

Under2 Coalition at COP26

Members' Briefing for the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference | September 2021

States and regions of the Under2 Coalition prepping for leadership in Glasgow

This briefing offers key information to states and regions of the Under2 Coalition to form their strategy for COP26. States and regions of the Under2 Coalition are working with the Secretariat to build a strong agenda at COP26. This briefing lays out an overview of the agenda, the key negotiation issues, the possible outcomes and key opportunities and messages for states and regions to engage at COP26. We will keep this briefing updated and will be sharing this with members regularly, including logistics information as we get closer to COP26.

UN Climate Change Conference UK 2021 – COP26

The United Kingdom is hosting the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) at the Scottish Event Campus (SEC) in Glasgow from Monday, 1 November – Friday, 12 November 2021, in partnership with Italy. The UK is prioritising the following for COP26:

- Adaptation and resilience
- Nature
- Energy transition
- Clean road transport
- Finance

Venue: The [Scottish Event Campus \(SEC\)](#) is the chosen venue for COP26. A map location for the SEC can be found [here](#).

Goals from COP26: 'The last best chance'

1. **Secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach:** Parties (national governments) are being asked to come forward with ambitious 2030 emissions reductions targets that align with reaching net zero by the middle of the century. To deliver on these stretch targets, countries will need to:
 - accelerate the phase-out of coal
 - curtail deforestation
 - speed up the switch to electric vehicles
 - encourage investment in renewables
 - decarbonize heavy industry

2. **Adapt to protect communities and natural habitats:** Climate change is manifesting in devastation and extreme weather already, and it is expected to get worse even as we reduce emissions. At COP26, countries need to work together to enable and encourage countries affected by climate change to:
 - protect and restore ecosystems
 - build defences, warning systems and resilient infrastructure and agriculture to avoid loss of homes, livelihoods and human life

3. **Mobilise finance:** To achieve the first two goals, advanced and developed economies need to make good on their promise to mobilise at least \$100 billion in climate finance per year by 2020 (as agreed to in Paris). International financial institutions are expected to step up and play their part towards unleashing trillions in private and public sector finance required to secure a net zero future, globally.

4. **Work together to deliver:** The global community can only rise to the challenges of the climate crisis by working together. At COP26 countries must:
 - finalise the Paris Rulebook (the detailed rules that make the Paris Agreement operational)
 - accelerate action to tackle the climate crisis through collaboration between all actors in society including subnational governments, businesses and civil society

Presidency Programme

WEEK ONE						
SUNDAY OCTOBER 31ST	MONDAY NOVEMBER 1ST	TUESDAY NOVEMBER 2ND	WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 3RD	THURSDAY NOVEMBER 4TH	FRIDAY NOVEMBER 5TH	SATURDAY NOVEMBER 6TH
PROCEDURAL OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS	WORLD LEADERS SUMMIT Welcoming world leaders to COP to put forward high level ambition and action towards securing global net zero and keeping 1.5 degrees in reach; adapting to protect communities and natural habitats; and mobilising finance.		FINANCE Mobilising public and private finance flows at scale for mitigation and adaptation.	ENERGY Accelerating the global transition to clean energy.	YOUTH AND PUBLIC EMPOWERMENT Elevating the voice of young people and demonstrating the critical role of public empowerment and education in climate action.	NATURE Ensuring the importance of nature and sustainable land use are part of global action on climate change and a clean, green recovery.
WEEK TWO						
SUNDAY NOVEMBER 7TH	MONDAY NOVEMBER 8TH	TUESDAY NOVEMBER 9TH	WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 10TH	THURSDAY NOVEMBER 11TH	FRIDAY NOVEMBER 12TH	SATURDAY NOVEMBER 13TH
REST DAY AHEAD OF THE SECOND WEEK OF NEGOTIATIONS	ADAPTATION, LOSS AND DAMAGE Delivering the practical solutions needed to adapt to climate impacts and address loss and damage.	GENDER Progressing gender equality and the full and meaningful participation of women and girls in climate action. SCIENCE AND INNOVATION Demonstrating that science and innovation can deliver climate solutions to meet, and accelerate, increased ambition.	TRANSPORT Driving the global transition to zero emission transport.	CITIES, REGIONS & BUILT ENVIRONMENT Advancing action in the places we live, from communities, through to cities and regions.	CLOSURE OF NEGOTIATIONS	

The full presidency programme is available here: <https://2nsbq1gn1rl23zol93eyrcj-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/COP26-Presidency-Programme.pdf>

Negotiations 2021

The 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) has been described as the “last best chance” by US climate envoy John Kerry which underlines the how important this milestone is since the adoption of Paris Agreement in 2015. The aim of this year’s summit in Glasgow is twofold:

1. Deliver a clear political commitment to increase the level of climate action ambition;
2. Agree the set of guidelines (or ‘Rulebook’) to ensure the full implementation of the Paris Agreement.

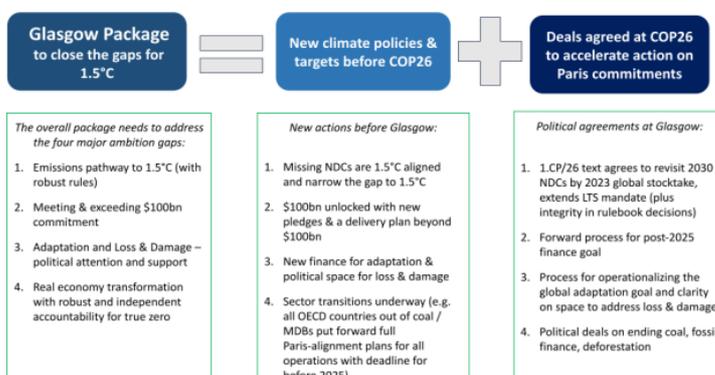
Required political commitment: According to the [2015 Paris Agreement](#), national governments (Parties) are expected to update, enhance and submit their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) every five years. Five years after the Paris Agreement was signed, COP26 provides the first opportunity for countries to submit their new and enhanced NDCs.

COP26 must be an accelerator as we move into a decade of delivery to keep 1.5°C in sight. The [IPCC AR6 WGI report](#) has reinforced the urgency of action to limit climate change to 1.5°C. Its findings have starkly emphasised the inadequacy of efforts on adaptation, resilience and loss & damage to date, all of which remains underfunded.

Current policies fail to bridge the gap between our current trajectory and what needs to be done to keep 1.5°C within reach: they are projected to result in about 2.9°C warming above pre-industrial levels. Pledges made so far under the Paris Agreement for 2030 would bring warming to about 2.4°C; and accounting for announced net-zero targets of major emitters would bring this down to about 2°C, if and only if all policies and actions were to strictly align with these announcements. Global emissions are expected to rise 16% by 2030 on 2010 levels under governments’ plans put forward since the start of 2020 where they need to be 45% below, according to [the synthesis report from UN Climate Change](#) released in September 2021.

By COP26 at the latest, countries whose contributions are not aligned with this goal will need to present increased 2030 ambition. The largest historical emitters and all G20 countries should lead the way with credible 2050 or earlier net zero commitments, renewed and 1.5°C aligned 2030 NDCs that cut emissions in half this decade, and put us on a pathway that is positive for nature. The COP26 outcome will need to set a roadmap out how the 1.5°C gap will be closed in coming years.

The Glasgow Package: Whilst views may differ on the possible elements of a Glasgow Package it is clear that outcomes are needed both now (pre-COP26) and in Glasgow to set up an arc of ambition out of COP26 to close the ambition gap in the early 2020s:



Key Messages towards COP26

An ambitious overall political COP26 outcome would at a minimum:

- Accelerate action to close the remaining gap to meet the 1.5°C temperature objective. All countries must be ready to take action to align their policies, their NDCs, with halving emissions by 2030, while restoring nature. Any country missing this imperative is expected to come back at an accelerated timeline to provide this assurance. This should happen before the Global Stocktake (in recognition of the science), and ensure all other deliverables serve to achieve that goal, in line with Paris.
- Address the under-delivery of the \$100bn/year commitment, commit to meet and exceed the goal instead, set the process for agreeing a new post-2025 finance goal, with adaptation financing and support for loss and damage. See latest news on the US announcement on finance: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/sep/21/joe-biden-un-general-assembly-climate-aid-developing-countries>
- Operationalize the global goal on adaptation, land strong governance for loss and damage and open a robust process to address loss and damage needs of vulnerable countries, including on finance.
- Ensure high-ambition and high-integrity rules outcomes on Article 6, common-timeframes and transparency. Finalize the Paris rulebook guaranteeing its integrity considering the Paris objectives.
- Accelerate real economy transformations, marking the end of deforestation and the end of fossil fuels, including moving away from coal, gas, oil, and accelerating renewables and energy efficiency.
- Ensure the integrity of net zero commitments, from countries and non-state actors (including those in the Race to Zero).
- Glasgow has an additional challenge we shall all have to meet and overcome – it shall have to be a fair COP, one where equity stands as the core principle, and participation by all stakeholders is fairly and sincerely guaranteed.

The Under2 Coalition at COP26

- **Under2 Leaders' Gala Dinner**

When: Saturday, 6 November

Where: [Stirling Castle](#)

Address: Castle Wynd, Stirling FK8 1EJ (Please find a map locating the venue [here](#))

Hosted by the Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP, as First Minister of Scotland, European Co-chair of the Under2 Coalition and host region to COP26, the Under2 Leaders' Gala Dinner will convene key leaders from states, regions, provinces and other subnational governments worldwide with key global climate leaders to celebrate climate leadership on **Saturday, 6 November at Stirling Castle**. The evening will offer a reflection on the Under2 Coalition's collective achievements from the past years, and a look at what's ahead with a focus on 'moving forward from the framing of Paris to action at Glasgow'. The event will include the launch of the Under2 Coalition Leadership Awards and recognise individual leadership of the states, regions and provinces of the Under2 Coalition.

- **Under2 Coalition 2021 General Assembly: Rhetoric to Reality**

When: Sunday, 7 November, 10 am – 3:30 pm

Where: [Technology and Innovation Centre \(TIC\) at Strathclyde University](#)

Address: 99 George St, Glasgow G1 1RD (Please find a map locating the venue [here](#).)

The venue is less than a 30-minute drive from the COP26 premises, and a 30-minute commute on public transport.)

The Under2 Coalition General Assembly is the annual meeting of the states and regions of the Coalition. It convenes states and regions in a unique opportunity to share their knowledge and first-hand experience, as well as demonstrate ambitious action that has been implemented to challenge the international community to play its part. During this year's General Assembly on **Sunday, 7 November**, Under2 Coalition states and regions will showcase their plans for urgent 2030 action, building up from their efforts on green recovery. It will be attended by Governors, Premiers and Ministers of the Coalition either in person, or virtually.

Note: The Under2 Coalition Secretariat is working with the assumption that the General Assembly will be an in-person event with provisions for delegates to dial-in virtually. However, we are also planning for the General Assembly to go fully virtual in case there are announcements that COP26 will be a hybrid event (in person for negotiators and virtual for observers and other non-party stakeholders).

Format: The General Assembly is a closed-door meeting for members of the Under2 Coalition to come together to not only reflect on what the Under2 Coalition has achieved so far, but also to decide collectively what more can be done by state and regional leaders in the coming Climate Decade to achieve a Net Zero Future and to support national governments in doing the same. The space provided at Strathclyde University's Technology and Innovation Centre is theatre style auditorium where state and regional governors and ministers featured on stage. The Secretariat is also making provisions for media engagement in the same venue.

Multilevel Action Pavilion at COP26 for regions and cities

The local government and municipal authority (LGMA) COP26 Multilevel Action Pavilion is being convened by ICLEI as the LGMA focal point in the Marrakech Partnership. This pavilion is being hosted by European co-chair Scotland, co-hosted by the Welsh Government as well as Glasgow City Council as well as session partners, including the Under2 Coalition. The program for this pavilion will be shared as the agenda for it develops further. Please get in touch with nkaur@theclimategroup.org for requests on the pavilion.

Key Relevant Events for the COP26 Agenda

- **Impact X Summit, Sydney**
When: Tuesday, 2 November - Wednesday, 3 November
Where: Virtual
Further details: <https://www.theclimategroup.org/impact-x-summit-sydney>
- **Holyrood Magazine COP Fringe Festival**
When: Wednesday, 3 November - Saturday, 6 November
Where: Central Glasgow
Further details: <https://events.holyrood.com/event/cop26fringe/>
- **Climate Group: RouteZero: driving innovation forward on zero emission vehicles**
When: Tuesday, 9 November
Where: SkyPark, Glasgow
- **Regions4: The catalytic role of regional governments for raising ambitions on adaptation and resilience**
When: Monday, 8 November 2 – 3:30 pm GMT
Where: Virtual
Further details: <https://www.regions4.org/news/cop-26-activities/>
- **We Mean Business Coalition: Business Pavilion for Climate Leadership**
Where: COP Blue Zone
When: November 1-12
Further details: https://www.wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/cop26-business-pavilion-for-climate-leadership/?utm_source=We+Mean+Business&utm_campaign=ea04d44ece-December+2017_News_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_07aa7946c8-ea04d44ece-594083177

Communications and Announcement Support at COP26

We will be using COP26 as an opportunity to raise the profile of Under2 Coalition and state and regional governments' climate action. Later in the year, we will be sharing a key speaking points document to support you in communications at COP26 and the General Assembly.

Within our communications plan, there will be a limited number of opportunities to profile governments. If you have a story that you will be telling at COP26 or announcements, please let us know, as we'd be delighted to support you in telling it. For any questions or to let us know about any communications activity you are planning, please contact Sophie Bengler sbengler@theclimategroup.org.

To stay up to date with the latest Under2 Coalition announcements, please follow @ClimateGroup on Twitter as well as #Under2Coalition and sign up to our newsletter here: <https://www.theclimategroup.org/newsletter>

Speaking Opportunities at COP26

There are a limited number of profiling and leadership opportunities open to governments of the Under2 Coalition. Please reach out to Mary-Claire Harvey (mcharvey@theclimategroup.org) if you are travelling to COP26 in Glasgow and are interested in leveraging these opportunities.

Member Delegations at COP26

Climate Group will share a list of Under2 Coalition member delegations to provide support in scheduling bilateral meetings. The list provides official representatives' names for each government attending COP26 as well as a point of contact to schedule meetings, across the two weeks.

If you would like to be included on the list, please send through the names of your delegation along with a contact email address and dates of travel to Mary-Claire Harvey at mcharvey@theclimategroup.org.

Logistics Information

- 1. Accommodation:** A range of accommodation options are available within Glasgow and the surrounding area, including in Edinburgh which is less than 50 miles from Glasgow and only 48 minutes away by train. Hotel bookings are managed by MCI, an independent booking company. You can book your accommodation on <https://www.cop26-accommodation.com/>
- 2. Transport:** Glasgow and the surrounding area are well served by public transport and the main COP venue is served by its own train station. Arrangements are being made to enable delegates to have a range of affordable and sustainable ways to reach the COP venues.
- 3. Visa applications:** Please follow this [short guide to immigration and visa requirements for those attending COP26](#). Delegates are encouraged to apply for required visas as early as possible. Visas are free for those who have an official acknowledgement from the

UNFCCC and apply via the [COP26 visa form](#). There is no link between vaccines and visas. There is no requirement to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to apply for a UK Visa.

4. **Travel Exemptions:** At the UNFCCC Bureau meeting in August, the UK government provided updates on the travel and border regulations that will be in place within England and Scotland for those travelling to COP26. The UK government also assured the Bureau of its commitment to hold an in-person and COVID-secure event.

In summary the rules are:

- everyone must be able to show evidence of pre-arrival COVID-19 negative test result
- everyone must complete a Passenger Locator Form (PLF)
- everyone must participate in the COP26 test programme
- anyone who has been in a red-list country or territory in the 10 days immediately prior to arrival into England or Scotland ([see current list](#)) must undergo Managed Quarantine at the port of entry. If delegates are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, or aged under 18, this will be for 5 days. If not fully vaccinated, or have not declared vaccination status, this will be for 10 days. A bespoke booking process is in place for COP26 attendees, and delegates must be registered on the UNFCCC website to begin the process of booking. Further guidance will be issued shortly.
- if delegates have not been in a red list country or territory they do not have to quarantine

To support these measures, uniquely for COP:

- The UK Government will fund the required Managed Quarantine stays for all Registered COP Attendees (party delegates, observers and media) who would otherwise find it difficult to attend COP, including those from the Global South.
- The UK and Scottish Governments will recognise all COVID-19 vaccinations, and declaration through the UNFCCC registration process as evidence.
- The UK Government will provide a supporting named invitation letter confirming that you are travelling to attend COP26 to help facilitate your travel.

5. **COP26 Covid Measures Update (as of 15 September 2021):** The UK government has updated that the first vaccines delivered through the government's programme have started to be administered. The UK government has also announced Managed Quarantine funding for COP attendees who need it and who would otherwise be unable to join COP26. There is no link between vaccines and visas. There is no requirement to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to apply for a UK Visa.

Drumbeat to COP26

- **76th Session of the UN General Assembly**
20 – 28 September 2021
<https://undocs.org/A/INF/76/4>
- **Climate Week NYC**
20 September – 26 September 2021
<https://www.climateweeknyc.org/>

- **Youth4Climate: Driving Ambition**
28 September – 30 September
<https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/youth4climate-driving-ambition/>
- **Net Zero Festival**
29 September – 1 October 2021
<https://netzerofestival.com/netzerofestival2021/en/page/home>
- **Pre-COP Milan**
30 September – 2 October 2021
<https://ukcop26.org/pre-cop/pre-cop-milan/>
- **G20 Leaders' Summit**
30 October – 31 October

If your government is hosting an event in the run up to COP26, please inform Sophie Bengler sbengler@theclimategroup.org for us to support communications and outreach.

Key Messages for Members

For non-party stakeholders such as states, regions, businesses and cities, it is importance to lead by example, but also use their voice to make a collective ask for national governments to step up to the required level of ambition. With that important role in mind, key messages to national governments include:

Urgency

- This is the Climate Decade: we must halve emissions in the next 10 years.
- The amount of planet-warming carbon dioxide in the atmosphere reached the [highest level in human history](#) in May 2021, according to two separate analyses. The data showed that the pandemic dip in emissions last year wasn't enough to halt the buildup of greenhouse gases and that countries are still far from getting global emissions under control.
- 2021 is a critical year and we need to see increased ambition from all national governments. No country is doing enough, and we need to go further and faster – but we are moving in the right direction.
- COP26 is not just about two weeks in Glasgow, but a year of opportunities for businesses and state and regional governments to support national government action and challenge them to raise ambition.
- Ambition is important and setting out interim targets for 2030 is necessary to set the direction; but ambition alone isn't enough – we need to see action now.
- This ambition and action need to be paid for; we need to see the scaling up of climate finance commitments in support of those that need assistance. Many countries need to not only transition to a low carbon economy but also adapt to the impact of climate change that they are already experiencing.

Long-termism

- We must deliver net-zero CO2 by 2050 (and all emissions by 2070).
- We must see all countries publishing enhanced NDCs with supportive policies and pathways for delivery.

- Companies are already making decisions that go well beyond the length of government policies. Some of the biggest emission reductions will need to come from sectors with tech and capital investments that last for decades. For companies, guessing future government emissions policies comes with huge risks. For countries, the lack of long-term climate targets risks losing out on the investment, innovation, jobs and growth the private sector has now proved possible.
- States and regions need to set 2030 and 2050 targets and develop pathways to reach these. There is a [group of leaders](#), but this must become commonplace. And national governments must support and empower states and regions.

States and regions are leading the way

- While all eyes are on national governments, state and regional governments are increasingly stepping in and stepping up - showing leadership in the face of adversity.
- Not only do states and regions have unique powers to develop and implement climate laws – with effects on air quality, transport, energy, buildings and biodiversity – but they are able to influence national governments across the world and encourage them to be more ambitious.
- The ambition set by leading state and regional governments of the Under2 Coalition should give national governments the confidence to raise their climate targets and catalyse broader action.
- The Under2 Coalition, which was started jointly by California and Baden-Württemberg in the run up to the Paris Summit in 2015, is a leading example of global subnational cooperation. It has grown from strength to strength and is now recognized as the international collaborative initiative with the highest potential to reduce emissions. Governments in the Under2 Coalition have committed to remove 4.9-5.2 Gigatons of CO₂e emissions per year by 2030 – that’s more than the current annual emissions of the European Union.
- Today, the Under2 coalition brings together 260 governments who represent over 1.75 billion people and 50% of the global economy. There are 130 individual states and regions who have signed the Under2 MOU. 35 of those signatories have also committed to reaching net zero emissions by 2050 or earlier.
- In countries where national leadership on climate change is lacking states and regions have continued to enact innovative and ambitious policies to reduce emissions regionally (see examples below). Even in countries with national leadership on climate, the role of states and regions is increasingly relevant for the achievement of Paris Agreement goals and implementation of NDCs.
- Increasing numbers of subnational governments are joining the UN High Level Champions’ [Race to Zero](#) campaign, adopting net zero targets by 2050 or earlier, and implementing pathways to get there. We encourage all states and regions to join such initiatives: using robust pathways to achieve net zero by 2050 at the latest.
- 55% of states and regions with a 2030 emissions reduction target are showing greater ambition than their national counterparts.
- 90% of states and regions reporting a 2030 target have one in line with the IPCC’s goal to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by 40-50% from 2010 levels by 2030.
- As we approach COP26 in 2021, we must also see collaboration between national governments and their state and regional counterparts to set the highest ambition possible for the Climate Decade. Under2 Coalition projects have seen initiatives started at regional become adopted nationally and form a blueprint for future climate work.
- States and regions are proven leaders on climate action, and only by working together can we successfully transition to a net zero world of equity and resilience.

Additional Information and Key Resources

Net Zero Futures: Led by our [co-chair](#) Scotland, in partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies and Climate Group, Net Zero Futures connects Under2 Coalition members with existing net zero targets with states and regions interested in increasing their ambition. Join a dedicated Net Zero Leaders Group to demonstrate how ambitious targets can be set - and achieved - and support other states and regions in making progress in their own jurisdictions. More information here:

<https://www.theclimategroup.org/net-zero-futures>

Race to Zero: Race to Zero is the UN-backed global campaign rallying non-state actors – including companies, cities, regions, financial and educational institutions – to take rigorous and immediate action to halve global emissions by 2030 and deliver a healthier, fairer zero carbon world in time.

As a partner to the Race to Zero, the Under2 Coalition Secretariat – Climate Group supports individual states, regions, provinces, prefectures and other subnational 'actors' to join Race to Zero.

More information here: <https://www.theclimategroup.org/join-race-to-zero>

Net Zero by 2050: This special report by the International Energy Agency is a comprehensive study of how to transition to a net zero energy system by 2050 while ensuring stable and affordable energy supplies, providing universal energy access, and enabling robust economic growth. It sets out a cost-effective and economically productive pathway, resulting in a clean, dynamic and resilient energy economy dominated by renewables like solar and wind instead of fossil fuels. The report also examines key uncertainties, such as the roles of bioenergy, carbon capture and behavioural changes in reaching net zero. <https://www.iea.org/reports/net-zero-by-2050>

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