

# GUIDE TO GLASGOW – COP 26

In October / November 2021, Glasgow will host the 26<sup>th</sup> UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26). This event will bring together world leaders to discuss the impacts of climate change and actions to address the global climate emergency.

There's been much news and activity surrounding global climate change events recently. This summary has been developed by our Energy and Sustainability team to explain and connect the various events and publications that are often discussed.



## United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The UNFCCC is an agreement signed by over 190 countries with an objective to "prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system." The UNFCCC establishes guiding principles and commitments for each country to follow when taking action to address climate change.

## 26<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP26)

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the decision-making body of the UNFCCC. The COP typically meets each year, bringing together parties to the UNFCCC to review and promote its implementation. Each conference provides the opportunity for parties to reach further agreements in pursuit of the UNFCCC objective.

### Paris Agreement (Reached at COP21)

Agreements reached at each COP are generally named after the host city. COP21 was held in Paris where all parties established an agreement to limit global temperature rise to well below 2.0°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C. The Paris Agreement is notable because it provides a quantitative target for climate action.

### Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

The IPCC is a UN expert body which assesses the science related to climate change. The IPCC publishes assessment reports at regular intervals and are currently preparing the sixth assessment report (AR6).

### 1.5°C Report

The IPCC recently published the '1.5°C Report' also known as *AR6: The physical science basis*. This document reviewed recent climate change science from around the world and concluded that the world is not on track to deliver on the commitments of the Paris Agreement.

## Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)

To support the Paris Agreement, each country must regularly submit a Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) which outlines its commitment to emissions reduction. NDCs include reduction targets and details of relevant domestic policies of each country. These domestic policies are where the objectives of the Paris Agreement and UNFCCC are delivered.

## Australian Climate Action and Impacts for the Construction Industry

Building construction and operation contribute approximately 38% of global greenhouse gas emissions<sup>1</sup>. Domestic emissions reduction measures are likely to require a significant contribution from the construction industry. Decarbonisation of building operation requires a transition to renewable electricity. This can be achieved through the electrification of all building systems, installation of onsite renewable generation, and commitment to renewable electricity supply.

Decarbonisation of construction processes and materials may be more complex, but exciting new technologies are emerging. For example, innovations such as advanced mass timber construction methodologies and renewable steel to reduce the embodied emissions of new construction. Technologies in the construction value chain are also evolving, including electrified transportation and heavy machinery.

<sup>1</sup> UNEP (2020). 2020 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction.