

The Time is Now – Doubling Down on Climate Leadership

A multi-part series following the 2016 elections

Daniel Kreeger – Executive Director, Association of Climate Change Officers

Tom Bateman – Bank of America Professor of Commerce, UVA McIntire School of Commerce

Part 1: Let's All Take a Deep Breath

People who work on climate change policy and action planning across sectors are terrified – and they should be. The election of a President and Congressional leadership that have announced their intent to turn the past 8 years of Federal agency and international climate action upside down should be scary. But it also should be a rallying call. The time is now – we simply cannot wait even a minute longer.

The world is moving forward on climate change with or without the United States. Global companies will have to deal with international and foreign policy efforts aimed at curbing emissions and preparing impacted and vulnerable communities. Local and provincial governments are acting already given the localized impacts and implications.

To be clear, giving up is NOT an option. So, let's take a deep breath and reorganize our thoughts.

1. Let's think of our democracy like a pendulum. We saw in 2008 and subsequently since 2010 what happens when we go too extreme in a political direction. Take comfort in expecting that what goes around comes around and that this is a significant opportunity for the greatest climate smart advocacy effort the country has seen to date.
2. Success on climate change does not need to be hinged to Congress or the White House. There are numerous paths forward.
3. Taking action is the most constructive solution to dealing with emotional duress. Whether your outlook is pessimistic, pragmatic or optimistic, the best way to ensure that you thrive is to identify tangible next steps and boldly take action.

Next week, we'll share with you some prescriptive thoughts on clear, simple and tangible actions that employees and leaders of local and state government agencies, private sector entities, higher education institutions and the Federal government should be considering going forward.

About ACCO

The Association of Climate Change Officers is a 501(c)(3) non-profit membership organization for executives and officials worldwide in industry, government, academia and the non-profit community. ACCO's mission is to define, develop and support the functions, resources and communities necessary for effective organizational leadership in addressing climate-related risks and opportunities. For more information about ACCO, please visit www.ACCOonline.org.