climate.

“He (Biden) knows Paris (climate agreement) alone is not enough,” Kerry was quoted as saying. “Not when almost 90% of all the planet's global emissions come from outside of U.S. borders. We could go to zero tomorrow and the problem isn't solved.”

Unnamed in that conversation was the largest source of atmospheric carbon: China. According to the website Investopedia, China is the largest carbon polluter — by a long shot. It produces 28% of the atmospheric carbon — almost double the amount produced by the U.S.

And China's contribution to the problem continues to grow. Its carbon dioxide emissions are up 270% from 1992, and according to its statement in the Paris accords will not peak for nine more years.

By comparison, U.S. carbon emissions are up 1.8% since 1992.

That means China has had its foot on the gas — literally — while the U.S. has slammed on the brakes.

The next largest source of carbon is India, at 7% of the world's total. Its emissions are up 253% since 1992, according to a 24/7 Wall Street report published in USA Today.

Biden says the U.S. “must lead” the effort to slow climate change.

But he must also make sure other nations, including China, are following and will do their part so a meaningful reduction on atmospheric carbon can be achieved.

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BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Successful project management

Whether leading a small or large project, there are key ingredients to success. First, the scope of the project as well as a clearly defined outcome must be determined and understood by the stakeholders. This begins with a leader who possesses the appropriate kind of leadership style, which is typically that of a visionary and participant.

Identification of the necessary steps, the requirements to achieve these milestones (for example, permitting, purchases, acquisitions, navigation of regulatory issues, etc.) and the estimated timeline to reach each goal is paramount to success.

One of the most overlooked factors is the ability to be flexible. Despite the best of plans, circumstances will no doubt change, and modifications will be made. It is a delicate balance between remaining focused on the set goals and adapting to unexpected events, divergence of opinions and other factors outside of the project manager's control.

Buy-in from stakeholders must be obtained, and often there is a reluctance to share information or to compromise to achieve mutually beneficial goals. This is where excellent communication and listening skills come in. Each party must feel their needs and desires are being addressed with the end result being a general consensus. Depending on the type and scope of a project, providing adequate progress updates to a manager, employer or the public is important, as well. The leader



Greg Smith

should provide an update of the project and openly state any delays or successes. Praise should be given to the team as a whole.

In conclusion, here are the key steps of successful project management:

1. Develop and communicate the purpose, benefits and outcome of the project to obtain consensus from the stakeholders.
2. Determine where adequate financial resources will originate.
3. Create and oversee a budget after necessary expenditures are identified.
4. When necessary, obtain the assistance of individuals outside of the project with various areas of expertise.
5. The project manager should fill at least two roles:
 - Explain the overall vision to obtain the desired outcome.
 - Identify the steps and necessary timeline.
 - Play a “hands-on” role to be sure milestones are being met in a responsive manner.
 - Be flexible and adjust to changes in the plan. This may mean something that was communicated a month ago is no longer pertinent. These circumstances may result from new knowledge obtained, regulations and processes or situations completely out of the manager's control. Again,

flexibility is a must.

6. Conduct regular meetings with the stakeholders and others involved in the project to make certain everyone remains on the same page and is aware of the progress being made or obstacles which may occur.

7. Regularly report to the governing body or the public through memos, conference calls or press releases and interviews with media, depending on whether the project is private or public.

8. When milestones are met, congratulations should be given to the whole team and shared with the parties to whom the group is accountable. There is no one person who will be responsible for the success of the project.

9. Provide constant oversight of the budget to make certain there are adequate funds available and that they are being allocated properly.

10. Did I mention remaining flexible? A project of any size can be compared to safely landing an airplane. Adjustments for weather, wind speed and direction, etc. must be made.

Seeing a successful project and its benefits come to fruition is a very rewarding and time-intensive experience, but the points listed above should provide an outline to achieving that goal.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Time for a change

To the Editor:

I am a citizen of this great country, the United States of America, and the state of Oregon. I have been witnessing shameful partisan rhetoric from both sides of the political spectrum for almost five years. Even more so since the election of 2020. This is unacceptable. The citizens of this state and country elect their representatives to fulfill the job of protecting us, as citizens, and the Constitution of the United States from those that seek to destroy it. You are failing.

As I watched 2020 end and the divide of the citizens grow ever wider, you as elected officials play games in Washington, D.C. This risks the country

to divide even more. Elected officials are there to protect all rights of the people, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as well as the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The political rhetoric and constant lashing out at each other serve the people — not.

The Founding Fathers of this country never intended for the country to be run by career politicians. Take the example of our first President George Washington: The people wanted him to stay in office, but he said no. He didn't want to be seen as a king or trying to become a monarch. Learn from his example and follow it.

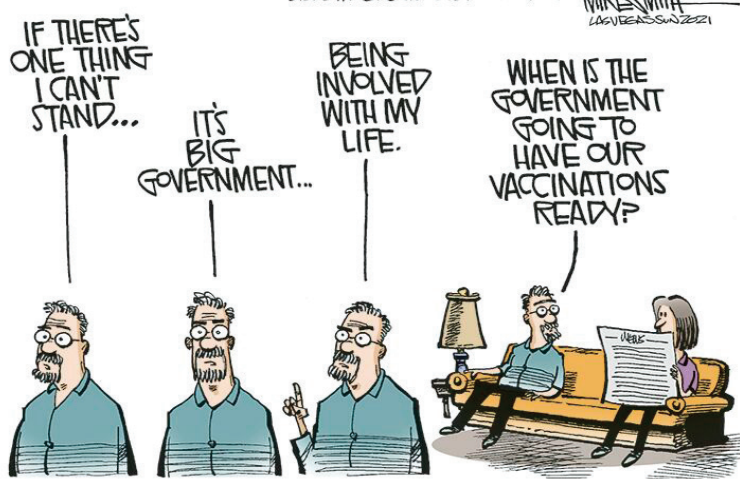
There has been past legislation in Washington, D.C., for term limits. Most of the citizens of this country

want Congress to be term limited. Up to 70% of the citizens believe term limits for Congress would be a good idea. You as politicians should be listening to the people.

Politicians that think they are too important are causing the partisan problems in Washington, D.C. The president has term limits, and so should Congress.

No official for the House should be allowed to serve more than three terms and should not be allowed to serve in the Senate after they have served in the House. This would have the appearance of playing games to stay in Washington, D.C. Senators should be limited to two terms with the same restriction.

Ed Clark
Prairie City



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