

By Jake Johnson

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Planned fossil fuel expansion in the U.S. accounts for more than a third of new oil and gas extraction projects set to begin through 2050, according to Oil Change International.

A new [report](#) released Tuesday identifies the United States as "planet-wrecker-in-chief," pointing to the nation's plans for a massive expansion of oil and gas production over the next two and a half decades even as it postures as a climate leader on the world stage.

According to Oil Change International's (OCI) research, planned oil and gas expansion in the U.S.—the largest historical contributor to planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions—accounts for more than a third of prospective global oil and gas expansion through 2050. Much of the U.S. expansion is tied to fracking, the report observes.

The U.S. is one of just 20 countries that are projected to be responsible for nearly 90% of the carbon dioxide pollution from new oil and gas extraction projects between 2023 and 2050.

If those 20 countries follow through with their fossil fuel expansion plans, OCI noted, the projects will emit an estimated 173 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide, the equivalent of the lifetime emissions of more than 1,000 new coal plants.

"If that amount of CO₂ is emitted into the atmosphere, then we're in serious trouble," Romain Ioualalen, global policy lead for OCI and a co-author of the new report, said during a press conference on Tuesday.

Such emissions, Ioualalen warned, would blow through the world's [dwindling carbon budget](#)

and make it "mathematically impossible" to limit global warming to 1.5°C by the end of the century.

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Five rich countries—the U.S., Canada, Australia, Norway, and the United Kingdom—account for more than half of all planned oil and gas expansion globally, even though they are far less reliant on fossil fuel revenues than other nations and have the resources for a renewable energy transition, OCI said.

The new report takes the Biden administration to task for "pledging climate leadership" while simultaneously facilitating "the continued expansion of fossil fuel production in the United States."

"In 2023 alone, the administration greenlit the Alaska [Willow Project](#) ; approved multiple LNG export facilities in Alaska and along the Gulf Coast, held a massive oil and gas lease sale in the Gulf of Mexico, fast-tracked the Mountain Valley Pipeline, and oversaw the weakening of bedrock environmental laws, making it easier for fossil fuel infrastructure to move forward," the report notes.

[See Oil Change International on Twitter.](#)

The new research was released just over a week before United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres' Climate Ambition Summit, which will be preceded by [more than 400 mobilizations](#) worldwide aimed at pressuring world leaders to urgently phase out fossil fuels.

"The planet-wreckers report presents unmistakable evidence of the peril of fossil fuel expansion while reckoning with the world's historic polluters, namely the United States, and how we must hold them accountable," Helen Mancini, a 16-year-old Fridays for Future activist

from New York City, said in a [statement](#) Tuesday.

"The activism youth are doing is not radical," Mancini added, "it's a demand for survival that the planet-wreckers must heed."