



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, December 4, 2022

So, What Happened at *COP27?

(27th Conference of the Parties from around the world on climate change, November 6-20)

“What was perhaps the most important COP since Paris in 2015 led to a **historic breakthrough** - the **creation of a loss and damage fund to support the most vulnerable countries before, during, and after climate-related disasters**. But the conference also saw a **major setback**, as nations stalled on committing to phasing out fossil fuels and reducing emissions, as we need to in order to keep warming under 1.5 degrees Celsius.” (*Climate Reality Project*, 11/22/22) **While 80 countries made statements calling for a transition away from ALL fossil fuels, this was blocked from being included in the final text.**

Al Gore (former US Vice President and founder/president of Climate Reality) opened the summit with this challenge: “We have a credibility problem - all of us. We're talking and we're starting to act, but we're not doing enough. It is a choice to continue this pattern of destructive behavior. We have other choices.”

“One of the major focuses of negotiations was how to turn major financial institutions like the World Bank into powerful engines for progress – not pollution.... **The World Bank has pumped billions into fossil fuel projects poisoning our air and changing our climate**.... Demands for reforming the World Bank and other multilateral development banks seemed to resonate at COP 27, with US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry telling reporters that reform could unlock \$1 trillion in funding for clean energy transition in countries hard hit by climate change.” (*Climate Reality Project*, 11/22/22) [You can take action on this too!](#)

President Biden's recent signing of the Inflation Reduction Act into law which marked the largest investment in U.S. history to fight climate change, putting hundreds of billions of dollars towards “unleashing a new era of clean-energy-powered economic growth” was something to celebrate. However, **a dirty permitting bill**, now being considered in Congress, threatens any hope for this future by silencing community voices and favoring fossil fuel interests. **“This bill would actually fast-track fossil fuel projects and make it difficult for communities to challenge such development in their own backyards.** By changing the permitting process for federal energy projects, the proposal would weaken the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)—a bedrock environmental safeguard ... that requires the government to consider how a project will affect the environment and local communities and gives people who will have to live with the consequences a fair chance to weigh in.” (Emily Denny, *The Wilderness Society*, 11/18/22)

Physicians weigh in: Kimberly Humphrey, MD, MPH, a visiting scholar at the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University, noted “We're still on track to hit about 2.7 degrees of warming, which will be catastrophic for our planet. It would have been wonderful to see more ambition on mitigation.” Tess Wiskel, MD, from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, drew a parallel between treating the climate crisis and treating patients. “We can treat the symptoms,” she said. “But if we're not treating the cause of the disease, we're not doing enough.” (Amanda D'Ambrosio, *MedPage Today*, 11/23/22)

So --- a win for loss and damages but no mention of a phase out of fossil fuels in the final agreement. **Our fight for climate justice continues.**