

# COP 26



# Jargon Buster

Get connected

for COP26



# COP26 Jargon Buster



COP26 represents the 26th conference of the parties under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held at Glasgow in November 2021. This Jargon Buster will help you get more connected to COP by explaining all of the key terminology and phrases.

## COP26 - What is it?

### **COP**

Conference of the Parties. The COP26 summit will bring parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

### **COP Presidency**

The UK will be assuming the COP26 Presidency, hosting the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow.

### **UNFCCC**

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The UNFCCC is the United Nations entity tasked with supporting the global response to the threat of climate change.

### **2015 Paris Agreement**

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.

### **IPCC**

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change.



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## Weather & Climate

### Climate

A way of summarising the weather observed over a particular period of time at a particular location. Mostly we are familiar with climate averages such as average temperature or rainfall experienced at a location. However, other weather factors are also part of climate such as wind, sunshine, and cloud.

While averages are useful, they don't tell the whole story. We also need to summarise how much these elements might vary during the same period. This might include their range and information about the size of extreme events and how often they occur.

### Climate Change

Climate change relates to shifts in climate between different periods of time, long enough to minimise the effects of short term variations, both locally and globally.

Current interest has focused on an observed warming of the global climate over the past 150 years.

### Net Zero

The amount of greenhouse gases put into the air = the amount of greenhouse gases removed.



***“Climate is what you expect, weather is what you get.”***

*Robert Heinlein*

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## Weather & Climate

### Event Attribution

We have all experienced extreme weather in our lives – storms, extreme rainfall, heatwaves or droughts. The question often arises how these events are linked to climate change and whether we are likely to see more of them in the future.

This field of research is called Event Attribution.

### 1.5°C

The increase in global temperature that scientists use as a projection for when we start to see devastating climate impacts and lasting changes. The aim is to keep below this number.

### Climate Mitigation

What actions can be taken to prevent, reduce, slow down, stop or reverse climate change.

### Climate Adaptation

Preparing and coping with the impacts of climate change that can't be reduced e.g. flood defences.



### Want more information?

Read the Royal Meteorological Society Climate Briefing papers here



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### **Nature based solutions**

Actions that provide benefits to nature whilst also addressing social challenges. Specifically, the protection, sustainable management and restoration of ecosystems that deliver benefits to both biodiversity and society.

### **Convention on Biological Diversity**

An international treaty with the following goals: conservation of biological diversity; sustainable use of its components; and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.

### **Anthropogenic greenhouse emissions**

Greenhouse-gas emissions that result from human activities.

### **Carbon sequestration**

The process of removing carbon from the atmosphere through either a natural or artificial process.

### **Carbon capture and storage (CCS)**

The process of capturing and storing carbon dioxide before it is released into the atmosphere.

### **Science based targets**

A carbon emissions target that is in line with the scale of reductions required to keep global temperature increase below 2°C above pre-industrial temperatures.



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## Economy & Policy

### Carbon market

A market in which we trade carbon emission allowances. The market aims to encourage companies to limit their emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>.

The Cap and Trade system is part of this. This system aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It works by limiting (capping) how much greenhouse gases that groups of companies can use. It also allows companies to buy and sell (trade) carbon credits.

### Circular economy

An economy that focuses on products with an extended lifespan and are reused or recycled when no longer functional or required, eliminating waste from the system. This is a departure from the traditional, linear economic model, which is based on a take-make-consume-throw away pattern.

### Climate justice

Climate justice relates to concerns about the inequitable outcomes for different people and places associated with vulnerability to climate impacts and the fairness of policy and practice responses to address climate change and its consequences.

**Find out how the  
Institution of Environmental Sciences are  
supporting COP26 here:**

[the-ies.org/news/our-plans-run-cop26](https://the-ies.org/news/our-plans-run-cop26)



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## Economy & Policy

### Green finance

Financial activity aimed at ensuring a better environmental outcome, for example investments that encourage the development of green projects or minimise the environmental impact of existing ones.

### Natural capital

The part of nature which directly or indirectly underpins value to people, including ecosystems, species, freshwater, soils, minerals, the air and oceans, as well as natural processes and functions.

### Green recovery

Making the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic environmentally sustainable, with the intention to 'build back better'. A green recovery focuses on long term policies and solutions that are designed to benefit both people and our planet.

### Leakage

The proportion of cuts in greenhouse-gas emissions by developed countries that may reappear in other countries not bound by such limits. For example, multinational corporations may shift factories from developed countries to developing countries to escape restrictions on emissions.



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## Economy & Policy

### Environmental, Social and Governance criteria

The three factors used to measure the sustainability of an investment. Investors use ESG criteria along with financial considerations when analysing potential investments.

**Environmental criteria** - how a company responds to environmental concerns.

**Social criteria** - relationships with employees, suppliers, customers, and the communities where a company operates.

**Governance criteria** - a company's leadership, executive pay, audits, internal controls, and shareholder rights.

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### Systemic change

Change that pervades all parts of a system, taking into account the interrelationships and interdependencies among those parts

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### Kyoto Protocol

The Kyoto Protocol sets binding targets for the reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions by industrialized countries.





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## Energy & Development

### Sustainable development

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Development that meets social and economic needs and ensures the protection of the environment.

### Sustainable development goals

The Sustainable Development Goals are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all".

They were adopted by all United Nations Member States as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### Carbon budgets

A carbon budget is the cumulative amount of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions permitted over a period of time to keep within a certain temperature threshold.

### Clean energy

Energy which comes from renewable sources whose use and production does not contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.



## CONNECTED FOR COP26

Our blog series **#Connected4COP26** showcases scientists contributing to the COP26 goals & to climate change mitigation efforts.

Read the stories here:  
[sciencecouncil.org/connected-4-cop26](https://sciencecouncil.org/connected-4-cop26)

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## Food & Food Waste

### Food loss

The decrease in the quantity or quality of food resulting from decisions and actions by food suppliers in the chain, excluding retailers, food service providers and consumers.<sup>1</sup>

### Food wastage

Any reduction in the quantity or quality of food throughout the food system (a colloquial term not formally endorsed by regulators or an authoritative body).<sup>1</sup>

### Food waste

The decrease in the quantity or quality of food resulting from decisions and actions by retailers, food service providers and consumers.<sup>1</sup>

### Food security

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.<sup>1</sup>

### Water footprint

A measure of humanity's appropriation of fresh water in volumes of water consumed and/or polluted.<sup>2</sup>



#### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fao.org/food-loss-and-food-waste/flw-data>

<sup>2</sup> <https://waterfootprint.org/en/water-footprint/what-is-water-footprint/>