

Government boosts UK resilience against climate change

- UK government launches new £5 million research programme to help the UK adapt and become more resilient to the impacts of climate change
- research will inform the UK's strategy to prepare for and protect against the impacts of climate change, such as heatwaves, flooding and extreme storms
- programme is a key step in the government's commitment to reach net zero emissions by the middle of this century

New research to step up the UK's resilience to the impacts of climate change, such as flooding, heatwaves and extreme weather storms, is made possible by the launch of a new £5 million research programme today (Friday 6 August).

Providing high-quality scientific research and analysis, the research programme, 'Climate Services for a Net Zero Resilient World', will help inform future climate policy and will be led by a consortium of some of the leading authorities in environmental science such as University College London and the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology.

This will ensure the UK is able to respond to the impacts a warming planet will have on national infrastructure. This includes heat waves causing record temperatures in buildings, extreme weather damage to power stations and electricity networks, and flooding impacting our communities. The programme will also engage with local authorities on local climate action plans, by equipping them with information on how to help households cope with extreme temperatures and helping them to identify low-cost, low-carbon measures.

To ensure that emissions are cut around the world, the scheme will also provide models for how the UK can reduce carbon emissions globally. This will build on the UK government's work with other countries to develop decarbonisation strategies – supporting overseas nations reduce their carbon footprints while building resilience and protecting their populations.

This announcement comes as the UK government steps up its climate leadership ahead of COP26, making world-leading commitments to eliminate the UK's contribution to climate change by 2050. In recent months alone, the government has launched a new UK Emissions Trading Scheme, committed to end coal power by 2024, secured record investment in wind power, and pledged billions in funding to support the development of carbon capture and the decarbonisation of transport.

UK Climate & Energy Minister and International Adaptation and Resilience COP26 champion Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

Climate change poses a threat to both our way of life and the safety of our nation. The climate decisions taken by the government

now, and over these crucial next few years, are vital to protect our homes, our wellbeing, and our future.

This new programme brings together the brightest and best climate scientists, universities and research institutions from across the country to provide us with the latest tools, advice, and research to inform future climate policies at a national and local level. This research will be vital to ensure we're making the best possible choices on our journey to net zero, making certain the UK is adaptable and more resilient to the effects of climate change.

The effects of climate change are already being felt in the UK and around the world. The Met Office's [State of the UK Climate report](#) published last week showed that last year was the third warmest, fifth wettest and eighth sunniest on record. Everyone has a part to play in tackling climate change, and combined with the efforts of individuals, businesses and industry, it is vital the UK government prepares for how this changing climate will impact the nation and the public.

Today's new scheme will help the UK take action to adapt to these changes and strengthen resilience to climate change impacts.

COP26 President-Designate Alok Sharma said:

With fewer than 100 days to go until COP26, this essential research which helps the UK work with governments around the world to deliver ambitious plans to decarbonise and reduce emissions has never been more important. From flooding to wildfires – the extreme weather events we've recently witnessed show how crucial it is for communities to build resilience and protect their futures.

This programme demonstrates our commitment as COP26 hosts to meet net zero by the middle of the century. The next decade is critical if we are to keep the 1.5 degree temperature limit on track and avoid the catastrophic impacts of climate change.

The 4-year UK government research programme will improve the UK's resilience to climate change by enhancing scientific understanding of climate impacts, decarbonisation and climate action. It will provide transformative advice, digital data, and technology such as data visualisation tools, providing critical evidence and expertise to inform the government's action plan to reach net zero and deliver a thriving, low carbon, greener future.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

Robust, world-leading science and research on climate change is central to informing our adaptation policies as we work towards the next National Adaptation Programme.

This new research programme will ensure climate science is fully integrated into our planning and decision-making, including on major infrastructure and biodiversity projects as we work to restore our peatlands, wetlands and natural environment, as well as improving our air and water through our landmark Environment Bill. This is alongside our record investment of £5.2 billion in new flood and coastal schemes to better protect 336,000 properties by 2027.

Gill Wilkins, Ricardo's CS-N0W Programme Director, said:

I am delighted to direct this ground-breaking research programme that will provide evidence to underpin UK climate change policy and raise ambition internationally. With our consortium partners, we will carry out research and analysis to better understand the impacts of climate change and how to maximise efforts to respond to the challenges faced. We will be visualising data to make it more accessible, transparent and user friendly to help regional and national authorities understand and respond to impacts.

Today's new climate research programme builds on the independent Climate Change Committee's [climate risk report](#), with the UK government showing international leadership by increasing domestic climate resilience efforts, ahead of the COP26 UN Climate Summit taking place in Glasgow this November.

The Climate Services for a Net Zero Resilient World consortium will include:

- Ricardo
- University College London (UCL)
- Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research
- institutes supported by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), including:
 - British Antarctic Survey (BAS)
 - British Geological Survey (BGS)
 - National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS)
 - National Centre for Earth Observation (NCEO)
 - National Oceanography Centre (NOC)
 - Plymouth Marine Laboratory (PML)
 - UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH)