

Achieving net zero carbon emissions through a whole systems approach

In June 2019, the UK became the first major country to legislate for a net-zero target for carbon emissions by 2050. Government needs to shape policies and regulations to create a market environment that increases consumer and business demand for low-carbon solutions and encourages sustainable private sector investment decisions. Policies across all areas of government interact to influence the transition of the whole economy towards net zero.

In a letter to the Prime Minister sent in January 2020, the Council for Science and Technology (CST) explores how a systems approach might be used to inform government thinking and proposes 9 recommendations focused on 3 areas:

- developing the analytical capability, flow of information, and reporting needed to inform decisions
- maximising the contribution of technology, mobilise financial systems and galvanise international collaboration
- strengthening the institutions, governance frameworks and leadership structures needed across central government to galvanise action to achieve net-zero