

World faces disastrous 2.7C temperature rise on current climate plans, UN warns

The world is squandering the opportunity to “build back better” from the Covid-19 pandemic, and faces disastrous temperature rises of at least 2.7C if countries fail to strengthen their climate pledges, according to a report from the UN.

Tuesday’s publication warns that countries’ current pledges would reduce carbon by only about 7.5% by 2030, far less than the 45% cut scientists say is needed to limit global temperature rises to 1.5C, the aim of the Cop26 summit that opens in Glasgow this Sunday.

António Guterres, the UN secretary-general, described the findings as a “thundering wake up call” to world leaders, while experts called for drastic action against fossil fuel companies.

Although more than 100 countries have promised to reach net zero emissions around mid-century, this would not be enough to stave off climate disaster, according to the UN emissions report, which examines the shortfall between countries’ intentions and actions needed on the climate. Many of the net zero pledges were found to be vague, and unless accompanied by stringent cuts in emissions this decade would allow global heating of a potentially catastrophic extent.

Guterres said: “The heat is on, and as the contents of this report show, the leadership we need is off. Far off. Countries are squandering a massive opportunity to invest Covid-19 fiscal and recovery resources in sustainable, cost-saving, planet-saving ways. As world leaders prepare for Cop26, this report is another thundering wake-up call. How many do we need?”

Inger Andersen, the executive director of the UN Environment Programme (Unep) said: “Climate change is no longer a future problem. It is a now problem. To stand a chance of limiting global warming to 1.5C, we have eight years to almost halve greenhouse gas emissions: eight years to make the plans, put in place the policies, implement them and ultimately deliver the cuts. The clock is ticking loudly.”

Emissions fell by about 5.4% last year during Covid lockdowns, the report found, but only about a fifth of the spending on economic recovery was geared to efforts that would cut carbon. This failure to “build back better” despite promises by governments around the world cast doubt on the world’s willingness to make the economic shift necessary to tackle the climate crisis, the UN said.

In the run-up to Cop26, countries were supposed to submit national plans on emissions cuts – called nationally determined contributions (NDCs) – for the next decade, a requirement under the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

But the Unep report found only half of countries had submitted new NDCs, and several other governments – including Russia, Brazil, Australia and Mexico – had presented weak plans that were no improvement on their 2015 Paris pledges.

The emissions gap report also highlighted methane, a powerful greenhouse gas that arises from animal husbandry, natural gas extraction and waste. The US, the EU and more than 20 other countries have signed a pledge to reduce methane globally by 30% this decade.

Unep said methane was the second biggest contributor to temperature rises, after carbon, and that about 20% of annual methane emissions could be cut at little or no cost, for instance through better management of natural gas drilling.

联合国敲响“气候警钟”：全球将升温 2.7 摄氏度

联合国的一份报告指出，世界正在浪费新冠疫情带来的“重建”机会，如果各国依然无法兑现气候承诺，全球气温会上升至少 2.7 摄氏度，这将是灾难性的。

10月26日发布的这份报告警告称，各国目前的承诺如果能够兑现，也只能在2030年前将碳排放量降低7.5%左右，远远低于科学家所说的将全球气温升幅限制在1.5摄氏度以内所需的45%。将全球升温幅度控制在1.5摄氏度以内也是本周日（10月31日）在格拉斯哥召开的COP26联合国气候峰会的目标。

联合国秘书长安东尼奥·古特雷斯将这一结论描述为向世界领导人“敲响振聋发聩的警钟”。与此同时，专家呼吁对化石燃料公司采取严厉措施。

联合国的碳排放报告称，尽管已有100多个国家承诺在本世纪中叶实现零排放目标，但是仍不足以避免气候灾难。这份报告检视了各国的承诺和应对气候危机所需采取的行动之间的落差。许多国家的零排放承诺都很含糊，然而，除非这个十年按照承诺实行严格的减排措施，否则灾难性的全球变暖将不可避免。

古特雷斯表示：“事态变得紧急，而且据这份报告的内容显示，我们所需的减排领导力很不够。远远不够。新冠疫情带来的大好转型机会正在被各国浪费掉，他们原本可以借此机会投资可持续的节省成本的环保资源。如今世界领导人正准备参加COP26联合国气候峰会，这份报告再次敲响了振聋发聩的警钟。我们还需要多少警钟才能行动起来？”

联合国环境规划署执行主任英格·安德森说：“气候变化不再是未来的问题，而是现在的问题。为了能有一线之机将全球变暖幅度限制在1.5摄氏度内，我们必须在八年内将碳排放量减半，其中包括计划的制定、政策的发布和实施以及最终减排。时不我待。”

报告发现，去年疫情封锁期间，碳排放量大约减少了5.4%，但是经济复苏的资金中只有约五分之一用于减排需求。联合国称，世界各国政府无视承诺不事“重建”的行为令人怀疑他们为应对气候危机而做出经济转型的诚意。

在即将举行的COP26联合国气候峰会期间，按照2015年巴黎气候协定的要求，各国本应提交下一个十年的全国减排计划“国家自主贡献预案”。

但是联合国环境规划署的报告发现，只有半数国家提交了新的国家自主贡献预案，俄罗斯、巴西、澳大利亚和墨西哥等国政府提交的计划乏善可陈，只是在重复他们在2015年巴黎协定上的承诺。

这份排放落差报告还重点关注了甲烷这种威力强大的温室气体。甲烷来自畜牧业、天然气开采和尾气。美国、欧盟和20多个其他国家都签署了在十年内将全球甲烷排放量减少30%的承诺书。

联合国环境规划署称，甲烷是仅次于二氧化碳的温室气体。每年可以通过成本很低或零成本的方式将甲烷排放量减少约20%，比如通过改善对天然气开采的管理。