

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space 64th session: UK statement on space and sustainable development

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

The United Kingdom is pleased to address the Committee on our activities in the field of 'Space for Sustainable Development' – which feels particularly significant during this pivotal year of climate action, in which the UK is delighted to hold the presidency of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of Parties, in partnership with Italy.

The UK Space Agency's International Partnership Programme – IPP – utilises the UK space sector's capabilities in satellite technology and data services to develop space-enabled solutions in partnership with developing countries which deliver real benefits to people on the ground and, ultimately, make the case for investment in space to policymakers.

Now over five years into its tenure, IPP has a portfolio of 43 projects grant-funded in 47 countries across Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America & Caribbean, two prestigious space awards (including the 2020 Group on Earth Observations' SDG Award for commitments to sustainable development), and is helping nations to achieve their UN Sustainable Development Goals.

IPP projects are achieving sustainable change and some examples of this include:

1. A pioneering dengue fever forecasting system called D-MOSS incorporating Earth observation data, in-situ observations and seasonal climate forecasts, allowing government officials in Vietnam and other South-East Asian countries to better manage outbreaks and improve planning and prevention measures.
2. The RE-SAT project which has developed an energy planning tool in partnership with the Seychelles, enabling them to rely less on expensive fossil fuel electricity generation and more on abundant resources of solar and wind renewables and ultimately reach their target of 15% renewable energy by 2030. This is now being implemented in other Small Island Developing States across the Caribbean and Pacific.
3. A transcontinental forest mapping and monitoring project, called Forests 2020, helped develop a National Map of Forests and Land Use for Ghana. This was launched earlier this year by their National Forestry Commission and will be formally adopted as a national product for the use of climate reporting and zero deforestation supply chains in both the forest sector and for commodity exports.
4. And the Earth and Sea Observation System (EASOS) MarineWatch tool which has helped to identify and map the trajectory of three oil spills, improving the response to and policing of marine pollution – in addition to environmental benefits, clean-up costs saved by early intervention

are estimated to be over £3 million.

There are also many programme-wide impacts which have supported sustainable development and demonstrate the case for investment in space solutions. Specific examples include:

- IPP's forestry projects in partnership with Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Indonesia, Malaysia, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, almost 40 million hectares of forest are already being monitored using Earth observation solutions, while an estimated one million hectares of deforestation has been avoided.
- Over 47,000 farmers have already been directly engaged in IPP to map field boundaries, test decision-support tools and begin implementing agronomic advice as a result of IPP's agriculture projects with Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Zambia, Argentina, Colombia, Mexico and Peru.
- IPP tools from projects in Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Fiji, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Vietnam have been applied to over a dozen natural disaster situations, including volcanic eruptions, typhoons, and even evacuation centres set up to cope with population displacement due to armed conflicts.
- And many lives have been saved by IPP-funded satellite communications tools, which have supported search and rescue operations of small-scale fishing vessels in South Africa and Madagascar and delivered video training to health workers in remote areas of Nigeria, providing life-saving care to pregnant women and their infants.

The full extent of IPP achievements since 2016 will be evaluated at the end of this year and we stand ready to report on this with members of the Committee.

While this all tells a positive story, the Coronavirus pandemic has, of course, impacted global governments' ability to invest in aid initiatives. However, the UK remains a world-leading donor and is keen to maximise the impact of ongoing collaborative work to ensure sustainability, and to explore areas of mutual interest for future partnerships.

The UK's membership of the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters since 2005 also reflects this outlook, and we are proud to be part of this collaborative which has seen over 700 activations since the Millennium. These include activations for natural disasters for which space tools developed through IPP have provided support – including swift provision of maps and analysis reports to partners by the CommonSensing climate resilience project when Cyclone Harold struck Pacific Island nations in April 2020.

IPP is therefore an excellent representation of the UK's mission to be a force for good in the world and we stand ready to explore areas of mutual interest for future partnerships and collaboration.

Finally, we look forward to using the review phases stemming from the Space 2030 Agenda as further opportunities to showcase how international cooperation on this important topic can assist all countries to realise their

SDG targets.

[Her Majesty's Ambassador to Luxembourg visits Guardian Glass plant](#)

World news story

Ambassador Fleur Thomas visited the Guardian Glass Plant in Luxembourg, learning more about the companies' investments and future plans.



On Tuesday 24 August, Ambassador Fleur Thomas visited Guardian Glass in Bascharage. Accompanied by the Trade & Investment Advisor Stefan van Look, the ambassador met with Messrs Boekhoudt, Ries and Gheysen for a guided tour of the plant and to discuss their latest investments in the UK, their production line in Luxembourg and future sustainable investments.

With its international headquarters in Luxembourg, the American company recently invested in a new state-of-the-art furnace in Goole, securing jobs for years to come. This UK plant produces flat, coated and laminated glass products mainly for customers in the UK and Ireland.

With COP26 drawing closer, the ambassador was especially interested in Guardian Glass' commitments to the environment. The Guardian Glass delegation was proud to explain that they are increasingly using recycled glass for the production of brand-new glass sheets. The company is also expanding its green initiatives by optimising the design of its new furnaces to become more energy efficient and improve environmental performance.

Published 30 August 2021

Press release: Chewing Gum Task Force to clean up our high streets

Gum firms to invest up to £10 million over next five years to significantly reduce gum litter

Chewing Gum Task Force to clean up our high streets

Major chewing gum producers, brought together by government, have signed up to a new £10 million partnership to remove gum litter from our high streets, Environment Minister Rebecca Pow announced today.

The scheme, including Mars Wrigley, GlaxoSmithKline and Perfetti Van Melle and managed by independent charity Keep Britain Tidy, will see gum firms invest up to £10 million over the next five years to help reduce gum litter.

Chewing gum litter is a blight on our towns and cities and wastes millions of pounds of taxpayers' money every year; the annual clean-up cost is estimated at £7 million. Around 87% of England's streets are stained with gum, according to research by Keep Britain Tidy.

The investment, starting later this year, will be used to clean up historic gum litter staining and use behavioural interventions to encourage people to bin their gum. Previous pilots have reduced gum littering by up to 64%.

Littering is a criminal offence and the Government has already empowered local authorities by increasing on-the-spot penalties for offenders to £150, rising to up to £2,500 if convicted in court. The Government is seeking powers in the Environment Bill to ensure that enforcement powers are used with a high degree of professionalism, whether by council staff or private contractors, and to place our improved enforcement guidance on a firm statutory footing.

The Task Force is part of the Government's new [strategy to support the evolution and regeneration of high streets](#) across the country, which includes [15 Town Deals](#) totalling £335 million to fund community regeneration projects, the transformation of derelict buildings, and communities being given the chance to own local pubs, theatres, sports grounds and corner shops.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

The stains of discarded chewing gum are a blight on our communities, spoiling our streets and wasting millions of pounds of taxpayers' money.

This new scheme means chewing gum producers are not only helping to clean up towns and cities as they welcome people back to our high streets, but crucially taking action to prevent people littering in the first place.

We are committed to building back better and greener and this commitment to making town centres a more attractive and inviting place is a key part of our long-term strategy to breathe new life into our communities.

Jonny Briscoe, Managing Director, Perfetti Van Melle – PVM UK, commented:

As an organisation serious about corporate responsibility, Perfetti Van Melle is committed to help with the clean-up of Britain's streets and to educate consumers about the importance of responsible gum disposal.

Allison Ogden-Newton, Chief Executive of environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, said:

Keep Britain Tidy are delighted to be working with Defra and the chewing gum industry to clean up gum from our streets and critically stop it being dropped in the first place.'

The Chewing Gum Task Force forms part of wider government action to tackle litter and protect our environment. The Group will also have the opportunity to share best practice and research in gum cleansing and litter prevention such as cleaning up, education, and biodegradability.

The "Keep it, Bin it" anti-litter campaign, supported by Defra and funded by Mars Wrigley, encourages people to dispose of their litter responsibly, calling time on rubbish excuses for littering and telling people to keep hold of their rubbish until they find a bin.

The Government's landmark Environment Bill includes powers to introduce a [Deposit Return Scheme](#) for drinks containers, which will recycle billions more plastic bottles and stop them going to landfill. Our Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme will mean companies will be expected to cover the full cost of recycling and disposing of their packaging, and through the fees they pay they will be incentivised to use packaging that can be recycled and meet higher recycling targets. We have also outlined our intention to [explore regulatory options](#) to tackle the issue of discarded cigarette butts, which make up 66% of all littered items.

[Consistent Recycling Collections](#) will be introduced for every household and business in England, ensuring more plastic is recycled, while ministers will have new powers to make it easier to place charges on single-use plastic items that threaten our ecosystems. The government will also introduce a world-leading [plastic packaging tax](#) from April 2022, on plastic packaging which doesn't meet a minimum threshold of at least 30% recycled content, to encourage greater use of recycled plastic and protect our environment.

Statistic on cost of chewing gum clean-up taken from [Financial Cost of Packaging Litter – Phase 2 – Final Report, WRAP](#)

Statistic on impact of chewing gum on streets taken from Keep Britain Tidy research

[Joint statement on Afghanistan safe passage](#)

We are all committed to ensuring that our citizens, nationals and residents, employees, Afghans who have worked with us and those who are at risk can continue to travel freely to destinations outside Afghanistan.

We have received assurances from the Taliban that all foreign nationals and any Afghan citizen with travel authorization from our countries will be allowed to proceed in a safe and orderly manner to points of departure and travel outside the country.

We will continue issuing travel documentation to designated Afghans, and we have the clear expectation of and commitment from the Taliban that they can travel to our respective countries. We note the public statements of the Taliban confirming this understanding.

The statement was released initially by the governments of the United States of America, Albania, Australia, Belgium, Belize, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Canada, Central African Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Eswatini, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Republic of

Cyprus, Republic of Korea, Republic of Kosovo, Romania, Rwanda, Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland , The Bahamas, The Gambia, The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, Union of the Comoros, United Kingdom, Vanuatu, Yemen, and Zambia.