

# Draft COP28 text omits phase-out of fossil fuels angering some Pacific leaders

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Some delegates have been left shocked at the COP28 climate summit by the draft text.

*(Reuters: Thaier Al Sudani)*

Attempts to forge an historic deal to phase out fossil fuels at this year's UN climate talks are hanging by a thread after a draft agreement dropped references to them.

Leaders from countries in favour of a phase-out, including Australia's Pacific neighbours, were left stunned when the draft text for COP28 omitted any mention of fossil fuels.

There had been suggestions a deal was within reach amid efforts by a large bloc of countries to negotiate a breakthrough.

## **Key points:**

- Draft resolution for COP28 drops references to fossil fuels
- Samoan minister says his country "will not sign our death certificates"

But a draft document released following days of intense negotiations stopped short of that ambition.

Rather, it set out a plan for "reducing both the consumption and production of fossil fuels".

- Summit organisers praise draft, encourage 'flexibility' from delegates



ypriya Kangujam, an Indigenous climate activist from India, holds a banner calling for climate action.  
(Reuters: Thomas Mukoya)

The document said such a reduction should be done in a "just, orderly and equitable manner so as to achieve net zero (carbon emission) by, before, or around 2050 in keeping with the science".

It also called for action to "accelerate efforts globally towards net zero emissions energy systems, using zero and low carbon fuels well before or by around mid-century".

If agreed by the almost 200 countries involved in the summit, the text would nevertheless be the first time a COP text referred to fossil fuels in such an explicit way.

At a press conference in the wake of the release, summit president Sultan al-Jaber was hailing the draft as a significant strengthening of the global drive to cut emissions.

Dr al-Jaber called on delegates to show "even more flexibility" as they entered the final days and hours of negotiations while acknowledging that "gaps" remain on many issues between countries.

However, he insisted progress was being made.

"The world is watching," Dr al-Jaber said.

"Let's not rest until we get this done.

"Yes, we have made progress but we still have a lot to do.

"You know I want you to deliver the highest ambition on all items including on fossil fuel language."

## 'We will not sign our death certificates'

Despite the upbeat tone, leaders of countries pushing for a phase-out were deeply unhappy about the draft text released overnight.

Cedric Schuster, the Minister for Natural Resources and Environment in the Pacific Island nation of Samoa, was damning.



eolesulusulu Cedric Schuster, Samoa environment minister, speaks during a COP28 session. (AP: Kamran Jebreili)

He said the draft text went nowhere near far enough and would risk undermining efforts to limit temperature rises to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

As a consequence, he said small island states like his own would be imperilled.

"If we do not have strong mitigation outcomes at this COP then this will be the COP where 1.5C would have died," Mr Schuster said.

"We will not sign our death certificates.

"We cannot sign on to text that does not have a strong commitment on phasing out fossil fuels.

"We have been asked throughout this process, what is at stake if these negotiations don't return a strong outcome that keeps 1.5C alive?

"How can you not understand it is our very survival that is at stake."

"This is why in every room our negotiators have been pushing tirelessly for decisions that align with staying under 1.5C of warming.

"That is why if parties continue to oppose the phase out of fossil fuels and fossil fuel subsidies they must stop and question their own commitment to this process."