



[World Leaders Gather in Glasgow for the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference](#)

This week, world leaders gathered in Glasgow for the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), as advocates stressed the urgent need for action on the issue. Climate activists have placed significant pressure on global actors to initiate strong policies and mechanisms through coordinative efforts, as opposed to simply “blowing hot air” without enacting actual substantive measures to address the crisis. Subject experts have consistently warned that the ongoing existential threat of climate change stands at a critical breaking point and must be alleviated within the decade. COP26 is the largest climate conference in years, with the United States returning to the stage after a multi-year absence under the previous Trump administration. The participating countries set parameters for long-term climate policy and delivered some noteworthy achievements in what many have regarded as a relatively productive summit so far, but with agreement that more still needs to be done to fully tackle the scope of the potential calamitous impacts of the crisis.

COP26 is arguably the most important climate conference since the Paris Climate Accords of 2016. During the period of time between these two, the United States has been notably absent from major climate crisis discussions, as the preceding Trump administration dismissed the need for climate change measures. Some analysts credibly argue that this hampered the global community’s ability to adopt bold and collaborative international climate policy – in large part due to the United States’ undeniably essential role in any prospective fruitful efforts on this issue. Now, the Biden administration and other key world actors are trying to make up for the 4-year freeze on forward-thinking and tangible climate change measures.

So far, COP26 has been a predominantly productive conference. The United States and 90 other countries agreed to reduce methane emissions by 2030, and many also cooperated on the issue of deforestation. Major financial pledges were also made, both from the private sector and governments. In combination with nations setting parameters for responsible climate policy, a coalition of the world’s biggest investors, banks, and insurers – who control a total of \$130 trillion in assets – announced that they were committing to use the financial capital to hit net zero emissions targets in their investments by the year 2050. Additionally, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos pledged \$2 billion on helping to restore natural habitats and transforming food systems. A few smaller nations also raised some criticisms of their larger counterparts, citing that much of the negative climate impact has come from the latter and devastated those who have less means to deal with the adverse ramifications. As such, they called on the world’s major economies to put in the most financial compensation for climate policy.

The climate measures that have been agreed upon are undoubtedly consequential. Significant progress has been made in the fight against climate change, however, even the most optimistic contend that a great deal of effort is still needed – particularly in the vital coming decade. Advancements in the areas of energy production reform and food processing must be made, in addition to a widespread shift in the political agendas of governments around the world towards a climate-first approach.