

Alok Sharma visits Saudi Arabia to discuss action on climate change

- COP26 President Alok Sharma visits Saudi Arabia to discuss climate action ahead of the vital climate change summit in November
- Mr Sharma set to meet members of Saudi government, business leaders and civil society on ramping up the global transition to net zero by the middle of the century
- The importance of unleashing the development of high growth, high employment green sectors through climate action will be a key focus of the visit

COP26 President-Designate Alok Sharma will travel to Saudi Arabia today to discuss ramping up global action on climate change ahead of the vital UN Climate Change talks in Glasgow this November.

The COP26 President-Designate is set to meet with ministers including the Minister for Energy, HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman and the Minister of Environment, Water and Agriculture Eng. Abdulrahman Al-Fadly. Mr Sharma will also meet with business leaders and civil society to discuss international collaboration on the transition to net zero by the middle of the century.

The UK is keen to build on commitments made during the recent G20 Environmental Ministerial in Naples where ministers agreed to the full implementation of the Paris Agreement.

This included accelerating climate action in the 2020s and submitting ambitious 2030 targets for reducing emissions ahead of COP26, aligned with keeping the 1.5 degree limit temperature increases in reach.

On his visit, Mr Sharma is expected to encourage Saudi Arabia to build on recent progress on climate issues, including the Kingdom's Green Initiative, and projects to support coral reef survival and address land degradation, to chart a path towards a sustainable and inclusive recovery from Covid-19.

COP26 President-Designate Alok Sharma said: "I am delighted to be in Riyadh to build on a strong, modern partnership with Saudi Arabia to address the global threat of climate change.

"The launch of the Saudi Green Initiative and Middle East Green Initiative was an important step as we look to accelerate climate action ahead of COP26 and the UK welcomes Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 for creating a more diverse and sustainable economy.

"Indeed, climate action can pave the way to an exciting vision of our future

that is good for the planet and the economy, as the plans for the green city of Neom and sustainable development for tourism on Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coast show.

"But we must act now to reduce emissions throughout the next ten years and to reach net zero by the middle of the century, allowing us to build a greener, prosperous and more inclusive future and avoid the catastrophic impacts of climate change.

"We look forward to working with Saudi Arabia to deliver on this ahead of COP26, noting our responsibility to young people and to future generations to do so."