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“U.S. Climate Change Action in an Era of Congressional Paralysis”

ABSTRACT: Congress has not passed any major environmental legislation since 1990 and the current partisan divide suggests this situation will persist for years to come. The Obama administration has been utilizing existing statutory authority, primarily the Clean Air Act, most prominently the Clean Power Plan. These efforts are vulnerable to action in the courts or Congress, and could be stopped depending on the outcome of the 2016 presidential election. Some states have also been taking significant actions, but this too is susceptible to politics. This situation does not bode well for a satisfactory outcome to the United Nations climate conference to be held in Paris in December.