

Greens condemn UK government for failing to honour COP commitment to update climate targets



Green Party

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Rishi Sunak must honour the commitment the UK made as COP president and update its climate targets to reflect what is necessary to limit global warming to 1.5C, the Green Party has said ahead of the start of COP27 this weekend.

The Glasgow Pact agreed at COP26 last year required all countries to revisit and increase their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) this year in order to ensure the world was on track to reduce carbon emissions at a rate that would keep global temperature rise to 1.5C [1].

However, the UK's updated NDC in September this year included no increase in its own NDC, despite the fact it had presided over the agreement in Glasgow to do so. [2]

The need for each country to update its NDCs is even more urgent now after the UN recently stated that there is "no credible pathway" to saving 1.5C on current trajectories. The UN said: "Only an urgent system-wide transformation can deliver the enormous cuts needed to limit greenhouse gas emissions by 2030." [3]

Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

"The UK government was applauded for overseeing a commitment from all countries to increase their NDCs, but its actions subsequently suggest it was just for show.

"It is shameful that at a time when people across the world are seeing their lives destroyed by climate change, the UK government could not live up to its commitments and set meaningful climate targets that would protect millions of people.

"In fact, since last year in Glasgow the UK government has gone in completely the wrong direction by introducing new North Sea oil and gas licences, continued to roll out airport and road expansion and will not even rule out

the opening of a new coal mine in Cumbria.

“Regrettably, Rishi Sunak will arrive in Egypt under a cloud, with the UK also having failed to make a promised £260 million climate finance payment [4].

“This is negligence on a historic scale, but it can be rectified. It is right that the Prime Minister has now decided to attend COP27, but he now needs to put his money where his mouth is.

“Sunak must immediately revisit the UK’s climate targets to ensure they are in line with a 1.5C global rise in temperatures and show he is willing to act on the global stage by putting climate justice and finance for poorer countries most impacted by the climate emergency at the top of the agenda.”

The Green Party has also set out a further six crucial tests for the UK government at this year’s COP climate targets:

- The UK government must call for offsetting to be ruled out as part of the measurement of net zero reporting for governments and industries
- The UK government needs to put loss and damage at the top of the agenda and back calls from the countries most impacted by climate change for the establishment of a financing facility, and to follow in the footsteps of Denmark and Scotland by delivering new and additional finance for loss and damage
- The government must urgently deliver the UK’s overdue climate finance, reinstate the mandatory 0.7% aid budget and support calls for increased adaptation finance
- The UK government should lobby for an immediate end to all fossil fuel subsidies and an urgent managed decline in the use of fossil fuels
- The UK government should advocate for the global roll out of loophole-free dirty profits taxes to ensure the most polluting industries not only pay for the impact of their emissions, but are also incentivised to find efficient means of reducing them
- The UK government should champion a system of nationally determined contributions requiring all countries to produce scientifically verifiable plans every year to show their progress in reaching the climate targets they have set themselves.

Notes

1

<https://www.bond.org.uk/news/2022/11/heres-what-the-uk-needs-to-do-for-cop27/>

2

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1109429/uk-nationally-determined-contribution.pdf

3

<https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2022>

4

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/nov/01/uk-criticised-for-failing-to-pay-300m-in-promised-climate-funds-ahead-of-cop27>

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