

Historic compensation fund approved at UN climate talks

By SETH BORENSTEIN, SAMY MAGDY and FRANK JORDANS

6 minutes ago



1 of 14

[Xie Zhenhua, China's special envoy for climate, left, and Sherry Rehman, minister of climate change for Pakistan, pose for photos during a break in a closing plenary session at the COP27 U.N. Climate Summit, Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. \(AP Photo/Peter Dejong\)](#)

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt (AP) — Negotiators early Sunday approved a historic deal that would create a fund for compensating poor nations that are victims of extreme weather worsened by rich countries' carbon pollution, but an overall larger agreement still was up in the air because of a fight over emission reduction efforts.

After the decision on the fund was approved, talks were put on hold for 30 minutes so delegates could read texts of other measures they were to vote on.

The decision establishes a fund for what negotiators call **loss and damage**. It is a big win for poorer nations which have long called for cash — sometimes viewed as reparations — because they are often the victims of climate worsened **floods, droughts, heat waves, famines** and **storms** despite having contributed little to the pollution that heats up the globe.

It is also long been called an issue of climate justice.

“This is how a 30-year-old journey of ours has finally, we hope, found fruition today,” said Pakistan Climate Minister Sherry Rehman, who often took the lead for the world’s poorest nations. One-third of her nation **was submerged this summer by a devastating flood** and she and other officials used the motto: “What went on in Pakistan will not stay in Pakistan.”

FLOODS

20 killed in van accident as record floods haunt Pakistan

Nigeria floods 80 times more likely with climate change

As climate warms, a China planner advocates "sponge cities"

Waters again threaten Australia town flooded 2 weeks ago

Maldives Environment Minister Aminath Shauna told The AP Saturday “that means for countries like ours we will have the mosaic of solutions that we have been advocating for.”

Outside experts hailed the decision as historic.

“This loss and damage fund will be a lifeline for poor families whose houses are destroyed, farmers whose fields are ruined, and islanders forced from their ancestral homes,” said Ani Dasgupta, president of the environmental think tank World Resources Institute, minutes after the early morning approval. “This positive outcome from COP27 is an important step toward rebuilding trust with vulnerable countries.”

It’s a reflection of what can be done when the poorest nations remain unified, said Alex Scott, a climate diplomacy expert at the think tank E3G.

“I think this is huge to have governments coming together to actually work out at least the first step of ... how to deal with the issue of loss and damage,” Scott said. But like all climate financials, it is one thing to create a fund, it’s another to get money flowing in and out, she said. The developed world still has not kept its 2009 pledge to spend \$100 billion a year in other climate aid — designed to help poor nations develop green energy and adapt to future warming.

The agreement “offers hope to the vulnerable people that they will get help to recover from climate disasters and rebuild their lives,” said Harjeet Singh, head of global political strategy at Climate Action Network International.

“Loss and damage is a way of both recognizing past harm and compensating for that past harm,” said Dartmouth climate scientist Justin Mankin, who calculated dollar amounts for each country’s warming. “These harms are scientifically identifiable.”

“In many ways we’re talking about reparations,” said University of Maryland environmental health and justice professor Sacoby Wilson. “It’s an appropriate term to use” he said, because the rich northern countries got the benefits of fossil fuels, while the poorer global south gets the damage in floods, droughts, climate refugees and hunger.

The Egyptian presidency, which had been under criticism by all sides, proposed a new loss and damage deal Saturday afternoon and within a couple hours an agreement was struck, but Norway’s negotiator said it was not so much the Egyptians but countries working together.

Germany climate envoy Jennifer Morgan and Chilean Environment Minister Maisa Rojas, who shepherded the deal on to the agenda and to the finish line, hugged each other after passage, posed for a photo and said “yeah, we made it!”

According to the agreement, the fund would initially draw on contributions from developed countries and other private and public sources such as international financial institutions. While major emerging economies such as China would not initially be required to contribute, that option remains

on the table and will be negotiated over the coming years. This is a key demand by the European Union and the United States, who argue that China and other large polluters currently classified as developing countries have the financial clout and responsibility to pay their way.

The fund would be largely aimed at the most vulnerable nations, though there would be room for middle-income countries that are severely battered by climate disasters to get aid.

Bleary-eyed ruffled delegations began to fill the plenary room 4 a.m. local time Sunday without seeing the overarching cover decision.

Going into the final session, battle lines were drawn over India's request to change last year's agreement that called for a phase down of "unabated coal" to include a phase down of oil and natural gas, two other fossil fuels that produce heat-trapping gases. While European nations and others keep pushing for that language, Saudi Arabia, Russia and Nigeria have been insistent on keeping it out.

"We are extremely on overtime. There were some good spirits earlier today. I think more people are more frustrated about the lack of progress," Norwegian climate change minister Espen Barth Eide told The Associated Press. He said it came down to getting tougher on fossil fuel emissions and retaining the goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times as was agreed in last year's climate summit in Glasgow.

"Some of us are trying to say that we actually have to keep global warming under 1.5 degrees and that requires some action. We have to reduce our use of fossil fuels, for instance," Eide said. "But there's a very strong fossil fuel lobby ... trying to block any language that we produce. So that's quite clear."

There was strong concern among both developed and developing countries about proposals on cutting greenhouse gas emissions, known as mitigation. Officials said the language put forward by Egypt backtracked on some of the commitments made at last year's U.N. climate conference in Glasgow aimed at keeping alive the target of [limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius \(2.7 Fahrenheit\)](#) since pre-industrial times. The world has already

warmed 1.1 degrees Celsius (2 degrees Fahrenheit) since the mid 19th century.

Some of the Egyptian language on mitigation seemingly reverted to the 2015 Paris agreement, which was before scientists knew [how crucial the 1.5 degree threshold was](#) and heavily mentioned a weaker 2-degree Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) goal, which is why scientists and Europeans are afraid of backtracking, said climate scientist Maarten van Aalst of the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre.

Ireland's Minister for the Environment Eamon Ryan said: "We need to get a deal on 1.5 degrees. We need strong wording on mitigation and that's what we're going to push."

Wanjohi Kabukuru, David Keyton, Theodora Tongas and Kelvin Chan contributed to this report.

Cop27 on cusp of 'historic step' as rich nations relent on climate aid to poor

Developed countries agree in principle to 'loss and damage' fund for vulnerable nations as talks run on past deadline

[Cop27 live – latest news updates](#)



A climate activist in Egypt sends a message to delegates at the Cop27 climate summit. Photograph: Mohamed Abd El Ghany/Reuters

Fiona Harvey in Sharm el-Sheikh and Nina Lakhani

Sat 19 Nov 2022 22.06 GMT

14m ago
02.51 GMT

Cop27 agrees a "loss and damage" fund for poorer countries

We are starting to get reactions now for what was agreed in the last hour, and the news about the passing of a loss and damage fund is being celebrated.

To be clear, campaigners for poorer nations have been pushing for a funding facility that would help them pay for the impacts of climate change for years.

Just getting this onto the **Cop27** agenda was seen as a victory, so to have a scheme agreed is a huge step.

Nabeel Munir, Pakistani diplomat and chief negotiator for the G77 told the Guardian:

It's a historic moment. Culmination of 30 years of work and

beginning of a new chapter in pursuit of climate justice. A ray of hope for countries most affected by climate induced close and damage.

We are still in this “30 minute” suspension of the main plenary at Cop27. But here’s what we gather is happening now.

Each Cop ends with a final overall text and this draft appeared to have been released by the Cop27 president within minutes of the final plenary meeting starting.

So Switzerland stood up and asked for more time.

In this current draft text, the temperature goals look as though they are in line with what was agreed in Glasgow in 2021, when a phase down for coal was also agreed.

There were hopes amongst some that the Egypt Cop would broaden this “phase down” to include all fossil fuels, but there is no such language in this text being negotiated. Here’s what it does say:

Calls upon Parties to accelerate the development, deployment and dissemination of technologies, and the adoption of policies, to transition towards low-emission energy systems, including by rapidly scaling up the deployment of clean power generation and energy efficiency measures, including accelerating efforts towards the phasedown of unabated coal power and phase-out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, while providing targeted support to the poorest and most vulnerable in line with national circumstances and recognizing the need for support towards a just transition;

The world’s poorest countries **stood on the brink of a historic victory** last night at crunch climate talks, as rich governments looked ready to finally provide aid for those devastated by extreme weather.

Developing countries have been asking for help with “**loss and damage**” – financial assistance to rescue and rebuild stricken countries after climate-related disaster – for more than a decade.

But rich countries have until now refused, providing limited cash instead to help

them cut greenhouse gas emissions and build defences against extreme weather.

“Spirits are high,” said Jean Su, energy justice director at the Center for Biological Diversity. “Climate-vulnerable nations and civil society are beaming at a big step forward on creating a loss and damage fund, more than a decade in the making.”

Maisa Rojas, Chile’s environment minister, said the fund would be a “historic step”.

A deal was still uncertain as the **clock ticked on the extension of the Cop27 UN climate summit in Egypt**, running well beyond delegates’ Friday deadline.

However, as the EU, the US, the UK and other developed countries had all agreed in principle by the mid-evening that a funding facility for loss and damage should be set up, it now looks inevitable in some form.

It was a day of high drama in Sharm el-Sheikh, and bitter conflict between rich and poor nations. Some of the world’s poorest countries denounced the rich world for delaying action and refusing financial assistance for afflicted countries for so long.

Rich countries sought to argue that rapidly growing economies such as China and oil producers such as Saudi Arabia and other petro-states should contribute to rather than receive from funds to repair climate “loss and damage”.

They also want to ensure that the countries receiving cash from the fund are the most vulnerable, rather than those with big economies that are still classed as “developing” under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, signed in 1992.

Vanessa Nakate, a youth activist from Uganda, said: “Cop27 was meant to be the African Cop, but the needs of African people have been obstructed throughout. Loss and damage in vulnerable countries is now unignorable, but some developed countries here in Egypt have decided to ignore our suffering. Young people were not able to have their voice heard at Cop27 because of restrictions on protest, but our movement is growing and ordinary citizens in every country are starting to hold their governments accountable on the climate crisis.”

The UK fought hard throughout the day to keep alive a **global vow made last year at Cop26 in Glasgow** of limiting global heating to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. Some nations – including Saudi Arabia, Brazil and at some points China – had threatened to unpick this commitment, weakening the temperature goal and removing the requirement made at Glasgow for countries to update their emissions-cutting plans each year.

The European Commission vice-president in charge of the European Green Deal, Frans Timmermans, speaking to the press at the conference in Sharm el-Sheikh on 19 November. Photograph: Sedat Suna/EPA

That unpicking was unacceptable to many developed and developing countries, which see the Glasgow commitments as a minimum that should be improved on, not rolled back. “What we are seeing is Glasgow minus, and we need to see Glasgow plus,” said one developed country negotiator.

Alok Sharma, the UK’s president of Cop26, warned the Egyptian hosts that the **fortnight-long conference** would be a failure unless the 1.5C goal was kept alive.

Sign up to **Down to Earth**

Free weekly newsletter

The planet's most important stories. Get all the week's environment news - the good, the bad and the essential

Enter your email address

Enter your email address

Sign up

Privacy Notice: Newsletters may contain info about charities, online ads, and content funded by outside parties. For more information see our [Privacy Policy](#). We use Google reCaptcha to protect our website and the Google [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#) apply.

The **Egyptian hosts** came in for strong criticism over their methods of brokering a deal, by showing drafts of the final text to selected countries individually, rather than allowing them to work together. One veteran delegate called it “un-transparent, unpredictable and chaotic”.

There was also a rare moment of unity, when the US and China unexpectedly patched up their diplomatic row and **revived a joint partnership** that will mean the world’s two biggest emitters, and biggest economies, cooperate on ways to

cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The final marathon negotiating session continued long into the night, past the deadline of 6pm local time on Friday. Workers dismantled the cafes, stalls and pavilions, leaving food and drink hard to find, while delegates rushed to meeting after hastily convened meeting. For long stretches, it was unclear what the format was for trying to reach agreement, and in some cases delegates seemed to be negotiating from different texts.

There were fears that so many attenders were having to leave to catch flights that some negotiating teams would be unable to complete the sessions, and if the exodus continued, the conference of the parties might not be quorate under UN rules.

A **commitment to “phase down fossil fuels”** looked likely to be lost after oil-producing countries objected. The conference of the parties (COP) takes place under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which requires consensus to be reached on all decisions. That means small numbers of countries can hold up progress, to the frustration of the majority.

Fossil fuel lobbyists have been **out in force** at this COP, with more than 600 estimated to have attended. Next year's COP will take place in the United Arab Emirates, an oil producer, which many activists fear will mean an even greater role for oil merchants.

Achieving a commitment to a loss and damage fund is just the beginning. Andres Mogro, finance negotiator for the developing country bloc G77 and China, told the *Observer*: “We hope that when [the fund] becomes operational, it can reflect the level of urgency and the needs of developing countries. A big responsibility is now in the hands of the committee that will design the fund.”

Discussions on the committee, one delegate said, would begin “one day after COP”.



An activist holds a sign at the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27), in Sharm El-Sheikh Photograph: Sedat Suna/EPA

Bibi van der Zee (*now*); **Natalie Hanman, Damian Carrington and Alan Evans** (*earlier*)

Sat 19 Nov 2022 21.51 GMT

Show key events only

25m ago
21.33 GMT

In the US, meanwhile, they're seeing the results of the **major lake-effect snow** event which has hit the Great Lakes region, with projected snowfalls of between 4-6 feet over a few days in some areas.

According to our **Weather Tracker** column: "Lake-effect snow occurs when cold air blows across an unfrozen lake that is relatively warm, heating the cold air from below and creating heavy snow showers. These showers often form in narrow quasi-stationary bands, causing significant amounts of snow to fall over a small area. This current event is caused by cold air sourced from Canada,

blowing cyclonically around low-pressure located above the Great Lakes, becoming a returning south-westerly or westerly flow depending on location.”

Updated at 21.51 GMT

51m ago

21.07 GMT

The plenary has now been put back to 0000 EET. It remains to be seen if it will actually happen then.

It may be useful to read my colleague Fiona Harvey’s report on the day so far.

Deep divisions threatened to derail the world’s chances of limiting the climate crisis last night as negotiators struggled to keep nations working together to tackle global heating.

*In a day of **high drama** at the **Cop27 UN climate summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt**, bitter conflict broke out between wealthy and poorer nations. Some of the world’s poorest countries denounced the rich for delaying action and refusing financial assistance to those suffering devastating extreme weather.*

*Rich countries sought to argue that rapidly growing economies such as China and oil producers such as Saudi Arabia and other petro-states should contribute to rather than receive from funds to repair **climate “loss and damage”**.*

*The UK fought hard throughout the day to keep alive a **global vow made last year at Cop26 in Glasgow**, of limiting global heating to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. Some nations – including Saudi Arabia, Brazil and at some points China – had threatened to unpick this commitment, weakening the temperature goal and removing the requirement made at Glasgow for countries to update their emissions-cutting plans each year.*

That unpicking was unacceptable to many developed and developing countries, which see the Glasgow commitments as a minimum that should be improved on, not rolled back. “What we are seeing is Glasgow minus, and we need to see Glasgow plus,” said one developed country negotiator.

*Alok Sharma, the UK’s president of Cop26, warned the Egyptian hosts that the **fortnight-long conference** would be a failure unless the 1.5C goal was kept alive.*

*The **Egyptian hosts** came in for strong criticism over their methods of*

brokering a deal, by showing drafts of the final text to selected countries individually, rather than allowing them to work together. One veteran delegate called it “un-transparent, unpredictable and chaotic”.

*There was also a rare moment of unity, when the US and China unexpectedly patched up their diplomatic row and **revived a joint partnership** that will mean the world’s two biggest emitters, and biggest economies, cooperate on ways to cut greenhouse gas emissions.*

Cop27: divisions and splits threaten deal to tackle climate crisis

[Read more](#)

1h ago

20.37 GMT



Oliver Milman

The hour is late and the **Cop27** talks have veered close at times to what some feared to be complete collapse, but there is still the occasional sprinkling of optimism to be found around Sharm el-Sheikh.

If it is kept in the final text, the progress on loss and damage, a central theme of the summit for developing countries, is an “historic step”, according to Maisa Rojas, Chile’s environment minister, although she noted much more needed to be done to keep the 1.5C goal viable.

There are still grumbles – the opposition from Russia and Saudi Arabia to any

mention of winding down the era of fossil fuels among them – but activists are hopeful of taking away something positive from Cop27.

Meanwhile Jean Su, energy justice director at the Center for Biological Diversity, was full of positivity. “The country pavilions are torn down and the water tanks empty, but the spirits are high. Climate-vulnerable nations and civil society are beaming at a big step forward on creating a loss and damage fund, more than a decade in the making.”

Su said that the openness of the US to phasing out fossil fuels – the Americans are also believed to be largely on board with attempts to create a loss and damage facility – has added to the encouragement. “It shouldn’t feel this surreal, but it seems like for this fleeting moment politicians are listening to the people, not polluters,” she said.

Updated at 20.43 GMT

2h ago

20.21 GMT

I’ve just been contacted by Alexander Lagaaij with the sad news that the closing plenary has now been put back to 2300 EET.

Lagaaij, by the way, has a [blog with photographs](#) of the extraordinary journey he has been making on his bicycle. A nice mental detour from the long negotiations taking place in Sharm el-Sheikh.

Updated at 20.24 GMT

2h ago

20.03 GMT

There are now reports that Russia and Saudi Arabia are saying that even mentioning “fossil fuels” in the text is an absolute red line, according to Leo Hickman, an ex-Guardian journalist who now runs the excellent Carbon Brief.

Word from inside the heads of delegation meeting at [#COP27](#) is that the Saudis and Russians are still saying any inclusion in text about fossil fuels is a red line.

Russia: "Unacceptable...We cannot make the energy situation worse"

Presumably said without any sense of irony...

— Leo Hickman (@LeoHickman) [November 19, 2022](#)

Updated at 20.05 GMT

2h ago

19.53 GMT

Our correspondent Fiona Harvey has just had a brief conversation with the spokesperson for the Egyptian Cop presidency, Ahmed Abu Zeid. Things are “progressing”, apparently.

Just spoke briefly to Shoukry’s spokesman Abu Zeid in a corridor, who said things were progressing. Shoukry was on his way to yet another meeting, not saying much, another line evening at [#COP27](#)

— Fiona Harvey (@fionaharvey) [November 19, 2022](#)

Updated at 19.57 GMT

2h ago

19.40 GMT

Aruna Chandrasekhar of Carbon Brief is taking a closer look at the now-published draft text on the funding mechanism for loss and damage.

 Proposed loss & damage  text from the Presidency just dropped: <https://t.co/6yLHEQEdOV>

Goes from: "assisting developing countries" to "developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change"

*Particularly vulnerable !=most vulnerable pic.twitter.com/2DIpFeM5JV

— Aruna Chandrasekhar (@aruna_sekhar) [November 19, 2022](#)

She points out that the proposal “makes it clear that [#LossAndDamageFinance](#) would be housed both under the Paris Agreement and Convention”, which will be reassuring to many.

There would be “new funding arrangements to complement *and* include sources, funds and initiatives *under* and outside the Convention and Agreement,” she adds.

 Proposal makes it clear that [#LossAndDamageFinance](#) would be housed both under the Paris Agreement and Convention, reassuring to many.

New funding arrangements to complement *and* include sources, funds and initiatives *under* and outside the Convention and Agreement.

— Aruna Chandrasekhar (@aruna_sekhar) [November 19, 2022](#)

Her colleague Josh Gabbatiss is going into the details too:

A new loss & damage text emerges as [#COP27](#) reaches its climax, and we're really getting

into the minutiae now.

📖 +1 member from a developing country on the committee to set the fund up

📖 Bits about budgeting the secretariat to support that committee

— Josh Gabbatiss (@Josh_Gabbatiss) **November 19, 2022**

He notes: “They’ve thrown in an extra ‘particularly vulnerable’ which – as I’m sure is clear to everyone – is apparently different to ‘most vulnerable’.”

Updated at 19.49 GMT

2h ago

19.29 GMT

The final plenary was originally due to start at 1900 EET, and was then pushed back to 2100 EET. It has since been pushed back again, to 2200 EET.

[Try watching this video on www.youtube.com](#)

There are currently 253 people (including us) watching a blank feed.

This is Bibi van der Zee, by the way, taking over from Natalie Hanman.

3h ago

18.54 GMT

US unlikely to block loss and damage fund



Damian Carrington

UN climate summits work by consensus, which means any nation can block an agreement. In the closing plenary at Cop26 in Glasgow last year, India almost brought the Cop president Alok Sharma to tears by demanding that “phase out coal” was watered down to “phase down”.

A potential flashpoint for the closing plenary at **Cop27** is the establishment of a loss and damage fund, which would provide money for poorer nations to rebuild after climate disasters. The US has long opposed this, fearing that – as the world’s biggest polluter over time – it could face huge liabilities.

But it looks unlikely that the US will block the loss and damage fund that is in the current draft text. A person close to the negotiations has just told my colleague **Fiona Harvey**: **“The US is working to sign on [on loss and damage].”**

The New York Times is also reporting that **the US is willing to accept** the creation of a loss and damage fund, while a source told Reuters the US is working to find a way it can agree to the proposal.

4h ago
18.15 GMT



Damian Carrington

“Tiny, tiny” things need to be resolved before a climate deal is finalised at the Cop27 summit in **Egypt**, the special representative to the **Cop president** has said. “We’re doing our best. **Tiny, tiny things to work out**,” **Wael Aboulmagd** told Reuters when asked whether a deal was near.

The **closing plenary session** is currently scheduled for **9pm local time**, though it has been repeatedly put back throughout the day.

4h ago

17.59 GMT

Scientists in the UK have also been sharing their views with journalists as **Cop27** enters the final stages. Here’s a selection:

Prof Kevin Anderson, professor of energy & climate change at the Tyndall Centre, University of Manchester, said:

A year on from the Glasgow COP26, a further 40 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide has been spewed into the atmosphere, the post-Covid skies are again streaked with aircraft vapour trails and the oil and gas majors are enthusiastically drilling to hell and back, thanks to new licences issued by so-called climate-progressive governments.

Set against this, another miserable facade of climate concern grinds to its ‘Groundhog’ end in the holiday resort of Sharm el-Sheikh ... Offering

superficially measured accounts of ‘this minor success’, ‘that improvement in wording’ or of a ‘few financial crumbs begrudgingly thrown at poorer nations’ only feeds into the business-as-usual circus that annual COP cycles have become.

Reasoned careful analysis and honest brokering are prerequisites of successful outcomes, but they are far from sufficient. As it is, they risk legitimising what is an increasingly corrupt and immoral process. As we burn through the carbon budget for a 50% chance of not exceeding 1.5C, at 1% every month, perhaps those genuinely concerned about climate change need to shout loud and long for an alternative structure for COP28.”

Dr Elena Cantarello, principal academic in sustainability science at Bournemouth University, said:

Like with any other COPs, more could have been done. However, there was progress on several fronts. Loss and damage was for the first time put on the agenda and there was appreciation of the moral case that climate change has been largely caused by industrialised countries but worst impacts are felt by those who have contributed the least to the problem ...

The so called ‘just energy transition partnership’ process to do big deals for countries like Indonesia is very exciting. However, as COP27 is closing, it looks like they are still going to decide on ‘phasing down’ of fossil fuels and not ‘phasing out’ in line with the scientific evidence.”

Prof Piers Forster, director of the Priestley International Centre for Climate at the University of Leeds, said:

It is all too easy to write COP27 off as a confused failure. But weaning the world off the heroin of fossil fuels was never going to be a cakewalk. The harrowing evidence of loss and damage presented at COP27 shows that continued fossil fuel use has become too expensive for the world to bear. In the negotiations, it was clear that countries want to quit the habit, even though they are still squabbling over who pays the rehab bill.”

Dr Sugandha Srivastav, postdoctoral researcher in environmental economics, Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment, University of Oxford, said:

Even though we have international negotiations every year, our focus should be on what we do in the space between these. We must reinvigorate and

energise climate-conscious citizen groups and green businesses. We should focus on the narrative of co-benefits and win-wins – there’s not enough of that.”

Dr James Dyke, of Exeter’s Global Systems Institute, said:

I struggle to understand how anyone can continue to argue that 1.5 is still alive. I certainly don’t believe any politicians involved in COP27 have any intentions of implementing the transformative policies that 1.5 now demands.

We are now entering a much warmer and more dangerous world. Loss and damages will increase, along with more human suffering and more destruction of the natural world. There is no way to spin this other than a colossal failure.

One thing that can be salvaged from this situation is that we now have an opportunity to learn from this failure. If the UNFCCC cannot produce transformative change, then we must urgently organise and generate effective action using other means. We can’t take back the emissions we have poured into the atmosphere, but there is still a future that we can choose for ourselves.”

Updated at 18.13 GMT
4h ago
17.45 GMT



Damian Carrington

National delegates have been commenting as the negotiations at **Cop27** enter

the endgame in this round up from Reuters.

Susana Muhamad, Colombia's environment minister, says:

"We hope to have two things which will make this a valuable Cop. One, this commitment to 1.5C with clear decisions and no backing back. And second, that the loss and damage fund will be fundamental. But one without the other, it doesn't make sense, because otherwise we will be accepting catastrophe, and not pushing forward towards avoiding the worst of climate change."

Romina Pourmokhtari, Sweden's climate minister, says:

"It is not acceptable that we will fund the consequences of climate change [via a loss and damage fund] while not also committing to working on the actual consequences of the emissions."

Chris Bowen, Australia's climate change minister, says:

"Australia's position is clear and strong: there can be no sliding back from Glasgow and the text should be strengthened where possible."

Kunal Satyarthi, India's negotiator on loss and damage, says:

"Everybody was flexible for the cause of loss and damage and the disasters and people dying and the economy being lost. I thank all the parties ... who were not flexible initially, but who [are] flexible now."

4h ago

17.33 GMT

As we on the Guardian's environment desk revise our weekend rota for the likely possibility that negotiations go on and on, **Carbon Reporter** has been keeping track of how **Cop27** compares with previous Cops in terms of a late finish.

#COP27 flexing its muscles like "I'm just getting warmed up" pic.twitter.com/SiL5PIZw6p
— CarbonReporter (@CarbonReporter) **November 19, 2022**

It's 19.32 local time in Sharm el-Sheikh, so that puts it in the top 10 – for now, between Warsaw and Bali ... but let's see where we end up.

I'm **Natalie Hanman, head of environment**, taking over from Bibi van der Zee for the next few hours. Please send me your thoughts, tips and hopes:

natalie.hanman@theguardian.com or @nataliehanman

Updated at 17.52 GMT

5h ago

17.13 GMT



Damian Carrington

The “mitigation work programme” is a part of the UN climate negotiations that sets out how countries will deliver emissions cuts to close the large gap between where the world is now and where it desperately needs to be. It is crucial to keeping global heating below the agreed 1.5C limit and is therefore a potential flashpoint as [Cop27](#) nears its conclusion.

The new agreement for the programme proposed by the Egyptian presidency does say it would run until 2030, rather than just a year as some nations wanted. But it also rules out any new targets or goals, according to Tom Evans, policy advisor at thinktank E3G. That would mean no faster timelines for the delivery of better emissions-cutting pledges from countries, or setting dates by which coal should be phased out, or global emissions should peak.

“The text talks about a transition to renewable energy and that’s welcome,” Evans said. “But there is nothing in there on fossil fuels, meaning there’s nothing in there on the actual cause of climate change.”

A Saudi Arabian delegate told delegates on Friday afternoon: “We should not target sources of energy, we should focus on emissions. We should not mention

fossil fuels.”

5h ago

17.05 GMT

Given that no one knows exactly when this will all end, a nap is an extremely good idea.

Get those Zs where you can. Photograph: Sedat Suna/EPA

Someone else catching a quick nap. Photograph: Sedat Suna/EPA

Updated at 17.08 GMT

5h ago

16.39 GMT

Issues around Loss and Damage continue to be in play

OK, we are now hearing that the draft text was altered during the afternoon to include a phrase important to the EU, which is to prioritise “particularly vulnerable countries” as recipients of the fund.

The EU’s concern is that the fund should not be used by countries with significant economic resources of their own – and often with high oil revenues – that are still classed as developing because the definition of developing countries has not changed since 1992 when the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was signed.

Countries such as Qatar, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia could be eligible for funds if the definition of recipients was merely “developing countries”.

Will the G77 bloc find that acceptable? It’s problematic because it seems as if there are different versions of the text on this very sensitive issue circulating at the same time.

Nina Lakhani has been speaking to Meena Raman at Third World Network, who points out that the phrase “developing countries” is in the original convention, and is defined by geographies. So even if the EU wants to exclude some countries, the convention has the final say. Harjeet Singh at Climate Action Network agrees with this analysis: “It doesn’t exclude any country but prioritises the vulnerable ones.”

Updated at 17.10 GMT

6h ago

16.12 GMT



Damian Carrington

This is a good take on the state of play from Tan Copsey at ClimateNexus.

Every sign now that **#COP27** will end tonight with a messy deal. Likely:

- Agreement on Loss and Damage finance facility
- No improvement on language around fossil fuel phase out
- Gestures towards importance of hitting the 1.5 degree target without sufficient action to get there.

— Tan Copsey (@tancopsey) **November 19, 2022**

The fossil fuel lobby and friendly countries have made their presence felt at COP, but it's clear momentum is still only going in one direction - towards a clean energy economy. But, countries have to do more to ensure that transition benefits everyone. **#COP27**

— Tan Copsey (@tancopsey) **November 19, 2022**

Also, stop for a second, and think about how what the breakthrough on Loss and Damage means. Every country accepts that climate change is happening now, and most rich countries accept that they'll have to pay for the damage they caused.

— Tan Copsey (@tancopsey) **November 19, 2022**

All the countries at Cop27 will have digested the texts on key climate issues that were proposed by the Egyptian presidency, deciding what they can swallow and what they can't. The heads of delegations are due to meet with the Cop presidency in a private meeting soon. If they can all more or less agree on the texts, quite possibly with some changes, then the closing plenary should go

ahead this evening.

Updated at 16.18 GMT

6h ago

15.45 GMT



Damian Carrington

The High Ambition Coalition (HAC) of nations has just set out its stall for the endgame of **Cop27**, which will play out in a closing plenary session. As UN climate summits work on consensus, any nation can block proposals in the decision texts, but the fact the plenary is scheduled would normally indicate the presidency of the Cop thinks agreement is close.

The HAC position was set out by Tina Stege, climate envoy for the Marshall Islands. She was flanked by the UK's Alok Sharma, the Cop26 president, and Jennifer Morgan, representing Germany, among others.

The Cop27 climate conference is now moving into its closing plenary session stage. Photograph: Mohamed Abd El Ghany/Reuters

“As we watch the devastating impacts of climate change this year, and the multiple and interrelated crises that grip our world, exacerbating the suffering of the poor, marginalised and vulnerable, we come together to say that we must emerge from Cop27 with a package of outcomes that keeps 1.5C alive and protects the world’s vulnerable.”

“The Cop27 decision must reflect that we hold fast to our commitment to 1.5C and recognise the IPCC [scientists’] finding that to keep 1.5C in reach, global emissions must peak before 2025 at the latest. This Cop decision must put the world on a path to phasing out all fossil fuels and an urgent, just transition to renewables.”

Currently, the proposed text does not call for the phasing out of all fossil fuels and some recalcitrant nations are known to oppose including text on an emissions peak by 2025.

Stege also said: “[The Cop decision must] support the agreement on new funding arrangements for loss and damage, including a loss and damage response fund at Cop27, and recognise that we will need to sprint together to operationalise this response in the coming year.” The establishment of a fund to help vulnerable nations rebuild after climate disasters was the key demand for Cop27 from developing nations.

Stege also called for the “affirmation of the importance of accountability for climate finance commitments”. That is likely to refer to the **failure of rich nations to deliver a promised \$100bn** a year to poorer nations, which has seriously undermined the trust of developing nations in the UN climate talks.

The plenary is scheduled to start at 6pm local time. Only then will we see just how hard nations are prepared to fight for their goals.

Updated at 15.57 GMT

7h ago

15.23 GMT

'Very constructive' discussions between China and US, but no change on finance issues



Fiona Harvey

My colleague Fiona Harvey is reporting that China and the US have renewed their partnership to tackle the climate crisis, and are working closely and productively on ways of bringing down greenhouse gas emissions, according to China's head of delegation.

The surprise news from Xie Zhenhua, who briefed a small group of journalists at the Cop27 UN climate summit in Egypt on Saturday, comes as a rare moment of progress amid a conference **mired in bitter fighting** between developed and developing countries.

China's chief climate negotiator, Xie Zhenhua. Photograph: Mohamed Abd El Ghany/Reuters
Xie said he and John Kerry, the US special presidential envoy for climate, had enjoyed "very constructive" discussions. "We have had a close and active dialogue, that was overall very constructive. [We want to] ensure the success of **Cop27** and exchange opinions on our differences."

His words reflected a warm and personal dialogue. "I have a lot of respect for Mr Kerry. I admire his professional attitude and love. We have been working together for 20 years and share a common wish." Xie revealed on Saturday that they intended to carry on with formal meetings after Cop27, in the hope of forging greater progress on vital issues such as low-carbon technology and reducing emissions of methane, the powerful greenhouse gas.

He said: "We have agreed that after this Cop we will continue formal

conversations, including face-to-face meetings.”

However, he is refusing to budge over China’s status as a developing country, which has been one of the many themes of the talks.

Xie repeated the Chinese position that it was still a developing country, and as such had no obligation to provide financial assistance to poor nations. He said China **voluntarily provided help to countries** in Latin America, Africa and elsewhere, including help with early warning systems of extreme weather, access to renewable energy technology, and “capacity building” for governments.

“[In a] loss and damage fund, if there is any fund, the responsibility to provide funds lies with developed countries,” he said. “That is their responsibility and obligation. Developing countries can contribute on a voluntary basis.”

He added: “The recipients should be developing countries. I hope it will be provided to fragile countries first ... and those who need it most, first.”

Updated at 15.46 GMT

Five crucial issues in fight to save planet – and what Cop27 did about them

This month’s environmental summit opened as our planet wilts under the impact of climate crisis. Here we examine five key areas and assess what success – if any – was achieved in Egypt



Residents push a boat through a flooded street in Havana. Industrial nations are being asked to compensate those countries most affected by climate crisis. Photograph: Ramón Espinosa/AP

Robin McKie

Sat 19 Nov 2022 19.27 GMT

Keeping cool

A key Cop27 goal was to strengthen emission **pledges made at last year's climate summit** in Glasgow. These are needed to ensure global heating is limited to 1.5C. No such commitments have been made in Egypt and most observers now conclude the world is destined to heat beyond this limit.

“I struggle to understand how anyone can continue to argue that 1.5C is still alive,” said James Dyke, from Exeter University’s Global Systems Institute. “We are now entering a much warmer and more dangerous world.”

This point was backed by Professor Kevin Anderson at Manchester University’s Tyndall Centre. “A year on from the Glasgow Cop26, a further 40bn tonnes of carbon dioxide has been spewed into the atmosphere. Another miserable facade of climate concern grinds to its ‘groundhog’ end.”

Loss and damage

As expected, Cop27 was dominated by arguments about **climate compensation due to poorer countries**. Global warming has been caused by industrial nations who used fossil fuels to enrich themselves. They should therefore reimburse countries who are suffering most from climate change. Such “loss and damage” claims include Pakistan’s recent \$30bn bill for its flooding.

Hopes were raised that a deal might be in the offing but confusion surrounds details of the agreement. “The one bright spot at Cop27 has been a renewed seriousness around loss and damage, with hundreds of millions committed via various schemes,” said geographer Laurie Parsons, from Royal Holloway, London University. “Major concerns remain, however. The total funding required for adaptation is at least \$2.5 trillion by 2030, so we are still orders of magnitude out.”

Nature

Global heating threatens to devastate habitats across the world, putting thousands of species in danger of extinction. These range from polar bears and tigers to monarch butterflies and sea turtles. However, the most spectacular threat is the one faced by the planet’s coral reefs which provide habitats for thousand of species. Planetary heating of 1.5C will see between 70 and 90% of coral reefs disappear. At 2C, 99% will be destroyed.



Baby gorillas play together in a Ugandan national park. Global heating threatens to devastate the habitats of animals like these. Photograph: AP

Threats like these will be debated intensively at Cop15, the UN biodiversity summit next month. However, no mention of the conference has been made in Egypt despite the **strong link between climate change and species loss**. On the other hand, a more positive note was struck by the arrival of Lula da Silva, the new Brazilian president, who pledged to do everything to save his country's rainforests – in contrast to previous years' gloom about their fate.

No more gas or coal

Hopes were raised at Cop27 that serious reductions could be made in humanity's burning of coal, gas and oil, the major causes of climate change. This optimism sprang from India's call for fossil fuel burning to be phased down – though not phasing out, it should be noted. But the proposal has not led to major follow ups and the issue has not yet been resolved.

“It's now about damage limitation,” said Professor Richard Betts of the UK Met Office. “We should all still work much harder to reduce emissions urgently to keep further heating of the planet as low as possible while also adapting to the changes we have already caused.”

Adapting to a warmer world

Minimising the heating of our planet by attempting to limit carbon emissions is only one way to tackle global heating. The world also needs to adapt so it is less vulnerable to the floods, droughts, sea level rises and crop disasters that lie ahead as the planet heats up. These adaptations would come in the form of better flood defences, seawalls, moving communities to higher ground and protecting road and rail links from storms and inundations.

Some improvements to previous commitments have been suggested at Cop27, with reports indicating a doubling of funding for adaptation could be agreed. However, scientists again warn that levels of promised fundings still lie well below the investments that will be needed in the near future.

China and US renew commitment to tackling climate crisis but differences remain

Xie Zhenhua said he'd had 'very constructive discussions' with John

Kerry at Cop27 but there's no change on finance issues

Cop27 live – latest news updates



China's special envoy for climate change, Xie Zhenhua, at Cop27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. Photograph: Sedat Suna/EPA

Fiona Harvey in *Sharm el-Sheikh*

Sat 19 Nov 2022 15.46 GMT

China and the US have renewed their partnership to tackle the climate crisis, and are working closely and productively on ways of bringing down greenhouse gas emissions, China's head of delegation has said.

The surprise news from Xie Zhenhua, who briefed a small group of journalists at the Cop27 UN climate summit in Egypt on Saturday, comes as a rare moment of progress amid a conference **mired in stalemate and bitter fighting** between developed and developing countries.

Xie said he and **John Kerry**, the US special presidential envoy for climate, had enjoyed “very constructive” discussions. “We have had a close and active dialogue, that was overall very constructive. [We want to] ensure the success of

Cop27 and exchange opinions on our differences.”

His words reflected a warm and personal dialogue. “I have a lot of respect for Mr Kerry. I admire his professional attitude and love. We have been working together for 20 years and share a common wish.”

Relations between China and the US hit a new low before the start of this conference, after House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, **visited the disputed island of Taiwan** this summer. All negotiations were broken off, including those on the climate.

This was a severe blow to the prospects of Cop27, as at Cop26 in Glasgow last year the world’s two biggest emitters, and two largest economies, **surprised the world by forging a “climate dialogue” to work as partners on reducing emissions**, including those of the powerful greenhouse gas methane.

But Joe Biden and Chinese president Xi Jinping **met at the G20 summit** in Bali earlier this week, and relations have thawed.

Xie and Kerry had already met for informal conversations last week. Xie revealed on Saturday that they intended to carry on with formal meetings after **Cop27**, in the hope of forging greater progress on vital issues such as low-carbon technology and reducing emissions of methane, the powerful greenhouse gas.



Cop27: is it right to talk of ‘reparations’?

[Read more](#)

He said: “We have agreed that after this Cop we will continue formal conversations, including face to face meetings.”

Kerry was negotiating from his hotel room on Saturday, after testing positive for Covid-19 on Friday night.

The talks dragged a full day past their Friday evening deadline, **amid complaints of “chaos” and a lack of transparency in the negotiations.**

China has also been closely involved in negotiations over loss and damage at the Cop, one of the most vexed issues. The EU launched a proposal for a new fund to provide financial assistance to poor countries suffering the most devastating impacts of extreme weather.

The EU wants to **widen the list of potential donors to such a fund.** Under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, signed in 1992, only countries classed as developed 30 years ago are asked to provide financial assistance.

But countries such as China, Saudi Arabia and Russia now have much bigger economies, including in some cases, high revenues from fossil fuels, and their emissions have ballooned.

Xie repeated the Chinese position that it was still a developing country, and as

such had no obligation to provide financial assistance to poor nations. He said China **voluntarily provided help to countries** in Latin America, Africa and elsewhere, including help with early warning systems for extreme weather, access to renewable energy technology, and “capacity building” for governments.

“[In a] loss and damage fund, if there is any fund, the responsibility to provide funds lies with developed countries,” he said. “That is their responsibility and obligation. Developing countries can contribute on a voluntary basis.”

He added: “The recipients should be developing countries. I hope it will be provided to fragile countries first ... and those who need it most, first.”

Another issue on which there was still no agreement by Saturday late afternoon was on the goal to limit global heating to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. That goal was agreed last year at the Cop26 summit in Glasgow, but some countries at Cop27 have attempted to unpick that commitment, and the requirement for countries to keep updating their national plans on emissions cuts on a yearly basis, until they are in line with the 1.5C goal.

Xie repeated that China was a supporter of both the Paris agreement and the Glasgow climate pact. “I believe we should follow the principles and spirit of the Paris agreement and the Glasgow pact, and we should make a great effort, but should not add more burden to developing countries,” he said. “Developed countries should take a lead in reducing emissions and provide developing countries with finance and technology to support their need to improve their capacity [to cut emissions].”