



The United Nations climate chief has warned that US voters risk ceding progress to China and Europe if they opt for a presidential candidate who denies climate change.

Christiana Figueres, the executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, told an audience in London: "The one thing [the frontrunners for the Republican candidacy] have in common is saying they do not believe in climate change, so it's very much the decision of the US electorate.

"My concern on this has been: is the US electorate willing to let history progress in such a way that it is China and Europe that are going to produce and benefit from the clean technologies we are going to be using? Is the US electorate willing to let the competitive edge on technology go to China or Europe or would they prefer to be leaders in technology? That is the question they have to answer."

The remarks by Figueres, a self-described "daughter of a revolutionary from Costa Rica", are unlikely to go down well with the Republican candidates, who tend to take a hostile view to the UN as well as climate change. Last year, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives cut funding to the UN climate science body, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

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