



COP26: Don't forget the successes - Oxford experts

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When the history of COP26 and the battle to reduce emissions is written, last minute manoeuvrings in Glasgow will be a feature. But the very real successes of this year's Conference of the Parties will also be writ large: years of negotiations over core issues resolved and the completion of the Paris rule book as well as a substantial package on mitigation.

To some extent, these have been overwhelmed by the disappointments, but the achievements need to be differentiated and highlighted, according to Professor Benito Müller

(<https://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/people/professor-benito-muller/>),
Managing Director of Oxford Climate Policy
 (<https://oxfordclimatepolicy.org/>) and Convener of
International Climate Policy Research at
Oxford's Environmental Change Institute
 (<https://www.eci.ox.ac.uk/>).

“ Years of negotiations over core issues [have been] resolved, the completion of the Paris rule book [has been achieved] as well as a substantial package on mitigation ”
COP26 successes

He insists, 'When judging the outcome of COP 26...it is important to distinguish between the core business...concerning the multilateral climate regime and the announcements of heads of state/government...The latter has become much more prominent and is attracting many more people than the former.'

Meanwhile, Professor Lavanya Rajamani (<https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/people/lavanya-rajamani>), professor of international environmental law, says, 'COP26 delivered, against all odds, a substantial package on mitigation. 1.5C might be on its last gasp but it still has a fighting chance. The outcome on mitigation, including the work programme on mitigation, is a remarkable achievement, the credit for which should go to those developing countries like India that agreed to enhanced mitigation action in the face of decades of breached promises on finance and support, and rapidly diminishing fairness in these negotiations.'

Professor Müller explains the importance of the COP26 achievements, 'One of the key core-business objective of the UK COP Presidency was to finalise the rule book of the Paris Agreement...There were three outstanding issues which have been languishing in the negotiation without resolution ever since 2015: Article 6, transparency, and common time frames (CTF).'

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Professor Lavanya Rajamani

In his latest blog post,

(<http://blog.oxfordclimatepolicy.org/the-common-time-frame-has-landed/>) he explains, 'I have had the honour of being part of a group of stakeholders that has been working tirelessly and doggedly over the past seven years to bring about the agreement on a common (5-year) time frame...under the Paris Agreement. Even though the odds were 4:1 stacked against us.'

It is difficult to say when the balance tipped towards the five-year frequency of NDC end-years but it was an uphill struggle.'

He continues, 'There is still something missing. It may sound complex, but it is important - the Glasgow Common Time Frame (CTF) decision does not include the request for regular (5-yearly) synchronised ambition updating. Revisiting and strengthening the ambition of NDCs that have been communicated earlier is key to harnessing much needed additional overall ambition; but to maximise the additional ambition, the process needs a time table for regular (5-yearly) synchronised updating.'

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