

UN talks on climate solutions wrap up two days into overtime

April 4 2022, by Marlowe Hood



The report is expected to be the definitive guide to slashing emissions and halting global warming.

Negotiations to finalise a key UN report on how to stave off climate catastrophe wrapped up on Sunday more than two days late following a

tussle over how to describe financial needs, participants told AFP.

Two-weeks of virtual talks were contentious from the start, as nearly 200 nations grapple with hard choices about how to rapidly purge carbon pollution from their economies and become carbon neutral by mid-century.

The latest report from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), due to be published on Monday, will detail how societies and industries must be reimagined to cut greenhouse gas emissions and avoid the worst impacts of a heating planet.

But with sweeping changes needed—and huge investments on the line—the political stakes are high.

"Everybody has something to lose and everybody has something to gain," another participant monitoring the process said.

Nations were tasked with thrashing out line-by-line a high-level "summary for policymakers" that distils the thousands of pages of the IPCC's underlying assessment.

As talks resumed Sunday, only 50 percent of the text had been approved, and by late evening all the sticking points had been cleared.

"A final reading and checkup will take place Monday morning," tweeted Belgian scientist Jean-Pascal van Ypersele, a delegate from Belgium.

A source close to the talks told AFP earlier that delays were down to the references to finance.

The United States balked at data showing how much developing countries require to slash greenhouse gas emissions to meet the

temperature goals of the Paris Agreement, whereas China wants the figures prominently included, he said.

While these detailed estimates will likely remain in the main IPCC report, the US and other wealthy nations wanted it dropped from the all-important summary for policymakers.

Some studies have said that developing nations need to spend trillions per year, many times more than current levels of investment.

"These figures are very policy relevant. The report says it is possible to limit warming to 1.5C and cut emissions in half by 2030," the source said.

"But you can't say that without saying how much money you need to implement those solutions."

The closed-door negotiations on how to cast the IPCC's findings stumbled over how, and how quickly, the fossil fuels that drive global warming must be drawn down.

They also stalled over how big a role should be given to technologies that capture CO₂ as it is emitted or extract it from the air.

Nikki Reisch, of the Center for International Environmental Law, said "political pressure" was trying to "mask the undeniable reality" that warming will reach catastrophic levels if the shift away from fossil fuels is not accelerated immediately.

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