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# Climate Action

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## COP27: a desecration or veneration of climate change?

Climate change is a uniquely global issue. Whether it has been displacing millions, destroying infrastructure, or increasing the prevalence of natural disasters, climate change has had impacts that have been felt around the world – and borne *especially* by developing countries.

The 2022 Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), more commonly referred to as COP27, was the 27th United Nations Climate Change conference, held from 6 November until 20 November 2022 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.

The first major breakthrough was on **loss & damage funding** for vulnerable developing countries, who are suffering the most from the effects of climate change. For a lot of countries in the global south, this is one of the biggest climate advances since the Paris Agreement at COP 2015. However, this policy is sort of like "putting a Band-Aid on the problem" instead of solving it. Developed countries are stuck in a vicious cycle of paying developing nations for the damage they cause instead of tackling the issues and implementing actual changes.

Reuters reports that it will be years before this fund comes into existence, and that several questions remain, "including who would oversee the fund, how the money would be dispersed". Interest in contributing the fund has been flat out of the gate - China has already stated that it will not contribute to the fund.

Any agreements on mitigation measures merely included a **phase down of coal**, rather than a phase out, and ignored emissions from the use of gas and oil. Although many countries had demanded that the phasing out of fossil fuels be mentioned in the summit agreement, this was removed in the final document. Interestingly, the conference was dominated by attendees with a connection to fossil fuels (coincidence?)

Furthermore, the language around fossil fuels was "tweaked" to refer to as "low emissions and renewable energy" rather than "cutting emissions entirely" (this is a major loophole that allows for the development of additional gas resources).

Nevertheless, the **role of the private sector** was recognized to move the world towards a fossil fuel-free future. It was agreed that to be able to reach net zero emissions by 2050 about \$4 trillion per year needs to be invested in renewable energy. The main question which remains: how is this money going to be allocated, and is this really realistic?

## Climate Activism, Gone Too Far?

In the last few months, the activities of climate activist groups, such as Just Stop Oil and Extinction rebellion, who employ a policy of civil disobedience to attract attention, has regularly made headlines.

These activist groups are perhaps best known for their destruction of priceless artworks and other artifacts - such as throwing tomato soup at a Van Gogh painting in London. The reach of such activist groups appears to be global - artworks alone in Italy, Germany, Australia, and the United Kingdom have been targeted; on a more local scale, activists from climate protest group Last Generation (known in German as "die letzte Generation") attempted to glue themselves to the tarmac at BER on November 24).

Activist groups, such as Just Stop Oil and Extinction Rebellion often argue that the sheer urgency of the situation, paired with the lack of action, mandate such a response.

While the activities of these groups certainly do attract a certain amount of attention (either good or bad), it remains to be seen whether their strategies will prove effective - by instigating action against climate change - or will simply anger the public and result in jail time and fines for protestors. And whether their actions are justified is still very much open to debate.

**P.S.** For the 12 days of school we have left before the Christmas holidays, we created an SDG advent calendar - if you get the answer to the question of the day right, you'll be able to win a small (sustainable) prize! We're looking forward to lots of people participating!