Obama reelection key to a global climate deal and alternative energy – Romney wrecks chances for success

Geman 12

Ben Geman, The Hill, “Report says global climate deal hinges on Obama reelection” 01/05/2012, http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/202539-report-global-climate-deal-hinges-on-obama-reelection

Prospects for striking a binding global climate deal by 2015 are probably toast ifPresidentObama loses in November. That’s among the conclusions in a wide-ranging, new climate and green energy outlook from banking giant HSBC’s research branch. A major outcome from the United Nations climate talks in December was a plan to craft a deal by 2015 — one that would include big, developing nations such as China — and have it come into force by 2020. But Obama’s main Republican White House rivals are critical of emissions limits and skeptical of climate science. HSBC predicts an international agreement by 2015 is highly unlikely if Obama loses the election. From their research note: [T]he prospects for a new global climate deal in 2015 depend considerably on the election of a pro-climate action president. The election of a President opposed to climate action will not only damage growth prospects for low-carbon solutions in the USA itself, but will make the hard task of negotiating a new global agreement by 2015 almost impossible**.**

Romney incites a trade war with china that breaks relations that the status quo solves

Stokes 11

Jacob Stokes November 12, 2011 “Amid Real Results, Romney Talks Tough on China” Democracy Arsenal http://www.democracyarsenal.org/2011/11/amid-real-results-romney-talks-tough-on-china.html

The currency issue is one among many issues that animate the Sino-American relationship. While the currency issue needs attention and has been receiving a great deal, unilateral harsh sanctions of the type Romney is suggesting run the risk of derailing the relationship completely and, possibly, starting a trade war. (They would likely also be illegal under international trade law, as noted above.) The current strategy – firm, consistent pressure that works to get results without breaking the broader relationship – is much more effective.

Uniquenes

Obama will win – polling data points to swing state leads and a national average

SILVER 9-20

FiveThirtyEight is the gold standard for elections predictions

Harris 12

Derrick Harris a technology journalist since 2003 and has been covering cloud computing, big data and other emerging IT trends for GigaOM since 2009.has a law degree from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Aug 1, 2012 5 sites that crunch data to help you predict the president gigaom.com/cloud/5-sites-thatll-help-you-predict-the-presidential-election/

This New York Times blog manned by expert statistician Nate Silver might be the gold standard for predicting elections. FiveThirtyEight is updated multiple times a week, usually tied to the release of poll data or economic numbers, and follows a consistent model for generating its forecast. The blog includes some easy-to-follow visualizations, including each candidate’s chances in each state. Also nice is that Silver gives some analysis of why the forecast is shaping up the way it is rather than just presenting the result. Latest prediction (July 31): Obama (69 percent chance of winning).

Obama will win the critical swing states – he has a significant edge

Whitesides 9-21

John Whitesides Sep 21, 2012 Analysis: Romney can still win, but it won't be easy http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/21/us-usa-campaign-romney-analysis-idUSBRE88K06G20120921

Democratic President Barack Obama has opened a slight lead over Romney in national polls, and new surveys indicate that Obama has a significant edge where it matters most: in Ohio, Virginia and Florida, the most coveted of nine politically divided "swing" states that are crucial to cobbling together the 270 electoral votes needed to win the White House.

Even Fox has Obama winning the key swing states

Williams 12

Vanessa Williams on September 19, 2012 Fox News poll: Dems lead in key swing states http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/election-2012/wp/2012/09/19/fox-news-poll-dems-lead-in-key-swing-states/?wprss=rss\_election-2012

Fox News joined this week’s parade of polls showing President Obama opening up leads over Republican Mitt Romney in crucial swing states. The Fox news survey puts Obama ahead of Romney by 7 percentage points among likely voters in Ohio, 49 to 42 percent, and in Virginia, 50 to 43 percent. In Florida, the president has a five-point advantage, 49 to 44 percent.

Issues shifted and energy is now intertwined with the economy as a top concern

Dlouhy 12

Jennifer A. Dlouhy August 28, 2012 Five things the energy sector needs to hear at the RNC http://fuelfix.com/blog/2012/08/28/five-things-the-energy-sector-needs-to-hear-at-the-rnc/

At the Republican National Convention in Tampa, the economy and energy are front-and-center issues. And to many of the thousands of party faithful attending the four-day event, they are increasingly tied together. American Petroleum Institute President Jack Gerard said that marks a change from earlier this year, when voters didn’t have energy on their mind. Now, he says, “the public understands that energy development will assist economic recovery in the form of new high-paying jobs.”

The economy being a key issue is what elevates the energy issue – this year is unique

Gardett 12

Peter Gardett August 23, 2012 As Voters Focus on Energy, API Chief Begs: 'Turn Us Loose' http://energy.aol.com/2012/08/23/as-voters-focus-on-energy-api-chief-begs-turn-us-loose/

The US oil and natural gas business has been an unusual bright spot for the American economy over the past four years, and that success has helped highlight energy issues as a major factor in the 2012 election cycle. Energy has not traditionally been a focus of electoral politics beyond prices at the gasoline pump, but this year the broader focus on the economy and the government's role in directing it have brought to light the successes, the potential and the risks of energy development in the US.

A2: Logical Policy Maker

Politics is an intrinsic test of the aff

Saideman 11

Steve Saideman associate professor of political science - McGill University, 7/25/’11 “Key Limit to Scholarly Relevance” Saideman's Semi-Spew http://saideman.blogspot.com/2011/07/key-limit-to-scholarly-relevance.html

Dan Drezner has a great post today about how the foreign policy smart set (his phrase) gets so frustrated by domestic politics that they tend to recommend domestic political changes that are never going to happen. I would go one step further and suggest that one of the key problems for scholars who want to be relevant for policy debates is that we tend to make recommendations that are "incentive incompatible." I love that phrase. What is best for policy may not be what is best for politics, and so we may think we have a good idea about what to recommend but get frustrated when our ideas do not get that far. Lots of folks talking about early warning about genocide, intervention into civil wars and the like blame "political will." That countries lack, for whatever reason, the compulsion to act. Well, that is another way of saying that domestic politics matters, but we don't want to think about it. Dan's piece contains an implication which is often false--that IR folks have little grasp of domestic politics. Many IR folks do tend to ignore or simplify the domestic side too much, but there is plenty of scholarship on the domestic determinants of foreign policy/grand strategy/war/trade/etc. Plenty of folks look at how domestic institutions and dynamics can cause countries to engage in sub-optimal foreign policies (hence the tradeoff implied in my second book--For Kin or Country). The challenge, then, is to figure out what would be a cool policy and how that cool policy could resonate with those who are relevant domestically. That is not easy, but it is what is necessary. To be policy relevant requires both parts--articulating a policy alternative that would improve things and some thought about how the alternative could be politically appealing. Otherwise, we can just dream about the right policy and gnash our teeth when it never happens.

A2: Environmentalists

Environmentalists wont abandon obama

**Drajem & Efstathiou 11**

Mark Drajem and Jim Efstathiou Jr. - Aug 31, 2011 Green Vote Cools Toward Obama Risking a Replay of Gore-Nader http://www.bloomberg.com/news/print/2011-08-31/green-vote-cools-to-obama-over-pipeline-concerns.html

Environmental voters may vote for Obama less out of hope than fear of his Republican opponents who are attacking the administration’s environmental regulations, according to Erich Pica, president of Friends of the Earth in Washington.

A2: Domestic Solar

Not a link turn – he’s not supporting solyndra now – and that was a while back.

They also don’t have any evidence about who solyndra actually pisses off now.

Didn’t get any press attention

WZKO, 9-16

WZKO Radio (Washington), 9-16-12 Fred Upton's "no more Solyndras" bill clears the U.S. House http://wkzo.com/news/articles/2012/sep/16/fred-uptons-no-more-solyndras-bill-clears-the-us-house/

WASHINGTON D.C. (WKZO) -- The U.S. House has approved the “no More Solyndra’s” act, sponsored by local Congressman Fred Upton, which now heads to an uncertain future in the U.S. Senate. It was criticized during floor debate by mostly democratic lawmakers as a monumental waste of time in a waning congress with little time to spare. Critics on both sides say say there are 50-projects in the pipeline funded from the same 34-billion dollar loan fund, many that that have been successes, and more than make up for the Solyndra bankruptcy, and some that pose an even bigger risk than Solyndra that won’t be effected by this bill. And they say there is another $34-billion to be loaned. They say the House bill is destined to die on a dusty shelf in the Senate anyway, and it was only trotted out one more time to take a political stab at the Obama Administration. It was approved Friday and got scant national attention.

Spin on Jobs

The plan rallies the GOP to make it a campaign issue – Ryan makes the stand a campaign asset

Restuccia 12

Andrew Restuccia August 12, 2012 Paul Ryan's energy record elates right, deflates greens http://dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=AA70D18E-CB4C-4092-A1CD-2EBA29C3FFFE

The environmental community fumed this weekend when Mitt Romney chose Paul Ryan as his running mate, condemning the House Budget Committee chairman’s crusade to slash clean energy funding while painting him as a bedfellow of Big Oil. But what greens hate about Ryan, the GOP loves. The Wisconsin Republican has been an outspoken critic of President Barack Obama’s clean energy agenda, offering a fiscal plan earlier this year that neatly mirrors the GOP’s policy priorities. The plan would expand oil and gas drilling, limit the reach of the EPA and kill the Energy Department’s clean energy loan program. The plan even earned a high-profile rebuke from Obama, something that many Republicans would wear as a badge of honor. “If some politicians had their way, there won’t be any more public investment in solar energy,” the president said during a March speech at a solar plant in Colorado. Ryan has rarely broken with his party on energy issues, a part of his resume that is probably a big bonus for Romney, who has come under fire for his position on climate change while governor of Massachusetts. The Romney campaign is hoping that Ryan’s energy record, coupled with his image as a staunch fiscal conservative, will be a huge asset for the campaign as it approaches the final stretch of the election.

A2: Winners Win

Too slow – healthcare & climate sequencing proves

Lashof 10

Dan Lashof 28 Jul 2010 “Lessons from Senate climate fail” Grist http://www.grist.org/article/2010-07-28-lessons-from-senate-climate-fail

Perhaps the most fateful decision the Obama administration made early on was to move healthcare reform before energy and climate legislation. I'm sure this seemed like a good idea at the time. Healthcare reform was popular, was seen as an issue that the public cared about on a personal level, and was expected to unite Democrats from all regions. White House officials and Congressional leaders reassured environmentalists with their theory that success breeds success. A quick victory on healthcare reform would renew Obama's political capital, some of which had to be spent early on to push the economic stimulus bill through Congress with no Republican help. Healthcare reform was eventually enacted, but only after an exhausting battle that eroded public support, drained political capital, and created the Tea Party movement. Public support for healthcare reform is slowly rebounding

as some of the early benefits kick in and people realize that the forecasted Armageddon is not happening. But this is occurring too slowly to rebuild Obama's political capital in time to help push climate legislation across the finish line.

Winners win only applies to a focused agenda – the plan derails strategy

Vickrey 9

[Dan Vickrey Lead guitarist, Counting Crows Huffington Post (blog) 9 10/27/09, " What Do We Want? Change! When Do We Want It? Ten Minutes Ago! ", http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dan-vickrey/what-do-we-want-emchangee\_b\_335932.html]

The economic stimulus, health care, and the war in Afghanistan are all issues of such massive scope that previous presidents would have needed to focus on just one or two of them in a full term in office. These days that option is a luxury. This week gay rights activists are up in arms about Obama's silence on the policy of "don't ask, don't tell." Really? While I think this policy is absurd, and that in an all volunteer army we should be thankful for each and every person who pursues the armed services as a career regardless of gender, race, sexuality or anything else for that matter, I think most of us would agree that this is not an issue that is quite as urgent as the ones he has tackled. I think we can all rest assured that it is still on the to do list. George Bush educated the nation to a real truth in U.S. politics when he announced he was going to spend some of his "political capital" he felt he earned after the 2004 re-election. Presidents have only so much political capital and they had best use it wisely. This is a plain fact in politics. Obama has made an investment in these issues, any one of which could define his presidency. **He must now follow them through to the end** if for no other reason than to claim MORE of that coveted capital. Sure, I can see issues such as Business Regulations and Climate Change cropping up in the near future (and rightfully so), but first things first. These fights are **already on the table** and they must be resolved to move further ahead. Nothing breeds success like success.

Obama will get the credit or blame for the economy

Alan Greenblatt 11/16/2011 Can A President Really Fix A Bad Economy? http://www.npr.org/2011/11/16/141762700/can-a-president-really-fix-a-bad-economy

President Obama's problem is not unusual. Every president gets the blame when times are bad. "If there's one issue over which a president can lose an election, it's the economy," says Stephen Weatherford, a political scientist at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Presidents can influence fiscal policy, if they have the support of Congress — which Obama lacks at this point. But even when presidents can persuade Congress to go along, there are limits to how much they can influence the economy as a whole, Weatherford says. They can't force firms to hire workers or banks to lend money, for instance. Nevertheless, presidents always receive either more credit or blame than they deserve for the way things are going. "Expectations are high for the president — too high and unrealistically high," says George C. Edwards III, a presidential scholar at Texas A&M University. That's a political reality every modern president has understood. "There's such an exaggerated view of what they can do," says presidential historian Robert Dallek. President Taft said that "people think the presidents can make the grass grow and the skies turn to blue. It's simply out of their reach." Here's a quick survey of how presidents have responded to economic challenges in recent decades. Scroll down to see how three key economic indicators changed during each administration.

Russia

#### Obama reelection is key to Russia relations

Weir 12

Fred Weir, Christian Science Monitor 03/27/12 Obama asks Russia to cut him slack until reelection http://www.minnpost.com/christian-science-monitor/2012/03/obama-asks-russia-cut-him-slack-until-reelection#

Russian experts say there's little doubt the Kremlin would like to see Obama re-elected. Official Moscow has been pleased by Obama's policy of "resetting" relations between Russia and the US, which resulted in the new START treaty and other cooperation breakthroughs after years of diplomatic chill while George W. Bush was president. The Russian media often covers Obama's lineup of Republican presidential challengers in tones of horror, and there seems to be a consensus among Russian pundits that a Republican president would put a quick end to the Obama-era thaw in relations. "The Republicans are active critics of Russia, and they are extremely negative toward Putin

and his return to the presidency," says Dmitry Babich, a political columnist with the official RIA-Novosti news agency. "Democrats are perceived as more easygoing, more positive toward Russia and Putin." Speaking on the record in Seoul, Mr. Medvedev said the years since Obama came to power "were the best three years in the past decade of Russia-US relations.… I hope this mode of relations will maintain between the Russian Federation and the United States and between the leaders." During Putin's own election campaign, which produced a troubled victory earlier this month, he played heavily on anti-Western themes, including what he described as the US drive to attain "absolute invulnerability" at the expense of everyone else. But many Russian experts say that was mostly election rhetoric, and that in office Putin will seek greater cooperation and normal relations with the West. "Russian society is more anti-American than its leaders are," says Pavel Zolotaryov, deputy director of the official Institute of USA-Canada Studies in Moscow. "Leaders have to take popular moods into account. But it's an objective fact that the US and Russia have more points in common than they have serious differences. If Obama wins the election, it seems likely the reset will continue."

#### Russia – US cooperation is the largest impact – failure of relations collapses the NPT and great power war. Also solves terrorism, and regional conflicts – only cooperation solves escalation – that’s Arbatov

#### Romney’s Russia policy will become a self-fulfilling prophecy of aggression that destroys relations

Bandow 12

Doug Bandow is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C., is a nationally syndicated columnist with Copley News Service, and is the former editor of Inquiry magazine. Before that, he served as a special assistant to President Reagan and as a senior policy analyst in the office of the president-elect and the Reagan for President campaign. April 23, 2012 “Romney and Russia: Complicating American Relationships” http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/romney-and-russia-complicating-american-relationships/print/

Mitt Romney has become the inevitable Republican presidential candidate. He’s hoping to paint Barack Obama as weak, but his attempt at a flanking maneuver on the right may complicate America’s relationship with Eastern Europe and beyond. Romney recently charged Russia with being America’s “number one geopolitical foe.” As Jacob Heilbrunn of National Interest pointed out [1], this claim embodies a monumental self-contradiction, attempting to claim “credit for the collapse of the Soviet Union, on the one hand [while] predicting dire threats from Russia on the other.” Thankfully, the U.S.S.R. really is gone, and neither all the king’s men nor Vladimir Putin can put it back together. It is important to separate behavior which is grating, even offensive, and that which is threatening. Putin is no friend of liberty, but his unwillingness to march lock-step with Washington does not mean that he wants conflict with America. Gordon Hahn of CSIS observes [2]: Yet despite NATO expansion, U.S. missile defense, Jackson-Vanik and much else, Moscow has refused to become a U.S. foe, cooperating with the West on a host of issues from North Korea to the war against jihadism. Most recently, Moscow agreed to the establishment of a NATO base in Ulyanovsk. These are hardly the actions of America’s “number one geopolitical foe.” Romney’s charge is both silly and foolish. This doesn’t mean the U.S. should not confront Moscow when important differences arise. But treating Russia as an adversary risks encouraging it to act like one.

 Moreover, treating Moscow like a foe will make Russia more suspicious of America’s relationships with former members of the Warsaw Pact and republics of the Soviet Union—and especially Washington’s determination to continue expanding NATO. After all, if another country ostentatiously called the U.S. its chief geopolitical threat, ringed America with bases, and established military relationships with areas that had broken away from the U.S., Washington would not react well. It might react, well, a lot like Moscow has been reacting. Although it has established better relations with the West, Russia still might not get along with some of its neighbors, most notably Georgia, with its irresponsibly confrontational president. However, Washington should not give Moscow additional reasons to indulge its paranoia.

A2: Water Wars Add-On

Solar prices don’t affect desalination in the Middle East

No water wars – history, cost

Tertrais (Senior Research Fellow at the Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, Paris) 11

(Bruno, The Climate Wars Myth, The Washington Quarterly, [Volume 34](http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rwaq20?open=34#vol_34), [Issue 3](http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rwaq20/34/3), pages 17-29)

And water crises do not mean water wars. The issue of access to water resources is undoubtedly a major dimension of numerous regional crises, in particular in the Greater Middle East, as testified by decades-old disputes between Turkey and Syria, or Egypt and Sudan. The value of strategic locations such as the Golan Heights or Kashmir is not a small part of tensions between Syria and Israel, or India and Pakistan. And water sharing can be the cause of local disputes sometimes degenerating into small-scale collective violence in Africa or Asia. However, experts from the University of Oregon, who maintain the most complete database on this topic, state that there has never been a “war over water” (that is, large-scale collective violence for the sake of a water resource) in the past 4,500 years.[35](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0163660X.2011.587951#NOTE0035) The last war over water opposed two Sumerian cities in the middle of the third millennium B.C.E., about sharing the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates. There are good reasons for such a scant record. Any country seeking to control the upstream of a river would need to ensure complete and permanent domination over it, which would be an ambitious goal. In the modern era, resorting to arms over water (like resorting to arms over oil) is just not worth the cost. Especially for those whose geographical location and budget can afford to build desalination plants—which is the case for some of the most water-stressed countries, those located on the Arabian Peninsula.

One should therefore not be surprised that access to water has always generated more cooperation than conflict. Since antiquity, thousands of agreements and treaties have been signed for water-sharing. And cooperation between adversaries has stood the test of wartime, as was seen during the 20th century in the Middle East, South Asia, or Southeast Asia.