

The USA and China avoid all specifics on decarbonisation

The world's two largest producers of CO2 met to discuss what to do about many governments backing net zero. Both governments now believe that man made carbon dioxide is the world's most pressing problem. Both now commit their countries to reach net zero, the USA by the fashionable 2050 and China by the more laid back 2060. Both commitments mean little and are cheap to promise.

This year the EU, the U.K. and other global hawks on the topic are out to pin countries down to meaningful targets for reducing CO2 by 2025 and or 2030. These are more meaningful as they require immediate actions to wean people and business off petrol and diesel vehicles, get them out of fossil fuel planes, change their coal oil and gas heating and change their diets away from meat and dairy. The USA has promised a credible plan by November for COP 26, the big UN conference for pledges. China is not yet ready to commit, still reserving the right to mine more coal, burn more fossil fuel and expand her industrial reach further for a few more years.

It is most important that the U.K. does not sign up to a one sided deal which leaves countries free to take our business away by continuing with the cheaper fossil fuel option. Take steel for example . How does it help if we close down all our blast furnaces and fossil fuel based capacity, only to import steel from countries that do not do the same?