

Four things to watch after the COP26 climate summit



By **Somini Sengupta**

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After all the rousing speeches and bitter negotiations, the celebrity spectacles and the parade of promises to protect this and invest in that, now what? Will the Glasgow summit [make any difference](#) in bending the arc of global warming?

That depends on at least four things.

First, what will leaders, starting with President Biden, do in key national capitals? Will Biden persuade Congress to pass his main climate legislation, known as the Build Back Better Act? Likewise, will the leaders of big polluter countries shift their policies at home to meet some of the big promises made, whether that's [cutting methane emissions](#) (China) or [boosting renewable energy](#) sources (India) or reversing deforestation (Brazil) or vague net-zero goals by midcentury (Russia, India). All these pledges are voluntary. "They're all in the ether," Simon Stiell, the environment minister of Grenada told me the morning after the summit.

Second, how much pressure will they face from their citizens, chiefly in democracies? A generation of angry young activists has been pushing politicians and corporate bosses to address the climate crisis, mainly on the streets but also in the courts, where citizens groups in a variety of countries have sued their governments and, in one instance, Shell, one of the world's [biggest oil companies](#). Whether and how quickly governments and private companies respond remains to be seen.

Third, business. A coalition of the world's biggest investors, which collectively controls [\\$130 trillion in assets](#), promised to use its capital to hit net-zero emissions targets for investments by 2050. But will they? And how quickly? Also keep an eye on whether companies will be compelled to shift their business practices to meet a new pledge made in Glasgow to [reduce](#)

[deforestation](#). That impacts the supply chains of many industries, ranging from the palm oil used in lipstick, to soy for chicken feed.

And finally, compensation. One of the most bitterly contested issues in Glasgow was a [demand for funding](#) from rich, industrialized nations mainly responsible for the warming of the atmosphere to poor, climate vulnerable countries who bear little responsibility for the problem. Rich countries, including those of the European Union and the United States, pushed back against the idea of new loss and damage compensation, as it's known. They agreed to have a "dialogue" in the future. Demands are likely to intensify before the next global climate summit scheduled for Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, in 2022.