

COP 26: Ground-breaking summit on climate hosted by the UK begins on Sunday

It comes as the British High Commission's #26For26 campaign continues to smash its target of having 26 Pakistani companies commit to halving emissions by 2030 and getting to net zero by 2050. 28 companies have so far signed up.

COP26 is the largest international event of its kind ever to be held in the UK with more than 25,000 delegates arriving in the city of Glasgow- including world leaders, opinion formers and top businesses. It will work to prevent global temperatures rising above 1.5C and protect our planet and people from the impacts of climate change.

The UK has already achieved notable successes so far. Around 70% of the world's economy is now covered by net zero targets, up from less than 30% when the UK took on the Presidency of COP26. This will help the most vulnerable countries like Pakistan.

Pakistan is the 8th most vulnerable country in the world to climate change. Some experts have warned that Karachi could be completely submerged by 2060 if the current trajectory of rising sea levels continues. Temperatures in Karachi this year have already been the highest in 74 years and by 2030, property damage due to coastal storm surges and rising sea levels is set to increase tenfold. By 2100, rising temperatures mean 36% of glaciers along the Hindu Kush & Himalayan range will be gone. The critical situation means Pakistan needs to act now, alongside the rest of the international community.

The UK is already working closely with Pakistan on climate change, and will provide £7m this year in grant financing and technical support to help Pakistan achieve its climate change objectives. Earlier this year the UK launched a new programme in Lahore to promote cleaner brick production practices which will help improve air quality, reduce smog and fight climate change.

Pakistan's leadership on some environmental issues has been recognised globally. The UK Prime Minister praised the country's 10 billion tree tsunami at last month's United Nations General Assembly. Earlier this week, HRH the Prince of Wales spoke to Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan and agreed on the need for greater global cooperation on climate change and protecting the environment. HRH the Prince of Wales congratulated Prime Minister Imran Khan on the 10 billion tree tsunami initiative.

Climate finance will be key at COP26. To support the transition to net zero, climate resilient economies, getting public and private finance flowing is crucial, especially to emerging markets and developing economies. Under the UK's COP26 & G7 Presidencies, we have seen clear moves towards this goal. G7 countries have committed new finance towards the \$100bn in climate finance

goal, including more funding for adaptation.

In terms of mobilising international finance the UK is committing funds to help Pakistan develop innovative climate financing instruments, including Nature Performance Bonds. The UK will invest more in Pakistan over the next 5 years, helping communities adapt to climate change and improve community level resilience and supporting the efficient use of water resources.

As hosts of COP26 (co-hosted with Italy), the UK has been driving international action and support to adapt to the effects of climate change, which are already impacting lives, livelihoods and natural habitats across the world. Thirty five countries have joined the Adaptation Action Coalition, and over 2,000 businesses, investors, regions, cities and other non-state actors have joined the Race to Resilience. Over 40 countries and organisations have joined the Risk-Informed Early Action Partnership, committing to make 1 billion people safer from disaster by 2025.

By signing up to the Race to Zero, over 3,000 companies and 170 investors, have committed to halving emissions by 2030 and achieving net zero emissions by 2050 at the latest, with transparent and robust action plans. Under the UK's G7 Presidency, the first net zero G7 saw all countries commit to deep emission reduction targets in the 2020s and put an end to funding fossil fuels & coal power this year.

The UK has been leading the way and shown that green growth is possible – over the last 30 years our economy has grown by 78% while cutting emissions by 44%. The UK was the first country to commit to reduce carbon emissions by 78% by 2035 and is on course to be the fastest G7 country to decarbonise cars and vans by 2030.

As part of the brick kiln programme launched earlier this year, the UK will support a targeted training programme on “Zig Zag” technology for the brick industry to substitute coal and reduce emissions. This programme will be implemented in collaboration with Government of Punjab, Brick Kiln Owners Association of Pakistan (BKAOP) and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

In 2015, the National Institute of Oceanography warned that Karachi could be completely submerged by 2060 if the current trajectory of rising sea levels continues.

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