

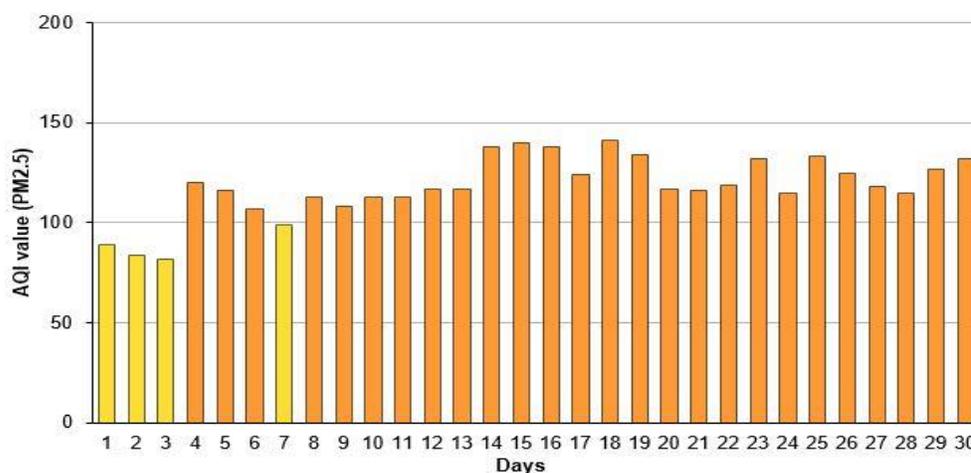
Our Concern



E-Newsletter November 2022

Our Concern, a monthly e-newsletter, is a compilation of news and views from local, and international, media coverage as an attempt to keep our readers abreast on the recent happenings on clean air, energy, and urban mobility and climate change issues.

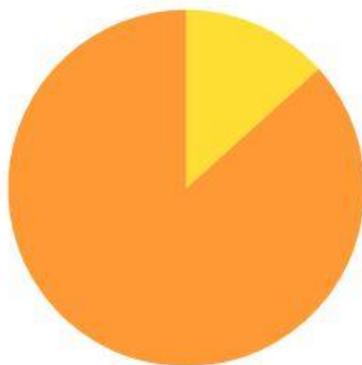
Kathmandu Valley Air Quality overview (PM 2.5)



from: <https://aqicn.org/city/nepal/kathmandu/us-embassy/>

Data retrieved

■ Moderate ■ Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups



- None of the days in November was satisfactory with AQI values from 0 to 50.
- There were 4 days where AQI values reach 51 to 100. During such period, air quality is acceptable; however, there may be a moderate health concern for people sensitive to air pollution. Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.
- Most days i.e. 26 days were unhealthy for sensitive group with AQI values reaching 101 to 150. Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion during such period.

News and Views

End of rainy season, stubble burning in India worsens Kathmandu air

Since the Diwali festival ended, the air quality in New Delhi has drastically deteriorated, resulting in an increase in air pollution levels by more than 20 percent compared to the level year ago. Also, farmers in Indian states of Punjab and Haryana have started burning the stubbles in the fields, polluting the air, which is transported to neighboring states and Nepal by winds. Experts said the polluted air has already started entering the country from the west. Authorities in the capital city of India have suspended construction and demolition activities to combat worsening air quality. But Nepali officials, according to experts, have not taken the pollution seriously or worked out ways to tackle it.

Pollution in Kathmandu air has risen with the PM2.5 level reaching 137 on Wednesday from Tuesday's 129, according to IQAir. With this, hospitals report rising cases of respiratory illnesses and experts blamed the worsening air quality of Kathmandu Valley as the chief culprit behind a sharp increase in respiratory problems

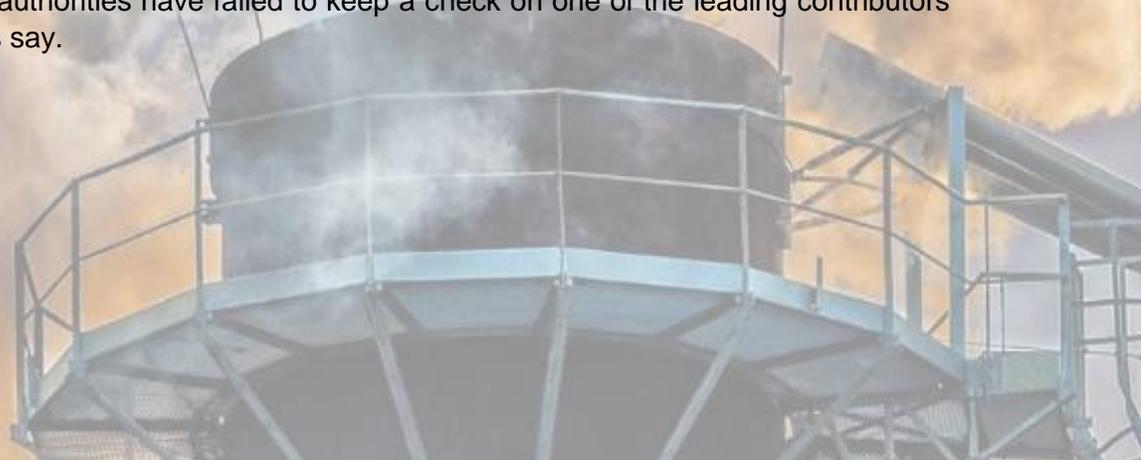
Published on: 3rd November 2022

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/climate-environment/2022/11/03/end-of-rainy-season-stubble-burning-in-india-worsen-kathmandu-air>

Banning is not enough in stopping open waste burning

Air pollution worsens in Kathmandu valley with the onset of winter every year and PM 2.5 in the valley exceeds the standard set by the World Health Organization by several times. Kathmandu even makes headlines as one of the world's most polluted cities. Burning of waste in the open contributes significantly to the increased PM 2.5 level, which is hazardous to health as particles so small can be easily inhaled even while wearing masks. Kathmandu Metropolitan City, in a bid to decrease air pollution and improve public health, has issued a notice a few weeks ago, prohibiting open waste burning in its jurisdiction while asking people not to burn waste in the open.

However, incidents of waste burning are increasingly being reported in the Valley of late and its air quality index is deteriorating by the day. The rise in open waste burning incidents across the Valley shows that the authorities have failed to keep a check on one of the leading contributors to air pollution, experts say.



Published on: 13th November 2022, 24th November 2022

Source: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/kmc-bans-open-burning-of-waste>

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/climate-environment/2022/11/24/ban-doesn-t-stop-waste-burning-in-open-in-valley>

Birendranagar plagued by waste mismanagement

A landfill site is under construction in the community forest area for Birendranagar. In the absence of a proper landfill site, the garbage generated by the municipality finds its way to Tarebhir where the garbage is left unmanaged. Environmental pollution has affected the quality of life of Birendranagar residents ever since the Birendranagar municipality started dumping garbage in Tarebhir in the fiscal year 2016-17. It is not only the human population that is at the receiving end of unmanaged garbage disposal but also the forest and wildlife in the area, says Padma Thapa, chairman of the community forest.

'The environmental pollution caused by the garbage disposal at Tarebhir has robbed us of clean air, roads, and even our water supply. Children and the elderly are at risk of health hazards caused by unchecked pollution', said Khad Magar, a resident of Tarebhir

Published on: 8th November 2022

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/karnali-province/2022/11/08/birendranagar-plagued-by-waste-mismanagement>

Delhi shuts primary schools as air quality deteriorates

New Delhi is a city of about 20 million and the world's most polluted capital. It is wrapped in smog every winter as cold, heavy air traps construction dust, vehicle emissions, and smoke from burning of crop residues in the neighboring states of Haryana and Punjab ahead of the new crop season.

As the capital continued to be engulfed by high levels of air pollution, primary schools in India's New Delhi will be shut from 5th November and restrictions on road traffic will be considered. Several residents complained of discomfort in breathing and irritation in the eyes, nose, and throat as the air quality index breached the "severe" and "hazardous" category in most monitoring stations, according to data from the Central Pollution Control Board.

Published on: 3rd November 2022

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/world/2022/11/04/delhi-shuts-primary-schools-as-air-quality-deteriorates>

'Nepal can play key role in clean energy transition'

Nepal is moving on the path of transition to electric energy from its dependence on fossil fuels at a relatively fast pace. Nepal produces 2,200 megawatts of power from these sources at present while power plants with the capacity of generating total of 5,000 megawatts are under construction. This clean energy can reduce carbon dioxide emissions resulting from the energy sector in Nepal down to 8.6 million metric tonnes by 2,030 and to 3,500 million metric tonnes by 2045. With significant use of clean energy, Nepal will be reducing the amount of domestic emission of greenhouse gases in the South Asia region as well.

Last year at COP26, the Government of Nepal announced its target of net-zero carbon emission by 2045. Nepal can achieve its long-term strategy for net-zero emission goal only if there is a major shift in energy use from traditional biomass and imported fossil fuel to clean energy sources because the energy sector is the largest contributor to Nepal's total carbon dioxide (CO₂) emission accounting for 54 percent of the total emission. Besides domestic emission reduction, Nepal can offset GHG emissions in the South Asian region by exporting its significant clean electricity generation.

Published on: 15th November 2022

Source: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/nepal-can-play-key-role-in-clean-energy-transition>

Climate change may hurt Nepal's remittance earnings

Young Nepalis began looking beyond the country's borders after promising sectors like agriculture and tourism faltered. Over the years, remittance inflow turned into a river, becoming a lifeline for Nepal's ailing economy. The labour permits in the last fiscal year were the second-highest number in history, sending home more than Rs1 trillion. Temporary labour out-migration from Nepal will continue for generations

The World Bank Group's Country Climate and Development Reports released on Thursday said the impact of climate change may severely impact Nepal's remittance earnings in the upcoming future. These are internal factors induced by climate change. The rising temperature resulting from climate change in many labor-hosting countries is another formidable challenge that Nepal will face sooner or later.

The potential impacts of rising temperatures in the Gulf and the Middle East may pose challenges for Nepalis to work there in the future. As the temperature goes up, the consequences of heat, obviously, will be big.

Published on: 4th November 2022

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/money/2022/11/04/climate-change-may-hurt-nepal-s-remittance-earnings-report-says>

Climate shocks add risks to Nepal's power projects

Nepal has seen increased and erratic incidents of flooding and landslides in recent years, which many experts blame on climate change. Besides frequent and intense floods and landslides, the country is also facing the risk of GLOFs. Hydropower assets face risks due to erratic precipitation, glacial melting, and high rates of runoff and erosion.

The country's hydropower projects face the risk of massive damage as many of them are run-of-the-river and the infrastructure has been built in hilly areas that are prone to landslides. The country is also seeing untimely rainfalls, which are also damaging the power infrastructure including hydropower and transmission lines. "The hydropower plants that are located within 50-100 km downstream of potential glacial lakes are expected to be more affected by potential GLOF events," a report titled 'Vulnerability and Risk Assessment and Identifying Adaptation Options' released by the Ministry of Forest and Environment in October last year, states.

Published on: 7th November 2022

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/climate-environment/2022/11/07/climate-shocks-add-risks-to-nepal-s-power-projects>

COP HIGHLIGHTS

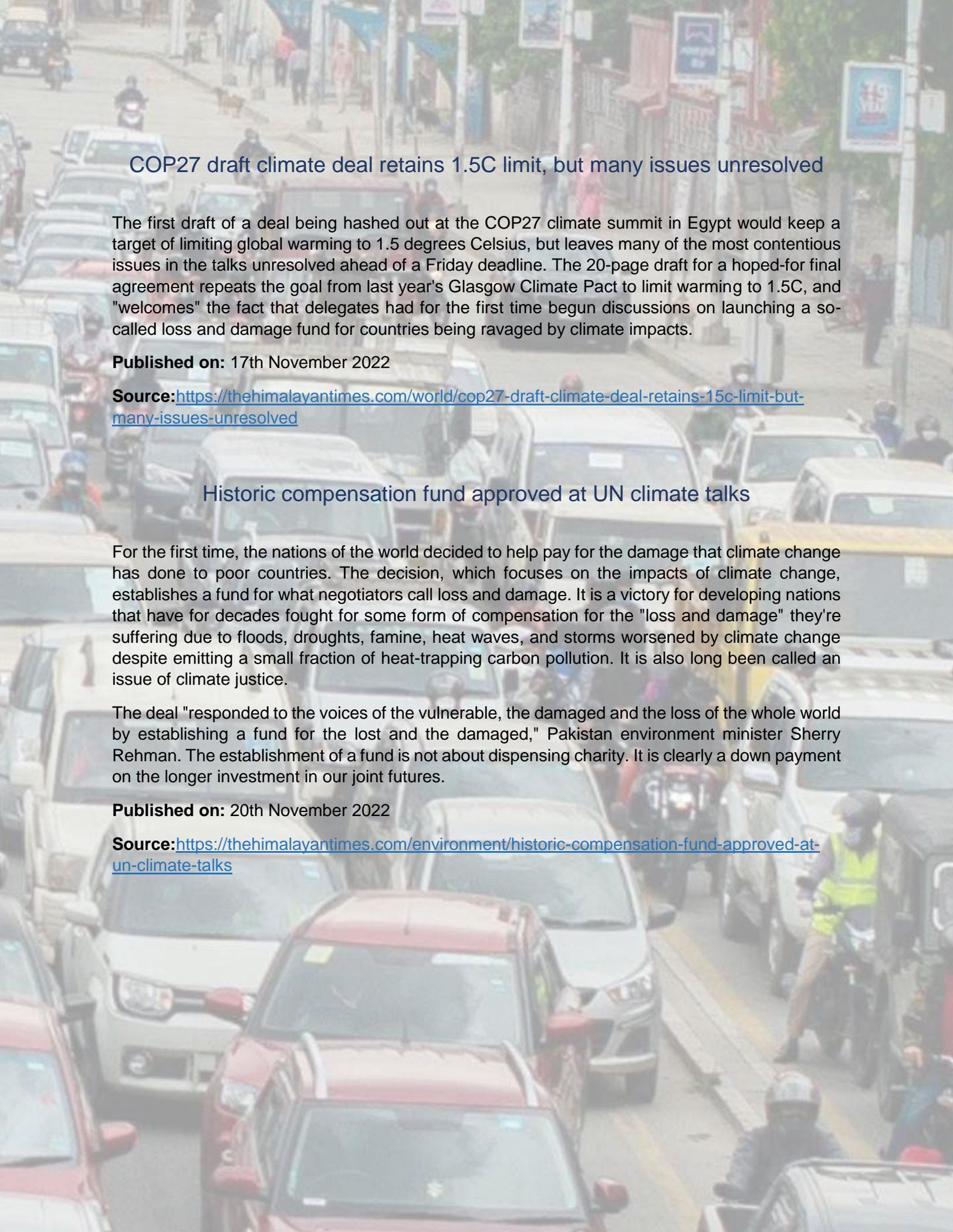
At COP27, climate change framed as battle for survival

World leaders and diplomats framed the fight against global warming as a battle for human survival during opening speeches at the COP27 climate summit in Egypt, with the head of the United Nations declaring a lack of progress so far had the world speeding down a "highway to hell".

Land war in Europe, deteriorating diplomatic ties between top emitters the United States and China, rampant inflation, and tight energy supplies threaten to distract countries further away from combating climate change, Guterres said, threatening to derail the transition to clean energy. "Humanity has a choice: cooperate or perish," U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told delegates, urging them to accelerate the transition from fossil fuels and speed funding to poorer countries struggling under climate impacts that have already occurred. The World Trade Organization, meanwhile, said in a report published on Monday that it should tackle trade barriers for low-carbon industries to address the role of global trade in driving climate change.

Published on: 8th November 2022

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/world/2022/11/08/at-cop27-climate-change-framed-as-battle-for-survival>



COP27 draft climate deal retains 1.5C limit, but many issues unresolved

The first draft of a deal being hashed out at the COP27 climate summit in Egypt would keep a target of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, but leaves many of the most contentious issues in the talks unresolved ahead of a Friday deadline. The 20-page draft for a hoped-for final agreement repeats the goal from last year's Glasgow Climate Pact to limit warming to 1.5C, and "welcomes" the fact that delegates had for the first time begun discussions on launching a so-called loss and damage fund for countries being ravaged by climate impacts.

Published on: 17th November 2022

Source: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/world/cop27-draft-climate-deal-retains-15c-limit-but-many-issues-unresolved>

Historic compensation fund approved at UN climate talks

For the first time, the nations of the world decided to help pay for the damage that climate change has done to poor countries. The decision, which focuses on the impacts of climate change, establishes a fund for what negotiators call loss and damage. It is a victory for developing nations that have for decades fought for some form of compensation for the "loss and damage" they're suffering due to floods, droughts, famine, heat waves, and storms worsened by climate change despite emitting a small fraction of heat-trapping carbon pollution. It is also long been called an issue of climate justice.

The deal "responded to the voices of the vulnerable, the damaged and the loss of the whole world by establishing a fund for the lost and the damaged," Pakistan environment minister Sherry Rehman. The establishment of a fund is not about dispensing charity. It is clearly a down payment on the longer investment in our joint futures.

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Source: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/environment/historic-compensation-fund-approved-at-un-climate-talks>

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