

The hopes of Cop26, China circles Taiwan and Elton's hip talk

We have just a decade left to prevent catastrophic heating, so what happens over the next two weeks at Cop26 in Glasgow is of existential importance to us and to every creature on Earth. As world leaders and, more crucially, their teams of negotiators prepare for the UN summit, our extended big story looks at what is at stake if determined action isn't taken to make good on the promises of the Paris climate agreement. Greta Thunberg calls for honesty and clear leadership from politicians about what is at stake, while we also feature young activists from climate change frontlines and find out how they are fighting for their future. And a US report warns of the political and economic instability global heating will bring in its wake.

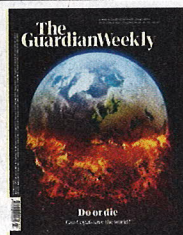
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China's sabre-rattling over President Xi Jinping's desire to bring Taiwan back under Beijing's control has ratcheted up over the past month, but Helen Davidson finds a quiet and defiant calm on the streets of Taipei where people have long been used to living with the threat of invasion and feel they have the measure of their dominant neighbour.

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Elton John's ebullience and continued enthusiasm for new music opens our Culture section. He talks about his new album, *The Lockdown Sessions*, and collaborations with Dua Lipa and Lil Nas X, as well as how overcoming the demons that dogged his early career now helps him take on an elder statesman role for younger musicians.

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On the cover

With Earth facing potentially calamitous temperature rises in coming years, Cop26 needs world leaders to finally take the threat seriously. As the Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg writes this week: "The clock is ticking. Summits keep happening. Emissions keep growing. Who will that leader be?"

CGI illustration/Peter Crowther/Debut Art



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