

Nations call for swift fossil fuel exit to tackle climate change

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No target for ending the use of fossil fuel use has yet been set.

The world needs an "urgent" exit from fossil fuels as part of efforts to slash planet-heating emissions and rein in global warming, a coalition of countries including EU economies and climate-vulnerable nations said

Friday.

In a statement released at the close of climate talks in Brussels, the High Ambition Coalition said the year-end COP28 talks must pave the way for "an urgent and just transition to renewables, a more climate resilient world, and climate justice for all".

"We must accelerate the global energy transition away from [fossil fuels](#)," said the statement, signed by representatives of countries including Germany, France and the Marshall Islands, as well as the European Commission.

It called for [greenhouse gas emissions](#) to peak by 2025 at the latest and be cut by 43 percent by 2030, compared to 2019 levels, in line with recent updates from UN climate experts.

"This requires systemic transformations across all sectors, driven by an urgent phase out from fossil fuels, starting with a rapid decline of fossil fuel production and use within this decade," the countries said.

The statement follows a ministerial summit in Belgium where the incoming COP28 president outlined priorities for the crunch Dubai meeting.

With [global temperatures](#) hitting record highs last week and countries buffeted by floods, storms and crop-withering heatwaves, the world remains far off track to meet its climate goals.

That has prompted some countries to call for a decision at COP28 to entirely phase out planet-warming fossil fuels from the global energy mix.

Fossil focus

Emirati oil boss Sultan Al Jaber, who will head up the COP28 talks, has said he expects fossil fuels to continue to play a role, albeit reduced and with the use of often controversial technologies to "abate", or neutralize, the emissions.

Jaber said on Thursday that a phase down of fossil fuels is both "inevitable" and "essential", but has been reluctant to spell out a time frame.

But "I don't have a magic (wand)" as to when that will happen, he told AFP in Brussels.

Countries have raised concerns about any reliance on [carbon capture and storage technologies](#)—for example those that trap emissions from [power plants](#) and store them permanently underground—which have so far not been used at scale.

"Abatement technologies must not be used to green-light continued fossil fuel expansion, but must be considered in the context of steps to phase out fossil [fuel](#) use," the statement said.

It added that these technologies had a "minimal role to play" in the decarbonization of the energy sector.

Among the concrete targets Jaber proposed as COP28 priorities include a host of 2030 targets, like tripling the world's renewable energy capacity and doubling energy efficiency improvements.

This is in line with what the International Energy Agency says is needed to meet the Paris deal target of limiting [global warming](#) to 1.5 degrees Celsius since preindustrial times.

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