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By Marcy Franck

November started with great uncertainty, but we're heading into December with progress at COP26, a [bi-partisan infrastructure bill](#) packed with climate goodness, and more reasons to be optimistic than many skeptics expected.

Did COP26 deliver the perfect movie ending, with world leaders singing in unison while promising to change their dirty fossil fuel ways? No. But was it just a lot of [blah blah blah](#), as Greta Thunberg accused them with great vim and vigor? “Well, maybe one blah was justified but three may have been overkill,” [said our former](#) Director Gina McCarthy.

Thank God, because I was one more blah away from totally losing it.

We can't kick back with our umbrella drinks and watch our bright, clean energy future unfold on autopilot. But the world is finally in the same pool, making our way to the bar, and that's a BFD (big fossil deal). Plus, no one is denying there is a pool, which is equal parts eye roll and major win.

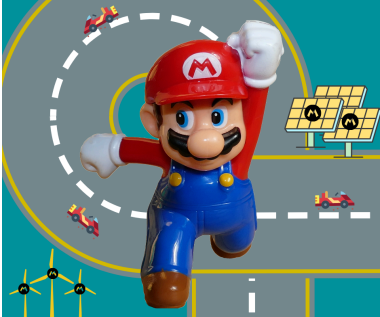
In this issue we're highlighting this month's top three announcements poised to improve health, and they have to do with methane, health care, and deforestation.

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COP26 GAVE US TREMENDOUS MOMENTUM

Like we just got a speed boost in Mario Kart.

We still have a long way to go but we're heading in the right direction:



- **The Global Methane Pledge bought us time** to address carbon pollution.
- **Countries will strengthen commitments** in one year, instead of the usual five.
- **COP26 finally framed** climate change as a [public health issue](#).
- **Ten years ago** we were on track for temps to rise 4°C - 6°C, but after COP26, 1.5°C is still alive. It will take a *lot* of work to get there, but [it's not dead yet!](#) Half the world's economies are already in line with it.

What were the most important takeaways from COP26? We summed it up [here](#) and [here](#).

METHANE IS HAVING A MOMENT

November released a blast of good news and boy did it feel good.

The **Global Methane Pledge**, signed by 105 world leaders, puts the world on track to decrease methane emissions 30% by 2030, passing a wind of change we can't ignore.

The **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency** proposed [the most aggressive rules on methane ever](#), the **Department of the Interior** will fix leaks in 3 million miles of pipelines, and the **Department of Agriculture** will cut methane across the food chain.

This BFD is a whole can of beans:



- **Methane is up to 80x more powerful** at trapping heat and is responsible for half of global warming.
- **The pledge** could cut temps by 0.2°C.
- **We'll see immediate** health benefits near oil and gas sites.
- **Success is easy to track** with satellite surveillance, and philanthropies pledged \$300-\$400 million to help.
- **Accountability will come** from tracking data, then naming and shaming players not living up to their pledge.

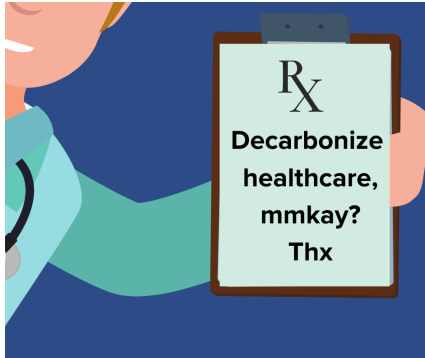
Dive deeper: Our advisory board member Jeff Nesbit talks more about this silent but deadly gas, and how to [keep countries accountable](#).

HEALTH IS IN THE CONVERSATION LIKE NEVER BEFORE

Just what the doctor ordered.

Fifty-one countries will lower the carbon emissions from their healthcare sector, with 14 promising net-zero by 2050. **The U.S. committed** to reducing emissions at federal health facilities, and will provide incentives to private facilities.

This BFD is nothing to sneeze at:



- **Health care is responsible** for 5% of global emissions.
- **Climate change is making us sick**, yet the mission of health care is to do no harm.
- **Since the UK committed to net-zero** earlier this year, they've reduced health care emissions equivalent to 1.7 million flights between London and New York.

Probe Deeper: Our Climate MD Leader Dr. Renee Salas on [why the pledge is a big deal](#).

A TREE-TY ON DEFORESTATION

With tree-mendous impact.

Over 100 countries—representing over 85% of the world's forests—committed to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030, breaking that grass ceiling for the first time. **The Biden administration** pledged a "whole of government approach" and vowed to work with Congress to join the world's \$19 billion pledge for forest protection.

Is this a BFD? You better be-leaf it:



- **One-third of global CO2** released from burning fossil fuels is absorbed by forests every year
- **Preventing deforestation** also prevents pandemics.
- **Over 30 banks** promised to end financing activities linked to deforestation.
- **\$1.7 billion to strengthen** Indigenous People's land rights and conservation efforts.

WE STILL HAVE SO MUCH WORK TO DO

Chop chop, world leaders! Chop chop!



We need to invest much more in developing countries to help them adapt and prepare for climate change. We have to stop financing fossil fuel projects and build clean energy infrastructure from the bottom up. “We don’t want to keep retrofitting our way into the future. We don’t have time for that.” [Learn more from Gina McCarthy.](#)

The U.S. needs to keep building credibility to inspire bigger world-wide commitments, which is why the recently passed Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal, packed with [climate-focused initiatives](#), and the \$555 billion in climate investments in the [Build Back Better Act](#), which could pass next month, are critical on the world stage, not just at home.

THE CLIMATE OPTIMIST IS TAKING A LONG WINTER'S NAP

With visions of wind turbines dancing in our head.

This is the last newsletter of the year, but we'll be back with glorious puns and irreverent takes on climate change in January! All of us at Team C-CHANGE wish you a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season—and let’s keep our eyes on the Build Back Better prize in December.

STAY CONNECTED

