

BPCL looking at buying Venezuelan oil, official says

MINT



New Delhi: State run refiner Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) is looking at buying Venezuelan oil, its head of refineries Sanjay Khanna said on Wednesday. "Our refineries are capable of processing Venezuelan oil and we have given our international trade (department) the okay to buy it," Khanna said. The import of Venezuelan oil will not be a threat to BPCL's Russian oil imports, he added. **REUTERS**

Climate Pledge by 200 Nations Seeks to 'Transition Away from Fossil Fuels'

First such mention in pact that outlines roadmap for net zero emissions by '50; some loopholes remain

Urmi Goswami

Dubai: The COP28 meeting ended with about 200 nations agreeing to "transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems" — the first time they have made that pledge — to meet the goal of net zero emissions by 2050.

The UAE Consensus made history by becoming the first climate agreement that explicitly calls for moving away from such non-renewable energy sources. It comes after two weeks of negotiations, with consultations running into the early hours.

"We have delivered a paradigm shift that has the potential to redefine our economies," said Sultan al-Jaber, president of COP28, after striking the gavel on the pact that provides a roadmap for achieving goals of the Paris Agreement.

However, Al-Jaber, also chief executive of UAE state-owned oil firm Adnoc, warned that "an agreement is only as good as its implementation. We are what we do, not what we say."

Pacts Give Some Leeway ►► 16



A Deeper Green

Tripling of renewable energy, doubling energy efficiency by 2030



Sultan Al-Jaber

Acceleration of efforts to phase down unabated coal use

Loss and Damage Fund operationalised, initial capitalisation of over

\$700 million

Next round of Nationally Determined Contributions by late 2024

IN TRADE...

Seek fair, aligned policies supporting climate-friendly global supply chains



GYAN

Pacts Give Some Leeway

►► From Page 1

The president of COP28 had consistently stressed his intention to supercharge climate action. Even as it signals progress, the UAE Consensus has loopholes that allow oil and gas exporters the space to continue operations, observers said. Countries agreed that “transitional fuels,” a euphemism for gas, “can play a role in facilitating the energy transition while ensuring energy security.” This free pass for the expansion of gas production is a particular blow, given that the associated methane leakage could make gas “even worse” than coal, an expert said.

Consensus was reached after anger over an earlier weaker version led to the strengthening of the wording.

“Whilst we didn’t turn the page on the fossil fuel era in Dubai, this outcome is the beginning of the end,” Simon Stiell, the UN’s climate boss, said at the closing plenary.

However, Samoa lead delegate Anne Rasmussen complained on behalf of small island nations that “the course correction that is needed has not been secured.” The agreement could

“potentially take us backward rather than forward,” she said. Rasmussen was given a standing ovation.

The agreement also includes “abatement and removal technologies such as carbon capture, utilisation and storage” among zero- and low-emissions technologies. The agreement does not limit the use of these to “hard-to-abate sectors.”

“The final outcome is certainly a clear signal from the global community, heralding a gradual shift away from fossil fuels,” said Jan Kowalzig, senior policy adviser, climate change, Oxfam. “However, this signal comes with annoying concessions that jeopardise compliance with the 1.5 degrees C threshold.”

ACCOMMODATING THE PUSHBACK

This balancing act between oil and gas producers and the demands for action to limit warming to 1.5 degrees C reflects the difficult task that faced the COP28 president and his team. Through the two weeks, oil and gas-producing countries, in particular, Saudi Arabia, pushed back against inclusion of a call to phase out fossil fuels. The Gulf region’s major oil producer

and the chair of the Arab Group claimed to have the support of 18 countries, a number large enough to block any deal. OPEC too got into the act with clear efforts to pressure the COP28 presidency. The loopholes and caveats notwithstanding, COP28 is a “pivotal landmark,” said Johan Rockström, co-director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research.

This consensus needs to be translated into action. “We needed this COP to send crystal clear signals on several fronts,” said Stiell. “We needed a global green light signaling it is ‘all systems go’ on renewables, climate justice and resilience. On this front, COP28 delivered some genuine strides forward.”

INDIA PERSPECTIVE

For India, the effort to focus on coal — with more aggressive timelines for phasing out its use — was a cause for concern. The final deal calls for accelerating the phasedown of unabated coal. While India and other coal-dependent countries may take comfort in this language, the lack of parity between coal and other fossil fuels that India sought to correct at Sharm El-Sheikh persists.

Coal is the only fossil fuel that is referred to in the text. “From an Indian perspective, this text displays greater parity between coal and other fossil fuels, but it appears to absolve developed

countries of the responsibility of phasing out their fossil fuel use in this critical decade,” said Ulka Kelkar, executive director, climate, World Resources Institute India.

The deal also fails to provide a robust outcome on adaptation, or helping countries adapt to, climate change. This is a priority issue for developing countries, particularly least developed ones. There is a reference to the Glasgow decision to double finance for adaptation. There are also mentions of the need to scale up adaptation finance, but there is no indication of how this will be done. “It exonerates developed countries from making up the finance gap so (wide), though it recognises that the gap in adaptation finance is ‘widening,’ and that doubling the current low levels of adaptation finance will be insufficient,” said Kelkar.

Though COP28 began on a positive note, with the operationalisation of the loss and damage fund, it has “largely disappointed on all fronts,” said Arunabha Ghosh, chief executive of Delhi-based think tank Council on Energy, Environment and Water. “It hasn’t sufficiently raised climate ambition, held historical polluters accountable, or established effective mechanisms to finance climate resilience and a just low-carbon transition for the Global South.”

urmi.goswami@timesgroup.com

COP28 agrees to move away from fossil fuels



UN Climate Chief Simon Stiell with COP28 President Sultan al-Jaber (right), at the end of the summit PHOTO: REUTERS

HIGHLIGHTS

- COP28 hosted by the UAE was a Global Stocktake year under the 2015 Paris Agreement
- Low-carbon hydrogen, carbon capture, energy storage, even nuclear power labelled under low-emission technologies
- Phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that do not address energy poverty or just transitions



INDIA URGES THAT THE DETERMINATION SHOWN AT COP IS ALSO SUBSTANTIATED WITH MEANS TO BRING IT TO FRUITION"

BHUPENDER YADAV
Union minister for environment, forest and climate change



Coal singled out to be phased down; India calls for climate equity and justice

SHREYA JAI

New Delhi, 13 December

The 28th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28), hosted by oil exporter United Arab Emirates (UAE), adopted the idea of "transitioning away from fossil fuel" in the final decision text, marking the first instance of such a decision in the three decades of COP's existence.

This agreement, reached during the hottest year in recorded history, was finalised on Wednesday after two weeks of intense debate at the UN climate summit in Dubai.

"Through the night and the early hours of morning, we worked collectively for consensus," said Sultan al-Jaber, president of COP28 and chief executive officer of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company.

"Together we have confronted the realities and set the world in the right direction," said al-Jaber.

Accepting the first Global Stocktake of climate action under the 2015 Paris Agreement, COP28 laid down principles for energy transition by calling upon nations to accelerate climate action in this "critical decade".

However, the fine print remained tilted towards the growth of brown fuels, providing oil-rich nations a business window and developing nations some leeway in their green transition. India, which supported the phasedown of all fossil fuels and not just coal, called for equity and justice in global climate action to the Paris Agreement in its concluding remarks at COP28.



EDIT UNEXPECTED PROGRESS **P9**

GAS FIRMS SEEK PRICE DEREGULATION **P6**

Turn to Page 6 ▶

► FROM PAGE 1

COP28...

Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav said, "We support the proposal of the presidency on the COP decision document while reiterating the fundamental principles enshrined in the Paris Agreement to take action for the global good in accordance with national circumstances."

"India urges that the determination shown at COP is also substantiated with means to bring it to fruition. This must be based on the principles of equity and climate justice, which are respectful of national circumstances, and where the developed countries take the lead based on their historical contributions," he said.

The COP28 Stocktake text 'recognised' the need for deep, rapid, and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in line with 1.5°C pathways and called on parties to contribute to global efforts in a nationally determined manner.

In the eight-point approach, the text suggested tripling renewable energy, "accelerating efforts towards the phasedown of unabated coal power, and transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, to achieve net-zero by 2050 in keeping with the science".

"An agreement is only as good as its implementation. We are what we do, not what we say," al-Jaber said. "We must take the steps necessary to turn this agreement into

tangible actions."

"Humankind has finally done what is long, long, long overdue," said Wopke Hoekstra, the European commissioner for climate action. "Thirty years — 30 years! — we spent to arrive at the beginning of the end of fossil fuels."

Despite India's push, coal was singled out for phasedown and not all fossil fuels. Natural gas has been placed under the 'transitional fuel' category, which is condemned by the Global South.

"This COP has largely disappointed on all fronts. It hasn't sufficiently raised climate ambition, held historical polluters accountable, or established effective mechanisms to finance climate resilience and a just low-carbon transition for the Global South. The exclusive focus on rapidly phasing down unabated coal heightens the risk of exacerbating the North-South global divide," said Arunabha Ghosh, CEO, Council on Energy, Environment and Water.

The tripling of renewable energy provides an impetus to India's effort to green its energy economy.

Ajay Mathur, director-general of the India-led International Solar Alliance, said, "Accelerating the transition to renewables is imperative, which requires at least tripling the investments. For this, we need accelerated actions in providing access, enabling financial mechanisms and business models, and agile institutions that can support these."

Being hosted by an oil-rich nation, this was expected to be a finance COP, said Aarti Khosla, director, Climate Trends, but there isn't any landmark outcome on

finance, she said.

This COP also was the first to operationalise the loss and damage fund on the very first day of the conference on November 30. It was expected to garner support from historic polluters, but the final text made the contribution voluntary.

LDF managed to raise barely \$700 million, as against the need being multifold of this amount. The beneficiaries and benefactors have also not been identified for LDF, and World Bank has been made an ad-hoc custodian.

COP28 leaves room for India's short-term coal capacity plan

Experts concerned UAE deal being ambivalent about RE financing

ARUNIMA BHARADWAJ
New Delhi, December 13

EVEN AS THE hotly negotiated COP28 deal requires accelerated efforts among countries towards the "phase-down of unabated coal power," it leaves room for India's contingency plan to add more coal-based capacity than envisaged earlier in the short to medium term, to avert an energy crisis in the fast-growing economy.

This is because the final document or the UAE Consensus after the Dubai summit, dropped references to "limiting the permitting of new and unabated coal power generation" under pressure from India and China.

Union power minister RK Singh has recently stated that the country would add another 30 giga watt (GW) to the nearly 50 GW of coal-based capacity that is already in the works. India also has no plans for retirement or re-purposing of coal-based power stations before 2030, even as the country sticks to the pledge to become carbon-neutral by 2070.

At present, coal-based power accounts for three-fourths of India's power supplies, and by all indications, it would still have a share of over 60% even a decade from now. This is despite continued focus on renewable energy capacity, and investments



Bhupender Yadav, minister for environment, forest & climate change, at the COP28 climate conference on Wednesday PTI



The UAE Consensus dropped references to "limiting the permitting of new and unabated coal power generation" under pressure from India and China

being planned to bolster RE storage capacity and connectivity of the benign energy to the grid. A key challenge is to address the intermittency of RE.

"It will be different for countries like India (to reduce dependence on

coal) as they will need to depend on fossil fuels for a longer period than advanced countries. India's RE capacity will be accelerated but even that is not going to meet the fast-growing demand," said Partha S Bhattacharya, former chairman of Coal India.

The final deal at the COP28 summit in Dubai called for "transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade" which came against the "phase-out" of fossil fuels as pleaded by more than 100 nations.

For India, this of course means adding RE capacity at a greater pace but not doing away with its dependence on coal to meet its energy requirements and demand.

"We are a growing economy and for us to grow at this pace and meet growth targets, energy security needs to be in place. The share of conventional coal coming down and RE capacity to go up will happen over years," said Vikram V, vice president and co-group head at Icra, Corporate Ratings. "We should have enough buffer to meet our demand. In this scenario we might even add some coal-based capacity," Vikram said.

Another aspect that needs attention is financing of RE projects. "In order to make this agreement actionable, what is required is financing for the developing countries to sort of absorb emissions," Bhattacharya said. "Developing countries expect the developed countries to come forward with their money and make the technology available."



CoP-28's finale averted a cop-out on fossil fuels

A transition away from fossil fuels finally found a global consensus in Dubai, but the climate conclave's success depends on what gets implemented and whether rich countries help the rest

The 28th Conference of the Parties—or CoP-28, the critical United Nations summit on climate change—went down to the wire in Dubai, spilling over the allotted time before finally clinching an agreement. Diplomats from almost 200 nations finally agreed on a common document, but only after locked horns, split phrases and nation-specific differences almost jeopardized the pact. A schism appeared over the initial draft's wording that pledged to completely “phase out” fossil fuels, which faced pushback from nations overly dependent on fossil fuels—consumers like India and producers such as Saudi Arabia alike. In the end, a consensus was achieved by asking nations to “transition away” from fossil fuels in a “just, equitable and orderly manner,” with an accelerated shift over the next few years, to achieve net zero by 2050. The final draft also enjoins UN members to triple the world's renewable energy capacity by 2030. The hammering out of a compromise is not only testimony to the CoP-28 President Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber's negotiating skills, but also came as a booster shot for multilateralism, which faces existential threats from a rising tide of autocracy across the globe.

There are good reasons to tag this CoP as momentous. The inclusion of the term “fossil fuels” in the final document, now called the global stocktake (GST), is a major change from previous conclaves, where such direct finger-pointing was resisted by most developing nations, even though it's well known that the historic burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas has been largely responsible for rising temperatures across the globe, making 2023 our hottest year on record. The 2015 Paris pact on

capping global warming at 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels was left by the wayside in subsequent years of squabbling and blame-shifting. In that sense, the Dubai deal breaks new ground. And yet, it failed to please all participants, even though they went along with the rest. Vulnerable island nations claimed that key clauses dealing with the transition away from fossil fuels had loopholes and afforded too much flexibility to countries with fossil-fuel interests. The ultimate proof of Dubai's success, then, will lie in the GST's implementation.

Like all climate summits of the past three decades, global politics has coloured CoP-28 and its final document. There has been chatter among Western powers and their media over the irony of Dubai, an oil producer, hosting this year's huddle. This is downright hypocritical; by that token, CoPs held in Glasgow, Bonn or Paris would also be labelled paradoxical for the host nations' outsized historical role in contributing to greenhouse gas emissions, and thus to global warming, as also for shrugging off justifiable reparations. The ironies do not end there. Rich nations committed to a \$700-million Loss and Damage Fund, with the largest polluter-so-far, the US, committing only \$17.5 million. Hard-up countries still need hundreds of billions of dollars to make a successful and sustainable transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy. No CoP has been able to address this obstacle in the planet's path to carbon neutrality. The blunt edge of climate politics now has the EU using climate change as a convenient ruse to erect new non-tariff trade barriers. Poignantly, the next spin on the merry-go-round of global politics will be held not too far from Dubai: Abu Dhabi hosts the World Trade Organisation's 13th ministerial conference in February 2024.

● DEAL PLEDGES TO REDUCE METHANE POLLUTION TO ZERO

COP28 signals role for gas in transition to clean energy

Gas has been heralded by the industry as the cleanest fossil fuel

STEPHEN STAPCZYNSKI
December 13

THE HISTORIC COP28 deal, which committed the world to the transition away from fossil fuels, also cemented a role for two key oil industry priorities.

The summit's final text indicated that natural gas, a fossil fuel that's somewhat less carbon-intensive than oil and coal, can play a part in cutting emissions. It also placed CO2 capture and storage alongside renewables and nuclear as key technologies that would drive the transition.

These are areas where Big Oil has been making multibillion dollar bets, and whether they truly complement, or eventually undercut, the pledge for a lower-carbon world is still open to debate. For natural gas it's largely a question of timing, and for CCS it's a matter of technological progress.

"We are not going to win the fight against the climate change if we continue to rely structurally on fossil fuels," said Tinne Van der Straeten, the energy minister for Belgium which still relies on gas for almost a quarter of its electricity production. "Gas as a transition fuel means that you use it as short as possible."

Gas has been heralded by the industry as the cleanest fossil fuel since it releases less carbon dioxide than coal when combusted. However, in many regions it's also responsible for rampant methane emissions, a greenhouse gas that's 80 times more potent than CO2.



UN Climate Chief Simon Stiell (left), COP28 President Sultan al-Jaber (centre) and Hana Al-Hashimi, chief COP28 negotiator for the UAE, pose at the end of the COP28 UN Climate Summit, on Wednesday in Dubai. AP

The COP28 text included a pledge to reduce methane pollution to near zero by the end of decade, and has been widely endorsed by the fossil fuel industry.

Before the deal, there was already a long-running debate about the role of natural gas in the shift to clean energy. Corporate giants including Shell and Woodside Energy Group insist it has a role in providing secure long-term fuel supplies. They are making big investments in new projects to pump gas, which for many companies represents a growing share of their overall fossil fuel production.

The fossil fuel industry had a big presence at the Dubai climate conference. The president of this year's UN-sponsored summit, the United Arab Emirates' Sultan Al Jaber, also runs the country's oil company. He brokered an agreement that kept

keeping Saudi Arabia and other oil producers on board. Major CEOs including Darren Woods of Exxon Mobil and Toby Rice of EQT were also in attendance.

Some governments, such as Japan's, also say that additional investment in gas is necessary to boost energy security, especially after Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year sent prices of the fuel to a record high. Firms in Europe and Asia signed 27-year liquefied natural gas purchase agreements with Qatar over the last year. Critics argue that this threatens 2050 net zero targets.

The technology to capture and store CO2 is something oil companies have been employing for decades, mostly pumping the trapped gas back into the ground to extract more fossil fuel. Today, there's increasing interest in using

I AM IN AWE OF THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION THAT HAS BROUGHT EVERYBODY TOGETHER.

JOHN KERRY, US SPECIAL CLIMATE ENVOY



THE DECISION TO RECOGNISE THAT THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS A FOSSIL FUEL CRISIS IS AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE. BUT IT IS ALSO THE BARE MINIMUM WE NEED.

AL GORE, FORMER US VICE PRESIDENT



WE'RE STANDING HERE IN AN OIL COUNTRY, SURROUNDED BY OIL COUNTRIES, AND WE MADE THE DECISION SAYING LET'S MOVE AWAY FROM OIL AND GAS.

DAN JORGENSEN, DENMARK'S MINISTER FOR CLIMATE AND ENERGY



COP28: Nations reach deal, agree to 'transition away' from fossil fuels

AGENCIES

DUBAI, 13 DECEMBER

After gruelling talks that ran into an extra day, climate negotiators on Wednesday reached a deal at the COP28 summit in Dubai, calling for "deep, rapid and sustained reduction in greenhouse gas emissions" and "transitioning" away from fossil fuels in the energy system in an orderly and equitable manner.

The COP28 climate summit went into overtime with negotiators scrambling to reach a deal. Finally, on Wednesday morning, COP28 president Sultan al-Jaber gavelled approval of the central document – the Global Stocktake that says how off-track the world is on climate and how to get back on. This was the third version presented to the countries in about two weeks.

Mral-Jabersaid: "It is a plan that is led by the science ... a historic package to accelerate

DUBAI COMMITS TO NET ZERO

» The document adopted at the Dubai summit calls for transitioning away from fossil fuels in the energy system "in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science."

» However, the document does not speak about the "phase out" of fossil fuels as several countries were opposed to the term.

» The document signals that countries agree that fossil fuels need to be replaced with clean energy and reach global net zero by 2050. It is the first time fossil fuels have been addressed in climate talks.

climate action."

"This is the first time we have language on fossil fuel," he said.

However, the document does not speak about the



» The signed deal calls on the parties for tripling renewable energy by 2030 and doubling energy efficiency. It also recognises that the costs of renewables are falling fast.

» The signed deal calls on the parties for tripling renewable energy by 2030 and doubling energy efficiency. It also recognises that the costs of renewables are falling fast.

"phase out" of fossil fuels as several countries were opposed to the term.

Instead, the document calls for transitioning away from fos-

sil fuels in the energy system "in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science."

It also lists 7 other steps to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The document signals that countries agree that fossil fuels need to be replaced with clean energy and reach global net zero by 2050. It is the first time fossil fuels have been addressed in the climate talks. The signed deal calls on the parties for tripling renewable energy by 2030 and doubling energy efficiency. It also recognises that the costs of renewables are falling fast.

It carries the same text on coal from Glasgow; the current text calls for accelerating efforts towards the phase-down of unabated coal power.

The previous draft document drew flak from European, Latin American and vulnerable island states after it dropped all references to

phasing out fossils.

On Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), the document says new national climate pledges should be delivered in late 2024. There is very little on finance, an acknowledgement of the need for it, but no concrete numbers, which means this becomes the main agenda item for 2024. Environmentalists have called the signing of the deal a "positive step, but with gaps" Aarti Khosla, Director, of Climate Trends said that it is the first time that there is recognition of transitioning away from fossil fuels in a COP text – essentially meaning slashing not just coal, but also oil and gas.

"The Dubai deal is positive, however with gaps. coming alongside an absolute recognition of a warming world, and the need to take rapid action within this decade, the outcome text makes real concessions for gas and oil," Ms Khosla said.



● SURPLUS TO COVER DISINVESTMENT SHORTFALL

CPSE dividend receipts cross 90% of target

May exceed ₹60,000 crore against BE of ₹43,000 crore

PRASANTA SAHU
New Delhi, December 13

THE CENTRE'S DIVIDEND receipts from the central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) have crossed ₹39,000 crore so far, which is over 90% of the target for the current financial year, boosting its non-tax receipts.

The dividend receipts of ₹39,086 crore so far in FY24 were over 11% higher than the corresponding period in the previous fiscal. Given that the OMCs' profitability has improved substantially due to softening of global crude prices, the CPSE dividend receipts will likely exceed ₹60,000 crore in FY24 as against the Budget target of ₹43,000 crore.

Earlier this week, the government received about ₹5,933 crore and ₹4,260 crore from Coal India and ONGC respectively as dividend tranches. It also recently received about ₹3,636 crore from Indian Oil Corporation and about ₹1,910 crore from Power Grid Corporation of India (PGCIL) as dividend tranches. The dividend payments reflect the robust profitability of state-run commodity and energy

CPSE dividends robust, post-pandemic

(₹ crore) Budget estimate Achievement



firms, among others.

Despite a drastic fall in the profitability of oil marketing companies (OMCs), a major contributor to dividend receipts, the Centre's dividend receipts in FY23 were around ₹59,000 crore, 37% more than the Budget target of ₹40,000 crore.

With disinvestment receipts likely to fall short of the target of ₹51,000 crore substantially in FY24, the extra dividend receipts would cover the shortfall to an extent.

Despite the government reducing its stake in several of these companies, higher commodity prices also aid the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management's (Dipam's) policy of nudging CPSEs to give higher dividends to keep investors' interest in their stocks.

CPSE dividend receipts under the supervision of the Dipam do not include receipts from state-run financial institutions such as banks and insurance companies.

RBI's surplus transfer to the Centre rose 188% on year to ₹87,416 crore in FY24 (for accounting year FY23), which was very close to ₹91,000 crore estimated from dividend receipts from the RBI, public sector banks and financial institutions (₹48,000 crore) and the CPSEs (₹43,000 crore) in FY24.

It is to be noted that the Centre's net tax revenues are also estimated to exceed the Budget target in the current financial year, putting the Centre's finances in a comfortable position to meet the fiscal deficit target even after meeting additional spending needs for subsidies among others.



Crude oil holds soft tone on oversupply worries



Beijing: Crude oil prices extended losses after falling by more than 3 per cent to six-month lows on oversupply and demand concerns. Brent crude futures for February fell 33 cents to \$72.91 a barrel. US West Texas Intermediate crude futures for January dropped 29 cents to \$68.32 a barrel. REUTERS

Do Buy What Was Said In Dubai

COP28 took a realistic approach to transitioning from fossil fuels. India's argument that only coal can't be a climate villain won. But the rich world still isn't forking out enough cash

Chandra Bhushan



As the gavel struck, albeit a day later than the deadline, to mark the agreement at COP28, it signalled more than just the usual closure of another United Nations climate negotiation. This time, the setting was Dubai, presided over by the CEO of one of the world's biggest oil companies, and the subject was fossil fuels.

Fossil fuels to the fore | For three decades, the international community has avoided the direct mention of fossil fuels in climate agreements due to the staunch resistance from major oil and gas producers. However, COP28 shattered this status quo. The decision to transition away from fossil fuels marks a significant leap towards acknowledging and addressing the root cause of climate change.

Message, not mandate | The agreement, aiming for a "just, orderly, and equitable transition away from fossil fuels", has nuanced wording to start reducing the production and consumption of fossil fuels. While it is not an explicit call for a phase-down or a phase-out, it sends an unmistakable message to the fossil fuel industry: the era of unchecked fossil fuel consumption is drawing to a close.

Fund for the vulnerable | COP28 will be also remembered for operationalising the Loss and Damage Fund on the very first day of the conference to support vulnerable developing countries in dealing with climate disasters. While the initial pledges to the fund remain about \$800 million, which is far less than what is needed, the operationalisation of the fund marks an important milestone in the climate justice movement.

Echoing G20's India summit decision | Dubai COP also enhanced the mitigation ambition by adopting the decision taken by G20 under India's presidency to triple renewable energy capacity and double energy efficiency improvements globally by 2030.

India's pragmatism delivers | At COP28, India's steadfast advocacy for a comprehensive approach to fossil fuel reduction also saw fruition. At COP27 in Sharm-el-Sheikh last year, India was the first country to

demand a phase-down of all fossil fuels and not just coal to accelerate climate action. This year's agreement on transitioning away from fossil fuels can be seen as a direct result of India's initiative last year.

Sustainability is acknowledged | Modi's call in Dubai for sustainable consumption patterns found resonance in the 'UAE Consensus'. The inclusion of India's emphasis on transitioning to sustainable lifestyles, circular economy practices, and sustainable production patterns in the consensus text highlights India's role.

Slow progress carries risks | The shortcomings of the Global Stocktaking (GST) process were glaringly evident. This critical component, designed to evaluate global progress in addressing climate change, acknowledged the stark reality: current efforts are insufficient, steering us towards a worrying 2.7°C rise in global temperatures. GST's failure to assign clear responsibility and provide actionable guidance was a significant missed opportunity. Especially concerning was its failure in highlighting the unfulfilled commitments of developed nations and its apparent leniency towards China, the world's largest emitter.

Double standards of developed countries | The fact is that developed countries have consistently not met any of their commitments on emissions reduction or financial support. They continue to invest in new fossil fuel infrastructure and emit more than their fair share. For instance, the US presently is the largest producer of oil and gas, producing nearly a quarter of global natural gas and 15% of world's crude oil. And the Biden administration has recently approved new offshore oil and gas leases. Developed countries have also not met

their collective finance obligations of providing \$100 billion to developing countries.

China, elephant in the room | The country's GHG emissions, a quarter of the global emissions, need to peak and reduce quickly to have any chance of meeting the 1.5°C target. Yet, GST failed to point out this crucial issue. The lessons from the first GST are that global climate action needs more than just pledges; it demands accountability, transparency, and equitable responsibility-sharing.

Business takes centre stage | With 70,000 confirmed attendees, it dwarfed the previous record of 30,372 set at COP21, where the landmark Paris Agreement was forged.

While some derided the large presence of businesses and lobbyists, the fact is that the resolution of the climate crisis will need proactive

participation of businesses. For years now those in the field of sustainable development have argued for the need of a meeting between environmental concerns and business interests. COP28 was a firm step towards such collaboration.

Why 'UAE Consensus' matters | It's a bold step forward. The decisions in it, and the scale at which they were showcased, reflect a growing recognition of the urgency of climate action and the need for substantive policy shifts – even in regions highly reliant on fossil fuels. Central to this shift is the emerging narrative of a just, orderly, and equitable transition away from fossil fuels – a theme that will increasingly dominate global discourse as countries internalise the imperative of shutting down fossil fuel establishments and diversifying their economies.

The writer, an environmentalist, attended COP28



EIA: Crude Prices Likely to Stay Around \$83 per Barrel in 2024



Sanjeev Choudhary

New Delhi: Crude oil prices will average \$83 per barrel for all of 2024 as recent OPEC+ production cuts are expected to offset lower demand growth, the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) has forecast.

The spot price of Brent crude oil has slumped to \$76 per barrel, marking a significant drop from the \$83 average seen in November and \$91 in October. This decline was mainly driven by fears of weakening global oil demand.

"We expect OPEC+ production cuts will offset lower global demand growth, prevent increases in global oil inventories, and keep Brent prices above \$80/barrel next year," EIA said in its latest short-term energy outlook. The 2024 annual average Brent price forecast of \$83 is, however, lower than the \$93 the agency had predicted in its outlook last month.

On November 30, OPEC+, a group of two dozen oil-producing countries led by Saudi Arabia and Russia, announced voluntary production cuts of 2.2 million barrels per day (mbd) on top of the voluntary cuts announced previously. The market, however, disregarded the cuts and Brent futures have since fallen by about \$10 per barrel to \$73 per barrel. The paper market, which is several times bigger than the physical oil market, appears to be driving prices currently, an Indian oil industry executive said.

Falling oil prices would mean lower costs for Indian refiners and lower outgo of foreign exchange for the country as it imports nearly 87% of the oil it consumes. Domestic vehicle drivers are unlikely to be affected as state fuel retailers have stopped altering pump prices in line with international prices for more than one-and-a-half years.

India's liquid fuel consumption is forecast to grow by an average of 0.3 mbd in both 2023 and 2024, EIA said. It would be 0.8 mbd for China in 2023 and 0.3 mbd in 2024.

EIA estimates that the OPEC+ members have lowered crude oil production by 1.4 mbd in 2023, partly offsetting production growth of 2.4 mbd by non-OPEC+ producers.

sanjeev.choudhary@timesgroup.com

Final text addresses India's coal use, methane concerns

Secures Deal That Meets Growth Needs & Aligns With Global Goals

Vishwa.Mohan@timesgroup.com

Dubai: As the UN climate summit (COP28) concluded on Wednesday, India was able to strike the right balance in securing a deal that meets its developmental needs and even as it fully aligned with the larger global goals on climate.



The final outcome addressed India's red lines by tweaking the previous text on the issue of coal and not making the provision on cut in methane emissions binding.

The earlier text on coal included the wording "limitations on permitting new and unabated coal power generation" which Indian negotiators objected to. Consequently, the final text got rid of this provision and stuck to the Glasgow (COP26) text of non-



COP28 president Sultan Al Jaber (centre) during the closing plenary. 'Our collective efforts during this COP have sent positive signals to the world, reinforcing our commitment to maintaining the temperature goals set in Paris,' environment minister Bhupender Yadav said

binding provision of efforts towards the 'phase-down' of unabated coal power, which India had agreed in 2021.

"We support the proposal of the Presidency on the COP decision document while reiterating the fundamental principles enshrined in Paris Agreement to take action for global good in accordance with national circumstances," said environment minister Bhupender Yadav in his social media post on X after

adoption of COP28 outcome.

"Our collective efforts during this COP have sent positive signals to the world, reinforcing our commitment to maintaining the temperature goals set in Paris," said Yadav while speaking at closing plenary of the COP28.

In a clear message to rich nations who are expected to fulfil their pledge on climate finance and technological support to developing countries, Yadav said, "We have concluded

ed decisions on important items like the Global Stocktake (GST), and the Global Goal on Adaptation. While this COP is outlining ambitious actions, India urges that such determination is also substantiated with means to bring it on the ground."

Elaborating India's stand on basic principles of Paris Agreement, he said, "The way ahead must be based on equity and climate justice. Let us implement Paris Agreement in letter and spirit through the GST process. Let us carry this spirit of cooperation, determination, and shared responsibility towards building a sustainable planet as we have one earth, we are one family and we share one future."

Praising the role of COP28 president Sultan Al Jaber during closing plenary, Yadav said, "You are presiding over a historic COP here in which on the first day itself, a decision regarding operationalisation of Loss and Damage Fund was finalised."

For first time, nations strike deal to move away from fossil fuels



EXPRESS AT COP28

AMITABH SINHA

DUBAI, DECEMBER 13

REPRESENTATIVES FROM nearly 200 countries at COP28 meeting in Dubai struck a new climate deal Wednesday that, for the first time, called upon them to transition away from fossil fuels and operationalised a loss-and-damage fund to help developing nations recover from climate disasters.

The countries agreed to contribute towards tripling global

renewable energy capacity and doubling the current annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030, two measures considered key to keeping alive hopes of restricting temperature rise to within 1.5 degree Celsius.

They also agreed to accelerate the deployment of "zero and low-emission technologies" like renewables, nuclear, and carbon capture and storage.

An earlier provision that asked countries not to allow the launch of new coal-fired power plants without carbon capture and storage technology was dropped from the final agreement.

This provision was considered problematic by India, South Africa, China and many other countries. The agreement only asks countries to "accelerate

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

● For first time, nations strike deal to move away from fossil fuels

efforts" towards a phase-down of "unabated coal power", in a reiteration of what was agreed in Glasgow two years ago.

A tougher language on fossil fuels, calling for its "phase-out", that had stalled negotiations for several days, could not be agreed upon and had to be changed. The Association of Small Island States, a group of island countries that face the worst impacts of climate change, could not hide its disappointment.

"The course corrections that were needed have not been secured. We have made incremental advancement over business as usual, when what we really needed was an exponential leap in our actions and support," said Anne Rasmussen, the lead negotiator of Samoa, a small island country in the Pacific, who received loud applause in response.

"We reference the science throughout the text but then we refrain from taking the relevant action. It is not enough for us to reference the science and then make agreements that ignore what science is telling us what we need to do," she said.

Fossil fuels — oil, natural gas, coal and their derivatives — contribute about 80 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions, but no earlier COP decision had ever even

acknowledged its role, leave aside calling for reduction of its use.

The 43 per cent reduction in global greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 from 2019 levels, which is what science says must be done to remain on 1.5 degree Celsius pathway, cannot be achieved without significant decline in fossil fuel usage. But countries like Saudi Arabia, which are major oil producers, insisted countries needed to focus on reducing emissions, and a phase-out of fossil fuels need not be prescribed.

The final agreement represented a compromise — no prescriptive "phase-out" but an acknowledgment that the world had to "transition away" from fossil fuels. "Whilst we did not turn the page on the fossil fuel era in Dubai, this outcome is the beginning of the end," said Simon Steil, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

"These climate conferences are, of course, a consensus-based process, meaning all parties must agree on every word, every comma, every full stop. This is not easy. It's not easy at all," he said.

But two of the most meaningful outcomes from COP28 — operationalisation of loss and damage fund, and tripling of global renewable capacity by 2030 — did in-

deed have wide acceptance among countries.

The Loss and Damage Fund, which was set up at Sharm el-Sheikh meeting last year, underwent its first capitalisation here, with countries together committing nearly \$800 million.

The tripling of renewable energy and doubling of the rate of improvement of energy efficiency is considered an extremely important step towards meeting the emissions gap by 2030.

This move had already been endorsed by the G20 countries and it was widely expected to be adopted by the COP as well. But the agreement says nothing about how this is to be achieved, or which countries needed to do how much to reach tripling of global renewable capacity. An earlier mention of the exact target capacity — 11,000 GW by 2030 from the current about 3,400 GW — was also dropped.

A call for reducing methane emissions has also been included for the first time. Methane is the second most widespread greenhouse gas after carbon dioxide but much more potent in causing global warming. The United States was the most vocal in asking for methane emission cuts in the agreement, but countries like India and Philippines were

reluctant.

Agricultural practices, and livestock, happen to be the major sources of methane emissions which are sensitive sectors for these countries. The final agreement calls for "accelerating and substantially reducing non-carbon dioxide emissions globally, including in particular methane emissions by 2030", which, from India's point of view, was an improvement from the more stringent provisions used in previous drafts that had quantified targets for emissions reduction.

COP28 also delivered an agreement on creating a framework for defining a global goal on adaptation. Adaptation is largely local in nature, but developing countries had been demanding that identifying some common global objectives could help bring more attention, and financial resources, to adaptation activities.

The final agreement identifies some of these common objectives, like making food and agriculture climate resilient, and reducing climate-induced water scarcity. A two-year work programme has been set up to decide the indicators that can measure progress on these efforts. But the adaptation agreement is extremely weak on financial provisions.

Gas firms seek price deregulation as city distribution targets fall behind

SUBHOMOY BHATTACHARJEE

New Delhi, 13 December

Irked by the sluggish rollout of city gas distribution (CGD) networks in India, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) has warned companies to expedite their efforts or risk having their bank guarantees seized.

In response, the companies have expressed hesitancy in committing investments without clear government guidance on the time frame during which natural gas will have free play in the economy, according to sources. Oil and gas companies have provided bank guarantees worth ₹35,000 crore, and while PNGRB has not specified whose funds could be seized, the slow pace of progress is evident.

PNGRB officials have not commented on potential actions against companies, but Chairman Anil Jain has emphasised the need for the government to outline a road map for the transition in the transport sector, involving roles for both compressed natural gas (CNG) and electric vehicles (EVs).

"We must move assuredly towards our net-zero targets; otherwise, CNG may not attract investor or consumer interest," he said.

Price control

International gas prices, typically one-sixth of oil prices, have risen since late 2021, touching \$100 per oil barrel at times. In 2022-23, 46.3



International gas prices, typically one-sixth of oil prices, have risen since late 2021, touching \$100 per barrel

per cent of the gas used in India was imported.

As prices cannot be controlled, it stands to reason that the gas economy should respond to the market and attract investments. However, this has not occurred in India due to stagnant petrol and diesel prices at oil bunks since May 2022, despite the government easing control.

Oil prices in Delhi (retail) have hardly moved since 2020, except for one correction. The unchanged prices provide the government relief from inflation pressures.

With stable prices of oil products, the appetite for CNG in commercial and personal vehicles is low. CGD operators, licenced to operate gas stations for vehicles and sell piped natural gas (PNG), argue that the lack of demand has made their investments risky. The envisioned business model suggested that gas

stations would be profit centres for operators, with PNG to homes being slightly subsidised. Kaushik Deb, a senior research scholar at the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, highlighted a larger problem.

"Retail prices for oil products are ostensibly deregulated. But given that public sector oil companies, under the administrative control of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, account for about 85 per cent of the market, it's an accurate assessment that all energy prices in India are controlled," he said. Jain echoed a similar sentiment, asking, "Since prices of competing fuels are controlled, can we expect market-priced gas to compete with them?" Companies reached out to by *Business Standard* did not comment on the topic.

Coal control

The issue extends to the coal sector, where 85 per cent of coal supplies are on fuel supply agreements with thermal power companies, determining prices long-term. Although the National Coal Index has begun to swing in tandem with international prices, it mainly reflects spot prices in e-auctions. For the government, this situation is favourable, as coal auction process keeps electricity prices low for household budgets. The rapid adoption of EVs, requiring recharging at reasonable prices, has been a gain.

Deb pointed out the lack of price discovery in the retail energy market. "The only price discovery elements in these sectors are (1) the award of drilling rights via auctions and (2) in the export of oil products."

Many CGD companies are lagging behind their commitments, endangering government plans to have the gas economy serve 15 per cent of the Indian economy's energy needs.

According to current estimates, the government may not achieve targets for 2023-24 or even 2024-25. PNGRB has issued licences to CGD companies covering about 98 per cent of the population and 88 per cent of the total geographical area of the country. The target is to provide 125 million PNG domestic connections over the next eight to 10 years.

More on business-standard.com

— CALL FOR A ‘DEEP, RAPID, AND SUSTAINED’ REDUCTION IN GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS —

Historic deal: Nearly 200 nations at COP28 agree to ‘transition away from fossil fuels’

DUBAI: Nearly 200 countries clinched a landmark climate deal that called for a transition away from fossil fuels, the primary reason for the climate crisis, in a “just and equitable” manner at the final session of the annual climate talks COP28 here on Wednesday.

Adopted after nearly two weeks of hectic negotiations, the first Global Stocktake deal, being termed the UAE consensus, urges countries to accelerate efforts toward the phase-down of unabated coal power, which is a climb down after India and China strongly resisted the singling out of coal.

As COP28 President Sultan al-



United Nations Climate Chief Simon Stiell, from left, COP28 President Sultan al-Jaber and Hana Al-Hashimi, chief COP28 negotiator for the United Arab Emirates, pose for photos at the end of the COP28 U.N. Climate Summit, on Wednesday PTI

Jaber gavelled through the agreement, the room full of negotiators at the annual Conference of Par-

ties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) burst

This absence suggests a strong pushback from heavily coal-dependent countries such as India and China

into applause.

Released in the wee hours, the text of the Dubai climate talks, the third draft after two were discussed threadbare and updated, called for a “deep, rapid, and sustained” reduction in planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions in line with 1.5 degree Celsius pathways in a “nationally determined” manner, taking into account the Paris Agreement and their different national circumstances, pathways, and approaches.

The historic document laid an eight-point plan to achieve this, including a “transition away from fossil fuels” in energy systems in a “just, orderly and equitable man-

ner”, accelerating action in this decade, to achieve net zero (balance between greenhouse gases emitted and removed from the atmosphere) by 2050.

The proposal urged countries to accelerate efforts toward the phase-down of unabated coal power, a marginal step up from the 2021 Glasgow deal.

However, unlike the previous versions, it lacks references to “limiting the permitting of new and unabated coal power generation.”

This absence suggests a strong pushback from heavily coal-dependent countries such as India and China.

Continued on P4

COP28

Also, there is no mention of oil and gas in the 21-page document, fuels that rich countries continue to use.

Addressing the gathering after adopting the agreement, Sultan al-Jaber said this is a robust action plan which plans to keep 1.5 degrees within reach.

"It is a balanced plan that tackles emissions, bridges the gap on adaptation, re-imagines global finance, and delivers on loss and damage. It is a balanced plan that tackles emissions, bridges the gap on adaptation, re-imagines global finance, and delivers on loss and damage," he said.

Avinash Persaud, Special Climate Envoy to PM Mottley of Barbados said when the dust settles and dawn breaks, this will be seen as one of the most historic COPs.

"We have operationalised a loss and damage fund, recapitalised the Green Climate Fund, and orchestrated an international climate finance system that prepares for new levies alongside emboldened development banks and new private sector flows. Today, we have committed to triple renewable investments and have a just transition from fossil fuels," he said.

Noting that some activists were disappointed the text didn't commit to an "immediate fossil fuel phase out," he said still, without the trade, investment, and finance to achieve it, it would either have hit developing coun-

tries hardest or been meaningless. "So meaningless that I saw some big developed country fossil fuel producers lining up to join that bandwagon before they had explained it to their electorates," he added.

Sanjay Vashist, Director, Climate Action Network South Asia: "The outcome of COP28 makes it clear that the world only belongs to the rich and influential in developed countries."

"The removal of equity and human rights principles from the final outcome text indicates that vulnerable communities in developing countries need to save themselves on their own and the real climate culprits are not coming to their rescue. We cannot celebrate the mere inclusion of the reference to fossil fuels in the text if it comes without means of implementation and finance for energy transition for poor and developing countries. If this is what a historical outcome looks like, then it is on the wrong side of history," Vashist said. AGENCIES

In a 1st, COP28 deal calls for ‘transition from fossil fuels’

Keeps Alive Goal
Of Restricting
Warming To 1.5°C

Vishwa.Mohan@timesgroup.com

Dubai: Targeting for the first time the chief contributors to global warming, nearly 200 countries, including India, on

Wednesday clinched a landmark climate deal calling for transitioning away from fossil fuels “in a just, orderly and equitable manner” while “accelerating action this decade to achieve net zero by 2050”.
At the end of the hottest year on record, the UN climate summit (COP28) in Dubai

‘START OF END OF FOSSIL FUEL ERA’

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Fossil fuels addressed in climate talks for the first time➤ 195 nations agree on ‘transitioning away from fossil fuels’ in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner’. Final text avoids the contentious ‘phase out’ phrase➤ A ‘loss and damage’ fund to support countries that are impacted by climate change operationalised | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Need to cut GHG emissions by 43% by 2030 and 60% by 2035 relative to 2019 level➤ Global net zero goal by 2050 to limit average warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels➤ Call to countries to triple renewable energy and double energy efficiency by 2030➤ UNFCCC exec secy Simon Stiell calls deal ‘the beginning of the end of fossil fuel era’ |
|--|---|

agreed to limit warming to 1.5 degree C (over 1850-1900 levels) through “rapid and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 43% by 2030 and 60% by 2035 relative to the 2019 level.”
The first global stocktake deal, where the words “fossil fuel” were in the final text for

the first time in three decades of such talks, urged countries to speed up efforts for phase-down of unabated coal use — dropping “rapidly” from the previous text after India and China strongly resisted the additional provisions.

In a first, COP28 decides to transition from fossil fuels

M Ramesh

Chennai

Though the final text released by the COP28 Presidency (the UAE) has no landmark decisions, mention of phasing out fossil fuels (as opposed to only coal), emphasis on the need for adaptation finance and recognition of the lack of it, and some promise of money — even if inadequate — for the ‘loss and damage’ fund, are seen as broadly positive for countries like India.

ENDING FOSSIL FUEL SOP

An attempt has been made to balance the interests of developing and developed countries. While the text mentions the need to “accelerate efforts towards the phase-down of unabated coal power” — a negative for India — it also calls for “transitioning away from fossil fuels” and “phasing out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that do not address energy poverty or just transitions.”

Aarti Khosla, Director, Climate Trends, a Delhi-based



BALANCING ACT. COP28 President Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber.... The final text “recognises that transitional fuels can play a role in facilitating energy transition while ensuring energy security” REUTERS

firm engaged in climate advocacy and capacity building, said this is “the first time that there is recognition of transitioning away from fossil fuels in a COP text, essentially meaning slashing not just coal but also oil and gas.”

DIFFERENT LANGUAGE

However, experts such as RR Rashmi, Distinguished Fellow, The Energy Resources Institute (TERI), who has been India’s negotiator in previous editions of COP, see a “tilt against developing countries” in the different language used

for fossil fuels and coal. While a “transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems” should be done “in a just, orderly, and equitable manner”, there is no such ‘softening’ in the case of coal.

Furthermore, the text “recognises that transitional fuels can play a role in facilitating the energy transition while ensuring energy security.” This, to some observers, like Harjeet Singh, Head of Global Political Strategy at the Climate Action Network, is not good. “The resolution is marred by loopholes that offer the fossil fuel in-

dustry numerous escape routes,” Singh said. Khosla notes that “in an effort to please the major emitters,” the COP28 final text “gives a free pass to (natural) gas” by terming it ‘transitional’ fuel”, even though gas contributes to CO2 emissions.

INDIA POSITIVES

Yet, from an Indian point of view, there are some positives in the text. For example, recognition of the need for tripling global renewable energy and doubling the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements is a call that India spearheaded at the G-20 meetings, though India did not sign the pledge at COP28 because of its opposition to references to coal.

The text also noted “with alarm and serious concern” the findings of the 6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that human activities “have unequivocally caused global warming of about 1.1 degrees C.” The target is to limit global warming by 1.5 degrees.

It's beginning of the end of fossil fuel era: Climate body

Vishwa.Mohan
@timesgroup.com

Dubai: After two weeks of intense negotiations — with oil producing nations opposing the 'phase out' term for fossil fuels being pitched by EU and small island countries — the climate talks were on over-time on Wednesday when the COP28 presidency brought a final text that was accepted in the final plenary within a few minutes.



The pace of the text decision being gavelled so quickly surprised many countries as some of them could not even reach the plenary hall.

"We did not want to interrupt you, but we are a little confused about what just happened. It seems that you gavelled the decisions, and the small island developing states were not in the room. We were working hard to coordinate the 39 small island developing states that are disproportionately affected by the overall climate change, and so were delayed in coming here," said Anne Rasmussen, the lead negotiator of Samoa.



Members of Greenpeace at the COP28 in UAE's Dubai

In the UNFCCC process, any outcome is adopted only with consensus of all of its members.

Though the Samoa representative did not oppose the outcome, she expressed disappointment, terming it inadequate. Rasmussen made her remarks on behalf of Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) in the plenary while speaking after its adoption.

The UN climate body (UNFCCC) executive secretary, Simon Stiell, in his remarks termed the outcome as "the beginning of the end of fossil fuel era".

He said though the countries "didn't turn the page on the fossil fuel era in Dubai, this outcome is the beginning of the end".

The COP28 outcome also spoke about encouraging countries to submit economy-wide nationally deter-

mined contributions (NDCs) — climate action pledges — during the next cycle beginning late next year. Among other key outcomes, the text agreed on tripling global renewable energy capacity and doubling energy efficiency by 2030, adopted a framework for the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) and operationalised the loss and damage fund that is meant to support countries impacted by climate change.

The countries also agreed on "accelerating and substantially reducing non-carbon-dioxide emissions globally, including in particular methane emissions by 2030. Since it's not a binding provision, India didn't object to the methane emission clause.

"A global goal to triple renewables and double energy efficiency, declaration on

agriculture, food and health, many more oil and gas companies stepping up for the first time on methane emissions and we have language on fossil fuels in our final agreement. All of these are world firsts... We have given it a robust action plan to keep 1.5°C (of warming goal) within reach. It is a plan that is led by science," said the COP28 president Sultan Al Jaber while delivering his remarks at closing plenary.

Though the outcome emphasised on energy transition, tripling of renewable energy and adaptation goals, there is little reference to finance. It is expected that countries would focus on the issue next year when the developed countries are expected to raise the floor of their annual contribution from \$100 billion annually. Rich nations including the US have invariably been pushing for private finance in this head.

The outcome talks about "phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies" with a caveat that such phasing out applicable to only those subsidies which do not address energy poverty or just transitions - the points which suits India for its subsidy programmes such as subsidy on cooking gas for poor.

Nations agree on shift from fossil fuels

FPJ NEWS SERVICE / DUBAI

Two hundred countries have reached a deal at the COP 28 summit in Dubai, calling for "deep, rapid and sustained reduction in greenhouse gas emissions" and "transitioning" away from fossil fuels -- coal, oil and gas -- that are dangerously heating the planet.

The sweeping agreement, which comes during the hottest year in recorded history, was reached on Wednesday after two weeks of furious debate at the United Nations climate summit in Dubai.

European leaders and many of the nations most vulnerable to climate-fueled disasters were urging language



that called for a complete "phaseout" of fossil fuels. But that proposal faced intense pushback from major oil exporters like Saudi Arabia and Iraq, as well as fast-growing countries like India and Nigeria. So, the document does not speak about the "phase out" of fossil fuels; instead, it calls for transitioning away from fossil fuels

CONTD. ON **NATION**

Nations agree on shift...

"in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, to achieve net zero emission by 2050."

It is the first time fossil fuels have been addressed in the climate talks.

"Humanity has finally done what is long, long, long overdue," said Wopke Hoekstra, the European commissioner for climate action.

"Thirty years — 30 years! — which have been spent to arrive at the beginning of the end of fossil fuels."

The new deal is not legally binding and can't, on its own, force any country to act. Yet many of the politicians, environmentalists and business leaders gathered in Dubai hoped it would send a message to investors and policymakers that the shift away from fossil fuels was unstoppable. Over the next two years, each nation is supposed to submit a detailed, formal plan for how it intends to curb greenhouse gas emissions through 2035. Wednesday's agreement is meant to guide those plans.

Many financial issues need to be sorted over the next two years at upcoming climate conferences in Azerbaijan and Brazil. Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav said India has already initiated a set of actions to restrict temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to preindustrial levels.

PAGE 1
ANCHOR



EXPRESS AT COP28

AMITABH SINHA
DUBAI, DECEMBER 13

REPRESENTATIVES FROM nearly 200 countries at COP28 meeting in Dubai struck a new climate deal Wednesday that, for the first time, called upon them to transition away from fossil fuels and opera-

tionalised a loss-and-damage fund to help developing nations recover from climate disasters.

The countries agreed to contribute towards tripling global renewable energy capacity and doubling the current annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030, two measures considered key to keeping alive hopes of restricting temperature rise to within 1.5 degree Celsius.

They also agreed to accelerate the deployment of "zero and low-emission technologies" like renewables, nuclear, and carbon capture and storage.

An earlier provision that asked countries not to allow the launch

of new coal-fired power plants without carbon capture and storage technology was dropped from the final agreement.

This provision was considered problematic by India, South Africa, China and many other countries. The agreement only asks countries to "accelerate efforts" towards a phase-down of "unabated coal power", in a reiteration of what was agreed in Glasgow two years ago.

At a tougher language on fossil fuels, calling for its "phase-out", that had stalled negotiations for several days, could not be agreed upon and had to be changed. The Association of Small Island



Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change Bhupendra Patel at a COP28 session in Dubai. PTI

States, a group of island countries that face the worst impacts of climate change, could not hide its disappointment.

"The course corrections that were needed have not been secured. We have made incremental advancement over business as usual, when what we really needed was an exponential leap in our actions and support," said Anne Rasmussen, the lead negotiator of Samoa, a small island country in the Pacific, who received loud applause in response.

"We reference the science throughout the text but then we refrain from taking the relevant action. It is not enough for us to

reference the science and then make agreements that ignore what science is telling us what we need to do," she said.

Fossil fuels — oil, natural gas, coal and their derivatives — contribute about 80 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions, but no earlier COP decision had ever even acknowledged its role, leave aside calling for reduction of its use.

The 43 per cent reduction in global greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 from 2019 levels, which is what science says must be done to remain on 1.5 degree Celsius pathway, cannot be achieved without significant decline in fossil fuel usage.

But countries like Saudi Arabia, which are major oil producers, insisted countries needed to focus on reducing emissions, and a phase-out of fossil fuels need not be prescribed.

The final agreement represented a compromise — no prescriptive "phase-out" but an acknowledgment that the world had to "transition away" from fossil fuels.

"Whilst we did not turn the page on the fossil fuel era in Dubai, this outcome is the beginning of the end," said Simon Stiell, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

● Nations strike first-ever deal

Climate Change (UNFCCC).

"These climate conferences are, of course, a consensus-based process, meaning all parties must agree on every word, every comma, every full stop. This is not easy. It's not easy at all," he said.

But two of the most meaningful outcomes from COP28 — operationalisation of loss and damage fund, and tripling of global renewable capacity by 2030 — did indeed have wide acceptance among countries.

The Loss and Damage Fund, which was set up at Sharm el-Sheikh meeting last year, underwent its first capitalisation here, with countries together committing nearly \$800 million.

The tripling of renewable energy and doubling of the rate of improvement of energy efficiency is considered an extremely important step towards meeting the emissions gap by 2030.

This move had already been endorsed by the G20 countries and it was widely expected to be adopted by the COP as well. But the agreement says nothing about how this is to be achieved, or which countries needed to do

how much to reach tripling of global renewable capacity. An earlier mention of the exact target capacity — 11,000 GW by 2030 from the current about 3,400 GW — was also dropped.

A call for reducing methane emissions has also been included for the first time. The United States was the most vocal in asking for methane emission cuts in the agreement, but countries like India and Philippines were reluctant.

Agricultural practices, and livestock, happen to be the major sources of methane emissions which are sensitive sectors for these countries.

The final agreement calls for "accelerating and substantially reducing non-carbon dioxide emissions globally, including in particular methane emissions by 2030".

COP28 also delivered an agreement on creating a framework for defining a global goal on adaptation.

A two-year work programme has been set up to decide the indicators that can measure progress on these efforts. But the adaptation agreement is extremely weak on financial provisions.

Nawgati makes CNG filling experience hassle-free

Its customer-focused solution helps users to bypass long queues

SUDHIR CHOWDHARY

LOOKING FOR A CNG (compressed natural gas) filling station in your vicinity? Nawgati, a homegrown fuel aggregator startup, has come up with Nawgati Fuel Discovery app that is built to enhance the fueling experience, allowing end-users to plan their trip in advance or find the nearest gas station on their route with minimal wait time. The app offers information such as fuel rate, fuel availability, and wait/serve time, among other information.

"The Nawgati app monitors real-time congestion, letting users iden-

tify less crowded stations nearby, thereby reducing wait times," said Vaibhav Kaushik, CEO and co-founder of Nawgati. "The app has around one million users."

To be sure, there are similar apps from other players, like IGLConnect from Indraprastha Gas (IGL), Silver-Touch's AutoGas (for both CNG and LPG filling stations), or Maruti Suzuki's CNG pump locator.

Recently, Nawgati signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Mahanagar Gas Ltd (MGL), in Mumbai, to integrate the services provided through its app with the latter's MGL Tez app. This partnership will empower more CNG users to bypass the queues, make cashless transactions, preschedule their slots at BEST depots to enjoy zero wait time and experience a hassle-free fueling service that is intended for commercial vehicles and cars. This



(L-R) Nawgati co-founders Aryan Sisodia, Vaibhav Kaushik and Aalaap Nair

service is available at Goregaon-Oshiwara and Ghatkopar BEST Depots, with plans for expansion to 13 more depots across Mumbai.

Beyond the B2C segment (cab drivers and the general public), Nawgati also addresses the B2B audiences (fuel pump owners, fuel com-

panies and dealers). "We have built a vertical retail ops platform called Aaveg that offers live updates via a dashboard to the fuel pump owners or gas companies on the latest movement at the station, enabling them to take action on the spot," said Kaushik. The SaaS platform acts as a single point of reference covering all incidents at the station allowing the owner to have complete oversight of transit time, waiting time, serving time, attendants deployed, and utilisation of resources.

Nawgati secured an undisclosed amount in seed funding led by All in Capital, a pre-seed venture capital fund. The company plans to expand operations to tier 1 and tier 2 cities besides major hubs like Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Kolkata, Bhopal, Chennai, Pune, Lucknow, Patna, and Jaipur, in partnership with gas companies.



RIL, DBS Bank to Finance Agri Residue Supply Chains for Feeding Biogas Plants

Partnership will help develop ecosystem for RIL's CBG production plants across the country

Our Bureau

Mumbai: Reliance Industries has joined hands with DBS Bank India to launch a financing programme for vendor partners to aggregate agricultural residue as inputs for compressed biogas (CBG) plants, a move that will help check the menace of stubble burning.

The financing will enable ecosystem development for Reliance CBG production plants across the country, the company said Wednesday, adding the funding structure will ensure that logistics are designed in a way this new stream remains competitive and achieves enhanced commercial scale.

India produces a significant amount of agricultural residue, but they are often burnt by farmers in the absence of required processing infrastructure and logistical support. Such stubble burning in states like Punjab and Uttar Pradesh is one of the primary causes for the poor air quality in Delhi and surrounding areas.

The agricultural residue supply chain in the country is unorganised and inefficient as farmers and aggregators have not been adequately incentivised and financed, and Reliance and DBS Bank hope to bridge this gap with their new initiative.

"Reliance Industries, identifying this as an important element in their net-zero roadmap, has plans to invest across the country to produce CBG as an alternative to imported CNG and other fossil fuels, making India a prominent source of biofuel," the company said in a statement.

Though the technology for CBG has evolved, commercialisation requires new infrastructure and value chain engagement, involving farmers across the states, it added.

RIL has planned to set up around 100 CBG plants across the country over the next five years, which would consume more than 5.5 million tonnes of agricultural residue and organic waste every year and lead to a projected reduction of nearly 2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually.

The CBG industry at present is fragmented, predominantly dependent on agriculture, and affected



ISTOCK

by seasonal variations, the statement said. "These modalities required DBS Bank India to introduce significant customisations to the standard supply chain financing model to meet the requirements of the project," it said.

"India's green energy sector, which includes solar and wind as well as emerging areas like biogas, will be one of the key pillars of the country's net-zero strategy," said Rajat Verma, managing director and head of institutional banking of DBS Bank India. "Transition financing plays a crucial role in enabling businesses to identify and scale new technologies that can accelerate the path to decarbonisation."

Harindra K Tripathi, head of bio-energy business at Reliance Industries Ltd, said, "Compressed biogas plants are one of the key ways to utilise the massive organic waste that our society produces, the burning of which is one of the major contributors to air pollution. In addition to the mitigating effect on carbon emissions, the Reliance CBG plants will also contribute towards the production of fermented organic manure (FOM), which will enhance soil fertility and reduce consumption of chemical fertilisers over a period."

RIL is setting up biogas facilities at multiple locations in Uttar Pradesh by using surplus agricultural residue and organic waste. These facilities will be linked to a network of biogas dispensing stations operated by Reliance Jio BP.

A flagship CBG production facility has been set up in Barabanki. This plant alone is expected to cut down CO2 emissions by 40,000 tonnes annually.

UAE oil chief keeps his promise

Dubai, Dec. 13: Sultan Al Jaber, the UAE oil chief who headed COP28 in Dubai, promised that this year's UN climate talks would be "different". He did not disappoint.

The towering Emirati, 50, was beaming in his grey dishdasha after he brought down the hammer on the first United Nations agreement calling for a transition away from fos-

sil fuels. It ended a Conference of the Parties (COP) of contradictions in the oil-rich United Arab Emirates, which is one of the world's biggest producers of crude.

Jaber is CEO of oil giant ADNOC as well as being the UAE's climate envoy and minister of industry and advanced technology. He is also chairman of renewable energy compa-

ny Masdar. His naming as COP28 chief drew conflict-of-interest concerns at a time of increasingly stark warnings about the urgency of transitioning away from hydrocarbons to have a hope of keeping climate targets in view.

Dozens of US and European lawmakers said Jaber's oil and gas links should disqualify him from the job. Hundreds of cli-

mate campaign groups called for him to quit either COP or ADNOC.

"COP28 is beset by a dark cloud of public scepticism," US Senator Sheldon Whitehouse said.

But Jaber will now claim vindication after presiding over a deal described by UN climate chief Simon Stiell as the "beginning of the end" for fossil fuels.

— AFP

Ultratech to have 85 per cent green energy mix by 2030

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The largest cement and ready-mix concrete maker Ultratech Cement on Wednesday announced that it plans to increase the overall share of green energy in its total energy mix to 85 per cent by 2030.

As an interim target for its sustainability objectives and targets, the AV Birla Group company plans to increase its total green energy share from its current 22 per cent to 60 per cent by FY26.

Currently the company has 691 MW of green energy capacity, which includes 262 MW of WHRS (waste heat recovery system) installed capacity and 429 MW of contracted renewable energy. This translates to about 22 per cent of its current energy requirements.

"As the country's largest cement maker, it is our responsibility to lead the way in building a more sustainable and green future for the industry by decarbonization. We've been constantly scaling up our green energy mix over the years," said KC Jhanwar, the managing director.

Ultratech targets to meet 100 per cent of its electricity requirement through renewable sources by 2050, as part of its commitment towards green power. As a member of EP100, Ultratech is committed to doubling its energy productivity.

To boost the share of green energy in the overall energy mix, the company has taken several initiatives including switching to renewable energy sources and expanding waste heat recovery systems. It has been reducing reliance on thermal energy in manufacturing



operations and also driving adoption of sustainable transport with logistics partners.

Recently it partnered with Coolbrook, a Finland-based transformational technology and engineering company to jointly develop a project to implement Coolbrook's rotodynamic heater (RDH) technology in one of its manufacturing units. This technology uses electrification from renewable sources for heating thus removing the need for fossil fuels.

Similarly it is actively exploring innovative technologies like carbon capture, utilisation, and storage (CCUS) in collaboration with startup technology companies such as CarbonOrO, Coomtech, and Fortera.

To reduce carbon footprint in its logistics segment, Ultratech has introduced CNG/LNG trucks.

It has plans to deploy 500 electric trucks and add 1,000 40 tonne CNG/LNG trucks by June 2025 as part of government's eFast initiative.

Ultratech first introduced CNG vehicles in its operations in 2021 and LNG vehicles in 2022 and has over 390 CNG trucks and 50 LNG trucks operational across 17 manufacturing units.

Unexpected progress

COP28 agrees to 'transition away' from fossil fuels

Much concern had been raised about the hosting of the 28th iteration of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) by the United Arab Emirates. The president of COP28, Sultan al-Jaber, is also chairman of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, and this led to many worrying that the defence of fossil-fuel consumption would play a larger role than it should at this COP. But the eventual COP28 declaration, adopted a day late after hard negotiations, took something of a step forward. While it did not meet the demands of small island states, backed by the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Australia, to “phase out” or “phase down” all fossil fuels, it eventually did “call on” countries to “transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner” while also “accelerating action in this critical decade”. This is more forceful language than looked likely earlier in the week, when some countries — in particular Saudi Arabia — seemed determined to block any language about fossil fuels. But the prospect of COP28 ending without a draft decision — because some negotiators refused to sign a proposal without a mention of fossil fuels — eventually forced a compromise.

Nevertheless, two elements of the COP28 final draft will be of interest to fossil-fuel companies and exporters. First, the “transition away” wording is limited to fossil fuels in the energy sector, whereas the plans for many large petrochemicals companies focus on the liquids-to-chemicals pipeline. Saudi Arabia's Aramco, for example, which produced 11.5 million barrels of crude oil a day in 2022, expects that by 2030, 4 million barrels a day will be set aside for chemicals production. Second, the final draft includes a specific reference to “transition fuels” playing a role. This is clearly about natural gas, which emits around 70 per cent of the carbon that refined petroleum does, and 50 per cent of what anthracite coal does.

The exact position of the Government of India at these negotiations can be inferred only from the outcomes. It is worth noting that the final text watered down the language related to coal power. It called for an acceleration of the phase-down of coal, whereas earlier the text had suggested “rapidly phasing down coal and limitations on permitting new” coal-power plants. This change is likely in response to concerns raised by Indian negotiators in particular, who rightfully continue to focus at multilateral climate forums on protecting the domestic coal sector. Notably, India did not sign on conventions on nuclear power and on climate and health, but decision-makers in New Delhi may like to review this position. That said, India and China did allow the final text to directly link the fossil-fuel transition to an aim to “achieve net zero in 2050 in keeping with the science”, which is decades earlier than domestic targets. Two other notable concessions included permitting a reference to global methane emission being “substantially reduced” by 2030, which, given its link to animal husbandry, is politically sensitive in India; and the agreement that even developing countries should be encouraged, in their next round of targets next year, to come up with “ambitious, economy-wide emissions reduction targets”, covering all sectors and gases. This is a shift away from a narrow focus on carbon dioxide and the energy sector. The eventual language will not satisfy everyone, but is nevertheless a step forward. The end of fossil fuels has not previously been part of a global consensus, and so COP28 was more effective than most expected.

World raises toast to fossil-fuel transition

COP28 closes with action plan to keep temp rise within target

Jayashree Nandi
jayashree.nandi@htlive.com
DUBAI

History was made in Dubai on Wednesday when 196 countries agreed to transition away from fossil fuels, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. However, experts said the deal doesn't do enough on almost all fronts—climate targets, funding, phasing out fossil fuels, and holding historical polluters accountable.

Still, fossil fuels have been a topic of taboo for years in climate negotiations, and while the text still doesn't mention the words "oil" or "gas", the very fact that there is a consensus is being seen as a victory in some quarters.

"The world needed to find a new way. By following our North Star, we have found that path. We have delivered a comprehensive response to the Global Stocktake and all the other mandates. Together, we have confronted realities and we have set the world in the right direction. We have given it a robust action plan to keep 1.5 within reach," said COP28 president Sultan AlJaber, who gav-



HEAT CHECK

ACTION plan to meet 1.5 degree C goal with eight measures : **EUROPE**, US happy with the outcome; small islands upset : **EQUITY** and climate justice must guide way ahead, says India

DATA BY PUJA DAS AND MANJUL PAUL

elled the decision on the global stocktake (GST) at the very start of the plenary session.

His reference is to one of the two flagship goals of the Paris accord (2015)—to keep global warming under 1.5 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels. The adoption of a very carefully calibrated decision text titled the UAE Consensus

seemed impossible even on Tuesday, and some experts were already beginning to term COP28 a complete failure.

AlJaber described the outcome as a "a balanced plan, that tackles emissions, bridges the gap on adaptation, reimagines global finance, and deliv-

TURN TO PAGE 6

World raises toast to fossil-fuel transition as COP28 concludes

FROM PAGE 1

ers on loss and damage" and one "built on common ground".

Union environment minister Bhupender Yadav congratulated the UAE's COP presidency "for its fairness, transparency and free exchange of thought". "The way ahead must be based on equity and climate justice," Yadav said.

The adoption of the decision was welcomed with applause, with most parties appearing agreeable to the decision except the group of small islands and Bolivia for different reasons, and they sought their reservations to be recorded in the proceedings. But some experts said the text remained weak on differentiation, did not ensure countries with historical

responsibility take the lead in moving away from fossil fuels and doesn't address finance for transition adequately.

The GST seeks to meet Paris Agreement's 1.5 degree C goal in eight ways, calling on parties to contribute to each in a "nationally determined manner".

One, tripling renewable energy capacity globally and doubling the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030.

Two, accelerating efforts towards the phase-down of unabated coal power.

Three, accelerating efforts globally towards net zero-emission energy systems, utilizing zero- and low-carbon fuels well before or by around mid-century.

Four, transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy sys-



Environment minister Bhupender Yadav congratulated the UAE's COP presidency "for its fairness and free exchange of thought".

tems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science.

Five, accelerating zero- and low-emission technologies, including renewables, nuclear, abatement and removal tech-

nologies such as carbon capture and utilization and storage, particularly in hard-to-abate sectors, and low-carbon hydrogen production.

Six, accelerating and substantially reducing non-carbon-dioxide emissions globally, including in particular methane

emissions by 2030.

Seven, accelerating the reduction of emissions from road transport on a range of pathways, including through development of infrastructure and rapid deployment of zero and low-emission vehicles.

And eight, phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that do not address energy poverty. This is the key section in the GST.

Experts have pointed out that point 29 of the text recognizes that transitional fuels can play a role in facilitating the energy transition while ensuring energy security. This may leave room for several countries to continue using oil, observers said.

One of COP28 Presidency's advisors said the text carefully balances aspirations with science, and recognizes the deadline for change. Describing it as

"finely calibrated" and a "step-up" she added that "it does a lot more on the urgency in this decade". She added that it does have "specificity around fossil fuels and energy transition".

Europe and the US were particularly happy with the outcome, while the small islands were clearly displeased.

Many experts said the GST is weak. "This COP has largely disappointed on all fronts. It hasn't sufficiently raised climate ambition, held historical polluters accountable, or established effective mechanisms to finance climate resilience and a just low-carbon transition for the Global South. While the operationali-

zation of the Loss and Damage fund on the first day marked a noteworthy success, subsequent developments revealed a discordant trajectory. The Global Stocktake's final text

lacked the candid acknowledgement of problems and the teeth required to fight them. The exclusive focus on rapidly phasing down unabated coal, as opposed to all fossil fuels, heightens

the risk of exacerbating the North-South global divide," said Arunabha Ghosh, the CEO of Council on Energy, Environment and Water.

"The GST text pushes the mitigation agenda, especially on coal, but still leaves room for

development. Methane has now become an issue that we will have to pay more attention to," said Manjeev Puri, former ambassador and negotiator.

"No, COP28 will not enable us to hold the 1.5°C limit, but yes, the result is a pivotal landmark. It makes clear to finance, business and societies that we are now finally - 8 years behind Paris schedule - at the beginning of the end of the fossil-fuel driven world economy," Johan Rockström, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, said on X.

"When we are long gone, our children and their children will be left to deal with all that we left behind. This is a day of solemn satisfaction. Humanity has done what has been long overdue," said Wopke Hoekstra, EU's climate chief.

Europe and US were particularly happy with the outcome, while the small islands were clearly displeased