

# British High Commissioner launches 'Race to Zero' bid in Pakistan ahead of COP 26 Climate Change Conference

So far 12 companies in Pakistan are committed – including one after meeting the High Commissioner on his visit. With one month to go until the COP 26 global climate change conference hosted in the UK, the UK Government is looking for more to take the leap. Globally more than 3,000 companies have signed up.

The High Commissioner's visit was part of an environment and climate-focussed trip to Pakistan's biggest metropolis to see first-hand some of the challenges – and some of the innovative solutions – Pakistan is offering as part of world action on climate change.

He saw how British and Pakistani expertise has been coming together to harness the power of renewable energy at Zephyr Wind Farm at Gharo. He was accompanied by Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam. There he saw how British funds have helped create green energy investments and have helped Pakistan replace coal power.

Dr Turner was also shown how Pakistan is using nature-based solutions to help repair the environment and protect livelihoods – through the regeneration of a mangrove forest near to the windfarm. Studies have shown mangrove barriers are cheaper and 50 times more cost-effective than concrete barriers when it comes to tidal flood protections.

Later, the High Commissioner took part in litter picking – a personal passion of his – at Clifton Beach to mark World Maritime Day. Eight million tonnes of plastic end up every year in the world's seas, which is swallowed by or entangles marine animals, causing injuries and deaths and threatening the survival of certain species.

Dr Christian Turner CMG said:

Pakistan is tackling climate change – and protecting the beauty of the natural world – and these are two key areas which the UK-hosted COP 26 conference will be focussing on.

I'm encouraging 26 Pakistani firms to sign a commitment to make net zero emissions commitments in 2050 as part of COP 26. 12 are committed but we need more companies to come forward. Together we can do this.

While on his visit the High Commissioner also met key business leaders from

the “Top 6” UK firms in Pakistan – (Unilever, Reckitt Benckiser, SCB, GSK, UBL and Shell) which contribute over 1% to Pakistan’s annual GDP, and rank among the biggest corporate taxpayers. He also met media house owners where he discussed the importance of a free media for accountability in a well-functioning democracy and welcomed the Protection of Journalists and Other Media Practitioners bill passed by the Sindh Assembly in May.

#### **Notes to editors:**

- The UK is hosting the global COP 26 climate change conference in Glasgow, in the UK, from October 31 till November 12, 2021. The UK has four core goals for the COP 26 presidency, namely:
  - Asking countries to come forward with ambitious 2030 emissions reductions targets that align with reaching net zero by the middle of the century to keep the 1.5 degree global warming target within reach;
  - Pushing further support for vulnerable countries to protect and restore ecosystems, build resilience and avoid loss of homes, livelihoods and lives;
  - Getting developed countries to deliver on their commitment to mobilise \$100bn in climate finance per year. All countries need to act to redirect finance flows, including by mobilising trillions of dollars from the private sector; and
  - Collaborating across governments, businesses and civil society, to finalise the “Paris Rulebook” through the climate negotiations and make progress in energy emissions.
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- Twelve Pakistani firms are so far committed to net zero. Yunus Textile Mills Ltd was the latest firm to make the commitment when the High Commissioner was in Karachi.
  - For more information visit [COP26 website](#)

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