# NOAA’s muted climate data release highlights challenges under current US administration



Since the beginning of President Trump’s administration, a significant shift has occurred in the handling of climate science information in the United States, leading to what many describe as an increasingly hostile stance towards climate data. A recent example of this shift is the subdued release of critical atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration data by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Earlier this year, NOAA reported that the global average surface concentration of carbon dioxide reached 422.7 parts per million (ppm) in 2023, marking a record annual increase of 3.7 ppm—the largest jump recorded since measurements began in 1958 and surpassing the previous largest increase of 2.9 ppm seen in 2015. Traditionally, NOAA has accompanied this data release with a press briefing and detailed commentary, but this year’s communication was limited to brief posts on social media platforms Facebook and X, with no contextual explanation or press engagement.

The escalating concentration of carbon dioxide, compared to the pre-industrial baseline of 280 ppm, underscores the ongoing challenge of limiting global warming to the 1.5°C target agreed under the Paris Accord. The muted approach to disseminating such vital information aligns with the administration’s broader position on climate change, which has downplayed or outright rejected scientific consensus and international agreements. Amid these developments, NOAA’s monthly climate and weather briefings have been discontinued, and there are plans to significantly reduce the capacity of its Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research—the scientific research division critical to understanding and forecasting environmental phenomena. These cutbacks threaten to weaken early warning systems for severe weather events, such as hurricanes and tornadoes.

Moreover, the administration’s decision to cease funding for online hosting of essential climate data has prompted international concern and cooperation to preserve access to these scientific resources. In particular, research institutes in Germany, including the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres and the Pangaea environmental data repository, have mobilised efforts to back up NOAA’s climate databases to prevent data loss. This international collaborative initiative extends beyond climate data, encompassing toxicology databases maintained by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and has seen participation from Canadian researchers as well.

This situation reflects a broader tension between the collection and dissemination of environmental data and political attitudes toward climate change. Historically, environmental data has driven policy and scientific progress, as evidenced by the landmark discovery of the ozone hole above Antarctica in the early 1980s by researchers from the British Antarctic Survey. This discovery led to the Montreal Protocol of 1987—an international treaty that successfully curbed the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) responsible for damaging the ozone layer. The protocol’s success highlights the potential of environmental science and international cooperation to address global ecological challenges, with NASA projecting full ozone layer recovery by 2066.

The current situation with U.S. climate data presents a contrast to past instances where scientific findings have catalysed collaborative global action. The Financial Times reports that the curtailment of support for climate science and the subsequent international efforts to safeguard data underscore the challenges and uncertainties facing climate research and policy in the United States under its present administration.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.ft.com/content/9ac531e7-332d-44c6-9cdf-6b6cd94601b3> - This article discusses the U.S. becoming a 'rogue state' in climate science, highlighting the suppression and downplaying of critical climate data, including the record 3.7 ppm annual increase in atmospheric CO₂ in 2024, surpassing the previous record set in 2015.
* <https://apnews.com/article/94424de6b22f1f734b1afd6bce8489b2> - This report details the record-high levels of carbon dioxide and methane in 2023, with CO₂ reaching 419.3 ppm, an increase of over 50% from pre-industrial times, and methane averaging 1922.6 ppb, posing additional climate concerns.
* <https://dev-04-drupal-climate.woc.noaa.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-atmospheric-carbon-dioxide> - NOAA's report confirms that global average atmospheric carbon dioxide was 419.3 ppm in 2023, setting a new record high, with a 2.8 ppm increase from 2022, marking the 12th consecutive year of increases exceeding 2 ppm.
* <https://www.noaa.gov/news-release/during-year-of-extremes-carbon-dioxide-levels-surge-faster-than-ever?lctg=88556446> - NOAA's announcement reveals that atmospheric CO₂ levels surged to a seasonal peak of 426.90 ppm in May 2024, an increase of 2.9 ppm over May 2023, marking the fifth-largest annual growth in NOAA's 50-year record.
* <https://cires.colorado.edu/news/global-greenhouse-gas-levels-continued-increase-2023> - This report indicates that atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide continued to increase in 2023, with CO₂ reaching 419.3 ppm, extending the highest sustained rate of increases during the 65-year monitoring record.
* <https://www.axios.com/2024/04/08/greenhouse-gases-record-noaa> - This article highlights that greenhouse gas levels, including CO₂, continue to increase at unprecedented rates, reaching heights unseen for over 4.3 million years, with CO₂ rising to 419.3 ppm in 2023, marking a 2.8 ppm increase from 2022.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/9ac531e7-332d-44c6-9cdf-6b6cd94601b3> - Please view link - unable to able to access data