

NZ and UK must maintain Pacific climate focus says UK Minister

- Tackling climate change and biodiversity loss in the Pacific remains top priority says UK Minister,
- The UK will welcome NZ agritech companies next month to build new research, science and innovation links.
- Speech on last day of visit to Australia, Vanuatu and New Zealand – to boost ties with the UK's Pacific partners.

Tackling climate change and biodiversity loss in the Pacific should remain a top priority for the UK and New Zealand, says a visiting British Foreign Minister.

At the British High Commission in Wellington to an audience of diplomats, policy-makers and academics, Amanda Milling, the UK Minister for Asia and the Middle East, welcomed New Zealand's pledge to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2050.

On the last day of her tour to Australia, Vanuatu and New Zealand, she also underlined the joint UK / New Zealand commitment to deliver on the [Glasgow Climate Pact](#), which pledges to cut emissions and limit global warming to below 1.5°C.

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Minister for Asia and the Middle East, Amanda Milling said:

I heard first-hand in Vanuatu about the impacts of climate change in the Pacific, and the importance of supporting Pacific Island countries to build resilience.

The UK and New Zealand are working with partners to ensure those countries can access climate finance, and that Pacific Island voices are heard.

The Minister's visit to the region – to boost diplomatic and trade ties with the UK's vital Pacific partners – follows COP26 President Alok Sharma's tour last month to Australia, New Zealand and Fiji, and the meeting of Prime Ministers Boris Johnson and Jacinda Ardern in London on 1 July 2022.

At that meeting, the leaders signed a new research, science and innovation arrangement which will see both countries share expertise and develop new technologies, including in the fields of agriculture and climate-change.

As part of this agreement, the Minister announced the UK will welcome some of New Zealand's most advanced agritech companies next month to build new links, with some of the UK's leading firms visiting New Zealand on a similar mission in November.

On the UK's recent trade deal with New Zealand, Minister Milling said:

We are also looking forward to our free trade agreement entering into force and watching our trade with New Zealand soar. But this is about so much more than business opportunities. It's about the participation of indigenous people and women in trade. And it's about a greener deal; bolstering commitments to the Paris agreement and Net Zero, while encouraging investment in low-carbon tech.

Finally, on Ukraine, Minister Milling thanked New Zealand for its support in standing against Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine arguing Putin has "thrown the international rules out of the window, shattered global stability and stamped on the principle of territorial sovereignty."

She went on to add that: "We must ensure that Putin loses, and that Russian aggression is never again allowed to shatter peace, freedom and democracy in Europe."

While in New Zealand, Minister Milling visited Auckland, the Waikato and Wellington. She met Aupito William Sio, Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister for Pacific Peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand, to discuss the challenges for Pasifika; Te Taumata, MFAT's Māori engagement group, and the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee.

She also attended a memorial for the former Māori Queen, Dame Te Atairangikaahu and visited several businesses in the Waikato, promoting the recently signed UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement.

Further Information

- The UK is helping Pacific nations and others to protect the marine environment and reduce poverty through our £500m Blue Planet Fund. This will directly support delivery of the region's [2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent](#).
- At COP 26, the UK announced £274 million for a new 'Climate Action for a Resilient Asia' programme across the Indo-Pacific. This will support up to 14 million people to adapt to global warming.

- The UK also pledged £40 million to help Small Island Developing States become more resilient, including in the Pacific in November 2021.
- The UK and New Zealand are working with partners to ensure those States can access climate finance, and that Pacific Island voices are heard. This includes collaborating with Fiji to address concerns raised through the Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance.