

Nations pledge \$9.8B to global climate fund to help the poor

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Climate change activists gather for a march and rally with Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg at the Alberta Legislature Building in Edmonton, Alberta, on Friday, Oct. 18, 2019. (Dave Chidley/The Canadian Press via AP)

Rich countries have pledged \$9.8 billion to help poor nations tackle

climate change, the Green Climate Fund said Friday, as environmental activists slammed the United States for refusing to contribute and other nations for giving too little.

Yannick Glemarec, the executive director of the Green Climate Fund, said 27 countries announced contributions by the end of a two-day conference in Paris.

The United States did not make any pledge, as U.S. President Donald Trump has decided to stop paying into the fund. Former U.S. President Barack Obama pledged \$3 billion toward the fund, but Trump moved to withhold \$2 billion of that after taking office.

The Climate Action Network, which is made up of more than 1,300 non-governmental organizations, castigated both the U.S. and Australia for refusing to pitch in.

They "have turned their backs on the world's poorest and have once again isolated themselves in global efforts to respond to the climate emergency," the network said.

It also named Canada, the Netherlands, Portugal, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Austria and Belgium as countries that "failed to deliver their fair share" and called on them to make up the shortfall.

Oxfam International's Armelle Le Comte called the failure of the United States and Australia to provide funding "appalling."



Extinction Rebellion activists Ursula Pethick, aged 83, John Lynes, 91, and John Halladay, 61, leave court where they were bailed to attend trial at a later date charged in connection with an environmental protest, in Folkestone, England, Wednesday Oct. 23, 2019. The protesters were detained by police during a demonstration by climate change pressure group Extinction Rebellion, blockading a major roadway near the Port of Dover, southern England. All three protesters pleaded not guilty to the charges. (Kirsty O'Connor/PA via AP)

But the Green Climate Fund's Glemarec put an optimistic spin on the shortfalls.

"We will most likely be able to find additional resources" before the United Nations' annual climate conference, which will be held in December in Santiago, Chile, Glemarec said.

Glemarec said the extra money will increase the fund's capacity from about \$1.4 billion per year now to \$2.4 billion per year in the period from 2020-2024.

French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire, speaking earlier Friday, praised "a great success" that he attributed largely to European countries, noting that almost half of the amount was being provided by France, Germany and Britain alone.

"Many countries will double their contributions," Le Maire said.

The South Korea-based fund, which provides money to help developing countries reduce their emissions and cope with the impacts of climate change, says it has nearly exhausted some \$7 billion received following an initial funding round five years ago.

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