

Every state has their own natural environmental wonders, but who is in charge of protecting these valuable pieces of land? The federal government has created many laws and agencies protecting the environment. For example, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was created for the protection of the environment and the Endangered Species Act was created to safeguard the loss of animal species. Often these laws do not cover new or ongoing environmental issues that occur in every state, rather they are a broad definition for ecological protection. States should have the primary responsibility for determining environmental policy because the state government would then have the ability to tailor specific policies for their state.

As of now, a majority of the power for determining environmental policy rests in the hands of the federal government. That has not always been the case though as a lot of environmental policies have taken place at the state level. It was not until the mid-twentieth century that the federal government began playing a role in the creation and execution of environmental policies. In the 1960's then-President Lyndon B. Johnson signed numerous environmental acts that set up an entirely new era of environmental consciousness.

The power to determine environmental policy should rest at the state level because it gives states a way to directly enact change on a negative environmental impact. Our country has a vast array of environments that need to be protected. From oceans to forests and deserts each ecosystem needs to have its own specific regulations surrounding it. If the federal government were to implement a policy it may not directly target one exact environment rather it would be an overarching policy. If the states were given power to implement an environmental policy it would have the potential to directly affect the issue at hand.