Compromises at COP26 – and an urgent call to foster energy innovation

The 26th Conference of the Parties to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change – and what must come next to scale cleantech on time
State leaders have agreed on several important steps — but efforts in R&D need to be multiplied

Many remaining challenges are closely related to developing and scaling technologies

**Curbing methane emissions** is critical and can partially be achieved at negative cost. If blue hydrogen is to be a credible medium-term solution instead of a dangerous distraction, methane leak rates must be reduced to almost zero.

**Phasing out coal** is vital. Yet developing countries’ grids are not yet able to deal with intermittent renewables. Cost-effective long-term storage is urgently needed to create a convincing price incentive of clean energy over coal.

**Expert models** have estimated the effect of the agreed upon methane and coal policies. Assuming they will be fully implemented and complied with, and that remaining countries sign on, their effect would only amount to a -0.4C reduction from the current estimate of +2.7C by 2100.

Sources: IEA, CATF, Nature, Carbon Brief, Photo: CC, Kimon Berlin
Our own events focused on the most urgently needed cleantech R&D

- Upon invitation of UN Climate Change, FCA co-hosted two events at the Global Innovation Hub in collaboration with our partners from UNIDO.
- Summing up our work during the past two years, we briefed decisionmakers on those cleantech areas that need to be accelerated immediately.
- Drawing upon results from the UNIDO Global Call 2021, FCA showcased innovative technical solutions with the potential to contribute significantly to the fight against climate change.
What we should prioritize beyond COP26: R&D efforts with leverage

- Many problems in hard-to-abate sectors such as hydrogen, cement, and carbon removal remain unsolved. They urgently need a massive, comprehensive, well-designed R&D effort to be available in time.

- Ensuring inexpensive clean solutions are available to developing economies would provide strong incentives to phase out polluting technologies like coal.

- One of the biggest levers developed countries have is to fund R&D for new solutions that can be applied both across developing countries as well as emerging economies.