

G20 AGREES ON 1.5 DEGREE CLIMATE CHANGE TARGET

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Degradation - GHGs, Ozone Depletion and Climate Change

G20 countries have agreed on the need to keep global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, in language tougher than the 2015 Paris accords, several sources said Sunday.

Three sources told AFP that diplomats had approved language for a final summit communique going beyond what was agreed six years ago, when the landmark climate deal called for capping global warming at well below 2 degrees, and ideally closer to 1.5 degrees.

The declaration, expected to be released later Sunday, will talk about keeping the 1.5 degrees target "within reach", one source said, without elaborating.

Earlier drafts seen by AFP suggested that G20 countries were going to fall short of a firm pledge on the 1.5 figure, but officials worked through the night to toughen up the language ahead of crucial UN talks on climate starting in Glasgow Sunday.

The Group of 20 major economies emit nearly 80 percent of carbon emissions, and a promise of action on their part would provide a much-needed boost to the make-or-break COP26 summit.

Opening the formal discussions on climate on the second and final day of the Rome summit Sunday, Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi urged counterparts to aim high.

"The decisions we make today will have a direct impact on the success of the Glasgow summit and ultimately on our ability to tackle the climate crisis," he said.

He added: "We need to set long-term goals which are consistent with the objectives of the Paris agreement and make short-term changes to achieve them."

Experts say meeting the 1.5 degree target -- the most ambitious goal in the 2015 Paris climate deal -- means slashing global emissions nearly in half by 2030 and to "net-zero" by 2050.

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