

COP26 climate change conference: Outcomes

Following prolonged talks, the 26th Conference of the Parties ended late on 13 November 2021. With countries' nationally determined contributions (NDC) ahead of the event leading to an estimated 2.7°C warming towards the end of the century, the host, the United Kingdom, set the goal to keep a limit of 1.5°C warming within reach.

Outcomes of the conference

A main outcome of the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) is the [Glasgow Climate Pact](#), requesting leaders to revisit their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) ahead of next year's COP27. It notes the need to reduce emissions by 45 % by 2030, from 2010 levels, to align with the [Paris Agreement's](#) 1.5°C ambition. From COP27, annual 'pre-2030 ambition' high-level ministerial meetings are to ensure climate action in this critical decade. A [work programme](#) to deliver on the [global goal for adaptation](#) was launched. Doubling of adaptation finance levels by 2025, compared to 2019, within the annual US\$100 billion climate finance pledge was also agreed. The text further specifies the need to 'phase down' unabated coal and phase out inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies. COP26 also [delivered](#) on its goal to finalise the Paris rulebook, which allows for operationalisation of key aspects such as international carbon markets, the agreement on emissions accounting and reporting under the Enhanced Transparency Framework, and agreed common timelines in NDC submissions (every five years with a ten-year view).

Countries representing 85 % of world forest cover promised to [halt and reverse deforestation](#) by 2030. The [Global Methane Pledge](#) reached 100+ signatories, as did a [clean vehicles pledge](#). Other commitments focused on reducing [aviation](#) and [shipping](#) emissions, while 30 countries and development banks [vowed](#) to end new public financing for unabated fossil-fuel projects by 2022. The [Breakthrough Agenda](#) will seek to deliver development and deployment of innovative technological solutions across several key sectors.

European Parliament position and role

Ahead of COP26, the European Parliament adopted its [COP26 resolution](#) at its October II plenary session, calling on world leaders to raise ambitions and for Europe to lead the way in ensuring a green global recovery and climate policies, in line with the just transition principle. The Parliament pointed to the overall need for increased climate finance, including striking a balance between mitigation and adaptation funds, to achieve the conditional aspects of NDCs. It urged a global end to fossil fuel subsidies, and pointed to the need to address specific sector challenges and potent warming gases such as methane. It called on the parties to finalise the Paris rulebook, ensuring transparency, strong environmental integrity and ambition. The Parliament previously adopted a [resolution](#) on climate diplomacy in 2018, and [declared](#) a climate and environment emergency in 2019. On the basis of the '[Fit for 55](#)' proposals, the European Parliament will have a key role as co-legislator in ensuring a legal framework fit to deliver the targets set in the [Climate Law](#).

Reactions and next steps

Disappointment was [voiced](#) at the final text calling for a 'phase down' rather than a 'phase out' of coal, although observers [point](#) to this as significant, as it is the first time coal is singled out in a COP decision text.

[Criticism](#) from developing countries regarding failed climate finance promises created tension [ahead of COP26](#). An overruled proposal by the G77 and China for a finance facility dedicated to loss and damage [reportedly](#) almost jeopardised the Glasgow Climate Pact. Instead, a 'Glasgow Dialogue' on funding for loss and damage was launched, along with a strengthening of the [Santiago Network](#). An [ad-hoc work programme](#) to quantify the post-2025 climate finance goal was also agreed. To close the Paris rulebook, carry-over of some 2013-2020 Kyoto Protocol credits was agreed, an admission starkly [criticised](#) by some climate non-governmental organisations.

EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service

Author: Liselotte Jensen, Climate Action Research and Tracking, Members' Research Service
PE 698.805 – November 2021



This document is prepared for, and addressed to, the Members and staff of the European Parliament as background material to assist them in their parliamentary work. The content of the document is the sole responsibility of its author(s) and any opinions expressed herein should not be taken to represent an official position of the Parliament. Reproduction and translation for non-commercial purposes are authorised, provided the source is acknowledged and the European Parliament is given prior notice and sent a copy. © European Union, 2021

eprs@ep.europa.eu (contact) <http://www.eprs.ep.parl.union.eu> (intranet) <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank> (internet) <http://eptthinktank.eu> (blog)