

News story: New UK initiatives to help Commonwealth countries tackle world's greatest environmental challenges

- business ministers announce more than £8 million for innovation technology to tackle global climate change and prepare for natural disasters
- funding to help Commonwealth countries lower greenhouse gas emissions
- new investment for British satellite technology to help Kenya prepare for and respond to natural disasters

Investment in pioneering British technology to help Commonwealth countries reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for natural disasters has been announced today (17 April 2018) as part of this week's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry has announced £3.5 million of funding to extend the '2050 Calculator', a technology that helps countries develop strategies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Ms Perry has also confirmed £1.2 million to reduce carbon emissions in Pacific countries, supporting the UN's climate change targets set out in the Paris Climate Agreement while helping to deliver on the government's Industrial Strategy [Clean Growth Grand Challenge](#).

Alongside this, Science Minister Sam Gyimah has announced a £3.5 million UK Space Agency International Partnerships Programme in Kenya which uses British satellite technology to help the country plan and respond to disasters, including droughts, floods and famine.

During a speech on accelerating climate action in the Commonwealth, Claire Perry, Minister for Energy and Clean Growth, said:

The UK is leading the world in tackling climate change while growing our national income, ensuring we are best placed to help other countries reduce harmful carbon emissions.

Providing expertise to mitigate global warming and reducing emissions is a crucial priority for Commonwealth nations, and vulnerable Pacific Islands in particular.

Speaking ahead of the Commonwealth Science, Research and Innovation Reception Science Minister Sam Gyimah said:

Reducing carbon emissions is one of the greatest environmental challenges of our time. It's up to us all to protect our planet for

generations to come.

The UK is a world-leader in science, research and innovation, and as part of the government's Industrial Strategy and Clean Growth Grand Challenge, we're utilising our world-class science and research expertise to develop programmes and new innovations that will help some of the world's most vulnerable people.

Dr Graham Turnock, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said:

Our International Partnership Programme is already helping more than 30 developing countries tackle big issues and this new project will vastly improve disaster relief in Kenya. IPP puts British innovation on a global stage, showcasing the capabilities of our leading space businesses.

Sam Gyimah is due to outline further details during the Commonwealth Science, Research and Innovation Reception tomorrow at New Zealand House.

The Science Minister is also expected to confirm the launch of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR): CommonSensing, to improve countries' ability to deal with climate change and reduce disaster risk in Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

This serves to show the importance of Commonwealth countries working together to reduce carbon emissions and tackle some of the world's greatest environmental challenges.

The Minister will also announce a new Met Office partnership programme, Met Office Climates Services Pilot for Commonwealth Member Countries, which will generate vital information to better tackle climate change across the Commonwealth.

Professor Stephen Belcher, the Met Office Chief Scientist, said:

The Commonwealth brings together a rich heritage and shared cultural values. But these aren't the only common bonds linking member states.

Each is also inextricably connected by the shared impacts of weather and climate. Improving resilience and forecasting will provide a lifeline for vulnerable communities helping them to cope with weather and climate shocks through measures which improve food security and provide protection from extremes of weather.

There can surely be no better aspiration than sharing cutting edge climate science to improve the fortunes and prospects of people in their day-to-day lives.

The [UK's Industrial Strategy](#) is a long-term plan to build a Britain fit for the future through a stronger, fairer economy. Through this we will help businesses to create better, higher-paying jobs – setting a path for Britain to lead in the high-tech, highly-skilled industries of the future.

2050 Calculator

BEIS welcomes interest from Commonwealth countries and encourage them to contact their local British High Commission or Embassy in the first instance to discuss the programme. The department will also be advertising for a technology company to act as a delivery partner through a competitive process to manage the programme and give training to countries.

UKSA International Partnership Programme

The International Partnership Programme (IPP) is a 5-year, £152 million programme run by the UK Space Agency. IPP focuses on using the UK space sector's research and innovation strengths to deliver a sustainable economic and societal benefit to emerging and developing economies around the world.

The primary aim of IPP is to deliver effective aid to developing countries, the secondary aim is to provide growth opportunities to UK businesses in new sectors and demonstrate the effectiveness of space solutions to governments around the world.

IPP is part of and is funded from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's £1.5billion Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF).