THIRD WAY

NEWSLETTER *Published June 23, 2023 • 4 minute read*

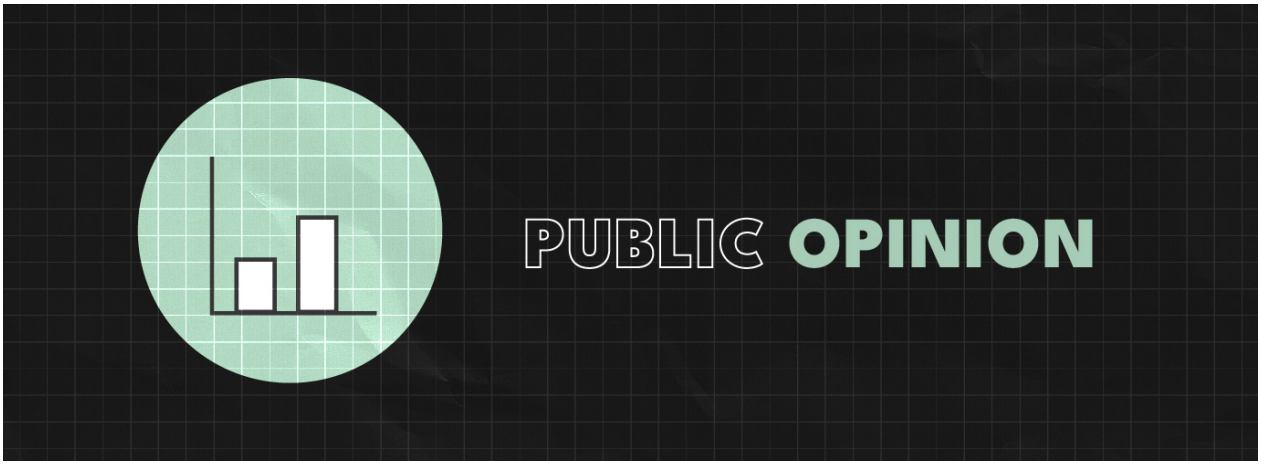
On the Grid: Leading the Global Decarbonization Effort 6/23/23

Mary Sagatelova
Communications and Content Advisor
@MarySagatelova

Click HERE to subscribe to this weekly newsletter.

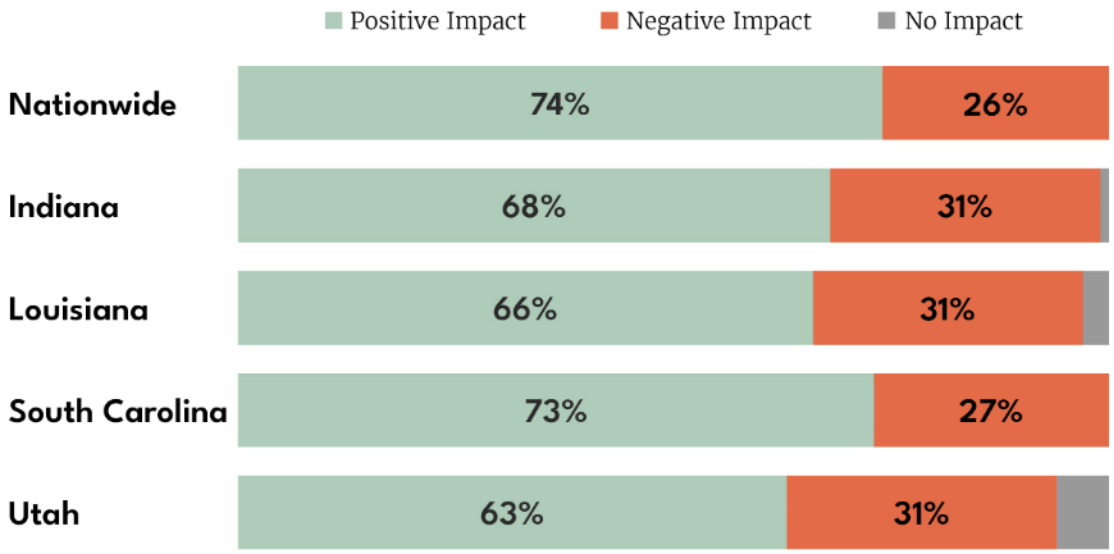
This week, discussions on permitting reform are continuing to reverberate through Washington as Senators Manchin and Graves reaffirm their commitment to pushing out comprehensive permitting reform later this year. But as discussions slowly begin to turn into legislation, the climate movement is finding itself increasingly divided.

As Josh Lappen outlines in *Heatmap* this week, there is a concerning lack of consensus among the climate coalition on the direction and scope of permitting reform. But this isn't just a matter of differing opinions; it's a full-on schism threatening to crack under pressure as different factions struggle to find common ground. With the climate and clean energy already under fire from Republican lawmakers, a full fracture would prove disastrous for our decarbonization efforts.



When it comes to shrinking our carbon footprint, commitments vary from nation to nation, making it difficult to make meaningful cuts to carbon emissions. A Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) addresses this issue head-on by levying a fee on certain carbon-intensive imports like steel and aluminum. CBAM incentivizes other countries to clean up their manufacturing processes and gives American-made, low-carbon goods a leg up. Not only is it a potent policy tool, but it's also a popular one.

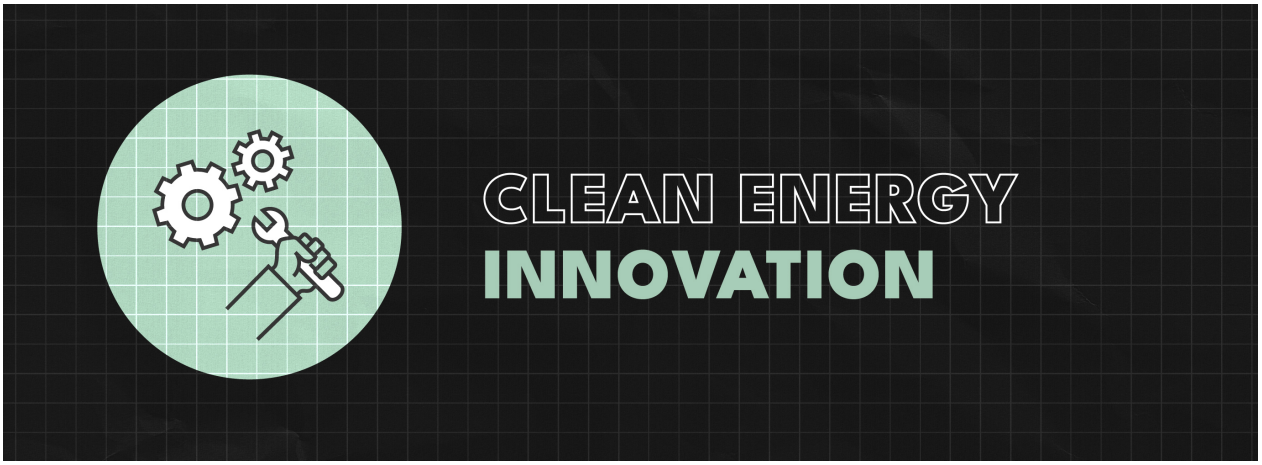
We partnered with Global Strategy Group for a new set of public opinion research examining attitudes towards a CBAM among key demographics. Our research found that not only do Americans overwhelmingly support a CBAM—*even in Republican-leaning states*—but voters are quick to grasp the benefits the policy will have on US manufacturing, the economy, and the environment.



Source: Carbon Border Adjustment Survey" Poll, Third Way and Global Strategy Group, January 26-February 3, 2023.

The stage for CBAM is set on Capitol Hill from Senator Whitehouse's Carbon Border legislation introduced last year, the recently introduced PROVE IT Act pushing for greater transparency, and the gathering momentum around Senator Cassidy's Foreign Pollution Act. And with Americans on board, CBAM is proving to be a political winner.

Check out my Twitter thread highlighting some key findings from the survey!

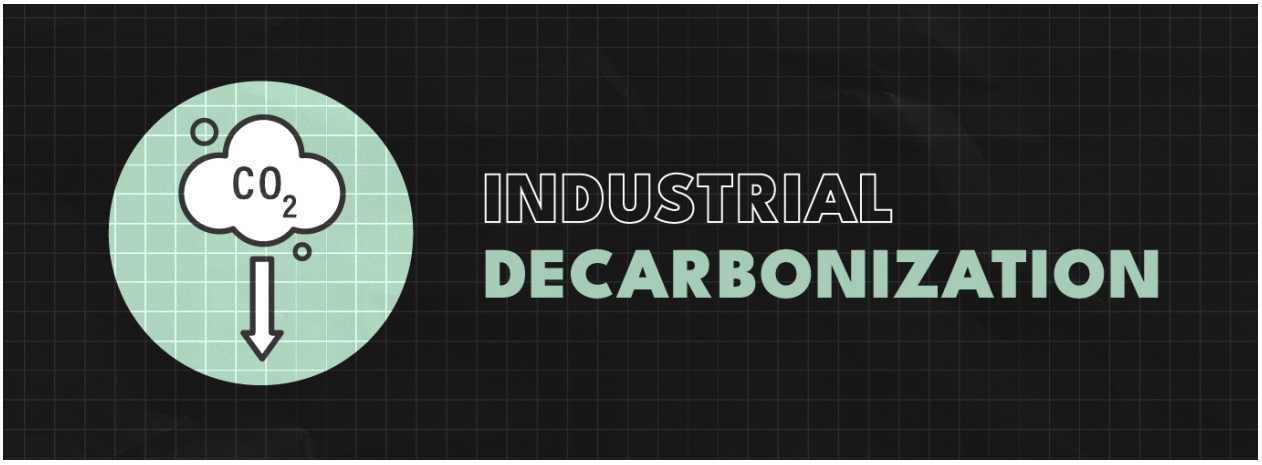


In 2021, the Department of Energy (DOE) launched the Energy Earthshots Initiative, an ambitious program laying the foundation for the US to reclaim *and maintain* its leadership role in clean energy innovation. Targeting seven critical areas–hydrogen, carbon removal, long-duration energy

storage, enhanced geothermal, floating offshore wind, low-carbon industrial heat, and clean fuels–these Earthshots are a game-changer, breaking down the biggest technical, regulatory, and financial barriers keeping these technologies on the bench.

This week, we released a first-of-its-kind analysis alongside Evolved Energy Research, modeling the potential impacts of reaching the first six Earthshots. Here are three findings we're excited about:

- Achieving the Earthshots will immensely impact our emissions targets, helping avoid over 3,900 million metric tons of carbon pollution.
- Deploying all six clean energy Earthshots will drastically reduce energy costs, saving $850 billion in energy systems costs for businesses and families.
- Reaching the Earthshots in tandem will amplify their individual impacts, unlocking additional, far-reaching carbon-cutting and cost-saving benefits.



Over the past year, the federal government has gotten serious about shrinking its carbon footprint, making commitments to leverage its massive purchasing power to guide cleaner procurement policies and create early demand for low-carbon materials.

But it can be difficult to make good purchasing decisions without reliable data on the lifecycle emissions–that is, the total amount of carbon emitted to create, transport, and use a product. This is where the Federal Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) Commons come into play. An open-access, interagency database, LCA Commons compiles reliable, verifiable data on products' environmental impact, providing government with the information needed to make smart purchasing decisions. With clean procurement set to accelerate in the coming years, LCA Commons must be equipped with the resources to meet the scale of the challenge ahead.

Third Way's newest memo outlines the importance of the database and, as we look ahead to FY24 funding, provides recommendations on how Congress can bolster its activities. Here's a quick readout:

- Provide resources for the Department of Energy's National Laboratories to manage public data repositories;
- And expand funding for the Department of Agriculture's National Agriculture Library (NAL) to continue hosting and managing the Federal LCA Commons Collaboration Server.

- Josh Lappen in *Heatmap* offers a refreshing take on the strain that permitting reform is having within the key factions of the US climate coalition, warning that serious disagreements can have disastrous political consequences.
- Shannon Osaka and Hailey Haymond in *The Washington Post* evaluate the effectiveness of renewable energy credits, highlighting how little impact they have on actually reducing emissions and deploying renewable energy projects.
- Andy Stone, energy journalist and host of *Energy Policy Now* from the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania, talks with climate entrepreneur Nick Rohleder to discuss the nature of risk inherent to climate investment and the challenge of managing that risk in emerging clean energy technologies.

Ryan Fitzpatrick, Senior Director of Domestic Policy, took an up-close look at Charm Industrial's novel CDR equipment in San Francisco this week.

Ryan Fitzpatrick
@rdfitzpat

Got a BTS look yesterday at @CharmIndustrial's innovative #CDR equipment, which uses pyrolysis to process waste biomass and create a carbon rich bio-oil for permanent underground storage. They've removed more CO2 than anyone else in this space. charmindustrial.com
1/