

FALSE SOLUTIONS IN NEW JERSEY

False solutions: Market-driven or sector-specific climate mitigation approaches and specific fuels or energy sources that do not address the root or structural causes of climate change and environmental injustice.

The presence of false solutions is evident in climate mitigation and energy policies in New Jersey. Examples include market-based approaches to climate mitigation such as participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and the promotion of false “renewable energy” sources such as waste incineration and nuclear power. In response, environmental justice (EJ) advocates are proposing increased investments to pilot community solar, renewable battery storage, community energy planning, improved energy efficiency, and access to solar and wind energy incentives. EJ organizations also championed the passage of a groundbreaking law (S232) that requires the Department of Environmental Protection to consider the cumulative impacts of polluting facilities on ‘overburdened communities’ for new and existing permits.

New Jersey False Solutions Policies and Projects

Name	Description	Type of False Solution	Reference/Resource
Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)	Adopted state by state, the RPS requires that a specific portion of utility-sold electricity comes from ‘renewable’ resources. Fuels considered renewable vary from state to state. New Jersey’s RPS includes false solutions such as municipal solid waste.	Landfill gas, anaerobic digestion, biomass, municipal solid waste incineration	RPS Overview Food and Water Watch RPS Report Card
Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)	A regional cap and trade program that establishes a price on power plants’ greenhouse gas emissions and market-based mechanism for trading allowances in the electricity-generating sector	Market-based approach	RGGI Overview
NJ Energy Master Plan (2019)	Sets the goal of 100% clean energy by 2050 with seven main strategies to achieve carbon neutrality	Carbon neutral/net zero	Energy Master Plan
NJDEP Global Warming Response Act 80x50 Report (2020)	Sets targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from 2006 levels by 2050	Carbon neutral/net zero	80x50 Report
Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI)	A regional collaborative of Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states as well as the District of Columbia that coalesces around the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector	Market-based approach	TCI Overview TCI Sacrifices EJ Communities, Climate Justice Alliance TCI Opposition, CEED
LNG Export Terminal	Liquefied natural gas export terminal in South Jersey on the Delaware river that was approved in late 2020 by the Delaware River Basin Commission	Liquefied natural gas	Export terminal press coverage Facing delays

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Nuclear Bailout Plan and proposed plant	Regulators unanimously extended the \$300 million dollar annual bailout subsidized by ratepayers for three additional years in April 2021. Camden Company is now proposing the construction of a new nuclear reactor in a decommissioned nuclear zone.	Nuclear	Subsidies Proposed plant
Natural and Working Lands Strategy Scoping Document	Investigated the potential for carbon sequestration in natural areas of New Jersey	Carbon sequestration/removal	Scoping document
Aries sewage sludge gasification	Aries facilities use gasification to convert biosolids to biochar that is used in making concrete. One facility is nearing completion in Linden, NJ, and two others are planned for Kearny and Newark, which have both been opposed.	Biochar	Opposition letter from Ironbound Community Corporation, Newark News article on opposition
A-5655 and S-1366 Bills to Promote RNG and Hydrogen (Introduced 2021 and 2022)	Establishes a program to encourage procurement of RNG and investment in RNG infrastructure by public gas utilities and sets portfolio targets for the distribution of RNG to consumers from 2022-2050.	Renewable natural gas and Hydrogen	News article on opposition
New Jersey Resources Corp. Green Hydrogen Pilot Project (Commenced October 2021)	A pilot project in Howell, NJ that blends hydrogen produced into existing fuel distribution systems. Hydrogen electrolysis is powered by wind and planned to be powered by an on-site solar array.	Green hydrogen	News article
A-5803 Plastic Waste Bill (Introduced 2021)	Enables pyrolysis of plastic waste and would exempt certain plastic materials from State regulation of solid waste disposal and recycling.	Plastic waste	Opposition statement, Clean Water Action NJ Spotlight News op-ed opposing A-5803