

COP26 climate change conference underway in Glasgow

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Glasgow, October 31 (RHC)-- As the COP26 climate change conference gets under way in Glasgow on Sunday, world leaders will likely have their last chance to curtail the deadliest consequences of human-induced planetary warming.

Time is of the essence for unified global action as studies suggest as little as nine years remain before the most catastrophic effects of climate change take hold and are impossible to stop.

“The effects of human-caused global warming are happening now, are irreversible on the timescale of people alive today, and will worsen in the decades to come,” the US space agency NASA said in a brief.

The study shows that greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide trap heat near Earth’s surface and when they become too concentrated, global warming results.

The landmark Paris climate accord in 2015 resulted in nations around the world agreeing to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) compared with the period before the start of the Industrial Revolution in 1760 in Europe and the United States.

The globe has already warmed 1C (1.8F) above preindustrial levels, and climate disasters are a result. The United Nations estimates to keep warming under 1.5C (2.7F), countries need to reach “net-zero” gas emissions by 2050. But efforts to decarbonise have badly faltered since the Paris agreement.

Global emissions would be 16 percent higher in 2030 than they were in 2010 under current national commitments – nowhere close to a 45 percent reduction by 2030 that scientists say is needed to halt climate catastrophe.

According to one study, envisioning the potential worst scenarios, the world’s most populous cities — including Chennai, Mumbai, Jakarta, Guangzhou, Tianjin, Hong Kong, Ho Chi Minh City, Shanghai, Lagos, Bangkok and Manila — could be abandoned by 2050.

Scorching temperatures will also wreak havoc on people’s lives. About 35 percent of the global land area and 55 percent of the world’s population would be subject to more than 20 days a year of lethal heat conditions, “beyond the threshold of human survivability”, the paper noted.

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