

COP29 UN Climate Change Conference

The COP29 UN Climate Change Conference is taking place 11–22 November 2024, in Baku, Azerbaijan. The event brings together country leaders, experts and environmental campaigners to take urgent action against climate change.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–j) with the vocabulary (1–10).

Vocabulary

1. a consequence
2. a drought
3. a polar ice cap
4. a summit
5. CO₂ emissions
6. finance
7. ambitious
8. inclusive
9. negotiation
10. devastating

Definition

- a. a large area of thick ice that covers the North or South Pole
- b. the money needed for something to happen
- c. a result of a particular action or situation
- d. including many different types of people, and treating them all fairly and equally
- e. causing a lot of damage or destruction
- f. an important formal meeting between leaders of governments
- g. a long period when there is little or no rain
- h. formal discussion between people who are trying to reach an agreement
- i. needing a lot of effort, money or time to succeed
- j. the release of carbon dioxide gas into the atmosphere, mainly from burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas

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The consequences of global warming are being seen all over the world. Droughts, floods, heatwaves and other extreme weather conditions are becoming more and more frequent. Polar ice caps are melting, and sea levels are rising. Climate change is a major threat to ecosystems and to humanity. Every year, world leaders meet at the COP summit to review the UN goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius and to discuss the action that still needs to be taken.

What is a COP?

This year the 29th United Nations Climate Change Conference will be held 11–22 November 2024, in Baku, Azerbaijan. The event is also known as COP29 – ‘COP’ stands for ‘Conference of the Parties’. It usually takes place every year, and the venue, as well as the COP presidency, rotates among the five different UN regions (Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe, and Western Europe and Others).

The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement remains a key part of global climate efforts. This agreement was adopted in 2015, during the COP21 summit in Paris. With this agreement, almost every country in the world committed to cut CO₂ emissions as rapidly as possible, in order to limit global warming to well below 2°C, aiming for 1.5°C. However, despite the commitments made in Paris, the progress made is not enough. The world is still failing to meet the targets necessary to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

What are the aims of COP29?

The goal of the COP29 conference is to take faster action to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement, with a focus on the finance required for countries to drastically reduce CO₂ emissions. The 2024 event aims to:

- encourage countries to set more ambitious targets for reducing emissions, with the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C
- increase finance to help developing countries reduce emissions and adapt to climate change
- ensure an inclusive and fair process, particularly supporting developing countries in climate negotiations.

As the effects of climate change become more and more devastating, it is crucial that country leaders, experts and environmental campaigners come together to work on the biggest challenge the world faces today.

Tasks

Task 1

Choose the best answer.

- The UN aims to limit global temperature rise to _____.
a. 1°C b. 1.5°C c. 2.5°C
- The conference in Baku, Azerbaijan, is the _____ UN Climate Change Conference.
a. 19th b. 25th c. 29th
- 'COP' stands for _____.
a. Conference of the Parties b. Climate Organisation Presidency c. Convention on Pollution
- The Paris Agreement was adopted in _____.
a. 2015 b. 2019 c. 2022
- The progress made towards meeting the targets agreed in the Paris Agreement is _____.
a. better than expected b. more or less as leaders agreed c. not good enough
- The 2024 conference aims to _____.
a. increase global production of gas, coal and oil b. increase finance and support developing countries c. provide electric cars for everyone at the conference

Task 2

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

CO ₂ emissions	ambitious	finance
change	targets	summit

Climate poses a threat to human beings and all other forms of life on Earth. World leaders meet at a yearly UN to discuss how to limit global warming. With the Paris Agreement, countries promised to reduce their However, the necessary to limit the worst effects of climate change are not being met. The COP29 conference aims to encourage more targets to cut CO₂ emissions. It also aims to increase to help developing countries reduce emissions and adapt to climate change.

Discussion

What do you think is the most important action to be taken to deal with the climate crisis?