

“ASSESSING PRESIDENT BIDEN'S CLIMATE SUMMIT: IS THE DIAL MOVING CLOSER TO 1.5°C?”



FOGGS online event, 29 April 2021

Transcript
(3 June 2021)

“Assessing President Biden's Climate Summit: Is the dial moving closer to 1.5°C?”

On Thursday, 29 April 2021, the Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability (FOGGS) organised a discussion on the outcomes of US President Biden's "Leaders' Summit on Climate" that was held online on 22-23 April 2021 and the implications flowing from it for achieving the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement and ensuring the success of UNFCCC COP 26 (Glasgow, November 2021).

Pilita Clark of the *Financial Times* moderated the discussion that brought together the following expert speakers:

- **Alison Campbell**, Deputy Director, COP26 Envoy, UK
- **Monica Dean**, Senior Advisor, US State Department
- Prof. Dr. **Niklas Höhne**, Founding Partner, NewClimate Institute
- **Richard Kinley**, President, FOGGS and former Deputy Executive Secretary, UNFCCC
- **Li Shuo**, Senior Global Policy Advisor, Greenpeace East Asia
- **Youssef Nassef**, Interim Director of the Intergovernmental Support and Collective Progress Division, UNFCCC Secretariat
- **Jenifer Tollmann**, Senior Policy Advisor, E3G

The event took place online, through the Zoom platform, and was broadcast live on the Facebook page of FOGGS. The Transcript was prepared by Peter Kakucska, Stuart Best and Lauren Brennan of the FOGGS Secretariat.

Event recording can be accessed online:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2kiaQuY87o>

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INTRODUCTION

00:00:15 - Richard Kinley

Good morning, good afternoon. Good evening everybody. I'm Richard Kinley, President of FOGGS, the Foundation on Global Governance and Sustainability and, in a former life, an official of the UN climate secretariat. We at FOGGS are really delighted today to be hosting this panel discussion on the themes of President Biden's climate summit of last week, and what it means for the achievement of the 1.5-degree temperature threshold goal from the Paris Agreement and the impact it could have on COP 26 in Glasgow later this year. We now have a week under our belts since the Summit took place, which gives time for the dust to settle, and I think it's a pretty good time to take stock.

It is my pleasure to welcome all of you who have joined us, either on Zoom or on Facebook, for what I'm really hopeful will be an informative and engaging conversation and discussion amongst a really impressive group of panellists who I must say I am delighted, have agreed to join us.

So, with that, I would now introduce our panel, and first and foremost, thanking them most wholeheartedly for giving their time to the discussion today and for sharing their insights on this really interesting and important topic.

- First off, and a really warm thanks to our moderator for today, Pilita Clark. Pilita is associate editor and business columnist at the Financial Times and a very well-informed climate commentator. So, Pilita, we are really thrilled that you agreed to help us today. I am really looking forward to the way you are going to grill our distinguished panel members shortly.
- Then, in terms of our panellists. First, I would introduce Alison Campbell who is the Deputy COP Envoy of the United Kingdom's COP 26 Presidency team. Welcome Alison!
- We have Monica Dean, Senior Adviser to John Kerry at the US State Department, and Monica was intimately involved in organising the summit last week. So welcome Monica!
- We have Niklas Hoehne, who is a founding partner of the NewClimate Institute and a professor at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. Welcome, Niklas!
- Li Shuo is senior global policy advisor for Greenpeace East Asia. Welcome Li Shuo!
- Youssef Nassef, a former colleague of mine - welcome Youssef! - Director of Adaptation and the Director in charge of intergovernmental process management at the UN Climate Secretariat.
- And last, but definitely not least, Jennifer Tollmann, a senior policy adviser on climate diplomacy and geopolitics at the international think tank E3G.

Before I hand over the control, or "the gavel" as we used to say, to Pilita, I would just note that there is the possibility for those of you who are viewing on Zoom or Facebook to submit questions for the panel members. In Zoom if you could please use the chat function and in Facebook the comment section. Our team will be keeping an eye on these and will try to take them on board, but I have to apologise from the outset that, depending on how vigorous the panel discussion is, it may be that some of the questions would not be able to be taken on board.

One final point from me. We are aiming to post a recorded version of the panel discussion tomorrow so that you can watch it again and again and again or, even better, recommend it to your friends and colleagues. This will be on the foggs.org website as well as the FOGGS Facebook page. So, without further ado, I would pass the responsibility to Pilita and invite you to kick off the discussion.

00:05:00 - Pilita Clark

Thanks so much Richard. It's a real pleasure to be here today with such a knowledgeable panel of speakers. And as you say, just one week on from a very unusual climate meeting. The Biden Summit was the first of its kind ever convened by a U.S. President. And of course, we saw it brought forth a number of extremely interesting pledges, not least from the US itself, which is now committed to roughly halving its emissions by 2030, but the real question is what did the summit actually achieve? Has it really brought us any closer to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement and will it have any impact at all on the COP 26 meeting due in November?

So, these are the many questions that we want to look at today. We know that all of you watching will have many more, and we are very much looking forward to getting to all of them. But first, let's just look at what happened at the summit itself, and Monica, as Richard said, you were actually involved in the exercise, which was obviously a mighty logistical event in its own right. Could you just briefly explain what your role was and then tell us what, through your perspective, was the biggest achievement of the summit overall?

THE BIDEN "LEADERS SUMMIT ON CLIMATE"

00:06:16 - Monica Dean

Sure, thanks Pilita, and thanks so much to FOGGS for inviting me to join this panel today. I was part of the State Department team working along with our colleagues throughout the Administration involved with planning the summit and organising all of the wonderful sessions and activities that everyone saw virtually. And to that end, I would say that the summit was quite the achievement, personal bias aside.

So, I think the summit did two big things. One, it demonstrated to the world that America is back. And two, that we're committed to rallying the world for greater climate ambition. On the first point, starting on day one, President Biden fulfilled his promise to re-join the Paris Agreement. A week later, we had the Climate Executive order, which directed the US to prepare a new NDC, a climate finance plan, and it also set forth this commitment to organise the Leaders' Summit all by Earth Day, less than 100 days later. And the summit delivered across the board on all of those.

Obviously, on organising the Leaders' Summit itself, but also on fulfilling our commitment to announce an ambitious new NDC, as you mentioned of having economy wide emissions reduction by 2030. It also fulfilled the commitment to announcing our new international climate finance plan, which included our intent to double, by 2024, our public climate finance to developing countries and also our intention to triple our adaptation finance. And so, I think when combined, all of these pledges showed that not only are we committed to getting the US on the right path, but that we're committed to creating unprecedented economic opportunities.

For those of you who watched President Biden's joint address last night, he kept saying, "jobs, jobs, jobs," and that's exactly our approach. All of these actions create new economic opportunities, not just here at home, but also for everyone, for every country addressing the climate crisis there are economic opportunities. And so, to that end, I would say that the second part of the summit that we accomplished was the raising global ambition, right.

And so, since the start, President Biden made it clear we cannot confront this crisis alone, and so the Leaders' Summit was the culmination of a strong diplomatic campaign led by the Special Envoy

Secretary Kerry and many others of my colleagues at the State Department to ensure enhanced emission reduction targets and innovative adaptation efforts. And I would say on that front, we were also successful. We were successful at getting the world to show up for climate. We hosted the largest virtual convening of world leaders with attendance by 40 Heads of State, including the world's 17 largest economies. But on top of that, Secretary Kerry also hosted two ministerial roundtables with over 60 other countries. That means in the course of two days, we convened nearly 100 countries, all showcasing their commitment and the urgency of addressing the climate crisis and their resolve in doing so.

00:09:35 – Pilita Clark

That's such an interesting point. I mean, you really did show that the convening power of the President is obviously still there. But one person who did show up was President Xi from China, and that was a really interesting point. But of course, the US is only the second biggest emitter in the world, and the biggest at the moment is China and has been for some time.

I just wanted if I can go now to Li Shuo and ask you, ahead of the summit a lot of people were expecting or hoping that President Xi might have actually improved on or given some update on the 2060 carbon neutrality goal announced last year. He didn't do that. But he did say that China would strictly limit the increase in coal use in the near future and phase it down after 2025, and a lot of people thought that was super significant. I just wondered what your thoughts are.

CHINA'S CLIMATE AMBITION

00.10:24 - Li Shuo

Sure, thanks, Pilita. I think, first of all, it's probably important to put the President's speech on the night of the 22nd into context. Many of you may know that China committed last year to carbon neutrality by 2060, and in the meanwhile, also incrementally enhanced all of its four numerical targets for 2030. Since then, these announcements have triggered a lot of domestic discussions, not only in Beijing at the central government level, but also among our provinces, but also in the private sector. So, in this way, I do see that over the past less than a year, the climate discussion here in China has advanced.

I think it is also important to of course mention that before the April 22nd Summit, the US Climate Envoy John Kerry paid a visit to Shanghai, and as a result of that visit, there was a US-China joint statement on the climate crisis, and the overall tone from the joint statement is very cooperative. I do think that provides a basis for these two countries to work together in the future, and that's not something that we could simply take for granted given the very contentious nature of the bilateral relationship.

But going back to your question Pilita, in terms of what the president said on the 22nd, I think, in the way, it is noteworthy that this is the first time that he has mentioned, in the international setting the issue of coal. He singled that issue out because, this is where the lion's share of China's energy comes from, and there is no climate solution if we don't tackle that. But on the other hand, the peak consumption, which is what he said, is somewhat already embedded in China's previous commitment, particularly the one to peak China's overall CO2 emissions before 2030. For you to achieve that, you have to, of course, peak coal before 2025. So, in a way, it's a modest announcement. It highlighted coal, but clearly, we will still have a lot of work to do.

00:12:48 – Pilita Clark

That's really interesting. Another point that he made, President Xi, in his speech, which really didn't receive very much attention was that he urged developed countries to refrain from green trade barriers. Jennifer, I want to bring you in because, in Europe, that was seen as very much a message to Brussels not to proceed, or to be very careful about proceeding, with its plans for a carbon border tax. And I just wonder, do you think that the EU is wise to be pushing ahead with this very contentious plan given its history of trying to bring in these sorts of measures to press outside countries to take action? And could it actually end up jeopardising or promoting the global climate agenda?

00:13:38 – Jennifer Tollmann

I think there is a lot that needs to be considered that is only just really reaching the attention of Brussels. At the Brussels political sphere, we've seen the CBAM emerged very much as an answer to a domestic problem that has potential international benefits, but also significant international risks once it becomes concrete. So, for a long time, the political sphere in Brussels was really wielding CBAM as a bit of a stick. A potential there will be trade consequences. We do have teeth...

00:14:12 - Pilita Clark

When you say CBAM, it's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, AKA carbon border tax. Correct?

00:14:23 – Jennifer Tollmann

Correct, that is the wonky Brussels abbreviation for this trade measure that they are proposing. But as we advance...

00:14:30 – Pilita Clark

Which potentially for goods coming in from countries that don't have, say as high a carbon price as the EU perhaps, it will actually attract some sort of levy.

00:14:49 - Jennifer Tollmann

Well, it really depends. I think this is the problem as we're heading towards a proposal, and it is actually very unclear what shape it will take until we see that proposal in June. So, there are questions around it. Is it some form of lobby? And there are questions around what is the scope? Is it just cement, steel, and electricity, which obviously just implicates a certain number of countries, particularly within the EU neighbourhood? Or is it broader? Is agriculture a part of this? That isn't the indication that we're seeing, but that would have much broader implications for EU trade partners. And then the final question is obviously so what happens with the resources?

Now, as I was saying, this has very much come about as a bit of a domestic proposition with little consideration for the international landscape that it is landing in until recently. And one of the big questions is what happens with any money that if it takes the levy form, that the levy would generate? Is it something that just gets sucked back into the EU machinery or is it something that goes towards supporting energy transitions in partner countries? That goes towards supporting them being able to meet the standards of production or electricity produced, cement produced and steel produced in the EU, will it therefore, at some point, be able to be exempt from this form of levy? What is the intentionality of this? I think that's the question that we've had a lot of partners asking.

THE ROAD TO GLASGOW

00:15:55 - Pilita Clark

Either way, it's fairly clear that China is not going to be very happy with it, it seems. Alison, if I can just put a question to you. There's another aspect of the summit. As we've discussed, we saw a number of really interesting pledges coming forward particularly from the US. However, a number of countries also turned up. My native one amongst them, Australia, also Russia, Indonesia, Mexico. A number really didn't make any significant pledges or new pledges at all, and I just wondered what is the UK hoping or planning to do between now and November's COP 26 meeting to change that?

00:16:39 - Alison Campbell

Thank you, and thanks to Richard and the team for having me on this panel as well. It is obviously the focus of our efforts towards COP 26. We've got six months to go now. We've just had the US Summit, which I think as Monica said, was a really important step and a really important moment to build the political momentum and political will because that's what's going to be really important as we go towards COP 26 that leaders engage in this and really look at how they can increase ambition.

I think you've mentioned that we saw a strong showing from the NDC commitments and the 2030 targets from the G7, and I think that is really important because we have been saying both, as COP President and President of the G7, that it is the responsibility of the G7 to be putting our best foot forward and taking the lead. And I think the signal that it now sends to other countries that we have all of the G7 with their net-zero targets on the table with 2030 and NDCs on the table that are aligned with that and having increased ambition between 10 and 20% from Paris. I think that is really important, and then it allows us to go into that conversation with some of those other countries that you talked about on a much stronger footing because we are very clear as COP President that that we need to leave Glasgow keeping 1.5 degrees in reach.

That doesn't mean of course, only the G7 and other developed countries acting. It also means the middle-income countries. It means all countries increasing ambition towards COP, and so we will continue through our diplomacy to send those messages and to try and put forward the narrative that Monica also said came very strongly from the US summit, which is also about opportunity and jobs. So, I think that's one important element. Another important aspect of this that we haven't discussed so far, and especially when we get to some of the countries that you mentioned, is the need to also show progress on finance and adaptation. I think the conversation is focused on the mitigation side so far, but we are also clear as COP President that we need to step up as donors and to deliver the 100 billion. And we need to show that the finance is flowing and give countries confidence that that support is available and that we're all moving on this transition together.

So yes, we didn't see every single country move at the Biden Summit, I would have been incredibly impressed with Monica and the diplomacy team in the US if that happened. We had our own Climate Ambition Summit back in December, and we saw that as a step in the road when we had 75 countries come forward with NDCs. I think the US summit has added to that and has added to the momentum and that political will. And we have six months left and a number of other steps on the road through our G7 Presidency, through the Commonwealth Summit, the G20 through UNGA, the UN General Assembly and at COP 26 itself. And I think, we just need to keep pushing for progress through each of those steps and as we move to COP 26.

00:20:10 - Pilita Clark

Thank you for that. Just a reminder to everyone, please do send in your questions. Just type them into the chat box at the bottom of your screen everybody watching, and we will be endeavouring to take as many of them as we can throughout the conversation.

But Youssef, just let me turn to you. In February, your boss, Patricia Espinosa the UN's top climate official, put out a report showing where countries were up to in terms of their pledges for the Paris Agreement. And she was very critical of the fact that they were nowhere near the stage needed to meet those goals. I just wonder in the wake of the summit, are things in the office feeling a little easier. Are you more optimistic now or has it in some ways, perhaps even made your job harder?

00:21:05 - Youssef Nassef

No, certainly more optimistic, Pilita. It's important to see what's the objective. The objective prescribed by the science, which is 45% reduction compared to 2010 by 2030. And that's our sort of threshold that we're measuring everything against. During this COVID year, which started last year obviously, our hope is that all of these political moments can help push slightly towards that goal in the end. So, we had in the beginning of the year, there was an Adaptation Summit. Then we have the Ministerial on Climate Action. Then we had the President Biden Summit. Then next week, we'll have Petersberg. There will be the UNGA. There's probably going to be something there on climate change. And so, every one of these gives a push or a chance, a platform for more announcements to be made for coalitions to be forged, for initiatives that bring us closer.

So certainly, the biggest leap and ambition that we've seen has been out of the Biden Summit. And certainly, we are feeling more optimistic as we move towards the COP. We will have another report coming up late in September with all the new up-to-date information submitted until the end of July. And then anything submitted after the end of July that did not make its way to that revised report will still have an opportunity for another addendum to come by the time of the COP. So, we're hopeful that this number keeps moving as we move forward, certainly bolstered considerably by the announcement from the summit last week, and then hopefully we're in the right direction. So, yes, optimistic.

IS THE DIAL MOVING: TARGETS, PLEDGES, AND ACTION?

00:22:43 - Pilita Clark

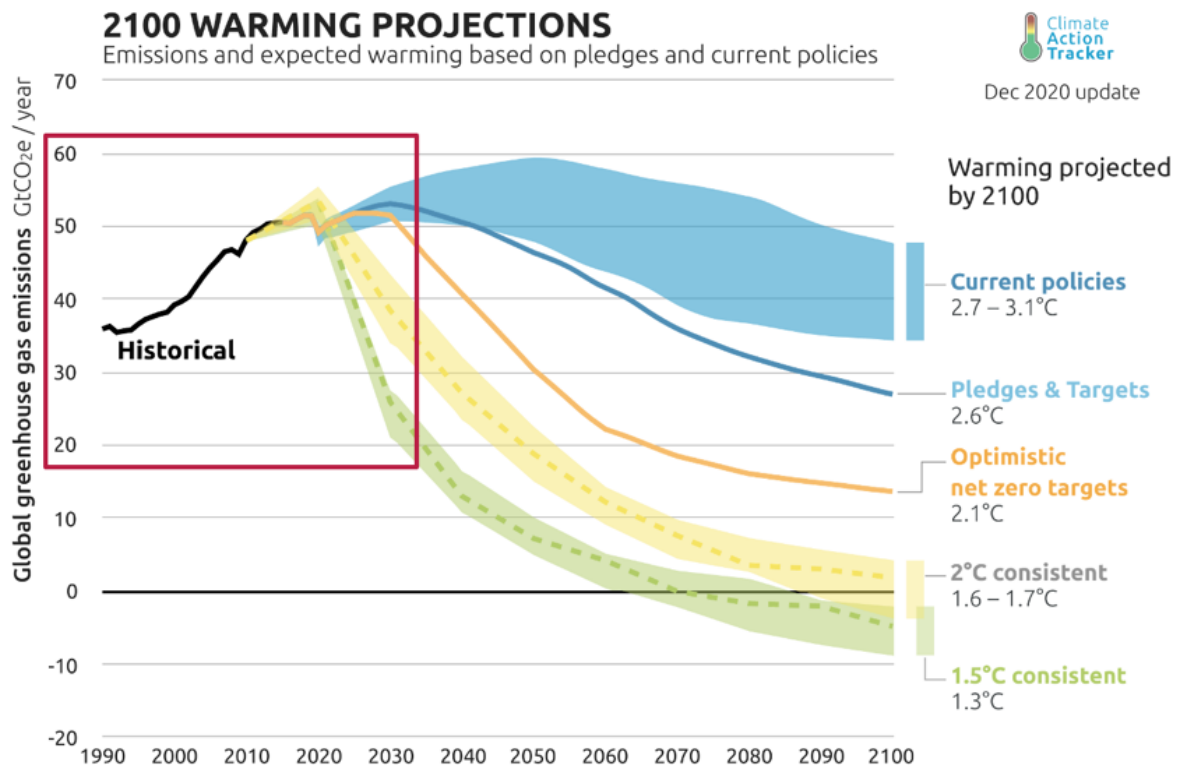
Alright, well, you mentioned the word science. Niklas, you have been following the UN climate negotiations forever. I think since something like 1995. You've contributed to several IPCC reports, and you created the Climate Action Tracker which keeps an eye on the pledges, the NDCs, as we say in the jargon that you have just mentioned. Can you tell us what this summit has done in terms of making it easier to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement?

00:23:15 - Niklas Hoehne

Thanks a lot, Pilita, and thanks Richard for the invitation to be here with a great panel. I have the privilege to show a few slides if I may. So, if we can show that, (see graphic: "2100 Warming Projections") indeed we can look at this for quite a while. And usually, it's frustrating business. But now, things are really moving, and it's the first time since I'm looking at this that we have good news, which is really nice after that many years. What I'm showing here is a few slides from the project, Climate Action Tracker, which is a project that we had in the NewClimate Institute that we are doing together with Climate Analytics. And we look at what's happening globally.

So here, you see the global greenhouse gas emissions in the past years. They have gone up unfortunately, in the past, but where they have to go is to go down for 1.5 degrees which is the goal (or one of the goals) of the Paris Agreement. You can see it's a drastic change. It's halving global emissions from now until 2030, or the minus 45% that Youssef mentioned. It is that order of magnitude, it is not nothing. It's halving global emissions in the next 10 years. This is a super big effort, and then going to zero by 2050 or somewhere after that. But we are, if you go to the next one, at 2 degrees, which is not Paris compatible because Paris has well below 2 degrees. It would be still cutting emissions by 25% from today until 2030. So even that is difficult. But this blue line is where we're really going.

This is with current policies, what countries have put in place. They're policies that have been implemented at home, and if they do those and emissions go in that way and its uncertain with Covid and everything else, we will basically be at 3 degrees or 2.9 degrees at the end of the century, which basically means catastrophic climate change. So, it is a situation that we definitely have to avoid.



Climate Action Tracker", courtesy Prof. Niklas Hoehne, NewClimate Institute climateactiontracker.org/global/temperatures/

That's why we have the Paris Agreement and the pledges and targets those countries have put forward. And on the next one, you see that if we take all of these pledges into account, you can see not too much is happening in the short-term, but at least in the long term, some reductions are there. These also include the long-term pledges that countries have put into the Paris Agreement, so the EU, for example, has a long-term target and submitted all the long-term, LTSs, that have been submitted. So already going a bit further with 2.6 degrees, much better, but still far away from the 1.5. And then the good news is, and that's for me, the good news of last year, that more and more countries are subscribing to net-zero. That now includes China at net-zero 2060 and also the US net-zero by 2050.

And if you take this very, very positive interpretation, take all the 127 countries that have considered or have adopted net-zero targets, so including US, including China, and assume that they really do what they promised, then we go down to 2.1 degrees by the end of the century.

So, this is really good. Much better than before, good news and it is hopeful. These are good long-term intentions. They are very good and are to be commended. But what I'm really worried about is short-term implementation. If we look at here, this little box here, which I'm going to zoom in, you can see the huge gap that we have in the short-term. If we are really interested in 1.5 degrees, then as I said, global emissions need to be halved in the next 10 years. And currently, they are more stable, which you see on the next slide, where you will see this cut out. This only period from 1990 to 2030, and here you see this huge gap with all the pledges that were on the table in September basically, last year. Emissions are basically stable until 2030, but they have to be cut in half to be in line with 1.5. So, there's a huge gap. If you want to say it in gigatons, it's 23 to 27 gigatons of emissions which is basically twice as much emissions as we are allowed to have.

Now, what the interesting bit is what happened now with the summit, we have new pledges actually. We have new pledges from the EU already last year, and we have new pledges from the US, and all of these new updates that have come since September. They reduce this gap by a substantial amount. I would say around three gigatons or 12 to 14%, which is the positive news. The negative news: it is still a large gap. But okay, we have never ever seen such a big jump in just a few days, so this is positive news. So, if you look at this little green change, this is roughly three gigatons.

On the next slide, you will see where that comes from. So that's the total three gigatons reductions that are new. And they come mainly from the US, which is the biggest contribution when you compare it to no targets. That's what we're doing here. So, under Trump, there was no NDC out of the Paris agreement, so no target was the baseline here. And the new target is really significantly more ambitious. Then you had the EU, which went from minus 40 to minus 55 percent. You had China, which made already last year a proposal, a modest proposal to increase ambition for 2030. You had, Japan is new, the UK also last year. Canada is new, and Ukraine was also last year.

This is the positive news. Now what's missing? And what is the negative news? You have, unfortunately, countries that went backwards. Brazil, for example. It looks like the same, but if you do the numbers, it's less. And you have certain countries that have submitted exactly the same thing. As we've seen, we have this huge gap. And we basically need to flip into emergency mode if we are serious about this. And then the one thing that should not happen is that the country submits exactly the same as before, exactly the same that they've submitted five years ago, which includes Australia, Mexico, Brazil and Russia. And other countries, or Indonesia, said that they probably will not submit something more ambitious. That's still unclear.

And then we have a round of countries that have not said anything, from the G20 here, India, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. So, I think what we've heard is what's really needed now. Of the countries that have made their pledges - great, excellent. Even they have to go back and hopefully overachieve them to further narrow the gap. And then the countries that have not made pledges need to go back and think about what still can be done. Over to you, Pilita.

00:30:20 - Pilita

That's great, thank you very much Niklas. Just so I am sure I've got this straight. We still need to find about at least 20 gigatons worth of cuts between now and 2030, correct?

00:030:37 - Niklas Hoehne

Yes, if we want to stay on this pathway towards 1.5°C.

00:30:40 – Pilita Clark

Right, and given that most of the parties, most of the countries, that have joined the Paris Agreement don't actually emit anything like one gigaton of CO2 equivalent. Doesn't that mean in essence, that we need even more action, perhaps from the big emitters, China, the US, the EU? More than what they've already pledged for 2030? Otherwise, where is it going to come from?

00:31:10 - Niklas Hoehne

Now first of all, I think we need it from everybody. If you look at what countries have put forward, they are asked to say why their contribution is fair. And many said, "Our contribution is fair because we are small." If you add up all the countries that have said, "Our contribution is fair because we are small," then you come up to 1/4 of all global greenhouse gas emissions. So, the countries that say it's fair because we are small, they make up 25% of global emissions. So that means to me every country counts. So even if you are small, you need to go back and see what you can do.

Then, I think, yes, for developed countries, we need to cut emissions in half in the next 10 years. None of the developed countries are proposing that from themselves. Maybe the UK, but the EU is not, the US is not, and so, Japan is definitely not. Canada is not. Those countries are not proposing for themselves to cut emissions in half in the next 10 years. And also, they then basically have to look at what other things they can do. And the third point is developing countries cannot do it alone, and we have heard this already. Financing is a very important part of the puzzle. Developed countries need to reduce their emissions, but they also significantly need to increase their financing to developing countries, otherwise they will have no chance to go on a pathway that is prescribed here.

00:32:35 - Pilita Clark

Just before I move on to someone else, can you just go back a bit. Alison was explaining the UK is saying it's going to be cutting emissions 78% by 2035, which sounds as though it's going to be in the ballpark, at least, of cutting emissions in half in the next 10 years, but I guess it's the baseline that matters. Is that right?

00:32:55 - Niklas Hoehne

Exactly. I'm always speaking about 'from today,' and many of the targets are from 1990 (for the EU and for the UK, that's where the emissions were the highest). For the US, it's from 2005, which is also at the point where they were the highest. So, you also have to calculate how far have they reduced emissions from their respective base year until today. And then from today onwards, from a certain level. Definitely, I think the EU and UK have reduced greenhouse gas emissions significantly in the past 30 years, which is a very good thing, and helps now others to do more. But I'm simplifying by saying: "Okay, if we just simply look at where do people go from today in the next 10 years" then it's more complicated. But as I said, I think the UK is probably the only one that is meeting that kind of a benchmark.

00:33:45 - Pilita Clark

And just one more question before I let you go because we've discussed this actually in the past and you'll be very bored when I ask you this again, but a lot of people watching, of course, read with great

interest the 2018 IPCC report on 1.5 degrees which said that to have any hope of stopping temperatures rising above 1.5 degrees, as you mentioned, emissions have to come down by around 45% by 2030 from 2010 levels. Now where are we at in terms of that 45% number now in the wake of the Biden Summit,

00:34:21 - Niklas Hoehne

Yeah, it's it's well if you compare it to the 45. I mean we have done 5 maybe close five to 10.

00:34:32 - Pilita Clark

Okay so if it's 10%, then that means that instead of the 45% cut, that if everything is implemented, we could be looking at 35% cut.

00:34:43 - Niklas Hoehne

That's the maximum.

00:34:45 - Pilita Clark

That's encouraging.

00:34:47 - Niklas Hoehne

it is encouraging and I really want to say half-full half-empty. Now I'm now doing this for 20 years almost, and never we were able to get anywhere close to 2 or 1.5 degrees. And now for the very first time, we at least see it somewhere in the horizon with the ambition that countries put on the table. So, I'm more hopeful than I've ever been. And also, this big step with the Biden Summit it was remarkable to get all these countries on board. For example, Japan. Japan had submitted a target. It has now submitted a better one just a few months later. That is very good result out of this positive spiral that has been created, so that's why I'm more hopeful than ever. Although the task is big, but we can still do it.

00:35:37 - Pilita Clark

Yes, I just wanted to ask you realistically, Li Shuo. First of all, do you think that we are likely to see another major commitment from Beijing in terms of near-term climate pledge between now and 2030 that's going to make a meaningful difference? In other words, are we going to be able to see anything like the contribution that Niklas is talking about still being needed?

00:36:07 - Li Shuo

Well, I guess have we have no other choice, right? We do need further ambition from major economies. I think from the Chinese perspective, if I look at the political, diplomatic and economic conditions for further ambition, we are actually at a much better place than a few years ago. Talking about economic conditions - building nuclear power plants for example - burning more coal simply does not make economic sense anymore in China. If you build more coal fired power plants, you're going to burn money, not coal, right? So, I think a very compelling economic argument can be built now in a much stronger way than a few years ago.

The second point here is if Niklas was looking at the glass half-full, then please also allow me to look at the glass half-empty, which is that we cannot afford in simply assuming all the targets that are put

on paper will be delivered in practise. There is still a lot of work to do simply to deliver what has been committed. And going forward post-April 22nd, I also see that as a major area for further work. You know, particularly among the major powers, they need to look at each other and ensure that what they have promised are indeed enforced.

US-CHINA COOPERATION

00:37:47 - Pilita Clark

And just before I go to Monica, what about the fact that unlike in 2014 and 2015, in the lead up to the Paris Agreement, the situation now between the US and China, is quite scratchy and, in fact, I've heard you say on previous panels say that, if anything, it's more akin to the lead up to the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Summit (which as we know, was not covered in glory - sorry Richard I know that brings back harsh memories) but that is probably closer to where we were now. Now, that was before the Biden Summit, do you still think that we're not going to be able to see the sort of close collaboration that we saw between the US and China that helped to make the Paris agreement actually happen?

00:38:37 - Li Shuo

Well, look, I think the first thing that I would say is, as someone based in China, we need to realise that there is only an effective climate solution if the major powers are aligned on this particular agenda. We can understand how this can really help us in the run-up to the Paris Agreement, so we really need to find a way for this to work. In the context of this, I do see the recent joint statement between the US and China in Shanghai as a concrete step forward.

I think post-April 22nd, there needs to be a lot of follow up work right to further firm up this cooperation so that more and more political trust can be built. But based on what I have said, I don't think we should be politically naïve? For colleagues that are not familiar with where the US-China relationship is at the moment, it is in pretty bad shape, right. So, we cannot guarantee that the climate agenda will be fully vaccinated from the more toxic overall bilateral relationship. So, we need to be prepared about that. We shouldn't be naive that we can somehow go back to the Paris time. We need to be prepared and think about how in this more complicated and delicate geopolitical environment, the climate agenda can still be progressed. And that's why the G7 and G20 putting climate firmly on some of the subsequent multilateral high political moments is very critical.

00:40:24 - Pilita Clark

Monica, can you respond to that? Is that pretty much the view from Washington as well that it is going to be quite a climb back to get anywhere near the position that you were ahead of the Paris agreement when it comes to relations with China on climate change?

00:40:40 - Monica Dean

I want to go back to something that you said (or the question you initially posed) to Li Shuo regarding how we actually get to these big 2030 45% emission reduction cuts. One of the things that has been sort of ubiquitous in all of the comments today is an assumption that technology, innovation and deployment is remaining at the level that we're currently seeing. And what we've seen time and time again is an acceleration and also exceeding of expectations. Every time the IEA released their reports on what renewable deployment will look like, we have beat it. And so, I think one of the reasons that we remain hopeful is because the markets are moving that way, because innovation is moving that

way, and if we put the investment into research and development to drive that innovation, we can get there. And so, I just want to reinforce that we truly believe we can do this.

And I think that, combined with all of these other lovely participants on the panel, through cooperation, through acting together, both developing countries and developed major economies, we can absolutely deliver what's needed to keep 1.5 degrees within reach. On the point regarding cooperation, I think the joint statement is evidence that climate change remains a stand-alone issue in the relationship between China and the US. And we are committed to working with them to fulfil all the work that was laid out in that statement. And we look forward to doing that. But we also look forward to doing that with every other country that came to the summit. And so, we know that the road to Glasgow is 6 months away, and we are not in a sprint, we are in a marathon. It's a marathon. We have a lot of work to do to continue to work with everyone so that all targets aren't just targets – but they're implemented. That is where our objective is going forward.

ENSURING UNFCCC COP26 SUCCESS

00:42:40 - Pilita Clark

Thanks for that. Richard, can I just bring you in? You had so much experience. All of this conversation is obviously incredibly familiar to you from your many years at the UNFCCC. What do you think is going to be the main hurdle now? If you were back in Bonn, and if it was up to you now to be thinking about how these pledges should really be implemented and accelerated, what would your advice be?

00:43:10 - Richard Kinley

I have to say, after long experience, viewing, often with optimism, these pledges coming in, one can only be disappointed that 30 years after the Framework Convention [on Climate Change – UNFCCC] was agreed, we're still in such a bad situation. So, the points that a couple of colleagues have made about the importance of implementation are, to me, absolutely critical, and this means really keeping the pressure on governments. I think Monica's point about technology is really important; so, there's a role for business and the economic actors to move that forward, but also for government to drive, and legislate, and require change. It won't just happen out of the goodness of people's hearts. One of the things, actually, that I was really struck by, and encouraged by, from the summit and the Biden administration's approach is the emphasis that they have put on "all-of-government".

For so many years, climate has been stuck in climate ministries or in environment ministries and hasn't really budged very far. Occasionally it pops up onto the table of the of the Heads of Government and then it disappears. You get a wave of progress, but we really need to follow the example that President Biden is now delivering in Washington by making all of his Cabinet secretaries active and committed to move on climate change. And this needs to be the case in all governments, not just in a few. A few do it, but not very many. To me, once you get the transport ministries and the energy ministries (who often are resisting things rather than promoting them) and the industry ministries, once these people, these ministers and their whole teams, can drive that agenda forward, we will have a much better chance to hit the kind of benchmarks that Niklas has been speaking about.

00:45:15 - Pilita Clark

Jennifer, I want to go to you because when you look at what the EU is doing, it has obviously been a huge environmental leader on environmental policy leader for many years. But Richard is right in that it hasn't actually managed to bring the whole of government or the sense that it's brought a whole of

government approach to climate yet. Would you agree with that? Or do you think that's an unfair characterization?

00:45:46 - Jennifer Tollmann

I think it's essentially an overgeneralisation. The EU is not a homogeneous entity, and I think that we have certainly seen the European Green Deal bring a bit more of a whole of government approach to the Commission and the European institutions' approaches. But then, when you look country-to-country, it varies drastically. So, this is an issue. But I do still think that the EU is leading and anchoring its pledges and its target in policy and things like the Climate Law. They really do have a good story to tell there, and they offer a lot of technical assistance to the world.

The one piece that is still missing here (and Niklas did mention it) is that good policies aren't going to change the fact that the vast majority of the world is facing a fiscal crisis. And it is not going to change the fact that the vast majority of the world quite simply does not have the money to invest in the transitions that would allow them to set higher targets that could then be anchored in policy propositions. And so, while I do think that the governance and policy processes are incredibly important, they aren't going to be what closes the gap this year. We need to really be looking at where can investment in green recovery be not just a luxury for the G7 but can actually be unlocked for other parties in such a way that they can still even consider setting higher targets ahead of COP 26.

I think that's the real question over the next six months and over the next three months: between now and the G7 summit, the Franco-Africa summit, and the G20 Venice summit. These are the real questions because if we don't get that big money shifted, then the 100 billion and delivery on climate adaptation finance (as necessary as it is) isn't actually going to shift the pathway that we are seeing over the next decade, and I think we're seeing a lot of that reflected in the questions and the comments as well.

So, I think alignment on unlocking development finance flows, unlocking SDR reallocation and recycling (we've already seen some shift that SDR is kind of the geeky term for special drawing rights from the IMF as kind of the lender of last resort), but really, just giving some of these governments the fiscal headspace to make any sort of decision. And that doesn't just go for lower-income countries. That is also the case for parts of the G20. And I think that's the next step that we really need to be focusing on.

The one thing that this summit didn't show is an alliance-building behind unlocking that money for green recoveries elsewhere. And that's what really concerns me. I would just like to say on this that Paris wasn't a G20 stitch up. Paris happened because there was a broad coalition of actors behind it, including vulnerable countries that worked together with the EU and with the UK to build a rules-based system around that G20 compromise. And we're not going to see that emerge as long as vulnerable countries are struggling to even get vaccinated, to even invest in anything, to see any form of solidarity, or multilateral systems delivering for them.

So, I would caution us in thinking that just looking at that relationship between the US and China is going to give us any measure of success at COP. It is an incredibly important factor. But alliance building, and whether that works or doesn't over the next six months, that's going to make or break COP 26. And the EU and UK are big factors in that. Thank you.

00:48:48 - Pilita Clark

When you refer to the \$100 billion, that's the \$100 billion a year that wealthier countries said would be mobilised by now. It hasn't been. Obviously, we've had a pandemic. But can you just tell us where we're up to when it comes to that pledge in the UN negotiations?

00:49:10 - Jennifer Tollmann

I'm not best placed on this panel. I think others might be. The thing that I would point to is that when we talk about green recovery when not talking about 100 million, we're talking about literally trillions. So, I do think we need to think in different sums of money if we're actually thinking about shaping the next decade. And it is an incredibly important commitment that was made, and therefore, there is value in fulfilling it, both monetary and diplomatic, in terms of trust built in the system. But the actual money that we need is more in the 1 to 2.5 trillion 'ballpark'. This is very much a ballpark figure.

00:49:43 - Pilita Clark

We do have an answer from one of our very well-informed audience members saying that we are at around 70 billion at the moment, which is not 100 billion. We've got a lot of interesting questions and some of them relate to Alison. Now Alison, we are, as you said, just six months away from the November COP; and we have India in crisis, and we have a number of European countries, even still with quite severe Covid restrictions. Vaccinations clearly are not being spread and not being rolled out equally around the world. Isn't it really just going to be impossible to have anything approaching what we would all regard as a "normal" COP meeting in November in Glasgow?

00:50:35 - Alison Campbell

No, when I think of a "normal" COP meeting, I think it is stretch to imagine exactly as we've seen in previous years. But you know, I think yes - that there are other crises happening in the world. And then I think, we all know how difficult that has been especially in India right now, and then for pretty much every country around the world. But just to flip that question slightly, I think you can't put one crisis on hold in order to solve another, especially when the response to one can help another. We've seen a lot of talk about the green recovery. We need to make sure the Covid recovery teaches us so that that we learn lessons from what has happened from the COVID crisis, in terms of our resilience, in terms of sustainability, in terms of how we are treating our planet, and we use that to put the world on a much more sustainable footing.

So, I think these two crises are coming to a head at the same time, and it's equally important that we deal with them both. And, you know, we are here today to talk about the US summit last week with President Biden. As you said, who brought 40 world leaders, including 17 of the major economies who prioritised and put that time towards this issue because I think they recognise that it is a crisis that does need to be dealt with and that we can't put on hold. We obviously had to delay COP for one-year last year.

I think both the Prime Minister and the COP president have been clear that we're working towards an in-person meeting in November, and the Prime Minister last week called on world leaders to come with ambition. I think it's a consistent message that we need the political will to tackle this issue, and that we can't completely dissociate it from everything else that is happening in the world and our economy.

So no, I think in some respects, (obviously in terms of the restrictions that are in place that makes things difficult), but in terms of what we are seeing now, in political will, I think Niklas said it was, the biggest step forward he's seen this year. And in this year, where we're having a COVID crisis, I think that shows that the seriousness and the urgency with which this is now being felt. So, I guess it depends how you categorise a "normal" COP.

00:53:09 - Pilita Clark

Well, when I say “normal” COP I mean an enormous event with thousands and thousands of people, not just the negotiators from the negotiating teams from each country which, by the way, can add up easily. I think I'm right in saying this. Richard Youssef will correct me, but you could easily get around 2000 people just in the negotiating teams alone. And then of course, you've got all of the people who typically come - everyone from NGOs to Fortune 500 companies and everybody on the outside having all of their events and putting pressure on the negotiators inside in many cases. That surely can't go ahead, right? You could have the leaders coming. You could have the negotiators, but surely there can't be any room for what is known in the trade as “civil society” to be meeting in the way that they normally would.

00:53:39 - Monica Dean

The team is doing a lot of work with public health officials, with the Scottish Government, with all of our partners and with UNFCCC. And we are looking at how we can have an in-person event that obviously prioritises the health of individuals. And also, one that really crucially enables delegates to participate on an equal footing. We have heard very clearly from a number of countries that the negotiations need to be in-person. We are obviously also looking at how we can use technology and some of the best practises that's coming from events like this. I think we're all much more used to doing virtual events now to make this summit as inclusive as possible. We are very clearly planning for an in-person event whilst looking at how technology can be used to make sure that all of the other activity that goes on, as you say around a “normal” COP, can take place in some shape or form.

00:55:00 - Pilita Clark

We had quite a lot of questions building up, and I am going to get to them very quickly. But Youssef, I just want to ask you, because the UNFCCC secretariat as it's now called UN Climate Change, is actually organising a big meeting in June that's going to go for three weeks, as a preparatory meeting ahead of COP. Now normally, these things only go for about 2 weeks. I understand that you've had to make it go for three weeks just because when you put these things online, it's incredibly difficult and it takes that long. I also understand it's going to be really difficult for a lot of people from a lot of countries to take part. Can you explain to what are some of the logistical changes that you've had to make, to make this meeting work? Because it may well be that they end up influencing what happens in Glasgow, I imagine.

00:55:52 - Youssef Nassef

In terms of the June session, the reason it's three weeks is because we have to confine the number of hours per day to probably 3 hours in order to accommodate as many time zones as possible. And with that, we still have to rotate time zones to enable sort of equal span across the world, across the three weeks. Now, the Covid crisis, and one of the questions referred to this, it offers us challenges but perhaps opportunities. We have been able to conduct throughout the year a lot of virtual meetings. There has been easier access to Ministers and to Heads of State since they don't have to fly in order to attend the meeting. And so, we can capitalise fully on this opportunity.

And speaking about COP, it might not have as many people in-person, but it could end up being the biggest COP in history if we manage the hybrid solution well and be as inclusive as possible so those who aren't there can participate. So right now, we're improving and handling the notion of virtual negotiations and the June session. Even though it's labelled as the subsidiary body sessions, all the negotiations or deliberations will be conducted informally, so no final decision-making will be taken until the parties can meet in person in Glasgow.

And so, thinking of the opportunities, the parallels between the Covid crisis and the climate crisis, I can't help but recall the proverbial frog in the boiling water. When you throw the frog in water that's already boiled, it jumps out. That's what's happening with Covid. Confronted with it, everyone is immediately responding, massive amounts of money are being put there. But when the water's boiling slowly, even though the end result may be the same or worse, then the sense of urgency is a bit different.

And so, as we move between here and Glasgow, it is obviously that half-empty portion of the glass that Niklas was talking about, and how does one then bridge that gap? It would not be a great outcome if we reached there, and the numbers are still showing a massive gap. Between now and then, if governments are close to the end of their capacity for what they're willing to pledge, as Richard said, there are a lot of other actors, and we have a climate action stream that tries to address all kinds of different players in the field.

And there's one of the questions that mentioned corporations, and certainly there are industries that need to be addressed (i.e.: concrete and steel). And note that, we just read somewhere that the top 1% are emitting as much as the bottom 50%. The world has 2,755 billionaires whose net worth is \$13 trillion. By comparison, the GDP of the US's 21 trillion to China's 14. So, we need to be starting to address players in addition to governments, in order to push that ambition train further. And through our platforms, between now and the end of the year, I think we should maximise the mobilisation of these efforts including in the Ministerial and Heads of State events that are coming up to push for other places - not just governments but with everybody.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND COP 26

00:59:36 - Pilita Clark

Now, that's great. But now, I know Jennifer unfortunately has to leave for another meeting. But Jennifer, just before you go, just tell us: are you booked into a hotel in Glasgow somewhere?

00:59:45 - Jennifer Tollmann

I'm not, but I'm really hoping that there might be some friendly civil society crowd surfing, but I would just leave with the challenge that civil society is not periphery at these meetings. That doesn't count for all civil society, but there is a very important function. And while I agree that virtual events have seen an opening up of participation from a variety of government stakeholders, it has held a lot of pitfalls for civil society participation in the form that we usually benefit from at COPs. For example, which is informal coffees with negotiators, being able to grab somebody on the way out of the room just to clarify what is going on, as well as just the space for bilateral consultations.

I would not underestimate how important that is in the way that we work into the process in the way that we try to enable accountability and transparency within the process. But also, in the way that we help translate the process and pass it into us into our local communities into the government into our media landscape.

So, civil society at COPs is not just side events, there is a function that we try to fill to really make sure that this is a process that gets the maximum amount out of it for the planet and the people that we represent and therefore we ask that we are not peripheral in the considerations of how we enable our participation. I'm hoping that Li Shuo and Niklas my interventions on this panel have proved what we bring to the process. So, a little pitch as I leave and apologies to this fantastic panel. I would love to listen to more of this conversation. Thank you so much to FOGGS for convening this and thank you to you Pilita.

GLOBAL ENERGY TRANSITION

01:01:03 - Pilita Clark

Well, thanks so much, Jennifer. Well, I guess Alison and Youssef heard that loud and clear, and I'm pretty sure it's probably not for the first time. I just want to go to some of the questions that have been coming in here: Niklas, there's one in particular you, saying that you make the important point that to achieve the 1.5-degree target, need to half emissions in 10 years, but central to that is the energy transition. What's actually your sense that the global energy architecture is really on the right path at the moment when it comes to making such an enormous transition.

01:02:07 - Niklas Hoehne

Yes, I think we mentioned it before that renewable energy technologies for example, they surprise us every year and how fast costs are reduced just by the sheer mass of it. So now, five years after Paris, the world is completely different and, in our view, the future of energy system is completely different than it was five years ago. We know that renewables have become much cheaper and we can do completely different things. Renewable storage, electric mobility etc, all of that is very different to what we thought five years ago. That for me is one point that actually now all countries that made a commitment five years ago, it's outdated. You basically have to review it, and you can do more than you did before.

Monica was saying that she's hopeful that we can do it, and I'm equally hopeful. We have all the tools; we have the technology to do it. It's more about the society or how decisions are made. I think we're investing a lot into renewables, but other parts of society are also investing a lot in coal fired power plants. Li Shou was saying they're investing in burning money, not burning coal. I really think all of the coal fired power plants that are built today will never ever run economically until the end of their life. It is simply impossible; it will not work. So, every investor has to really think whether it's a good idea to build a coal fired power plant today anywhere in the world.

01:03:42 - Pilita Clark

What about the new coal mine in Cumbria for example?

01:03:46 - Niklas Hoehne

Same thing, anywhere in the world. It doesn't work, coal is on the downward path. I would even say investing in new gas infrastructure, anywhere is not a good idea. We have solar with storage is in many places of the world cheaper than building a new gas fired turbine. It's I think these kinds of investments are not a good idea.

01:04:14 - Pilita Clark

Alison, I mean you know I'm not meaning to be too facetious about Cumbrian coal mines, but obviously it must have complicated your job earlier this year when these plans for a new coal mine in Cumbria were on the table. They're not quite as rigidly on the table as they were now, but at the same time there's also been a plan put on the table that still is there very much, which is to cut international aid. The UK is saying that climate finance is still going to be a priority, but surely this is a problem when

you are trying to encourage countries around the world to contribute more finance and cut emissions. If the UK is still doing this, is it still a problem for you?

01:04:58 - Alison Campbell

Well, I think if you look at the big picture of what we're doing in the UK, you know the first country to put net-zero into law, we came out with our end ambitious NDC of 68% by 2030 and we've gone further to make a 2035 commitment in law for 78% reductions. Our coal usage has reduced 40% between 2012 and 2019. It's now 2% of our energy mix from what was, a very coal dependent country in the past and on the finance side we have come out and said we will spend 11.6 billion on climate finance to the period of 2025, and that commitment stands. There is a lot that we are doing as the UK to show a direction of travel and to show leadership, I think you know that's where we're focusing our efforts and are certainly encourage in others to do the same.

AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS

01:06:02 - Pilita Clark

And when it comes to the UK's objectives for COP 26, what are your main objectives, the top one or two? If you can just spell them out for us, what is that you really want to achieve from this meeting?

01:06:20 - Alison Campbell

I'm afraid I'm going to give you 4 instead of one or two because we have four very clear goals for COP 26. The first thing to say is that we are being very clear as COP President that we want to see a high ambition outcome from Glasgow, that that delivers an urgent response to some of the ambition gaps that we've been talking about today. Specifically, on 1.5 degrees, on adaptation and it's on finance and particularly the delivery of the 100 billion.

As I said within that we've got four goals. On mitigation, we need to leave Glasgow at 1.5°C in reach. I think we've had talk of this decisive decade; I think we all know what needs to be done. We're calling for all countries to come forward with ambitious 2030 targets such as their NDCs aligned with 1.5° and long-term strategies to reach net-zero. So, I think that's clear.

Secondly, on adaptation we need a step change here on a number of levels and it needs to be a lot more central to countries planning and we need countries to come forward with their adaptation plans to the UNFCCC, and we really need donors to scale up adaptation finance, so countries are supported in doing that.

I think the third goal on finance, we really need donor countries to drive on evidence progress on the 100 billion, and show that finance both public and private, is flowing and we need to begin discussions as well on the Post 2025 framework. It's not just about the quantum of finance, we need to also address issues of access and quality, and we need the IFIs to be also aligning their portfolios with Paris.

Then finally, and this has come up a few times in this conversation, but the fourth goal is around collaboration. This is something that we all have to do together and I think the strength of Paris is it's of universality and we need to deliver on our negotiating mandates. We need to finalise the Paris rule book, and things that give countries confidence that, as we said before, these targets will be implemented, reported on, and accounted for.

We're also using our presidency to enhance collaboration and push for transformation and change in some of the sectors that we've been talking about today. We've heard about coal, the need to fade it out, and so we were putting a lot of emphasis on clean energy, clean transport and on nature. So sorry, that was four instead of one or two, but I think in a nutshell, that's what we're aiming for.

01:08:57 - Pilita Clark

No, that's very understandable, it's a fine set of objectives. I'm actually thinking about now of a paper that Richard co-authored a little while ago, with other former leaders from the UNFCCC, which talked about the fact that the UN climate process itself was previously well ahead of public consciousness on climate change but actually had come to lag it. In other words, public sentiment and in fact anger, and activism, as we've seen with Greta Thunberg and students, and in fact a whole range of other actors have been really coming to the fore in the last couple of years or so. They're kind of demanding more of the UN process, then the UN process itself in some ways I would argue is basically set up to deliver. Is that fair do you think Richard? And do you think that you've seen any signs of change since your paper was published.

01:10:04 - Richard Kinley

For me, it's really important to have a sense of what a COP can do. It was very good to hear from Alison the objectives of the UK Presidency. But if you roll that back to think about concrete outcomes from a COP, the first that you could get is a treaty. Well, we're not going to get that. There's no expectation of a treaty from Glasgow.

The second is COP decisions. Basically, where you have consensus amongst all governments that they're going to decide something and do it. And here I think Alison mentioned we must finish the rule book to implement the Paris Agreement. There are transparency measures that need to be agreed and adopted. That's really important homework that can be done in a negotiation process. For me, what's critical is will it be possible to deliver consensus COP decisions that entrench 2030 and 2050 as landmark or milestone outcomes? That will be a real measure of the achievement of Glasgow if that can be done.

But another thing about a COP is that there are all sorts of things that are important about COPs that have nothing to do with the decision-making process or the formal negotiations. And a number of the colleagues today have referred to the civil society aspects, the mobilisation around COPs, these events that happen "on the side". All of that contributes to give a sense that something is happening - that we have a momentum growing and that we've reached a turning point. To me, this will be the critical thing, especially in a Covid time, to try to orchestrate - that COP 26 will give that sense that we have turned a corner and we're on our way to a different place.

Now, the negotiators are struggling, I think. In times when there isn't head of state engagement, it's really hard for negotiators to get attention. So, the fact that we are now in an era when you have heads of state engagement means, I think, that there's a better chance of success. Similarly, with the business community also coming in, and the finance sector in particular coming in, I think that also is a very positive element.

For me, one of the real things to keep an eye on is will it be possible for the UK and for others to generate these kinds of "coalitions of the willing" around touchstone issues where you don't need 190 countries to agree on an outcome. You really need the major players to agree - on things like coal. I mean, it's really scandalous what is what is happening on coal in the world today. It's absolutely scandalous! Will it be possible to have even some sort of side arrangement that would take us another step forward on coal, or fossil fuel subsidies, or carbon pricing. These have all been kicked around on the side-lines for a long time. This is a moment when we can do something decisive and I really hope

that the presidency, with its allies and major countries like the United States, by working with all that Jennifer made the point that Paris was a success because it was a conference of coalitions of every interested group and country. So, that, to me, would be a really essential thing to keep in mind - to give the process a chance to succeed because of all the buy-in, momentum and engagement and not let inertia and vested interests hold things back.

01:14:00 - Pilita Clark

Yes, and just by the way everybody Joanna Depledge just kindly posted a link to the paper that Richard co-authored in the chat there, which I do recommend. Let me ask, Alison and Youssef from where you sit, how realistic and actually Monica and Li Shou would like to ask you as well, but you know how realistic is it that the sorts of measures that Richard just mentioned could in fact somehow become part of the process.

Alison you first, I mean can you see some way, of pushing to get some sort of agreement on an end of fossil fuel subsidies which people have been talking about for I don't know how long, well over a decade, it's actually even the G20 I think, was probably more than a decade now since they said they were going to wind them all up and of course, there's still not. Can you imagine that it might be possible to inject that into the process?

01:14:58 - Alison Campbell

I said before that that we need to leave Glasgow, showing that we are responding to the gaps that we know are in front of us on mitigation, adaptation, and finance. So, I think we do need to be looking at high ambition outcomes from Glasgow that do that. We obviously, as the COP presidency. we are not the decision maker; we are the ones that are bringing countries together to get to these outcomes in these solutions and I think you know that the collaboration point and that every country needs to be involved in this process and that they are very important points and we need to facilitate that. I think you know now we've got the session in June that you said was talking about where finally, you know we can get parties to discuss these issues, and even if it's in a virtual setting, and I think that's going to give us some sense of direction of where the discussions are going.

You know the COP president has been really clear that he plans to convene ministers, and he's been doing a lot of travelling and bilateral meetings. It's also important that ministers can meet in a multilateral setting and then we have a set of, leader level events towards COP 26 as well that would that we need to utilise and so we continue to believe, and I think we have to believe that that ambition is possible from Glasgow and it's not only possible, it's vital and so I think is as COP President we will keep working to facilitate that and I'm sure Youssef has his views as well.

01:16:35 - Pilita Clark

Youssef, what's your view? How do we let it happen?

01:16:38 - Youssef Nassef

Yes, I totally agree and I think Richard alludes to a very important point which is that not everything arises from the rigorous negotiating process but also from a parallel process. Just rewinding a bit when the Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015, the rhythm that was set for the negotiations planned for the first political moment, where we assess an ambition to happen in 2023. The first, global stock take. In the meantime, in 2018 and 2019 we got alarm calls from the science from the IPCC and the 1.5 report and the "it-best" report in in 2019. Those I think created that shift switching gear of public consciousness that you were talking about and we saw that reflected very strongly in Madrid when

civil society was extremely vocal at the slow pace of ambition which was not on the agenda of negotiations.

In Glasgow there is no item to assess the NDCs or the synthesis report. It is supposed to be produced, but there's no negotiation on it. So that parallel process would be really important for ambition, whether it results in the form of a declaration from Heads of State or otherwise to give that push towards ambition. So yes, there will be negotiations on things like completing the rule book, on transparency, on Article 6 but that part on ambition, on mitigation on adaptation and finance, a lot of it will happen in parallel and will be empowered by strong statements by the leaders. It may be reflected in the overarching decision, which is 11CP26 in a sentence or two, but the thrust will not come from a protracted negotiation but travel from the efforts of leaders between now and then, and the combination of that in public statements that will, will lead to some political commitment of the type you're talking about.

01:18:35 - Pilita Clark

Yes, Li Shuo, I just wanted to know if there were a push to get some sort of process for agreement on carbon pricing, although I'm not talking about Article 6 itself. If there was some sort of push to get some sort of agreement on carbon pricing beyond what's being talked about in Article 6, China is apparently about to finally launch its ETS, an emissions trading scheme nationally, but is not quite there yet. What do you think? Its response would be and Monica same question to you after Li Shou is spoken.

01:19:19- Li Shuo

Well, no, I think China should certainly support that approach. The current price, that's where the country has been working on for the past decade and then making baby steps over the past few years. But this year, the pilot ETS system will be expanded nationwide, we still need to tighten the cap and we also need to broaden the coverage of our carbon pricing system to not only the power sector but also increasingly the heavy industries. So, I do hope that China could play a supporting role, but also, in the context of our COP 26.

I do agree that there seems to be two baskets of issues. The ones that we require move lateral deliberation that is going to be delivered by the composition, and on the other hand another basket on real-world application. What you will do domestically and contributions towards providing finance. I do also see a very important role for China in both of these two baskets, either on a formal finalising of the Paris rule book, where key thing for China there is how to interpret CDBR and how this will be reflected.

01:20:43- - Pilita Clark

"Common But differentiated responsibilities" I thought my brain wasn't going to be able to pronounce that again, but there we just managed. There you go.

01:20:58 – Li Shuo

Yes, and that's primarily about what different common responsibilities are developing and developed countries should take. There, we certainly need some leadership from the Chinese side to deliver the rule book in the in the true spirit of the Paris Agreement. And then of course on the real word ambition side, you know further progress in coal. As I said, the conditions are getting mature and it is in China's interest to do so, and it will automatically help China to fulfil the 2030 peaking and the 2060 carbon neutrality goals.

01:21:32 - Pilita Clark

Yes, and Monica, carbon pricing was not included in the White House statement last week. Some people think that that was a problem, and I'm going to ask Niklas next whether he thinks that, scientifically speaking, it is. But from your perspective, do you think we can realistically expect to see the administration embrace the idea of pushing for carbon pricing in this first term of Mr Biden's?

01:20:05 - Monica Dean

Yeah, I think there were a lot of expectations for exactly everything we could accomplish in 100 days and I'm quite proud of everything that we have set forward already. I would say that similar to Li Shuo's comments, that we are predominantly focused on finishing the Paris Rule book and in finalising that joint understanding of how carbon markets are going to work. I also want to come back to your initial question that sort of kicked this off regarding participation in the COP, and the fact that the COP is sort of rigid in form.

There's a set agenda, there's set stakeholders that are all engaged, and one of the things that we learned in the United States over the last four years is how critical it is to have cities, to have governors and to have other non-state actors involved, because they are the large reason how we're going to meet a lot of our emissions reduction targets. We need to make sure that we're not just engaging at the COP, but also participating in these other fora to make sure that their work is moving forward and that they have the right support that they need as well. So, it's not just youth, that's also the mayors that's also indigenous stakeholders, its everyone. And going back to that, all of government response, it's an all of society response. I think that's also part of our work moving forward.

01:23:46 - Pilita Clark

Yes, thank you. And Niklas, how important do you think it is or how much would it shift the dial that you are constantly monitoring when it comes to reaching the Paris temperature goals if there could be some sort of greater agreement on carbon pricing, or indeed an end to fossil fuel subsidies or rapid phase out coal, what's the most important?

01:24:010 - Niklas Hoehne

I think I mentioned before that we are in emergency situation, and there's no single measure which can do the trick. We have to do everything, and we have to try everything. The great thing about ending fossil fuel subsidies and carbon pricing is that you generate new revenues that you can then use to even accelerate the transition. I think that's the main positive element of carbon pricing, but it alone will not do the trick, but it is an important piece of the puzzle. I've shown before this huge emissions gap which we still have and what you can also do, and what we tried to do that at UNEP emissions gap reports is to measure other areas where critical mass has been achieved.

So how many countries do have ambitious com pricing, or how many countries or even companies, cities, and regions have net-zero targets? I think for net-zero targets we have reached critical mass. It's 2/3 of global emissions that are covered already, so great tick it off. But how many countries have 100% renewable targets, or cities, regions, and companies? Not that many, but quite a quite a few. How many have 100% electric vehicle targets and for when? That group is increasing very, very fast but you can also count how many countries have said that they will stop extracting oil for example? Not many, Denmark is the biggest one so far. Or how many have said and achieved ending fossil fuel subsidies or emission free steel, or zero emission flying?

In all of them you find a few players now that have this ambitious goal. But that's the thing is the COP and this whole process can incentivise groups around these different topics and we see these groups are growing and growing so fast that they have critical mass. And once they have critical mass then the whole global system flips. But these are many things that we have to look at.

01:26:10 - Pilita Clark

Yeah, this is a really interesting point. I'm not sure that many people have really focused on what Denmark did. I think it I think I'm correct in saying that it basically said that it was not going to allow new contracts for drilling oil that the industry was expecting, which was quite a difficult decision to make. You probably can tell us more about what happened as a result then I can, but it didn't go down that well uniformly in all quarters, correct?

01:26:48 - Niklas Hoehne

No, it's not easy at all, but that's the whole transition is very, very difficult and you have to really be careful to do it and to compensate those that lose the most, through this idea of a just transition. And again, by having a carbon price and getting money in, that helps to then redistribute that money. But we have to face it if we are serious about 1.5°, we need to end oil extraction, we need to end coal and we need to do something to the communities that are suffering most from that transition. That's very clear and but that's the challenge that we have.

01:27:20 - Pilita Clark

Yes, and we're just at the very beginning of what I think is going to be really a crunch period where countries and companies have to actually meet their net-zero targets. We had a very interesting story in this morning's paper about the fact that because the EU carbon price has risen so much over the last year, it's about double what it was before the pandemic, it has put a lot of pressure on European industry who are now really keen for this plan for a carbon border tax to come to fruition pretty quickly. But of course, those carbon border taxes that several of you have mentioned today, are going to be really tricky, so this is time that we're going to be starting to see much more difficult politics coming forward. There's time to just answer one question on this very point here, about how we can hold non state actors accountable. In other words, not countries so much as the companies, in that companies don't have to put in anything like a nationally determined contribution in anything like the Paris agreement process. But they're making some very big announcements. Is there any way realistically that they can be held to account other than by the public, the media, and outside sources? Niklas, what do you think?

01:28:49 - Niklas Hoehne

You know, first of all, I think there's a lot going on with non-state actors, so cities, regions and businesses which is very encouraging. There's a lot of ambition in that group of actors, often going beyond the ambition of national governments. So, if one can create this positive virtuous cycle between these cities, regions and companies saying this is what we want to do with helping the national government or the other the governments to do more, and then they positively going the right way. That would be the right interaction. Holding them 100% accountable is the same issue with holding national governments accountable. We have to do it as a civil society with research.

Coming back to it, we for example have a project looking at how these non-state actors are doing, that's coming out in June and you can have a look there about commitments from regions, cities, and businesses. What are they and have there been implemented in the past? So that's something that I

think the research and civil society community has to have a good eye on. Otherwise, it will just be greenwashing which is not a good thing.

01:29:56 - Pilita Clark

Alright, I would love to keep talking. It's been such an interesting discussion. Thank you all from me for making some incredibly revealing and interesting points. I'm not sure now what to do about my Glasgow hotel booking, but I am very much hoping I'll be seeing as many of you there as possible. Thank you very much. I'm going to hand this back to Richard just to sum up and say goodbye to everyone. Thanks very much.

01:30:22 – Richard Kinley

Well, thank you, Pilita, for really your excellent questions - challenging questions - but also for steering the discussion in a way that brought out so many really interesting questions and dilemmas that the policy community, governments, and others need to address. It really showed the richness of the debate and the diversity of opinions. So, thank you very much! We really appreciate your contribution. To all the panellists - thank you for being here today for 90 minutes. I know you're all very busy! And for bringing insightful and thoughtful, reflective comments and discussion to what was really, I thought, an excellent overview of the issues. And I hope in some small way that this effort by FOGGS can contribute to the ongoing policy discussions and drive us towards a more ambitious climate outcome. I will say just a quick word of thanks to my colleagues from FOGGS for working behind the scenes diligently to set this all up, for dealing with the technology, etc. So, to Georgios, Stuart and Peter, thanks a lot.

And finally, just a reminder that if you found the discussion so riveting that you'd like to watch it again, or even better, that you could recommend it to your friends and family, it will be posted. We're hoping, in the great words of the Framework Convention: we "aim" to post it on our website tomorrow - at FOGGS.org or on the FOGGS Facebook page. You could view it there, recommend it, tweet it and it will live on, and, I hope, be part of the momentum building towards Glasgow. So, with that at 2 minutes overtime, I'll say thank you again everybody. Thank you to those who joined us online. And I wish you all a good evening and have a good weekend. Goodbye.

1:32:40 – End

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