

Keyword: climate-change

Headline: Leaders to present goals vs climate change

Byline: By Agence France-Presse

Published Date: December 13, 2020

Section: news

Word Count: 480

Content:

THE HAGUE: Global leaders were due to announce more ambitious plans to combat global warming on Saturday, on the fifth anniversary of the signing of the landmark Paris Agreement.

The Climate Ambition Summit, being held online, comes as the United Nations warns current commitments to tackle rises in global temperatures are inadequate.

Britain, the UN and France are co-hosting the summit, which Prime Minister Boris Johnson will open at 1400 GMT and which will be live-streamed at [climateambitionsummit2020.org](https://climateambitionsummit2020.org).

China's President Xi Jinping and France's Emmanuel Macron are among the heads of state taking part, with speaking slots handed to leaders of countries that submitted the most ambitious plans.

These include Honduras, and Guatemala, which were both recently hit by hurricanes, as well as India, which is battling increasingly erratic weather patterns and air pollution.

Business figures set to speak reportedly include Tim Cook, the chief executive of Apple, which has committed to making its whole supply chain carbon neutral by 2030.

But major economies including Australia, Brazil and South Africa are absent. Australia has not committed to net-zero emissions by 2050 and has been accused of setting targets that are too weak.

Speakers will deliver short video messages, with organizers saying they will announce "new and ambitious climate change commitments" and there will be "no space for general statements".

The 2015 Paris climate accord saw signatories commit to take action to limit temperature rises to "well below" 2.0 Celsius above pre-industrial levels and try to limit them to 1.5 C.

But the UN warned this week that under current commitments, the Earth is still on course for a "catastrophic temperature rise" of more than 3.0C this century. It warned this will create a crisis that will "dwarf the impacts of Covid-19" and has said current pledges to cut emissions to meet the Paris accord were "woefully inadequate."

Greenpeace called the summit — seen as a warm-up for the UN's climate change conference COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland, next November — a "moment of accountability for leaders".

Under the Paris deal's "ratchet" mechanism, countries are required to submit renewed emissions cutting plans — termed Nationally Determined Contributions or NDCs — every five years.

The deadline for this is December 31. Countries are set to announce efforts to reduce national emissions, long-term strategies and financial commitments to support the most vulnerable.

More than 110 countries have committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2050. China, the world's biggest polluter, announced in September it plans to achieve net-zero emissions by 2060.

The summit comes as European Union leaders on Friday committed to the goal of reducing emissions by 55 percent by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.

Britain — out of the EU since January — this month announced it would seek to reduce emissions by 68 percent over the same period. Johnson has presented plans for a “green industrial revolution” creating up to 250,000 jobs.