



3 December 2018 - UN Secretary-General António Guterres warns that the majority of countries most responsible for greenhouse gas emissions are behind in their efforts to meet their Paris pledges.

In a speech to kick-off the two-week 24th conference of the parties of the United Nations Climate Change Convention ([UNFCCC](#)) in Katowice, Poland, the UN Secretary-General painted a bleak picture.

“This meeting is the most important gathering on climate change since the Paris Agreement was signed,” Mr. Guterres said. “It is hard to overstate the urgency of our situation. Even as we witness devastating climate impacts causing havoc across the world, we are still not doing enough. The 20 warmest years on record have been in the past 22 years, with the top four in the past four years. The concentration of carbon dioxide is the highest it has been in 3 million years. Emissions are now growing again.”

Guterres said that while the challenges are enormous, the benefits of climate action are also extremely important. He says that the world had not yet capitalized on the enormous social,

economic and environmental opportunities of climate action.

“Emissions must decline by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and be net zero by 2050. Renewable energy will need to supply half to two-thirds of the world’s primary energy by 2050 with a corresponding reduction in fossil fuels.”

Governments and investors, Mr. Guterres says, need to bet on the green economy, not the grey.

“Climate action is not just the right thing to do – it makes social and economic sense.

Meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement would reduce air pollution – saving more than a million lives each year by 2030, according to the World Health Organization.

According to the recent New Climate Economy report, ambitious climate action could yield 65 million jobs and a direct economic gain of \$26 trillion US dollars compared to business as usual over the next 12 years.

We are seeing early signs of this economic transformation, but we are nowhere near where we need to be,” Mr. Guterres said.

The aim of the so-called COP24 conference is to define how the 2015 Paris Agreement will be implemented and moved forward.

Under the agreement, all countries have committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to limit the global average rise in temperature to well below 2°C, and as close as possible to 1.5°C.

