



Cooking the Books: State Department Ignores True Climate Impact of Keystone XL Pipeline

By

A new report out today from environmental groups—[Oil Change International](#), [Natural Resources Defense Council](#), [350.org](#), [Environment America](#), [National Wildlife Federation](#), [Friends of the Earth](#), [Sierra Club](#), [Greenpeace](#)—shows that the [Keystone XL](#) tar sands pipeline would, if approved, be responsible for at least 181 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) each year, comparable to the tailpipe emissions from more than 37.7 million cars or 51 coal-fired power plants.

In documenting the emissions associated with the controversial pipeline project, the report makes real the scale of climate impact and the further hurdles the project would create for the battle against climate change, putting the State Department's "business as usual" scenarios into doubt.

The major findings of [Cooking the Books: How The State Department Analysis Ignores the True Climate Impact of the Keystone XL Pipeline](#) are:

- The 181 million metric tons of (CO₂e) from Keystone XL is equivalent to the tailpipe emissions from more than 37.7 million cars. This is more cars than are currently registered on the entire West Coast (California, Washington, and Oregon), plus Florida, Michigan and New York—combined.
- Between 2015 and 2050, the pipeline alone would result in emissions of 6.34 billion metric tons of CO₂e. This amount is greater than the 2011 total annual carbon dioxide emissions of the U.S.
- The International Energy Agency has said that two-thirds of known fossil fuel reserves must remain undeveloped if we are to avoid a 2 degree C temperature rise. Constructing the Keystone XL pipeline and developing the tar sands make that goal far more difficult, if not impossible, to reach.

“When evaluating this project, the State Department should apply a simple test: Does its completion bring the U.S. closer to meeting its climate goals? The answer is clearly no, and therefore the project must be denied,” said Steve Kretzmann, executive director of Oil Change International.

In its 2012 World Energy Outlook, the International Energy Agency is very clear about the impact of climate policy on U.S. oil demand. If meaningful climate policy is pursued, U.S. oil demand would necessarily be cut 50 percent by 2035 and 70 percent by 2050 based on a 2012 baseline.

“Alberta’s premier was just in Washington, DC noting how essential the pipeline is to meeting increased production of the dirtiest oil on the planet. The numbers in this report make it clear that

we can't afford to help Big Oil meet that goal," said Elizabeth Shope of the Natural Resources Defense Council.

U.S. demand for oil has declined since 2005 by 2.25 million barrels per day—or the equivalent of almost three Keystone XL pipelines.

"Any objective analysis of the impact of building Keystone shows that it would be a climate catastrophe," said Ross Hammond, senior campaigner for Friends of the Earth. "Instead, the State Department seems ready to buy into the pipeline propaganda of an army of lobbyists who are trading on their ties to Secretary Kerry and President Obama to taint the decision. The president must act in the national interest, not the interests of Big Oil, and reject the Keystone XL pipeline."

"Today's report clearly demonstrates that we can't protect future generations from the worst impacts of global warming while allowing ourselves to become hooked on even dirtier sources of fuel," said Daniel Gatti, Get Off Oil program director for Environment America. "We need President Obama and Secretary Kerry to say no to tar sands, and no to the Keystone XL pipeline."

"If he's to keep his promise to confront climate change to protect America's wildlife and communities, President Obama should say no to the proposed Keystone XL tar sands pipeline," said Jim Murphy, senior counsel at the National Wildlife Federation. "Our leaders can't have it both ways—if they're truly committed to protecting America's wildlife and communities from climate change, they need to say no to Keystone XL and massive amounts of climate-disrupting carbon pollution it would deliver."

This article was published at NationofChange at: <http://www.nationofchange.org/cooking-books-state-department-ignores-true-climate-impact-keystone-xl-pipeline-1366208671>. All rights are reserved.