

My UNFCCC itinerary –Vanya Walker-Leigh TSSF

The UNFCCC text was adopted at the Rio sustainable development summit 1992, along with those on biodiversity and desertification. It entered into force in 1994 and there are 197 parties. It was followed by the **Kyoto Protocol** (adopted 1997, entered into force in 2005, for Greenhouse Gas emission reductions to 2012, then 2020, by 37 leading industrial countries) and then the **Paris Agreement** 2015, entering into force in 2016 and now has 193 parties.

Paris provides for post-2020 wide-ranging action with its **key goal** “Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C ...as **nationally determined contributions (NDCs)** to the global response to climate change, all Parties are to undertake and communicate ambitious efforts.. “

Who attends COPs? All nations send delegations as do UN and other multilateral organisations and a broad range of non-state actors. Some COPs such as Glasgow have involved heads of state or governments, with ministers also attending the annual High Level Segments. Over 1500 NGOs have “Admitted Observer” status: however, non-Admitted NGOs can and do request any Observer delegation to include one or more of their representatives. Within COPs NGOs are grouped into nine ‘constituencies’ (farmers, industry, etc,) and three informal groups (faith based, education, parliamentarians).

COP 26 was attended by **39509** registered participants of which: 21695 Parties and Observers, 667 UN and specialised agencies, 539 Specialised Agencies and related organisations, 1093 intergovernmental organisations 11 734 NGOs, 3781 media. A great number of non-registered activists also filled the streets and offsite venues.

The COP ‘blue zone’ is for accredited participants, a nearby ‘Green zone’ admits both registered and non to a large number of events and exhibition booths. **Egypt’s foreign minister recently confirmed that such a zone will be set up and ‘demonstrations allowed’.**

What do COPs do? They negotiate texts of draft resolutions drafted by parties, **which can only be adopted by consensus of all nations** – developing (group of 77 and China – 135 nations) and developed.... NGOs work hard to influence the wording but are excluded from many text negotiations.

The 153 NDCs (representing 49 per cent of global GHG emissions) tabled by COP 26 together would deliver an increase in global temperature of 2.7°C by 2100..... way over 2°C, let alone the 1.5°C now urged by scientists. Indeed, the world can only keep open the 1.5°C possibility by reducing emissions by 45 per cent by 2030 below 2010 levels, achieving ‘net zero’ by 2050.

Developed countries admitted at COP 26 that they would miss the promised USD 100 billion per year by 2020 climate finance goal, not likely achieve it before 2023.

The three recent working groups reports of the Intergovernmental Panel of Experts on Climate Change (IPCC) – two after COP 26 - issued dire warnings on **of the irreversible, catastrophic consequences over coming decades of current climate change policies.**

On 15th May, COP 26 UK president Alok Sharma said “Leaders have not done enough to deliver on their Glasgow commitments,... And that must change.”

Nations were encouraged by COP 26 to submit more ambitious NDCs by COP 27, and annually thereafter, to be reviewed by annual ministerial meetings.

In the most recent of his innumerable climate warnings UN secretary-general Antonio Guterres stated on 18 May that the just issued World Meteorological Organisation report “**is a dismal litany of humanity’s failure to tackle climate disruption**”.

COP 27 will thus have as **its key focus** getting the main emitting nations (the G20 account for 80 pc) to dramatically improve their NDCs, while also providing the finance necessary to bring about sufficient action in developing nations for adaptation AND sharing relevant technology.

US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry keeps saying ‘its trillions, not billions’ we need – but how to mobilise sufficient private investments to complement money from national governments is the challenge. As big a challenge is how to hugely reduce the output of the oil, gas and coal industries (major GHG emitters) to meet the 1.5°C goal, an unwelcome idea to their managements, shareholders and financiers (major banks, etc.) and indeed many supportive governments.

A key issue in Sharm will be the developing nations’ demands for ‘Loss and Damage’ (i.e. when climate impacts cannot be adapted to), a system of financial support strongly opposed by the developed nations.

Prior meetings of developed nations may largely determine what may or may not happen at COP 27 – the G7 summit in Germany (June 26-28) and the G20 one in Indonesia (30-31 October)...the Ukraine situation and its many impacts could influence what they decide on climate action....

Another complication...a Global Biodiversity Framework to 2030 to be adopted by a Biodiversity Convention COP scheduled in China for autumn 2020 aimed to facilitate COP 26 and 27 decisions on ‘nature-based solutions’. BUT the event has been rescheduled several times for COVID reasons..the latest date ‘the third quarter of 2022’ is still announced as ‘tentative’.