

Dear readers,

This month's email is a COP26 special. I hope you've had a chance to relax after a crazy two weeks!

In this email we have compiled coverage during and after the COP. We also offer short takes on how domestic outlets in Japan, Brazil, South Korea and others covered the Climate Summit.

A big thank you to Marina Lou who has done a heroic job of media monitoring during COP26, which we also used for this summary.

If you want your colleagues or friends to sign up to this newsletter, please send them [this link](#).

Best,

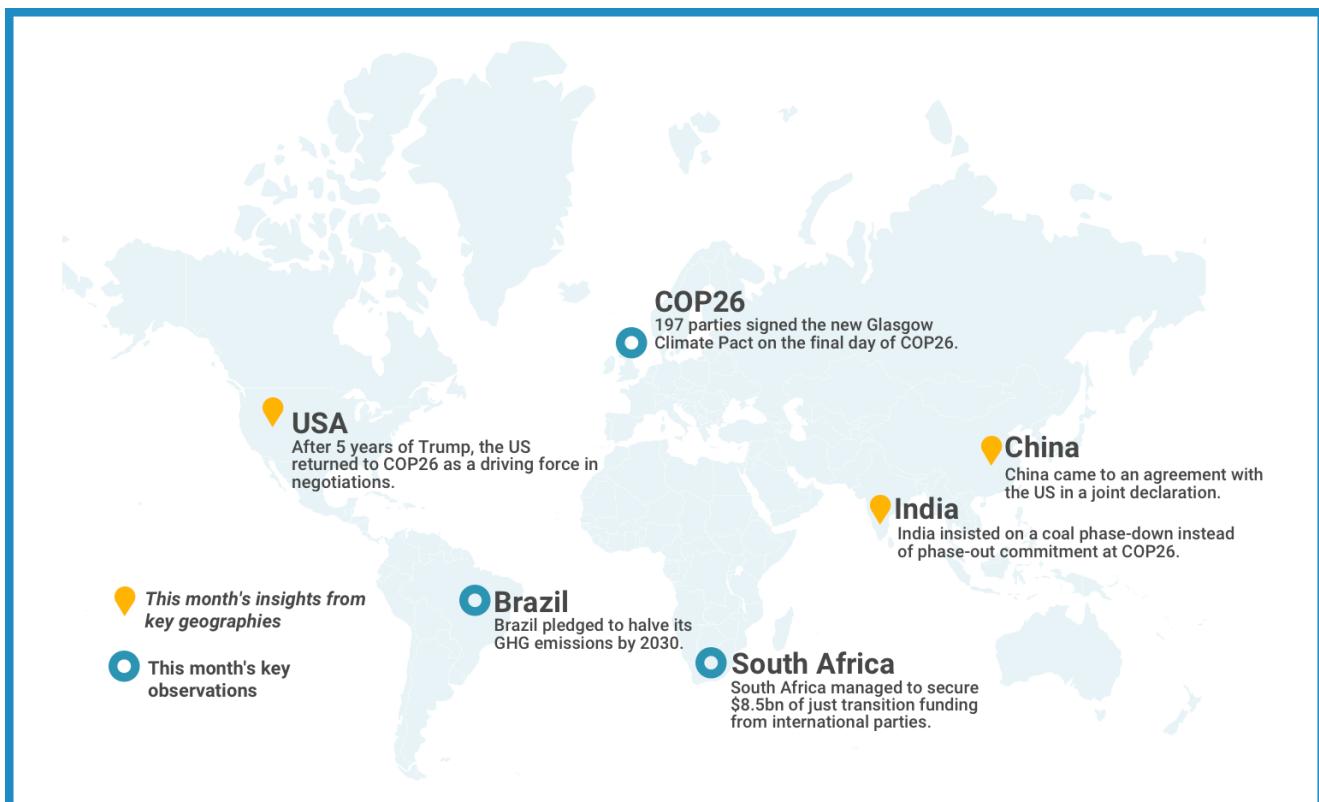
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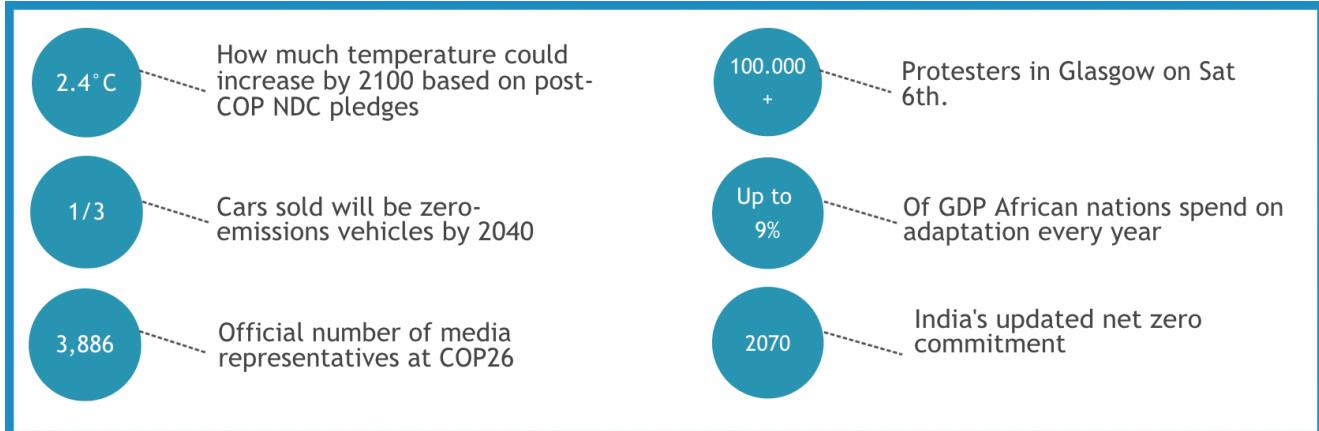


This month's key observations

- Coverage of the monitored topics in top-tier international media almost quadrupled from the September-October period (estimated using Factiva), while social media engagement also saw a huge increase (380%), according to Talkwalker.
- During COP, interest in the global climate talks peaked during the World Leaders Summit in the first two days.
- The first week's coverage was dominated by deals on nature, finance, coal and more. Barbados PM Mia Mottley's and Marshall Island Climate Envoy Tina Stege both made widely-covered speeches - sobering reminders of what's at stake.
- Climate finance and equity remained high on the agenda. Developing nations called for climate finance to be centre stage at COP, as the Climate Vulnerables Forum called for a Climate Emergency Pact.
- Access issues to the venue were also widely covered by outlets as hundreds queued to get inside the Blue Zone in the early hours.
- The end of coal was widely reported as new pledges and deals were announced in Glasgow.
- The coal compromise of the final text was covered by various major outlets. However, as the dust settles on COP26, coverage focuses on deeper analysis of the outcomes and what COP27 needs to deliver.



This month in numbers



International media coverage

Climate talks dominate global media

The attention of over 3,000 journalists was focused on the "[moment of truth](#)" - the "[pivotal moment](#)" that was the Glasgow Climate Summit. World leaders opened COP26 with a string of new announcements, while Small Island State leaders and activists offered sobering interventions. Barbados PM Mia Mottley delivered a landmark speech emphasising that "[we do not want that dreaded death sentence](#)", while Tuvalu Foreign Minister Simon Kofe [read out his statement knee-deep in sea water](#). As Samoan activist Brianna Fuena put it: "[We are not drowning, we are fighting](#)". Former [US President Barack Obama's speech](#) received significant attention, calling on major emitters to help island nations. The Climate Vulnerables Forum once again called for a [climate emergency pact](#) that prioritised rapid emissions cuts and the delivery of the long-delayed USD 100 billion. As some African countries are expected to spend up to 9% of their GDP on climate change related damages, a [UN report](#) pointed out that money for poor countries must rise tenfold.

New announcements from countries and industries were celebrated, but also received with caution in the media. [India's net-zero by 2070 announcement](#) was an [unexpected](#) but appreciated surprise. Brazil also announced a new target. However, [critics were quick to point out its many loopholes](#). Other new net-zero pledges like [Vietnam's](#) and Nigeria's received less attention. The first week's deals received significant media coverage. News that more than [100 countries have pledged to cut methane emissions](#) and the landmark agreement among more than 100 world leaders to reverse deforestation by 2030 dominated coverage. The Mark Carney-led Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero, covering USD 130 trillion in assets, was branded as a "[scam](#)" and received criticism from

reporters as pledges don't commit investors to [stop putting money into fossil fuels](#). Costa Rica's and Denmark's alliance to phase out the production of oil and gas [was covered positively](#). While the coal pledge made by over 40 countries was widely reported, journalists were quick to point out its short falls, [criticising](#) the absence of major coal producers. Similarly, commitments to phase-out fossil-fuel vehicles by 2040 were [taken with modesty](#) as leading carmakers like Toyota and Volkswagen as well as major markets like China, the US and Germany were missing from the deal.

The first week's new pledges made [little](#) progress in bringing us closer to the [1.5C target](#). The world is still heading towards [2.4C](#) warming by the end of the century. As UN Chief Antonio Guterress pointed out: "[1.5C is on life support](#)". Rich countries were widely criticised for [failing to deliver the developing world's climate finance demands](#). The EU and US in particular [received wide criticism](#) for standing aside while Saudi Arabia and Russia pushed for less ambitious targets, and for [blocking a separate funding facility for loss and damage](#). Saudi Arabia was further [accused](#) of blocking transparency rules and "[playing dirty games](#)" on human-rights language. The US and China [joint declaration to cooperate on climate change](#) was widely covered, many welcoming the 'unexpected' tone of agreement between the two countries given the geopolitical tensions. In week two, the [difficult negotiations began and coverage focused](#) on the viability of 1.5C, key blockers and cheating.

Protestors and [pikachus](#) occupied front pages as campaigner stunts were widely covered. Throughout the two weeks of COP, protestors marched across Glasgow to call out the lack of progress inside the talks. Activists stood behind the demands of the most vulnerable and placed climate justice at the heart of their protests. Greta Thunberg called the talks "[a failure](#)" and "[a global north greenwash festival](#)", while over [100,000 people](#) occupied the streets of Glasgow on Saturday.

Coverage highlights

- [COP26's key task: Stamping out climate cheating](#) (Politico)
- [Climate compensation demands grow louder at COP26](#) (Politico)
- [Reality check: Here's what the COP26 deals actually mean for our future climate](#) (CNN)
- [COP26: World leaders promise to end deforestation by 2030](#) (BBC)
- [Africa Is Living The Climate Crisis Now - COP26 Must Deliver](#) (Gamal M Hassan)
- [Greenwashing Is The New Climate Denial](#) (Laurence Tubiana)

What did COP26 achieve?

Closing coverage focused on India's intervention to change coal from 'phase out' to 'phase down' in the final text. The fact that the text contained language that formally targeted fossil fuels for the first time was recognised as a breakthrough moment in the history of COP negotiations. However, the last minute, watered-down language received criticism as it '[almost sunk the Glasgow climate deal](#)'. In the final moments, President Alok Sharma was close to tears and said he was 'deeply sorry' about the [watered down coal text](#). Initially, [China and India](#) were blamed for the text amendments. However, later reflections revealed that the EU and US also played a significant part, despite their emotional final speeches. [Poorer nations and civil society organisations criticised](#) the text for failing to recognise the needs of the most vulnerable, particularly on finance. Representatives of small islands emphasised that the fight is not over.

After the final text, commentators pointed out that [1.5C is not much closer than before COP](#). The Glasgow Climate Pact received mixed reactions from experts. Greenpeace's Jennifer Morgan said: "It's meek, it's weak and the 1.5C goal is only just alive, but a signal has been sent that the era of coal is ending". According to Power Shift Africa's Mohamed Adow, [COP26 outcomes reflect the Global North's priorities](#). UN Chief Antonio Guterres called it "[an important step but not enough. It's time to go into emergency mode](#)". While small island leaders were "[hurt deeply](#)" and [disappointed about the weakened language on coal, they recognised the important steps the summit made](#). Beyond the coal compromise, countries have managed to resolve critical issues around [carbon markets](#), the ratchet mechanism and [transparency](#). As the dust settled on the busy two weeks of the summit, journalists reflected on [how the UK Presidency had done its job](#). COP26 was high on the agenda for the government. Number 10 has made [great efforts to sell it as a success](#). Politico's Karl Mathiesen and Esther Webber wrote: "[It wasn't quite the coming out party post-Brexit Britain had dreamed of.](#)"

Experts and analysts are now turning towards what's next on the agenda of climate negotiations ahead of COP27. As countries start to crunch what the new decisions mean for their countries, doubts are emerging. [Australia and the US are already questioning whether they need to come back with new pledges in 2022](#). Others are already working hard to deliver what Glasgow missed. The richest nations failed to meet developing countries' demands on climate finance and loss and damage. [Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley is on a mission to make the international financial system deliver for those on the frontline of the climate crisis](#). With the next COP being hosted by Egypt, [experts are concerned about potential civil society suppression](#). [COP27 will have to make climate finance and loss and damage its focus](#), some commentators argue. Beyond loss and damage, national action, funding a just transition and holding greenwashers accountable are some of the top five things to watch in 2022, according to academic Rachel Kyte. As Marshall Islands Climate Envoy Tina Stege tweeted, [the real work to deliver the Glasgow Pact starts now](#).

Coverage highlights

- [COP26: Key outcomes agreed at the UN climate talks in Glasgow](#) (Carbon Brief)
- [COP26: What was agreed at the Glasgow climate conference?](#) (BBC)
- [COP26 Finds Its Scapegoats - India and China](#) (The Diplomat)
- [Mia Mottley: the ‘fearless’ leader pushing a global settlement for the climate frontlines](#) (Climate Home News)
- [Dancing on the edge of climate disaster](#) (FT)
- [What the COP26 deal means for fossil fuels](#) (FT)
- [COP26 left the world with a climate to-do list: Here are 5 things to watch for in 2022](#) (The Conversation)

COP26 in domestic outlets

This COP saw an unprecedented amount of coverage in domestic outlets. Brazil saw its most extensive COP coverage ever. Civil society organisations used the media's attention to [call out the Bolsonaro government's lack of action](#). Meanwhile, Australian outlets focused on the lack of substance in the country's net-zero by 2050 target, avoidance of major deals to cut carbon pollution as well as the lack of new 2030 emissions-reductions targets. Australia was [accused domestically](#) of using the global climate talks to promote fossil fuels, including by putting a gas company's exhibit front and centre at its pavilion. Mainstream French media mostly focused on the 1.5C target, the credibility of the pledges, and individual deals. In Japan, most stories welcomed the 1.5C articulation as a clear new signal but also warned that ensuring implementation in each country was key.

The end of coal was also picked up by national outlets. [About a third of major German outlets](#) commented that the summit sent an important signal on the global decline of coal - with important domestic implications. Two different views predominated on coal in Japan. Some saw international coal phase-down commitments as a burden, while others said it was important to promote innovative technology on nuclear and coal-fired power as renewables were unreliable. In France, there was a [specific emphasis](#) on the group of countries that pledged to cease funding hydrocarbons abroad. In South Korea, liberal outlets framed the outcomes of CO26 as [disappointing](#) due to the watered down language on coal, while conservative outlets saw COP as [where discussions actively began on nuclear power's role in achieving carbon neutrality](#). Both conservative and liberal media criticised the equivocal attitude of the Korean government on coal phase-out. In South Africa, coverage focused on the landmark USD 8.5 billion just transition funding agreement between South Africa and the UK, US, France, Germany and EU. The announcement was [tentatively welcomed](#) by local analysts.

Domestic outlets had differing takes on COP26. German media coverage about the

outcome was [balanced](#), shedding light on progress and failures with a slight tendency by journalists to defend the UN process. All major Indonesian outlets called the outcomes of COP26 [disappointing](#), highlighting the failure of developed countries to come forward with the finance needed to support developing nations in meeting their targets. However, the Indonesian media hailed the COP as a [diplomatic win](#) for President Joko Widodo, as media reports characterised his ask for climate finance as bold and an act that commanded respect from world leaders.

For in-depth analysis on China, India and the US, see below.

Coverage highlights

- [COP26 começa com tom de urgência contra aquecimento global e cobrança por medidas concretas](#) (Globo, Brazil)
- [‘Fragile win’: COP26 Glasgow’s pledge to end coal power weakened in final compromise](#) (Sydney Morning Herald, Australia)
- [COP26 : après un tourbillon d’annonces, la crédibilité des nouveaux engagements en question](#) (Le Monde, France)

Insights from key geographies

Below is a brief summary of media coverage in three key countries.

China

Chinese media stayed relatively quiet during COP26 since most outlets were covering the event remotely. While China was under significant pressure during COP, both from developed countries and some developing countries, the pressure was rarely reflected in Chinese media coverage. The gap between China's own assessment of its climate efforts and the world's expectations is getting wider. Cultural differences exacerbate this divergence. '[Do not promise anything that cannot be delivered](#)' is an unwritten rule for Chinese policymakers, but not necessarily for other countries. Domestically, there seems to be a sense that China is making huge efforts for climate, so a popular narrative was that [China was misunderstood, if not mistreated, at COP26](#). The US-China joint declaration injected some much needed optimism to the overall media discourse.

India

[COP was covered widely](#) by Indian media and the Glasgow Pact made front page news in most outlets. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's five-point announcement at the Leaders Summit, including a net-zero commitment by 2070, was covered by every major national and regional media. While there was some critical analysis of how the 2030 targets were lumped in with other ongoing commitments, most Indian experts and mainstream narratives remained [positive about India's NZ goal in light of its 2030 targets](#). An [analysis by CREA for the global coal stocktake at COP26](#) claimed that India's 2070 net-zero goal may give coal a longer shelf life, but its 2030 energy and emission-reduction targets will make it harder for coal to grow exponentially. While India unsuccessfully pushed for oil and natural gas phase-down to be included in the text, as opposed to singling out coal, the failure of developed nations to meet the USD 100bn climate finance pledge was met with disappointment by the media. The global critique of India's last-minute request to change coal 'phase-out' to 'phase-down' has been seen by most experts and media in light of CBDR. They also noted the language was first used in the US-China Joint Declaration.

Many media stories highlighted the [issue of equity for developing nations](#) to commit to NZ goals without the finance, tech and other commitments the developed world has not kept. Climate impacts were widely reported through the lens of loss & damage in India and the failure of an L&D facility in the final pact was noted by almost every wrap-up story. The UNEP Adaptation Gap report underscored the growing gap between the financial commitments from developed countries vs the need for developing countries in the face of rising climate impacts. India's sectoral commitments on greening the Indian railways and transitioning the automobile sector by 2030 were also significant measures which were noted. However, India's silence on any forest commitments was reported by some mainstream media, which highlighted how the country was struggling to meet its third NDC of creating a 2.5bn-3bn tonnes equivalent of carbon sink by planting trees. The launch of the International Solar Alliance, an initiative led by India and the GGI-OSOWOG in partnership with the UK, created some buzz, but the lack of financial details did not lead to much excitement about the project at this stage. The US joining the ISA was also noted widely.

USA

US climate coverage continued to be dominated by the Biden administration at COP26, the Build Back Better policy package and speculation about US & China geopolitical dynamics. The [return of the US to the UN climate talks](#) got a mixed reception in the media, with some reporting that the US was back and effectively turning up the pressure, and others [lumping the US in with other laggards and major economies holding back progress](#). The amount and depth of US COP26 coverage in both print and broadcast media was far more than in recent years, and the surprise US-China deal was largely portrayed as a [bright light in another contentious diplomatic relationship](#). In the slew of COP26 announcements, including from the US, attention to Biden's unfinished domestic climate policy push lessened. However,

post-COP coverage has again focused on the [legislation crucial to the US meeting its Paris climate targets](#).

Climate coverage with the highest social media engagement

Of all the English-language articles and social media posts related to COP26, NDCs and international climate diplomacy posted over the month, the following pieces attracted the most public engagement on social media, measured by the total number of shares, likes, retweets and mentions. This is compiled using Talkwalker.

Articles from climate and foreign affairs journalists

- [‘Blah, Photos: Biden cruises Rome with 85-car motorcade before ‘climate’ summit](#) - Amy Furr
- [Countries’ climate pledges built on flawed data, Post investigation finds](#) - Chris Mooney, Juliet Eilperin, Desmond Butler, John Muyskens, Ana Narayanswamy & Naema Ahmed
- [Countries, cities, carmakers commit to end fossil-fuel vehicles by 2040](#) - Simon Jessop, William James & Nick Carey
- [‘Last, best hope’: leaders launch crucial UN climate summit](#) - Frank Jordan & Ellen Knickmeyer
- [COP26: world on track for disastrous heating of more than 2.4C, says key report](#) - Fiona Harvey

Online Media

- [Biden administration considering shutting down Michigan pipeline, drawing criticism and dire warnings as winter nears](#) - The Biden administration’s energy policies have drawn criticism as gas prices surge heading into their winter months (Fox News)

153.8K
engagements

- [An open letter to the global media by Greta Thunberg and Vanessa Nakate](#) - The two young climate activists from Sweden and Uganda join forces in an open letter to call on global media to include the fundamental issues time, holistic thinking and justice in their climate reporting (Time)

82.6K

engagements

[Youth activists petition UN to declare ‘systemwide climate emergency’](#) - Exclusive: Greta Thunberg among young people filing legal suit for climate crisis to be declared a global level 3 emergency (The Guardian)

80.2K
engagements

[Report: Camilla blown away after hearing Joe Biden ‘loudly’ fart](#) - The Duchess of Cornwall reportedly drew people’s attention to Biden’s very own natural gas contribution when he farted “loudly” in front of her at COP (Breitbart)

76.6K
engagements

Social media

CALLING ALL #BLINKS! Just in time for #COP in Glasgow, South Korean girl group Blackpink demands: Time to step up and come #TogetherForOurPlanet. Watch this space for more #ClimateActionInYourArea ([BLACKPINK Global Blink](#) on Twitter)

857.1K
engagements

On his final day at COP, Leonardo DiCaprio met with young indigenous leader Juma Xipaia to talk about indigenous peoples on the frontline of climate emergency, praising her inspiring and tireless efforts (Leonardo DiCaprio on [Instagram](#))

680.5K
engagements

Along with images showing climate impacts across the world, Angelina Jolie used her voice to emphasize that climate change was human-made and accelerating due to inaction (Angelina Jolie on [Instagram](#))

460.6K
engagements

19-year old Maham from Manchester took over Tom Hiddleston's instagram account to call on people to sign UNICEF UK's petition to protect future generations, spreading the important message: "If ever there was a time for change, it is now" (Tom Hiddleston on [Instagram](#))

228.9K
engagements

Outspoken as always, Emma Watson reposted a message by @unclimatechange emphasizing how dramatically different the scenarios between 1.5°C, 2°C, 3°C or 4°C of global warming would be (Emma Watson on [Instagram](#))

157.7K
engagements

Live monitoring dashboard

This shows statistics and top articles for the media space of key issues we care about: Climate, energy, transport, finance and nature, across mainstream and social media from the past 30 days.

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This analysis is based on insight from the social listening tool Talkwalker, English-language media coverage from the media database Factiva, and expert insight from GSCC colleagues.

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