



# COP 28 EXPLAINED:

## KEY MESSAGES TO WORLD LEADERS AT THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (COP 28)

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the unceded land where our Naarm (Melbourne) office rests and on which we work, learn, and live: the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples.

We acknowledge over 65,000 years of continuing care and custodianship of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples, for these lands and waters. Their sovereignty has never been ceded.

We pay respect to elders past and present and acknowledge the Wurundjeri and Bunurong peoples as the Traditional and rightful owners of the country we reside on.

We pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and commit ourselves as allies.

We wholeheartedly support The Voice referendum and the Uluru Statement from the Heart.



The Climate Reality Project  
AUSTRALIA & PACIFIC

**COP 28**

## WHY IS COP 28 IMPORTANT?

**PEOPLE, ANIMALS AND ECOSYSTEMS IN AUSTRALIA, AOTEAROA (NEW ZEALAND) AND OVER 25,000 ISLANDS IN THE PACIFIC ARE FACING AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT FROM HUMAN-INDUCED CLIMATE CHANGE.**

While we all experience the effects of climate change differently, those who contribute the least to the climate crisis are most often the first and worst impacted. Developed countries in the Australia & Pacific region must rapidly scale up climate solutions and commit to a just end to fossil fuel projects (and financing) now, to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

The 28th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is being held in the United Arab Emirates from November 30 – December 12, 2023. COP 28 will mark the completion of the first Global Stocktake, where countries essentially ‘take stock’ of international climate action and the results of climate commitments made under the 2015 Paris Agreement. This makes

COP 28 a critical moment to identify gaps in loss and damage, adaptation, and mitigation and to move countries closer to their commitment of keeping global heating below 1.5°C.

At COP 28 we ask that governments of this region, most notably Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand), take immediate actions to protect and safeguard life for current and future generations. Australia has placed a bid to host COP 31 in partnership with Pacific Nations in 2026. COP 31 can be an opportunity for Australia and Pacific Nations to rally the world behind the Paris Agreement – but first – Australia must underpin its bid with specific commitments to meeting its ‘fair share’ of keeping global temperatures below 1.5°C.

International climate negotiations can often feel remote and immune to advocacy led by individuals and collectives working on local and regional climate impacts and solutions. However, historical achievements at COPs such as ‘1.5°C within the Paris Agreement’ and the ‘Loss and Damage Fund’ prove that with focus and collaboration people do have



the power to influence international climate policy. *We urge the reader to think globally and act locally with us.*

On the road to COP 31, we are working with Climate Reality Leaders (CRLs) and diverse stakeholders to build a bridge between UNFCCC processes and regional climate action – a pathway that incites more ambitious (and inclusive) climate outcomes before, during and after upcoming COPs... *we invite you to join us.*



# KEY MESSAGES TO WORLD LEADERS AT THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (COP 28)

## 1.0

**GOVERNMENTS OF THIS REGION MUST SUPPORT AMBITIOUS ACTION PLANS THAT BRIDGE GAPS IN LOSS AND DAMAGE, MITIGATION, ADAPTATION, AND FINANCE** as identified in the Global Stocktake and all countries must align Nationally Determined Contributions with 1.5°C.

## 2.0

**AUSTRALIA MUST CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN ITS 2030 TARGET** to meet its 'fair share' of 1.5°C and net-zero by 2035, now and ahead of the COP 30 set to take place in Brazil.

## 3.0

**WORLD LEADERS AND INVESTORS MUST COMMIT TO EQUITABLY ENDING THE LICENSING AND FUNDING (PUBLIC AND PRIVATE) OF NEW COAL, OIL, AND GAS DEVELOPMENT.** A successful COP 28 will close with a commitment to a just phase-out of fossil fuels.

## 4.0

**OIL AND CLIMATE DONT MIX.** With the CEO of one of the world's largest oil companies appointed to lead COP 28 in the United Arab Emirates, we shine a light on the inescapable conflict of interest and ask for real leadership committed to leaving fossil fuels behind.

## 5.0

**AT COP 28 WORLD LEADERS MUST PROGRESS MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANK REFORM AND SHIFT ALL FINANCE FROM FOSSIL FUELS INTO CLEAN ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES.** Governments of this region must also increase climate finance commitments and deliver on pledges previously made.

## 6.0

**DEVELOPED ECONOMIES SHOULD SUPPORT THE EQUITABLE OPERATIONALISATION OF THE 'LOSS AND DAMAGE FUND'** and make additional climate finance commitments to vulnerable countries.

## 7.0

**GOVERNMENTS OF THIS REGION MUST JOIN SIDE AGREEMENTS** that rapidly reduce methane emissions, phase out fossil fuel projects, protect forests and oceans, and support a just transition for all.



# WHAT IS COP (CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES)?

## COP STANDS FOR CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES AND IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE ACTION

refers to the 198 countries that have joined the international treaty called the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) since its inception in 1992.

The UNFCCC aims to encourage and implement international climate negotiations that “*stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.*”<sup>1</sup>

The first COP was held in 1995 and marked the start of yearly negotiations to strengthen

participation in global climate action.

The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, is one of the most notable moments in COP history and is guiding global climate action and emission reduction goals today. Put simply, the Paris Agreement is a legally binding international climate treaty that calls on all signatories to collectively limit global warming to “*well below*” 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.<sup>2</sup> Pacific Nations were instrumental in building consensus for a 1.5°C target and many were amongst the first to ratify the Paris Agreement in 2016.<sup>3</sup>

Parties to the Convention take turns hosting the annual meeting. This year’s COP 28 will take place in late November in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). Australia is bidding to host COP 31 in partnership with Pacific Nations in 2026.<sup>4</sup> If the Australian bid is successful, COP 31 presents an opportunity for Australia and Pacific Nations to advance climate ambition in this region. For a successful COP partnership and co-hosting to take place, Australia must align current and future Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) with a 1.5°C future and commit to a just fossil fuel phase out.

# WHAT HAPPENS AT COPs?

**THE LEADUP TO EACH COP IS AN EVER-EVOLVING SCHEDULE OF CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, AND ASSEMBLIES** that work to address progress made at previous COPs, as well as what should be discussed (*and hopefully achieved*) at the next ones.

COPs provide a platform for governments to meet and bring their own NDCs forward. These events assemble committees, non-party stakeholders, and parties to the convention for implementing climate action, developing themes, and setting the agenda for the conference’s negotiations.<sup>5</sup>

COP is an opportunity to draw increased attention to climate change with countries and their associated stakeholders present, and to use lived experiences and future projections of impacts to increase ambition and move forward on climate action.<sup>6</sup>

# WHY IS COP IMPORTANT FOR THE AUSTRALIA & PACIFIC REGION?

Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), and Pacific Island Countries are uniquely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change:

- **SEA LEVEL RISE, COASTAL EROSION, OCEAN ACIDIFICATION, AND INCREASING OCEAN TEMPERATURES**—four impacts that threaten ocean productivity as well as aquaculture and the region’s fisheries and industries.<sup>7</sup>
- **INCREASED FREQUENCY OF EXTREMELY HOT TEMPERATURES THAT THREATEN PUBLIC HEALTH,**

particularly among our most vulnerable populations (outdoor workers, the elderly, and babies).<sup>8</sup>

- **INCREASED INTENSITY AND OCCURRENCES OF EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS,** ranging from devastating droughts that impact crop yields and land productivity, to ocean-based storms and floods that can damage infrastructure and harm livelihoods.<sup>9</sup>

Climate change threatens all of us including Indigenous peoples’, potentially impacting culture, tradition, ancestral lands, and

social cohesion. Climate-driven migration may present difficulties to those aiming to preserve their cultural and traditional practices.<sup>10</sup>

While progress has historically been slow, and the outcomes at many previous COPs have not been up to the standards of the climate action we urgently need, COPs are still crucial in the battle against climate change. **Even with time running out, global climate action is a marathon, not a sprint.**

# WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED AT COPs?

This timeline covers some of the major treaties and agreements made at COPs and future agendas. Negotiations and smaller agreements in between COPs set the stage for these historic decisions and determine how the agreements are operationalized.<sup>11</sup>

**1992**

## **UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC) IS ADOPTED:**

As the world's foundational climate treaty, the UNFCCC established the global aim to limit greenhouse gas emissions. While the UNFCCC did not set any specific emissions reductions goals, it laid out the structure of annual COPs and called for research, negotiations, and future agreements to be made.<sup>12</sup>

**1995**

## **COP 1 TAKES PLACE IN BERLIN:**

At the world's first COP, parties established a process for negotiating stronger commitments for developed countries than first set out by the Convention on Climate Change.<sup>13</sup>

**1997**

## **COP 3 – KYOTO PROTOCOL:**

As the world's first legally binding international climate treaty, the Kyoto Protocol bound 37 industrialized nations, economies in transition, and the European Union to meeting certain emissions reductions targets. The average emissions reduction target for the period of 2008–2012 was 5% below 1990 levels.<sup>14</sup> These commitments were not delivered.

**2015**

## **COP 21 – PARIS AGREEMENT:**

Originally adopted by 196 parties, the goal of the Paris Agreement is to hold “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels (1850–1900)” and pursue efforts “to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels (1850–1900).” It is a legally binding international treaty that requires countries to set emissions reductions plans (called Nationally Determined Contributions) and report progress. It also sets up a framework for providing financial, technical, and capacity building support to developing countries.<sup>15</sup> Successive COPs also set up guidelines to operationalise the Paris Agreement.<sup>16</sup>

**2021**

## **COP 26 – GLASGOW CLIMATE PACT:**

This pact focuses on providing the necessary finance for global climate adaptation and mitigation. Notably, this pact marks the first time that nations were called upon to “phase down unabated coal power and insufficient subsidies for fossil fuels.”<sup>17</sup>

**2022**

## **COP 27 EGYPT – LOSS AND DAMAGE FUND:**

COP 27 largely failed to deliver ambitious climate outcomes, however countries agreed to establish a Loss and Damage Fund dedicated to helping developing countries recover from the catastrophic effects of climate change. As of mid-July 2023, it is yet to be determined who will pay into the fund, where the money will come from, and which countries will benefit.<sup>18</sup>

**2023**

## **COP 28 DUBAI – GLOBAL STOCKTAKE:**

The 2023 COP will mark the close of the first Global Stocktake. Set to take on a five-year cycle, the stocktaking process aims to assess parties' progress in mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation to raise ambition under The Paris Climate Agreement. It's an accountability exercise, that can help policy makers identify gaps in progress, from which to strengthen climate policies and action.

**2025**

## **COP 30 BELÉM, BRAZIL:**

2025 will mark the 10-year anniversary of The Paris Climate Agreement and it is also when parties must submit their second round of more ambitious NDCs. It will be key that parties to the convention set strong 2035 targets that bring global heating below 1.5°C.



# WHAT DO WE HAVE TO BUILD ON FROM COP 27 IN EGYPT?

**BROADLY SPEAKING, COP 27 IN EGYPT FAILED BECAUSE THE NEGOTIATIONS DIDN'T ADVANCE THE GLASGOW CLIMATE PACTS PROMISE – WHICH WOULD RESULT IN A VOTE TO “PHASE OUT UNBATED COAL POWER,”** however COP 27 concluded with the historic agreement to establish a Loss and Damage Fund.<sup>19</sup>

Put simply, ‘loss and damage’ refers to climate impacts that exceed what people can adapt to, or when solutions exist but people don’t have the resources to access them – a step beyond adaptation and mitigation.

The fund is expected to be dedicated to helping developing countries recover from the catastrophic effects of climate change, but information relating to how it will do so is still being determined. As a result of this, a committee was created and is working over the course of 2023 to

create a set of recommendations on operationalizing the fund and associated funding arrangements. The committee will present its work at COP 28 in November.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to the Loss and Damage fund, the Adaptation Fund received nearly \$243 million USD in pledges and contributions during COP 27 (with New Zealand pledging the equivalent of \$8.7 million USD), the COP 27 Presidency launched a global Adaptation Agenda.

The agenda is comprised of 30 adaptation outcomes that aim to address the global adaptation gap and build the resilience of 4 billion people living in the world’s most climate vulnerable communities by 2030. The agenda rallies governments, businesses, and civil society actors to act across

five impact areas – food and agriculture, water and nature, coastal and oceans, human settlements, and infrastructure.<sup>21</sup>



# WHAT DOES A SUCCESSFUL COP 28 LOOK LIKE?

## OUR KEY MESSAGES EXPLAINED

*COP 28 will take place in Expo City Dubai from November 30 – December 12, 2023. The two-week conference is set to bring global leaders, constituencies, and non-state actors – and will hopefully build upon last year’s progress. With COP 31 on the horizon The Australian Government must act now and at COP 28 to rapidly advance climate action to ensure the 2026 COP is a success for all parties. Our key asks of governments and key stakeholders in the Australia and Pacific region are as follows:*

### 1.

#### **GOVERNMENTS OF THIS REGION MUST SUPPORT AMBITIOUS ACTION PLANS THAT BRIDGE GAPS IN LOSS AND DAMAGE, MITIGATION, ADAPTATION, AND FINANCE AS IDENTIFIED IN THE GLOBAL STOCKTAKE AND ALL COUNTRIES MUST ALIGN NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS WITH 1.5°C.**

COP 28 in Dubai, UAE marks the completion of the first Global Stocktake, where countries essentially ‘take stock’ of climate action and the results of climate commitments. This formal process is designed to inform countries in updating and enhancing their NDCs. The process will identify gaps in climate action and opportunities to bridge them as it relates to meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement. The current Global Stocktake will also inform NDCs to be brought forward at

COP 30 which is set to take place in Brazil in 2025.<sup>22</sup>

In response to the Global Stocktake, we urge that Governments of this region deliver robust and informational recommendations to guide future climate action and that seek to immediately address the unequal effects of climate change across Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand) and across the Pacific. In response to the Global Stocktake, countries must strengthen their NDC targets to hold global heating well below 1.5°C and commit to action plans

that show how they intend to do so.<sup>23</sup>

**Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), and Pacific Nations, including partners of the Pacific Islands Forum should not only continue to strengthen their commitments in time for COP 28, but go beyond the conclusions presented in the Global Stocktake; to ensure intergenerational equality and to make best of the enormous opportunity a low-carbon economy presents this region.**

### 2.

#### **AUSTRALIA MUST CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN ITS 2030 TARGET TO MEET ITS ‘FAIR SHARE’ OF 1.5°C AND NET-ZERO BY 2035, NOW AND AHEAD OF THE 2025 COP SET TO TAKE PLACE IN BRAZIL.**

Australia must commit to a much stronger NDC to meet its fair share of 1.5°C. Australia’s current NDC pledge is a 43% reduction relevant to 2005 levels by 2030, with net-zero emissions by 2050.<sup>24</sup> Last year, Australia improved its 2030 emission target by committing to reduce emissions by 43% (from 2005 levels) by the end of the decade. Previously it had committed to cutting emissions by 26–28% by 2030.

Anthony Albanese, the Australian Prime Minister, states this target is a floor, not a maximum. This

was welcomed by leaders from the Pacific and by other nations. **However, for Australia, a 2030 emissions reduction target of 75% compared to 2005 emissions levels and net zero by 2035 is required if Australia is to be consistent with the latest climate science.**<sup>25</sup>

To reduce global heating to 1.5°C, it is estimated that Aotearoa (New Zealand) needs a gross emissions reduction target of at least 44% by 2030. While the country's first NDC includes a commitment of 50% emissions

reduction below 2005 levels by 2030, questions remain on whether the NDC target will truly reduce emissions, particularly methane from agriculture which accounts for over 40% of the country’s emissions. Aotearoa (New Zealand) plans to purchase international carbon offsets to help meet an array of its climate commitments and mitigate potential emissions overshoot, but this approach should not be a substitute for cutting emissions at the source.<sup>26</sup>





### 3.

#### **WORLD LEADERS AND INVESTORS MUST COMMIT TO EQUITABLY END THE LICENSING AND FUNDING (PUBLIC AND PRIVATE) OF NEW COAL, OIL, AND GAS DEVELOPMENT. A SUCCESSFUL COP 28 WILL CLOSE WITH A COMMITMENT TO A JUST PHASE-OUT OF FOSSIL FUELS.**

COP 27 failed to have nations commit to a global phase-out of fossil fuels.<sup>27</sup> As urgent action is needed to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of warming, a successful COP 28 must end with a global commitment to phase out fossil fuel technologies, with caution around false solutions such as carbon capture and storage (CCS).

This region should work to be a key player in the just transition to clean energy. Australia specifically has a responsibility to help urgently rectify climate impacts as one of the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases, and as such, should strengthen its emissions reductions targets, rapidly scale up clean energy infrastructure and provide training and financing packages for people and communities on the frontline of the transition.<sup>28</sup>

While the carbon footprints of many Pacific Nations are negligible (*the Pacific region only making up 0.03% of the world's total greenhouse emissions*<sup>29</sup>) they must continue to ensure their decarbonisation strategies are aligned with the Paris Agreement. Despite their light footprint, many Pacific Nations are leading

international climate policy both regionally and internationally.

Six Pacific Nations (the Kingdom of Tonga, the Republic of Fiji, Niue, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and the Republic of Vanuatu) have now pledged to what is called the 'Port Villa Call for a Just Transition to a Fossil Free Pacific.' Amongst significant calls to action – The Port Villa Call seeks a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and the formation of an “*alliance to negotiate a new Treaty to govern the end of fossil fuel expansion, equitable phase out of fossil fuels, and a global just transition.*”<sup>30</sup> Members of the Port Villa Call are seeking regional partners to pledge allegiance and to finance the transition. Governments of this region such as Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand) should pledge allegiance to the Port Villa Call – committing to an “equitable phase-out of fossil fuels, coal, oil and gas production in

line with the global temperature goal of below 1.5°C.”

**Overall, we need COPs to hold major emitters accountable and increase climate ambition for all countries.**





#### 4.

**OIL AND CLIMATE DON'T MIX. WITH THE CEO OF ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST OIL COMPANIES APPOINTED TO LEAD COP 28, WE SHINE A LIGHT ON THIS INESCAPABLE CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ASK FOR REAL LEADERSHIP COMMITTED TO LEAVING FOSSIL FUELS BEHIND.**

There is valid concern over outcomes at this year's COP in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The president, Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, is CEO of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) – the 12th largest oil and gas company in the world – a company that plans to boost oil production by 7.6 billion barrels in coming years.<sup>31</sup> There must be increased pressure on parties to the UNFCCC to stand strong against any conflicts of interest with fossil fuel interests.

COPs must focus on speeding the transition away from the fossil fuels driving climate change and threatening our shared future.

At COP 28 moving forward, world leaders must advocate for changes to COP processes that will remove fossil fuel interests from COP presidencies, negotiations, and platforms. **Governments, committees, non-party stakeholders, and civil society must work together to enact a true conflict of interest standard**

**that identifies fossil fuel lobbyists at COPs and removes their capacity to influence UNFCCC outcomes.**

#### 5.

**AT COP 28 WORLD LEADERS MUST PROGRESS MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANK REFORM AND SHIFT ALL FINANCE FROM FOSSIL FUELS INTO CLEAN ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES. GOVERNMENTS OF THIS REGION MUST ALSO INCREASE CLIMATE FINANCE COMMITMENTS AND DELIVER ON PLEDGES PREVIOUSLY MADE.**

COP 27 saw increased calls for public financial system reform, including multilateral development banks (MDBs), and increased ambition around meeting the \$100 billion per year in climate finance pledge, but new climate finance goals ultimately fell short. At COP 28, we should urge world leaders to make progress on MDB reform as well as increased commitments to climate funds, including delivering on pledges previously made.<sup>32</sup>

Financing must be shifted from fossil fuels and into

clean energy technologies. At COP 26 in Glasgow, Scotland, 34 governments and five public finance institutions signed the 'Glasgow Statement on International Public Support for the Clean Energy Transition', committing themselves to ending new direct public support for international fossil fuel projects by the end of 2022. Out of 16 signatories providing significant finance for energy projects, eight (including Aotearoa – New Zealand) have policies broadly

meeting Glasgow Statement goals, currently shifting \$5.7 billion USD out of international fossil fuel finance per year<sup>33</sup>



#### GREEN CLIMATE FUND:

Developed economies must also be providers of climate finance for the most vulnerable international communities. The Australian Government played a key role in the inception of the United Nations Green Climate Fund (GCF) however withdrew funding in

2019. A second round of GCF funding is set to take place from 2024 to 2027.<sup>34</sup> The Australian Government should re-commit funding between \$700-900 million to the GCF,<sup>35</sup> as well as provide financing to other mechanisms such as The Adaptation Fund.<sup>36</sup>

## 6.

### DEVELOPED ECONOMIES SHOULD SUPPORT THE EQUITABLE OPERATIONALISATION OF THE 'LOSS AND DAMAGE FUND' AND MAKE ADDITIONAL CLIMATE FINANCE COMMITMENTS TO VULNERABLE COUNTRIES.

Wealthy countries in this region such as Australia – must support the equitable advancement of the Loss and Damage Fund and make additional financial commitments at COP 28. A sum of US \$400 Billion per annum has been recommended as a floor to meet the current scale of finance required for loss and damage internationally.<sup>37</sup>

In the lead up to COP28, Australia must take leadership as one of twenty-four countries with membership on the Transitional Committee, the body making decisions on the operationalization of the new funding arrangements required by the Loss and Damage Fund.

Historically, loans are customary in climate finance schemes, including in loss and damage funding. The rate of climate debt is rising for those worst impacted and in the face of rising climate disasters governments are forced to choose between repaying debts or investing in a climate safe future.<sup>38</sup> Developed countries must play their part to close the gap at COP 28.

We must also establish a clear allocation of finance for loss and damage, that remains distinct from other forms of climate funding such as adaptation and development finance. Of utmost

importance – Governments of this region must acknowledge and introduce human-rights based and gender responsive loss and damage commitments. Non-economic loss and damage (e.g., health, cultural heritage, Indigenous and local knowledge) has historically been ignored; new efforts to address these impacts must be designed with those impacted.

Fossil fuel stakeholders and polluting industries must also make financial commitments to the Loss and Damage Fund ahead of COP 28 – reflecting the extent of the historical and future harm their activities caused to people and the environment.

## 7.

### GOVERNMENTS OF THIS REGION MUST JOIN SIDE AGREEMENTS THAT REDUCE METHANE EMISSIONS, PHASE OUT FOSSIL FUELS PROJECTS AND FINANCING, PROTECT FORESTS AND OCEANS, AND SUPPORT A JUST TRANSITION FOR ALL.

**FOSSIL FUELS:** As the world's third largest exporter of fossil fuels<sup>39</sup> Australia should work alongside Aotearoa (New Zealand) and other governments at COP 28 to strengthen climate action that aligns coal, oil and gas production with the Paris Agreement by joining the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance and Powering Past Coal Alliance.

**OCEANS:** We must continue to advocate for the protection of the world's oceans. In March 2023, the UN agreed on a historic Global Ocean Treaty which will help governments protect high seas and 30% of the world's oceans by 2030. *"The Treaty delivers*

*stronger protections for the ocean under the framework of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, including by providing a mechanism for establishing marine protected areas on the high seas."* On September 20, 2023 Australia signed the High Seas Biodiversity Treaty. **Governments of this region must act swiftly to ratify the Treaty and take immediate action to create new ocean sanctuaries.**

**FORESTS:** 145 countries struck an agreement to work collectively to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 including Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand) and Fiji. At

COP 28 all signatories need to report back on this crucial action. More needs to be done to reverse the loss of forests and woodlands in Australia, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands.

**METHANE** is over 80 times more powerful a climate pollutant than CO<sub>2</sub> and breaks down faster. At the Glasgow COP, a crucial side agreement, the Global Methane Pledge, was launched by the United States, the European Union and over 100 countries. It commits them to cutting methane emissions by at least 30% by 2030. Australia joined the Methane pledge at COP 27;

however, Australia must bring updated reduction and action plans to COP 28 – and these plans must show how they intend to rapidly cut methane emissions from both gas production and agriculture.

Agricultural emissions, particularly methane, make up the bulk of Aotearoa's (New Zealand's) emissions profile. Having signed on to the Methane Pledge, the country can accelerate existing innovations to improve farming practices. It should also invest in research to develop more solutions to reduce methane emissions.



# THE GLOBAL STOCKTAKE:

A cornerstone of COP28 will be the first Global Stocktake (GST) of the Paris Agreement, where countries essentially “take stock” of climate action and the results of their climate commitments and set agenda for commitments moving forward. Successive Global Stocktakes will take place every five years.<sup>40</sup>

**THE GLOBAL STOCKTAKE** is designed to inform countries in updating and enhancing their Nationally Determined Contribution. The process will identify gaps in climate action and opportunities to bridge them as it relates to meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement.

**THE CURRENT GLOBAL STOCKTAKE WILL ALSO INFORM NDCs TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD IN 2025.** Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand) and Pacific Nations, including partners of the Pacific Islands Forum should not only continue to strengthen their commitments in time for COP 28, but go beyond the conclusions presented in the Global Stocktake.

**AS ESTABLISHED BY THE PARIS AGREEMENT**, the Global Stocktake analyses progress made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, build resilience to climate impacts, and position financial support. The assessment aims to answer three questions:

## WHERE ARE WE?

## WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

## HOW DO WE GET THERE?

**THE COP 28 PRESIDENCY** has set four elements within the Paris Agreement to track and deliver outcomes within this year’s Global Stocktake:

1. Fast-tracking the energy transition and slashing emissions before 2030.
2. Transforming climate finance, by delivering on old promises and setting the framework for a new deal on finance

3. Putting nature, people, lives, and livelihoods at the heart of climate action.
4. Mobilizing for the most inclusive COP ever.

**AT THE CLOSE OF COP 28** the COP Presidency has mapped out three goals of the Global Stocktake:

**A negotiated action plan:** that increases ambition on adaptation, mitigation, finance and loss and damage. They state, the stocktake should rally “*all Parties around concrete, equitable solutions to close those gaps, inform NDCs and NAPs, and enshrine Paris-aligned 2030 pathways, including pursuing efforts to limit global temperature increase to 1.5°C.*”<sup>41</sup>

**The Action Agenda:** which aims to increase pressure on upscaling solutions and finance in key sectors, initiated by ‘The World Climate Action Summit’ and a rolling agenda of COP 28 themes.

**A call to action with a clear message to the world:** that maps how each government, individual and industry will play their part to meet the requirements of the Paris Agreement.





# HOW COP 31 COULD BECOME THE PACIFIC COP

The formal offer of Australia to host COP 31 in partnership with Pacific Nations presents a unique opportunity to host a successful COP that advances needed action on climate change and the standing climate interests of the region. A successful COP can include the COP agreement, side agreements by some governments, action by businesses and community groups, raised public support and increased awareness, and benefits to the region – and,

ideally, all these together ensuring success.

Pacific Island leaders play an instrumental role in shaping international climate negotiations. Considering, Australia's bid to host COP 31 with Pacific Nations, Australia must immediately scale up their climate ambition to demonstrate genuine commitment.

Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand) and Pacific Island Nations are at high risk from the impacts of climate change and have

considerable opportunities in a low carbon world. The outreach of Australia and the Pacific Nations globally from its governments, societies, businesses, and knowledge institutions is potentially very influential in the context of international climate action and agreements.

Planning and acting well in advance of the hosting of a COP allows a broader set of goals to be pursued to maximize effective action on climate change at scale.

## INSIGHTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL COP 31

### PAST COPs PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS WITH A MULTI-YEAR, WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH.

Previous COPs have been informed by climate science and modelling provided by the IPCC and UNEP. If the hosting rights for COP 31 in Australia and the Pacific Nations are announced at COP 28 in Dubai this year, it will provide the region with three years to maximise this opportunity. Making COP 31 the primary focus

of the Australian Government's diplomatic efforts over that period should be seen as a pivotal moment for nation-building.

COP 30 in Brazil will focus on new NDCs. If ambition falls short, COP 31 will need to push for more, drawing inspiration from progress achieved at COP 16 in Cancun following shortfalls during COP 15 in Copenhagen.

COPs can also be used to mobilise efforts outside formal

negotiations in what is known as the 'Action Agenda'. A good example of this was COP 26 in Glasgow.

COP Presidencies should also work with G20, G7, APEC, ASEAN, PIF and other forums to coordinate and build climate action, culminating at the end-of-year COP.



# POSSIBLE GOALS FOR HOSTING COP 31:

*A broad goal could be to accelerate commitments, action, and knowledge and awareness, from governments, business, and civil society around the world, and to position Australia and the Pacific at the centre of this effort for domestic and international benefit.*

## **ACHIEVE THE BEST POSSIBLE NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS FROM COP 31:**

- Engage strongly in current COP activities, including the Global Stocktake.
- Take a multiyear whole of government approach to COP 31.
- Use all diplomatic missions to undertake engagement for ideally three years prior to the COP with outreach to governments, business, and civil society.
- Ensure the ‘agenda’ for the COP is impactful – seek to encourage increased ambition in NDCs before and at the 2025 and 2026 COPs, enhance implementation efforts, and achieve agreements on key themes relevant to the region such as oceans and climate finance
- Encourage high quality and shared analysis including from the International Panel on Climate Change, United Nations Environmental Program, and others.
- Leverage the unique networks of Australia and the Pacific Nations.
- The Pacific Island Forum (Pacific Nations, Australia, and Aotearoa (New Zealand)) and its 18 Dialogue Partners (including USA, China, European Union, India, Indonesia, United Kingdom, and others) provide a unique network of countries essential to a successful COP that could be engaged early by the Forum to ensure success of the COP.
- Work closely with Brazil to advance climate ambition ahead of and after the 2025 COP (COP 30) set to take-place

in Belém on the fringes of the Amazon Rainforest.

- Push for all NDCs to be aligned with no more than 1.5°C of global warming. The Pacific COP needs to put 1.5°C as an accountability mechanism.

## **ADVANCE ‘SIDE-AGREEMENTS’ AND ACTION ON THEM THAT ACCELERATE ACTION BY WILLING GOVERNMENTS, BUSINESSES, AND CIVIL SOCIETY:**

- Engage in tracking and action under the existing ‘Glasgow side agreements’, and key agreements being made around COPs by business and societies.
- Foster new relevant side agreements, for example for Non-Economic Loss and Damage, Oceans and Climate Finance.
- Build a new alliance of clean energy exporting nations. Australia can showcase how a country known for exporting the problem (fossil fuels) can transition to exporting the solution (green hydrogen, steel and aluminum).

## **BUILD PUBLIC AND BUSINESS ACTION AND SUPPORT:**

- Review and offer to strengthen roles and synergies between Climate Champions and engage early with them.
- Engage business and civil society in planning and action, and encourage existing and new initiatives (e.g., The Glasgow Finance Alliance) and new.
- Support and foster the ‘art’s sectors’ in Australia and the Pacific and globally as an early and powerful builder

of awareness, action, and celebration.

- Engage Pacific diasporas in Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand) and in the USA in activities.
- Expand the Climate Champions role to every major sector (Agriculture Champion, Energy Champion, Transport Champion, etc).

## **ENCOURAGE PARALLEL ACTION ACROSS OTHER KEY FORA INCLUDING THE G20, MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS, THE PACIFIC ISLAND FORUM, THE BIODIVERSITY CONVENTION, AND UNEP, TO DEEPEN AND ACCELERATION PROGRESS THAT WILL ENHANCE SUCCESS OF THE COP:**

- Continue to advance climate action and seek synergies in the G20, PIF, UNEP, and the Biodiversity Convention.
- Join efforts to reform and strengthen the role that multilateral development banks can play in accelerating the transition to net zero economies.

## **POSITION AUSTRALIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION TO BENEFIT FROM FINANCE, KNOWLEDGE, TECHNOLOGY, AND PUBLIC AWARENESS/SUPPORT NEEDED FOR THE CONTINUING RAPID GLOBAL TRANSITION TO LOW CARBON SOCIETIES/ ECONOMIES.**

- Encourage Australian and Pacific interests to use the COP year and pavilions at upcoming COPs to showcase actions and needs in the region; viewing this as a finance, knowledge, technology, business, and awareness ‘accelerator.’

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