

A country where people can flourish no matter where they are born or who they are

We are focused on delivering economic growth in a way that's more inclusive – and by that I mean inclusive of people, and inclusive of places. What we all want is a country where people can flourish no matter where they are born or who they are.

China battles southern floods, endures northern heat wave

China is battling floods along the Yangtze River in the south while northern regions, including Beijing, endure a heat wave.

The first flood this year of the Yangtze River, the country's longest, is forming as water levels are rapidly rising in major tributaries in the middle and lower reaches, said the Yangtze River Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters Saturday.

The headquarters ordered the Three Gorges Reservoir of the Yangtze to reduce the flow of discharging to 18,000 cubic meters per second from 2 p.m. Saturday to relieve the flood pressure downstream.

Other upstream reservoirs also joined the flood control efforts.

Floods have already hit the Xiangjiang, Yuanjiang and Zishui rivers in central China's Hunan, the worst-hit province. The rain continues in Changsha, the provincial capital and other cities such as Xiangtan and Huaihua.

The level of the Xiangjiang River in Changsha stood at 38.6 meters at 4 p.m. Saturday, well above the warning level of 36 meters and only 57 cm lower than its highest record level, according to the Hunan Provincial Hydrological Bureau.

The level of the Zishui River in Taojiang County was only 38 cm lower than its record level in history, said the bureau.

At around 1 a.m. Saturday, a 20-meter stretch of the Taxi river, a small branch of the Zishui River, burst due to flood, according to a local official.

The Hunan flood control and drought relief headquarters raised the flood response from Grade III to Grade II on Saturday. The province has mobilized soldiers, officials and villagers, allocated funds and sent relief supplies to affected areas.

As of Saturday, the rain had caused an evacuation of 310,000 in Hunan.

"The water level is rising and my house is in danger of being submerged. I was relieved when I saw a rescue boat coming," said Zhou Changsong, who was evacuated Saturday afternoon from Chenxi County, where eight towns were flooded by the Yuanjiang River. Around 100,000 people have been evacuated.

Downpours also hit Hubei, Guizhou and Jiangxi provinces and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

In Jiangxi, which neighbors Hunan, seven people died and two were missing due to flood in the past ten days, showed statistics with the provincial flood control headquarters.

About 440,000 were evacuated in Jiangxi. On Saturday morning, a landslide buried two residential buildings in a village in Xiushui County, but caused no casualties as all 39 residents had been displaced on Thursday.

More than 70 passenger trains passing Jiangxi Province were suspended from Saturday to Monday due to floods, said the Nanchang Railway Bureau in Jiangxi.

The State Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters launched a Grade III emergency response plan Saturday and dispatched eight work teams to flood-stricken areas to guide relief work.

The National Meteorological Center (NMC) forecast Saturday afternoon rainstorms will hit Guangxi, Hunan, Jiangxi and Anhui from Saturday night to Sunday.

In north China, a heat wave affected Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Liaoning and Inner Mongolia, with temperatures reaching 35 to 37 degrees Celsius at 2 p.m. Saturday, said the center.

In Beijing, many residents chose to stay indoors over the weekend due to the hot weather.

The NMC forecast the heat wave will continue in the north until Tuesday. Some areas will see temperatures of up to 40 degrees Celsius in Inner Mongolia, Hebei and Shaanxi on Sunday.

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Green Party

1 July 2017

MPs are calling for a new Environmental Protection Bill to be added to the government's list of policy priorities for the year ahead as laid out in last week's Queen's Speech.

Led by Green Party co-leader Caroline Lucas, the environment amendment has cross-party support from Labour MPs David Lammy and Kerry McCarthy, Liberal Democrat MP Layla Moran, the Scottish National Democrat MP Chris Law, and Plaid Cymru MP Liz Saville Roberts.

The [amendment](#), which was introduced last week and will likely be voted for on Thursday June 29, states that "in negotiating our future relationship with the EU, the Government should opt for the most environmentally effective way forward."

This includes introducing a new bill to "transfer all relevant EU law into

domestic law by way of primary legislation". This legislation should include "the meaningful transfer of existing targets and to set new and ambitious targets" as well as provide access to citizens to environmental justice.

'Conspicuous Absence'

[Speaking in the House of Commons](#) on Monday, Lucas said "a Bill on environmental protection is conspicuous by its absence. Given the significance of the EU's role in environmental protection, I think that this is a particularly grave omission on the part of the government's Brexit team."

The [Queen's speech last week](#) introduced this year's legislative program, the majority of which is concerned with leaving the EU. The only mention of climate change came when the Queen reiterated support for the Paris climate agreement.

Since then Theresa May's government has officially announced its deal with Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). The DUP was called "[dinosaurs](#)" in Parliament by Lucas last week following the Queen's speech due to their [history of climate denial](#) and denying the science behind evolution.

In a statement to DeSmog UK, Lucas said: "It's astounding that the Queen's Speech didn't contain plans for a bill to protect the environment in the Brexit process. The Government is aiming to pass eight separate pieces of Brexit legislation, yet they're leaving environmental protection behind despite 80 percent of our laws in that area coming from the EU."

She continued: "I'd urge MPs from all parties to back my call for an Environmental Protection Act. Such a bill would both strengthen our environmental laws and ensure that a legal and regulatory framework is in place to enforce them."

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