

‘Minimal progress’ made this year on curbing global heating, report finds

Analysis by Climate Action Tracker puts median temperature rise by 2100 at 2.7C if current policies continue

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It was ‘not a paradox’ to see greenhouse gas emissions still rising while renewables also boom, said one climate scientist. Photograph: Matthias Schröder/AP

World leaders have promised to try to stop the planet heating by more than 1.5C (2.7F). But current policies put the temperature rise on track for 2.7C, a report has found.

The expected level of global heating by the end of the century has not changed since 2021, with “minimal progress” made this year, according to the [Climate Action Tracker](#) project. The consortium’s estimate has not shifted since the Cop26 climate summit in Glasgow three years ago.

“We have clearly failed to bend the curve,” said the lead author of the analysis, Sofia Gonzales-Zuñiga, from [Climate Analytics](#).

The expected level of warming is slightly lower when considering government pledges and targets, at 2.1C, but has also not changed since 2021. Warming in the most optimistic scenario rose slightly from 1.8C last year to 1.9C this year, the report found.

Changes in average global temperatures that sound small can lead to massive human suffering. Last month, a study found half of the 68,000 heat deaths in Europe in 2022 were the result of the 1.3C of global heating the world has seen so far. At the higher temperatures that are projected for the end of the century, the risk of irreversible and catastrophic extremes is also set to soar.

The findings were released as climate negotiators converge on the [COP29](#) summit in Azerbaijan for fraught negotiations over greenhouse gas pollution and the money needed to deal with it. The flatlining of progress comes despite the world seeing breakneck change in the rollout of clean technologies that can replace coal, oil and gas.

The report found fossil fuel subsidies have also hit all-time highs, and funding for such projects quadrupled between 2021 and 2022.

Prof Niklas Höhne, a climate scientist at the [NewClimate Institute](#) in Germany, said it was “not a paradox” to see rising emissions while renewables boomed. “In recent years, fossil fuels have won the race against renewables, leading to increasing emissions,” he said.

Still, he added, “renewables surprise us each year” with faster growth than expected. He said they would soon crowd out fossil fuels. “It allows a much faster decline in emissions than we thought only three years ago.”

Climate scientists say every fraction of a degree matters for the health of people and the planet.

The researchers warned their median warming estimate of 2.7C by 2100 had a wide enough margin of error that it could translate into far hotter temperatures than scientists were expecting.

“There is a 33% chance of our projection being 3C or higher, and a 10% chance of being 3.6C or higher,” said Gonzales-Zuniga. The latter would be “absolutely catastrophic”, she added.

A handful of world leaders at COP29 expressed frustration at the slow pace of progress after 28 UN climate summits.

“What on earth are we doing in this gathering?” the Albanian prime minister, Edi Rama, asked his fellow heads of state on Wednesday. “What does it mean for the future of the world if the biggest polluters continue as usual?”

Others pointed to progress made despite the shortcomings.

“Meetings like these are often perceived as talking shops,” said the Belgium prime minister, Alexander De Croo. “And yes, these strenuous negotiations are far from perfect. But if you compare climate policy now to a decade ago, we are in a different world.”