

EDITORIAL

Towards Sustainable Living: From COP21 to COP26 and Beyond

Nasir Shafiq*

Department of Civil Engineering, University Technology PETRONAS, Malaysia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: 11 February 2021

Accepted: 21 February 2022

Published Online: 24 February 2022

The publication of the Brundtland report in 1987 set the new agenda for world business when it presented the universally recognized definition of sustainable development that fulfills the present demands without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs^[1]. Since then, sustainability has been much debated at all forums, and various studies show that we are overstressing our mother planet by stretching the limits of our lifestyle. If the lifestyle does not change, the planet's life will be at the most significant disaster risk. The publication of the Brundtland report brought the word sustainability into the political arena at the world level that, is considered a core pillar in economic development. Every year United Nations host a Climate Change Conference or simply COP. In every COP, the world leaders present the recent progress and the future pledges to meet the UN agenda on sustainability. The COP21 held in Paris 2015 was one of the remarkable

events that had set many KPI for progressing towards sustainable living. The main focus in COP21 was given to two primary issues: temperature rise and funding resources to developing and under-developed nations. The critical temperature limit was recommended to set at 1.5 °C or 2 °C above preindustrial levels. It was also urged that the developed nations award appropriate funding to developing countries potentially vulnerable to sea-level rise and expectedly more severe weather events^[2]. The pledge made for zero net greenhouse gas emissions was targeted during the second half of the 21st century. However, it was reiterated that if the temperature increase is required to be limited to 1.5 °C, zero net emission aspiration should be achieved from 2030 to 2050^[2]. Towards the end of 2021, there were two beliefs about the climate action and the progress on COP21:

- The Paris Agreement is working as it was aspired, doing what it is supposed to do and what it can do as an

*Corresponding Author:

Nasir Shafiq,

Department of Civil Engineering, University Technology PETRONAS, Malaysia;

Email: nasirshafiq@utp.edu.my

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/jaeser.v5i1.4440>

Copyright © 2022 by the author(s). Published by Bilingual Publishing Co. This is an open access article under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>).

international agreement.

• The Paris Agreement agreement alone cannot save us. The global response to climate change is not generating transformation at the pace or scale we need to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

In December 2021, Glasgow was the moment for countries to update their plans to reduce emissions. Unfortunately, the summit was delayed by a year due to the COVID-19 outbreak. It was obtained that the commitments laid out in Paris did not come close to limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees, and the window for achieving this is closing. The most significant takeaway of the COP26 is that the direction of travel is clear when it comes to climate change: achieving net zero emissions by 2050 or sooner. However, the speed, mode, and path of travel are less noticeable.

The five most significant takeaways from COP26 are: for the first time; country commitments brought the world closer to the goal of limiting global warming to well below 2 °C. In addition, methane took center stage, with more than 100 countries signing on to the Global Methane Pledge. Methane is one of the most potent greenhouse gases, and the pledge is to cut methane emissions by 30% by 2030. A broader-than-expected coalition signed on to a commitment to halt global deforestation. References to coal and fossil fuel subsidies made their way into a new Glasgow Climate Pact. The rulebook for voluntary carbon markets was finally established^[3]. Let us hope for the best to fulfill the commitments and pledges made to make our mother planet livable for today and tomorrow.

In modern society, most people spend 90% of their time

in the built environment^[4]. Therefore, people will have higher and higher requirements for the built environment. In addition to sustainable energy conservation and emission reduction, the livability of buildings is also more and more attention. The continuous update of green building materials has brought a better orientation to the building environment. Architects, engineers and construction personnel work together to ensure the quality of the built environment.

Journal of Architectural Environment & Structural Engineering Research, a peerreview and open access journal, provides a good service platform to publish these related study results. Certainly, all topics related to the built environment, structural engineering could be accepted to publish on this journal.

References

- [1] Drolet, J., 2015. Disasters in Social, Cultural and Political Context, *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (Second Edition). pp. 478-484.
- [2] Christopher Rhodes, J., 2016. The 2015 Paris Climate Change Conference: COP21, *Science Progress*. 99(1), 97-104.
- [3] Collaboration – The Paris Rulebook, UN Climate Change Conference UK 2021. (Accessed November 16, 2021).
- [4] Dietz, L., Horve, P.F., Coil, D.A., et al., 2020. 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic: Built environment considerations to reduce transmission. *Msystems*. 5, e00245-20.