

# November/December 2021

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Global Futures Laboratory™  
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## Global Futures: **Now**



***"To be is to do."***  
**Immanuel Kant**

The 26<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), more commonly known as COP26, has concluded and the world has been presented with another set of accords that do not measure up to address the climate crisis that human activities have thrust upon our planet. This is not to say that what was achieved at Glasgow is insignificant. There were landmark pledges and agreements to drastically reduce deforestation and methane emissions. And, for the first time ever, global

leaders agreed to target fossil fuel emissions as part of the so-called Glasgow Climate Pact, despite a last-ditch appeal from the delegates from India and China to shift wording regarding coal-based power from “phase out” to “phase down.”

Year after year, it is this kind of language from countries of influence that hedge their commitments that hinders strong policy action. At the same time, emerging nations grapple with the immediate effects at the front lines of the impact of global warming. This is why nationally determined contributions (NDCs) for cutting emissions presently have our planet on course for a global temperature increase of 2.4C, almost a full degree Celsius (approximately 2 degrees Fahrenheit) beyond the targeted level of 1.5C by 2030 that was established at the 2015 COP at Paris. And we must keep in mind that 2 degrees Celsius warming will be the ‘death sentence’ for small island nations such as Barbados, according to its Prime Minister, Mia Mottley.

So, are we sunk? The answer is no – or better, not yet. There are statements of hope [such as that from COP26 President Alok Sharma](#) who said that delegations could say “with credibility” that they have kept 1.5 degrees within reach. “But its pulse is weak. And it will only survive if we keep our promises. If we translate commitments into rapid action. If we deliver on the expectations set out in this Glasgow Climate Pact to increase ambition to 2030 and beyond. And if we close the vast gap that remains, as we must,” he told delegates. At the same time the top negotiator from New Zealand concluded, “The text represents the ‘least worst’ outcome.” In the end, it is up to us to take the decisions that will keep alive the window of 1.5 to less than 2 degrees Celsius warming.

From the perspective of the Global Futures Laboratory, we remain committed and active in keeping the space of hope not merely alive, but strong. Directly related to COP26 and through our engagement as the secretariat of The Earth League, we actively engaged in the publication of the [2021 10 New Insights in Climate Science](#), published in partnership with Future Earth and World Climate Research Programme. This annual report, compiled by a group of leading climate scientists around the globe, summarizes ten vital scientific insights that have proven to be a valued resource for policy and society at large to better understand the state of and risks to our current climate situation. Its publication in concert with the annual COP negotiations is not by accident.

On additional fronts of engagement beyond COP, [a group of seven College of Global Futures students traveled to Geneva to participate in the International Leadership Association’s 23rd Global Conference](#) where they were able to engage with and learn from global dignitaries including Martin Chungong, secretary general for the Inter-Parliamentary

Union. On Nov. 1-2, we hosted the Public Interest Technology University Network's annual convening that featured a plenary panel with Laura Helmuth, editor-in-chief of Scientific America, Jasmine Sanders, executive director of Our Climate and Janene Yazzie, director of Sixth World Solutions.

Overall, we have hope because as we saw in Glasgow these past few weeks, the public demand for action is tremendous, and these calls are being led by those who will become our leaders sooner than we know. We are driven by our efforts here at ASU and by our partners and colleagues around the world who are addressing climate challenges and developing applications and solutions right now, not waiting for some policy mandate to come down. We, the scientists, artists, activists, and citizens all sit in the collective "driver seat" to shape the future we want.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter", with a stylized, flowing script.

## News

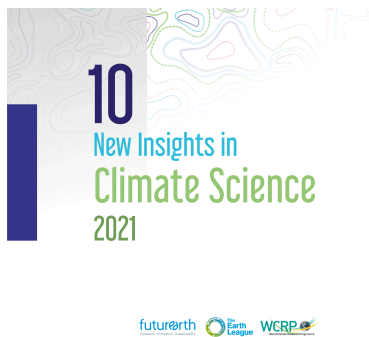


## ASU Global Futures welcomes Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences as new partner to expand oceans and climate research

In a major development in the bid to deepen the understanding of the role that the ocean plays in climate science, ASU has established a partnership with the [Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences](#) (BIOS), one of the longest-serving research institutes dedicated to studying ocean processes in the Western Hemisphere.

[Read more](#)

**2021 New Insights in Climate Science show maximum of 1.5°C**



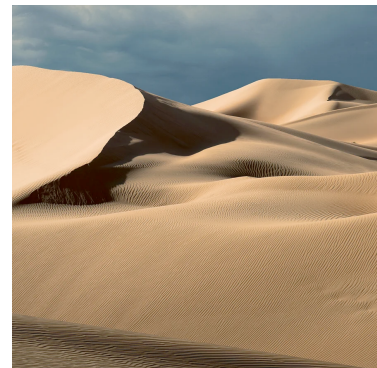
## global temperature warming above pre-industrial levels is still possible

"To put it simply, the state of the planet is broken," as United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres said in the 2021 State of the Planet address. To address this and help provide guiderails for the planet's scientists and policy makers, The Earth League, along with its partners at Future Earth and the World Climate Research Programme have released the 2021 10 New Insights in Climate Science.

[Learn more](#)

## Hit movie "Dune" sets scene for Earth's drylands. But is it accurate?

Global Futures Scientists Osvaldo Sala, Celina Osuna and Ed Finn, in a feature in Scientific American, discuss what our planet's global drylands actually are and how Hollywood portrayals, such as in the recent film by Denis Villeneuve, get it right and wrong.



[Read more](#)

## Kathleen Vogel co-authors Issues article on the state of biosecurity

The interim director for the School for the Future of Innovation in Society joins colleagues to explore how the biosecurity threats of today are being managed





through the now 20-year old lens of the Patriot Act.

[Read more](#)

## **\$4.2M NSF grant will advance innovation in computational modeling for sustainability**

“By integrating innovative technology with training and incentives to engage in best-practice standards, this project will stimulate innovation and diversity in modeling science,” says Michael Barton, project PI. The funding will develop new cyberinfrastructure and technology to advance the next generation of human-Earth systems modeling, produce online educational materials that expand knowledge and access to computational modeling technology, and expand its existing online library.



[Read more](#)

**Amanda Ellis featured on The McKay Interview, discusses international leadership and climate policy**



The former ambassador to the United Nations for New Zealand who now leads the networks and partnerships initiatives for the Global Futures Laboratory spoke with McKay on the eve of two international leadership and climate conferences in Europe.

[Listen](#)

## Upcoming events

### College of Global Futures Student Showcase

You are cordially invited to join the Fall semester's virtual Student Showcase, featuring undergraduate and graduate research, including final projects, theses and dissertations. The Showcase includes students from the School for the Future of Innovation in Society, the School of Sustainability and the School for Complex Adaptive Systems.

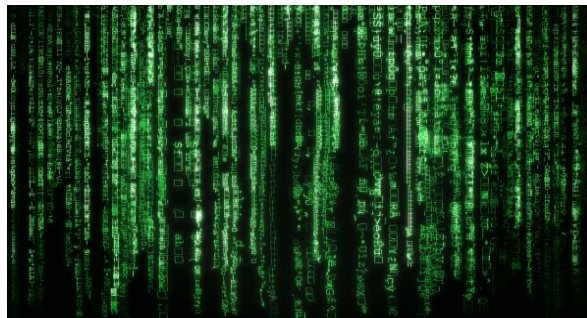
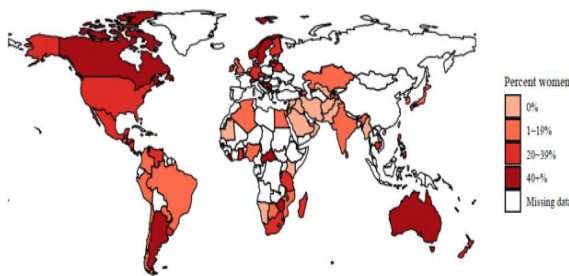


**Friday, Dec. 3, 2021**

**3-5 p.m. MST**

**Zoom**

[Register now](#)



## Reimagining the Judiciary: Women's Representation on High Courts Worldwide

## ASU Global Futures presents "The Matrix": screening and discussion

Join four renowned political scientists for the launch of their book, "[Reimagining the Judiciary](#)." This work examines the factors that facilitate the inclusion of women on high courts, while recognizing that many courts have a long way to go before reaching gender parity.

**Friday, Dec. 3**  
**10-11 a.m. MST**  
**Zoom**

**Register now**

Are we all living in a Matrix-like simulation? Could we one day develop the technology to make "The Matrix" real? Come watch the groundbreaking original film "The Matrix," followed by a wide-ranging discussion on whether we're living in a simulation. Discussion facilitated by faculty members Diana Bowman and Andrew Maynard and student and author Rizwan Virk.

**Friday, Dec. 10**  
**6-9 p.m. MST**  
**The Majestic Theater in Tempe**

**Register now**