

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard
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Subject: EPA moving ahead with 'red team' climate science review

By Alex Guillén

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EPA is preparing to create a "read team/blue team" exercise to review climate change science, an agency spokeswoman confirmed today.

"Climate science like other fields of science is constantly changing. A new, fresh, and transparent evaluation is something everyone should support doing," EPA spokeswoman Liz Bowman said in a statement.

Pruitt and other Trump administration officials in recent weeks have hinted at some kind of climate science review after Obama-era undersecretary of Energy Steve Koonin wrote in The Wall Street Journal that climate science could benefit from a "red team" review. Such a review program is now formally in the works, and likely will include the Energy Department.

The "red team" concept has been used in other fields as a sort of devil's advocate system meant to find flaws in a theory or plan.

But scientists have pushed back on applying the idea to climate change science, saying the adversarial nature of peer-reviewed science means climate change science has already faced decades of rigorous review — and that a "red team" review here would give out-sized weight to a small subset of scientists who do not agree with mainstream conclusions.

Critics of the climate science "red team" approach also noted that it could also be a first step toward an EPA review and repeal of its 2009 endangerment finding, the underlying scientific document that concluded climate change poses a threat to human health and welfare and created legal obligations for EPA to regulate carbon dioxide.

Climatewire first reported today that EPA is definitely moving ahead with a "red team" review.

WHAT'S NEXT: EPA will recruit individuals to provide input as part of the climate science review, but the full process is still being finalized.

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