



Chapter six: Transformative action on climate change



Priority actions for the UK Government: Climate



1 Transformative change...

Commit to a ‘transformative change’ approach to reshaping unsustainable systems, addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental pollution together.



2 mitigating & adapting...

Take an integrated approach to adaptation alongside mitigation, bringing resilience funding and support in line with the scale of the UK’s adaptation challenge.



3 to close the emissions gap...

Deliver ambitious action to mitigate UK emissions, closing the gap between current commitments and a plan aligned with 1.5°C, with explicit implementation plans.



4 deliver a just transition...

Work with communities and NGOs on a ‘just transition’ away from fossil fuels which fairly distributes costs and benefits so that no communities are left behind.



5 ...and drive sustainability.

Work with businesses to unlock private finance and drive corporate sustainability that supports a nature-positive future.

“The UK can, and should, return to a leadership role for climate action on the international stage.”

Climate change is an immediate, immense, and inescapable threat to humanity.

Despite the scale of what must be done, we have reason to be optimistic about our ability to face those challenges. Complex connections between people, the economy, and the environment created the threat of climate change, so we can also use them to fight back.

We know what actions are needed: the Climate Change Committee is an invaluable source of expert guidance on the steps and pathways to net zero.

We also know that rapid action will unlock ‘the economic opportunity of the 21st Century’ and will be far more cost-effective than facing the spiralling costs of delay and inaction.

Succeeding in the fight against climate change requires solutions which work with nature, because an integrated approach is the only way to avoid unintended consequences.

An integrated approach can also create better outcomes for people and the economy, because social transformation is achievable alongside environmental transformation.

A just transition towards sustainability can not only protect the UK, it can make it a

better place to live. The UK can, and should, return to a leadership role for climate action on the international stage, particularly following COP30.

Taking transformative action requires us to tackle the big systems of consumption: food, energy, transport, buildings, and the economy. These systems need to be both sustainable and resilient to the effects of climate change.

To succeed, communities and businesses are essential partners in the pursuit of a sustainable society where people and nature thrive.

Box 5. The Climate Action Community

The **Climate Action Community** is focused on championing the work of professionals in the environmental sciences in climate action, promoting the work of experts and evidence around climate change and driving change to ensure adaptation and mitigation measures are accurate, ambitious and achievable.

The Community champions an interdisciplinary systems approach to the interlinked crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

1. Commit to a ‘transformative change’ approach to reshaping unsustainable systems, addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental pollution together.

- i. Make climate a strategic priority across government, ensuring that policy makers understand the connections between climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental pollution, and the social and economic drivers of those crises.
- ii. Embed an approach to decision making that seeks to secure multiple benefits from solutions to climate change, even where it costs more in the short-term to avoid increased costs in the long-term.
- iii. Return the UK to a position of climate leadership ahead of COP30, working with international partners to adapt to climate change and drive global emissions reductions.

This realises the Government’s **vision for Mission-driven Government** in the context of the environment: **“focusing on ambitious, measurable, long-term objectives that provide a driving sense of purpose for the country ... doing government that is more joined up, pushes power out to communities and harnesses new technology.”**

This will deliver the Government’s **manifesto commitment** to **“provide leadership at home so we can influence others to ensure every country plays their part in meeting our collective obligations to future generations.”**

2. Take an integrated approach to climate adaptation alongside climate mitigation, bringing resilience funding and support in line with the scale of the UK's adaptation challenge.

- i. Embed climate resilience across decision making: make adaptation, resilience, and co-benefits explicit considerations during the design, planning, and consenting of new housing and infrastructure. Support resilience for the rest of the world through the **Global Goal on Adaptation**.
- ii. Coordinate nature-based approaches to climate mitigation to maximise the ecosystem services provided. Deliver a consistent approach to Environmental Land Management Schemes, soil health, and the Land Use Framework, informed by scientific insights.
- iii. Integrate oceans and seas into the UK's approach to climate change, recognising the vital role of oceans as carbon sinks and improving resilience for UK coasts, saltmarshes and seas through Ocean Literacy and **Integrated Coastal Zone Management**.

This realises the Government's **manifesto commitment** to “not only ... **tackl[e]** the climate and nature emergencies, but also [adapt] to the changes they will bring to our environment.”

3. Deliver ambitious action to mitigate UK emissions, closing the gap between current commitments and a plan aligned with 1.5°C, with explicit implementation plans.

- i. Close the emissions gap ahead of COP30 to bring the UK in line with a pathway that provides the best chance to limit temperature rises to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, making explicit revisions to the **Net Zero Strategy** and **Carbon Budget Delivery Plan**. Commit to no further delays or reversals of climate commitments.
- ii. Complete the transition to a green energy system by increasing energy storage and grid connectivity, and by removing barriers to community energy generation. Commit to an urgent and complete ‘phase out’ of fossil fuels in the UK.
- iii. Set out delivery plans to reach net zero emissions across the most unsustainable systems, including land management, agriculture and food, the built environment, waste, and transport.
- iv. Clarify and capitalise on the role of local authorities in the net zero transition. Recognise that climate action plans represent ‘Locally Determined Contributions’ as part of the UK’s overall net zero objectives, as **called for by the CCC**.
- v. Take a science-led approach to climate action wherever possible, building stronger links between interdisciplinary climate science and Government departments to fill evidence gaps and identify challenges for delivery.

This will deliver the UK’s legal obligations around net zero and will support the Government’s **ambition in its manifesto** to **“get Britain back on track to meet our climate targets.”**

These actions will support the Government’s mission to **‘make Britain a clean energy superpower’** and its **manifesto commitment** for **“clean energy by 2030.”**

4. Work with communities and NGOs on a ‘just transition’ away from fossil fuels which fairly distributes costs and benefits so that no communities are left behind.

- i. Commit to a just transition towards a sustainable society. Where necessary, provide support and funding to facilitate the transition for those who are unable to afford necessary actions. Learn from case studies such as the [Alberta Just Transition Taskforce](#) and Scotland’s [Just Transition Commission](#).
- ii. Support funding for loss and damage to ensure that the UK’s pledge of £60million for the Loss and Damage Fund is new and additional money, supported by further investment where necessary to deliver a global just transition.
- iii. Where appropriate, co-create climate solutions with delivery organisations and communities, supporting the implementation process and allowing people to pursue their own vision for a sustainable future. Support widespread access to [Carbon Literacy](#) and [climate assemblies](#).

This realises the Government’s [vision in its manifesto](#) that **“this transition presents an opportunity to create good jobs, with no community left behind, and support well-paying jobs in existing and future industries.”**

This would align with the Secretary of State for Energy Security & Net Zero’s [pre-election promise](#) to **“fill the vacuum of leadership” on global climate action.**

5. Work with businesses to unlock private finance and drive corporate sustainability that supports a nature-positive future.

- i. Work with international partners, businesses and NGOs to align taxonomies and definitions for green finance, responsible investments, and net zero commitments, creating a certain and stable market for investment.
- ii. Remove barriers to investment and make the **upfront public investments** needed to attract private capital and grow the market for sustainable innovation.
- iii. Tighten rules around climate accounting, reporting, and certification. Drive compliance with **TCFD** and **TNFD** recommendations through sustainability regulations, reporting frameworks, and guidance on best practice for corporate compliance, aligned from the board room down to the shop floor.
- iv. Work with the environment sector to lead a skills audit for climate-relevant careers, driving professionalism by endorsing competency frameworks, skills strategies, and sector-by-sector transition pathways. Facilitate the development of the deep expertise needed in carbon reporting and climate risk management.

These actions will support the delivery of the Government's **manifesto commitments** to **"make the UK the green finance capital of the world"** and **"shape markets, and use public investment to crowd in private funding ... [using the] Green Prosperity Plan ... in partnership with business through our National Wealth Fund, ... [to] invest in the industries of the future."**

This supports the Government's **manifesto commitment** to **"create 650,000 jobs across the country by 2030"** and applies the Government's proposals for Skills England to the specific needs of climate action.