



DAY 12

COP26 ECUMENICAL DELEGATION

News from the UN Climate Change Conference UK 2021

NOVEMBER 2021 | DAY 12

The COP26 Ecumenical Delegation, led by *For the Love of Creation* and the United Church of Canada, will be bringing you highlights, impressions, stories, and hopes each day of the UN Climate Change Conference.

Notable quotes

“WE OWE IT TO OUR POOREST SISTERS AND BROTHERS, FUTURE GENERATIONS, AND ALL OF GOD’S CREATION TO SEIZE THIS HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY. IN 2015, POPE FRANCIS WROTE IN LAUDATO SI’ THAT FOSSIL FUELS NEED ‘TO BE PROGRESSIVELY REPLACED WITHOUT DELAY.’ NOW, IN 2021, WE HAVE REACHED A DECISIVE MOMENT. WE MUST REACH AN AGREEMENT IN GLASGOW THAT SETS A CLEAR AND AMBITIOUS TIMELINE FOR A JUST TRANSITION AWAY FROM HARMFUL FOSSIL FUELS. SETTING OUT SUCH A PATHWAY IS AN ESSENTIAL STEP TO ACCELERATING INVESTMENT IN A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE FOR ALL.”
LAUDATO SI’ MOVEMENT LETTER

Day 12 Highlights

Today was the official closing day of COP26, though negotiations of the outcomes statement or “cover decision” are not yet concluded.

The day started with a modified draft outcomes document. There have been some changes in language in the draft. For some, this signals a watering down of important pieces, such as the statement on phasing out coal and fossil fuel subsidies. While some saw this as a major step forward, given reference to fossil fuels hasn’t been included in previous outcomes, the document now adds the qualifying term of phasing out “inefficient” subsidies. In another case, the word “urge” has been replaced with “request,” softening expectations around meeting targets in 2030.

Other concerns are being raised around carbon credit trading and carbon markets, an outcome of Article 6 from the Paris Agreement, which is part of the negotiations.



Day 12 Highlights

Part of the fear is that rich countries, who are the highest emitters, will choose to buy carbon credits from developing countries rather than lower than their own emissions. Or that countries will claim carbon credits for projects that don't actually reduce emissions, or don't include those most impacted, particularly Indigenous people. The lack of standardized accounting and transparency in reporting are part of the concern.

Other issues being raised involve ensuring that financing commitments of \$100 billion/year to developing countries are met next year, with an increased percentage to adaptation. Funds tend to focus on mitigation, but poorer countries say they need support for climate impacts they are experiencing now.

Further, there is a call by civil society organizations for a separate fund for loss and damage, which acknowledges that those most impacted by the climate crisis should be compensated by those most responsible for the climate crisis. Human rights, justice, and UNDRIP should guide the process.

It is likely a final cover decision will not be released today, as negotiators continue working on the draft. However, civil society organizations are sharing what they want to see in the final outcomes. The Laudato Si Movement put out a statement signed by over 40 Catholic organizations indicating what they want to see as outcomes. It calls for an ambitious timeline for a just transition from fossil fuels, including human rights, Indigenous rights, and finance for adaptation, loss and damage. The Climate Action Network Canada statement offers more specific demands: <https://climateactionnetwork.ca/>

Stories, Impressions, Reflections

We ended our time together as a delegation today listening to Canada's Environment Minister in his new role speaking at such an important moment and important platform. He was very...diplomatic, balanced, careful. Perhaps these are all good qualities for ministers to have while in the middle of difficult negotiations. However, it doesn't feel like the time for careful talk. Listening to country representatives speak today, the final chance for input into the cover decision, some clearly felt more was needed, and they received resounding applause. Others exercised "polite obstruction" clearly blocking efforts for further ambition.

At the end of all this, we go our own ways. Delegates attending in person go home. Our virtual delegation disperses. What happens next? For us and for so many others around the world, we continue the work for climate justice. It is clear from this COP that we cannot wait for world leaders to lead. We have to show them, and we are.

We leave this COP with deep gratitude for the time we have had together as a delegation. There was rich sharing and insights. We listened and learned together. And we brought our faith communities into this intense process of witness. We move forward in gratitude and in hope knowing we are part of a global movement of the Spirit for justice and love of creation.

To follow COP26 online go to the COP26 Youtube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/UNClimateChange>

