

# FRIEDBERT PFLÜGER

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Before Trump, the Paris Agreement paradigm had found broad acceptance but now it has reached a historic turning point. The United States will no longer be the “electric engine” of climate policy. We are already on our way to missing the goals of Paris. If the issue of climate change becomes secondary for the most powerful nation on earth, it will become difficult to convince emerging and developing countries to remain committed to their climate pledges. Germany, with its *Energiewende*, is lagging behind its own climate goals and is not well equipped to become a forerunner, as an aggressive expansion of renewables is not by itself sufficient to ensure sustainable emission reduction. Politicians tend to set goals for a distant future, in which they cannot be held accountable anymore. But, in addition to phasing out fossil fuels by the end of the century, we should also concentrate on reaping the low-hanging fruit of the foreseeable future. Fossil fuels cannot all be thrown into one pot – gas is much more environmentally friendly than oil and especially coal. Much rather than the electrification across sectors – as originally intended for example by the German government – natural gas has the greatest potential to lower emissions, as clearly shown in the course of the US’ “shale revolution” and the UK’s “dash for gas”.