



Glasgow – A Climate Change Summit Success?

It All Depends on Translating Commitments Into Action

It ran a day longer than expected, and, no surprise, the results are mixed. Indeed, the nearly 200 countries represented actually put off to next year the negotiation of enhanced emissions targets (COP27 is scheduled for November 8 – 20, 2022 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt).

Summarizing is difficult; actually a bit painful in light of the many reports summarized in my [earlier blog](#). So, how to address it here?

First, and most importantly, the official version: the [Outcomes of the Glasgow Climate Change Conference – Advance Unedited Versions \(AUVs\)](#). The governing body lists the advanced unedited versions of the decisions reached at the Glasgow Climate Change Conference. The full reports will be published later.

Now, some obvious overarching facts:

(i) The largest carbon emissions come from three countries: China, the United States, and India. The Russian Federation is in fourth place, unless you consider the countries making up the EU, which would put the EU in fourth place. Any combination of the top four shows those countries emitting over 50% of the global total.

China generates around 28% of all global emissions; the United States almost 15%; India: 7% Russian Federation: 5%. The ranking below shows emissions measured in millions of tons of CO₂ in 2019. Here is the ranking from the [Union of Concerned Scientists](#):

1. China, with more than 10,065 million tons of CO₂ released.

2. United States, with 5,416 million tons of CO₂
3. India, with 2,654 million tons of CO₂
4. Russia, with 1,711 million tons of CO₂

Thus, arguably, the big four will be responsible for either solving the planet's carbon emissions issues or not.

(2) No consensus has ever been reached among (a) industry interests that resist enforceable regulatory programs, (b) the demands of developing countries for money to transition away from fossil fuels, and (c) a vocal citizens' movement demanding emissions reductions more quickly.

(3) As summarized by Alok Sharma, the British politician presiding at the conference said: The pledges made at COP26 have **kept the goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees "within reach — but its pulse is weak . . . And it will only survive if we keep our promises, if we translate commitments into rapid action."** In the words of Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain who hailed the climate agreement declaring that Glasgow had "sounded the death knell for coal power," his exuberance was "tinged with disappointment" that the agreements were not more ambitious.

And from the Swedish activist, Greta Thunberg? She accused the conference of being nothing more than "blah, blah, blah."

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