Twitter Thread by Ryan Heath

Ryan Heath
@PoliticoRyan

THREAD: What the world wants from John Kerry in 2021

Re-joining the #ParisAgreement isn't enough, say 25 climate ministers and advocates we interviewed from six continents. Deeds before words: Legislating a tough 2030 U.S. emissions reduction legislation is 1st serious step

2) But the world wants the words too, hoping Kerry will be world's climate cheerleader: convincing reluctant and developing country governments (also with $) to set aggressive climate goals, which many pinpoint as including carbon neutrality by 2050.

3) World's moved on from Obama era. Jacob Werksman (the EU's international climate adviser) warned Obama alums on Biden's team "they can't expect to be treated the same way" as four or eight years ago

4) Net-zero emissions by 2050 — once an activist slogan — is now a guiding framework for policy across the G-7. "It is a totally different political and historical moment right now," Costa Rican minister @AndreaMeza76.

5) @timothydadams, President and CEO of @IIF warned against the U.S. aiming too low at home, creating policy divergence with the rest of the world. He urged the Biden administration to "broadly align with the rapidly evolving global climate policy framework."

6) As a co-founder of @WorldWarZeroOrg, Kerry's well aware of the pressure to repair damage to America's climate reputation, that the world has moved on from the Paris agreement, and that the pressure's only increased since Democrat won control of the Senate Jan. 5

7) The world's big fear: "What is, four or eight years from now, going to stop another Republican president from withdrawing again?" said New Zealand Climate Minister @jamespeshaw

8) "We need Kerry not only to scream that America is back, but to make up for lost time, and to buy back their credibility by going to a front-running position," urged an adviser to Dutch prime minister @markrutte (he's since become caretaker PM).

9) Dem powerbrokers get it. @johnpodesta said he expects the U.S. to make a “down payment” on new climate commitments by March, then real deal June G7 summit. “I don’t think you have any credibility in the international system unless you’re walking the walk at home,” he said.

10) #Canada has its own specific demands: policy alignment on vehicle-emissions standards, which the Trump administration weakened, and regulation of oil and gas sector’s #methane emissions

11) Kerry being member of the National Security Council also gives climate advocates a win: they want #ClimateAction to be a factor in all major policy decisions.

12) Kerry has a unique opportunity: every door is open.
“He’s in a different league,” said @MBeukeboom, the Dutch climate envoy. “He has more tools at his disposal than we do, so we hope that will give him more clout to act.”

13) European officials want climate at the core of a warmer transatlantic relationship, but others such as former Aussie PM @MrKRudd (now head of @AsiaSociety) said Kerry must first sync with China, before moving to a trilateral U.S.- China - EU format to prepare @COP26 goals

14) “If you get the three of them working in concert, then you are representing frankly, the bulk of global emissions,” said Rudd. “Then you bring everyone else along with you.”

NZ's Shaw wants Kerry to lead push to end consensus decision-making in global climate negotiations.

15) But Kerry's life is complicated. @ianbremmer captured a common concern. That Kerry's personal zeal could complicate relationships abroad. “Let’s say you want to do a broader strategic and economic dialogue with the Chinese. How does Kerry fit into that bureaucracy?"

16) In fact, it’s not always clear who Kerry should be talking to in foreign govts: Less than 50 have climate ministers/envoys. But the Kerry role is already shifting that landscape: @AlokSharma_RDG is now 100% @COP26. There's a German @CDU for matching #Brussels + #Berlin envoys

17) ■■ Rich world has failed to deliver the $100bn a year it promised to developing countries for #JustTransition. U.K. is making #climatefinance a focus, but Mohamed Nasr, Africa's climate finance negotiator isn't happy with the U.K. approach.

18) U.N. boss @antonioguterres says only 14%of climate finance goes to the poorest countries, #fail. “The U.S.,” while @rclemencon said world must “must significantly step up engagement on climate justice" i.e. Green Climate Fund + Global Environment Facility

19) Carlos Fuller, chief negotiator for @AOSISChair says it's a matter of survival for many places. Public $ won't be enough said @ndcp_pablo, so development banks key. Kerry's team said ■■

20) U.S. domestic spending can be great too: “Most of the science that we know about climate change comes from U.S. scientists like at @NASA and @NOAA,” Fuller said.

Our full John Kerry story is here: https://t.co/L5O1TATt2p

Big thanks - and a follow recommendation - to my colleagues ➡■ @zcolman @KarlMathiesen @MaKaOro @MauraForrest @america_hdz @jancienski @dailym1