

What did the UK achieve at COP26 and how can COP27 build on its successes?

November 2022



Background

- COP stands for ‘conference of the parties’ and they are UN summits. The first was held in 1995 in Berlin.
- At COP21 in 2015, world leaders signed [The Paris Agreement](#), a legally binding international treaty which requires planning and regularly reporting on contributions to limit global temperature rises as close as possible to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.
- In November 2021, the UK hosted COP26 in Glasgow. The summit resulted in the agreed upon [Glasgow Climate Pact](#) signed by almost 200 countries, and the UK holds the Presidency until COP27.

What did the UK achieve with the presidency at COP26?

- Prior to COP26, the UN had predicted that the world was on a “catastrophic pathway” to 2.7 degrees of heating by the end of the century. [A recent study from the UNFCCC](#) suggests that we’re now on track for 2.5 degrees of warming (short of 1.5 degrees agreed at Paris).
- Net zero commitments were made by countries that now account for [83% of global emissions, 91% of global GDP, and 80% of the world's population](#).
- Countries like India (2070), China (2060) and Australia (2050), made net zero commitments.
- China committed to end overseas coal financing, which equates to [two thirds of future coal in Asia](#). [The Just Energy Transition Partnership](#) was also firmed up, with the US, Britain, France, Germany and the EU providing \$8.5 billion in grants and cheap loans to fund South Africa’s coal exit over the next five years.
- More than 100 world leaders, including leaders from Brazil and Indonesia, [promised to end and reverse deforestation by 2030](#).
- Canada and Italy [joined](#) the UK to end overseas finance for fossil fuels.
- New commitments were made to [double adaptation finance to \\$40 billion by 2025](#) to support developing countries in achieving climate targets.
- India delivered a [new target](#) to reach net zero by 2070 and pledged one half of electricity would be renewable by 2030.
- Over 100 countries signed the [Global Methane Pledge](#), expected to lower global warming by 0.2C.
- There were progressive commitments for the UK private sector, including [mandatory climate disclosure for large companies](#).
- COP25 in 2019 was the first summit where governments recognised the need to [strengthen the understanding of the ocean and climate change under the UNFCCC](#), and mandated the first ocean and climate change dialogue. COP26 built on this and agreed to hold an [annual dialogue](#) and prepare a formal summary report to strengthen ocean-based action to address climate change. Now, the UNFCCC recognises the vital role that marine ecosystems play in acting as carbon sinks, protecting biodiversity, reducing vulnerability to climate change impacts, and supporting livelihoods.

- As a result of COP26, [Nationally Determined Contributions](#) (NDCs), which are formal pledges for emissions reductions, were strengthened across 151 countries for [this year's COP27 summit](#).

How has the UK strengthened and updated its NDC?

[The UK's NDC](#) has been strengthened in several ways:

- It now clarifies how the UK will reduce economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions by at least 68% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, aligning with the Paris Agreement.
- It lays out how the UK will deliver its NDC by 2030, considering policies and plans announced since the NDC was first submitted in December 2020.
- It's scope now includes UK Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories.
- It now provides information on the UK's approach to levelling up, green skills, just transitions and how the UK is supporting other countries with NDC delivery.

What is COP27 and how can it build upon progress at COP26?

- World leaders will meet in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, on November 6th for two weeks of climate negotiations. Leaders confirmed as going include President Biden and Macron.
- [COP27](#) hopes to build on the outcomes of COP26 to negotiate new commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, build resilience and adaptation, and provide finance for developing countries.
- COP27 offers the opportunity to build on the momentum of COP26, particularly in areas [not fully resolved or covered at COP26](#).
- Key areas to be discussed at COP27 include loss and damage financing (which fell short at COP26), establishing a global carbon market, and strengthening commitments to reduce coal dependence.
- The world will be watching to see whether countries will strengthen climate targets and policies and follow through on pledges to phase down fossil fuels. When COP26 concluded last year [over 90% of the world's GDP had been under net zero targets](#), and this year's summit will have the added context of extreme weather conditions such as the flooding in Pakistan, heatwaves in Europe, and the energy crisis as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This will all impact how governments choose to honour commitments made at COP26.
- Every climate summit is now crucial with global warming continuing to escalate, and they provide an annual platform to monitor progress made and negotiate targets needed to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Why should the Prime Minister attend?

- Rising global carbon emissions have brought us closer to reaching a [1.5C degree rise in global temperatures](#).
- COP27 offers hope that world leaders can together avert the worst impacts and address the climate crisis, and the Prime Minister's attendance would signal the UK's support for global leadership, while highlighting responsibility for personal contributions to climate change since the Industrial Revolution.
- Choosing to focus on pressing domestic issues would ignore the global nature of the UK's instabilities, with the rising energy crisis linked to dependence on fossil fuels and climate change threatening global markets.

- COP27 provides a global platform for the Prime Minister to set a precedent for change and build on the successes of COP26.

Where will COP28 be held?

- The 28th session will be held in the [United Arab Emirates in November 2023](#) and will showcase the roles of Egypt and UAE in driving the process of sustainable development and climate action.
- Scheduled to be held at Expo City Dubai, the UAE will hope to drive on COP27's successes, and as the [first country](#) in the region to adopt the Paris Agreement and commit to net zero by 2050, COP28 will hope to bring developing countries along with them in the transition to clean energy and strengthen climate commitments.

What do voters think?

- [YouGov](#) finds 61% of the UK public think Rishi Sunak should attend COP27 and [49% think King Charles should attend](#).
- [The majority of the UK public](#) supports major commitments made at COP26, including 84% in favour of ending deforestation by 2030 and 77% to cut methane emissions by 30% by 2030.
- [Over half of UK adults](#) think the government should do more to tackle climate change.
- [77% of Conservative voters](#) are worried about climate change.