

Environmental Ideologies

[Republican ideology in red, Democratic ideology in blue]

The main function of political policy is to enhance human freedom, so big government isn't the solution—it's the problem.

The main function of political policy is to enhance the general welfare, so big government often needs to regulate markets that provide more for shareholders than for the whole population.

Markets are the natural way to solve most problems, including environmental problems. The “invisible hand” of the market guarantees that the public good is the ultimate result of private greed.

Markets are a cultural creation that can solve some problems better than others, and sometimes they place an “invisible foot” on the backs of poorer people and the plants and animals we share the planet with. So far, markets haven't found a good way to price biodiversity or ecosystem services.

We need “sound science” on environmental issues.

We have sound science on environmental issues, but Republicans seek to confuse the public about the nature of scientific theory and consensus.

Environmental regulation violates economic liberty.

Economic liberty often threatens environmental sustainability, so corporations (and individuals) may need regulation.

Environmental regulation threatens the American way of life.

Business as usual threatens the American way of life.

Environmental regulations don't work.

Because of regulations assuring clean air and clean water, there have been significant improvements in air and water quality, although much more needs to be done.

Environmental regulations controlling pollution are too expensive, and costs always get passed on to consumers.

Polluters should pay for their pollution, not everybody else (through higher taxes for clean-up or higher costs for health-care).

Business profits drive the economy, and the economy supports society, so business profits are sacrosanct.

There's more to life than the bottom line.

Environmental policy costs the country jobs.

The right kind of environmental policy creates “green jobs.”

Now is more important than forever.

Now is more important than forever, but sustainability is still an important issue.

People's common sense is more valuable than experts' knowledge—"You can spend your money more wisely than the government can."

Experts serve a useful purpose in policy making and implementation. Many environmental problems are complicated, whether people like it or not.

Taxes are always too high, and they're a threat to American freedom (like the Holocaust, according to Michelle Bachman).

You need to pay for the government services you want, and taxes are the way to do it.

In a system of progressive taxation, rich people pay too much in taxes, because they pay a higher percentage than other people.

People who earn more should pay more, since society protects more of their property than of poorer people.

Economic growth is progress, because economic growth invariably increases human welfare.

Economic growth is progress, although human welfare is a policy concern as well.

There should be no limitations on human reproduction, although there can be restrictions on human sexuality.

There are too many people for the health of the planet.

There is no such thing as consuming too much. In fact, we need more consumption to stimulate the economy.

People consume too much.

Even if we are in a situation of "overshoot," there are substitutions available for increasingly scarce resources—like the replacement of copper wire with xxxxxxxx.

In many instances, people are engaged in "overshoot," using materials faster than rates of replenishment.

"Conservation may be a sign of personal virtue, but it is not a sufficient basis for a sound, comprehensive energy policy." [Vice President Dick Cheney]

Conservation is an essential part of any long-term energy strategy.

We oppose the mandated use of mercury-containing compact fluorescent bulbs and the ban on incandescent bulbs, because such measures compromise our freedom to consume what we want.

Incandescent bulbs are heat bulbs, since only 10 percent of their energy use goes to light. CFLs are more efficient (ecologically and environmentally).

The earth is composed of natural resources, which ought to be used for human benefit and corporate profit.

The earth is composed of incredible biodiversity, which provides priceless ecosystem services, that should not be compromised for people or profit.

The public lands belong to the public, which ought to provide corporations with cheap access to lumber and oil and gas and minerals found on those lands.

The public lands belong to the public, and not to private enterprise.

“Drill, baby, drill.” The United States should exploit all of its domestic coal and oil in order to supply people with all the energy they want.

The burning of oil and coal creates greenhouse gases, and we can’t afford them (even if economically we can afford them).

In a free market, inventors will find technological fixes for environmental problems.

Many of our environmental problems *are* a technological fix.

Because they understand the industry, regulators should often come from the industries being regulated.

Regulation depends on a conception of the public good, and personnel from private corporations may not always have a robust conception of the public good.

“We oppose government policies, legislation, and mandates that are based on the theory that humans are the primary cause of global climate change.” (2008 MN Republican platform)

Science shows that humans are a primary cause of global climate change, and therefore environmental policy should address that problem.

There should be no regulation of emissions of carbon dioxide. (2008 MN Republican platform)

Carbon dioxide is one of the major greenhouse gases, and if it’s not regulated, increasing atmospheric concentrations will lead to disaster.

Environmental policy can best be handled at the state or local level, where stakeholders live.

At the state and local level, special interests have inordinate power to influence decisions, so many environmental policies should be decided at the national level. Besides, a tangle of different state and local regulations makes it hard to do business in the U.S.

The government is “them, the bureaucrats,” not, “we the people.” We have to take our country back.

Bureaucracy is the way you make sure that policies are implemented without fear or favor. The civil service protects us from the politicization of policy implementation.