

Press release: Climate experts asked for advice on net zero target

- Committee on Climate Change to advise on setting a date for net zero emissions target
- first-ever Green GB & NI Week launches – bringing society together to tackle climate change
- ‘Green collar’ jobs could reach two million by 2030, generating up to £170 billion in annual exports for UK businesses

To mark the launch of this nationwide week, Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry today (Monday 15 October) wrote to the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) asking for advice on:

- setting a date for achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions from across the economy, including from transport, industry and agriculture
- whether we need to review our 2050 target of cutting emissions by at least 80% relative to 1990 levels to meet international climate targets set out in Paris Agreement
- how emissions reductions might be achieved in industry, homes, transport and agriculture
- and the expected costs and benefits in comparison to current targets

This makes the UK one of the first in the G7 to formally explore setting an even more ambitious target than its current one. It follows a report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), showing more rapid action is needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to avoid devastating risks of climate change to health and global prosperity.

The UK is already a world leader when it comes to tackling climate change. We led the world with our Climate Change Act, and since 1990 we have led the G7 in cutting emissions while growing our economy on a per person basis. In 2017 we saw renewable energy generation at record levels, and we are among the world’s best in cutting our carbon intensity.

But the government is determined to do more and our first-ever Green GB & NI Week will celebrate the progress we have made while challenging governments, businesses and civil society to rise to the task.

During Green GB Week, Claire Perry will also highlight the economic opportunities of moving to an even greener, cleaner economy. There are already almost 400,000 jobs in the low carbon economy and this could quadruple to around 2 million, generating up to £170 billion of annual exports. This is why the government has put Clean Growth at the centre of its modern [Industrial Strategy](#).

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

On the global stage, the UK is driving forward action on climate

change through our work at the UN and with our Commonwealth partners. To ensure that we continue to lead from the front, we are asking the experts to advise on targets for net zero emissions.

At home, we are growing an economy that is fit for the future. Over the last year, we've generated record levels of solar and offshore wind energy, and just last month I hosted the UK's first zero-emission vehicles summit. For our first Green GB Week, we are asking businesses and consumers to work with us to consider what more they can do to protect our environment.

Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry said:

We're a world leader when it comes to tackling climate change and cutting carbon intensity, but the evidence is clear – governments, businesses and communities must take further action to confront one of the greatest global challenges we've ever faced.

That's why we're asking the independent climate experts of the CCC for advice on a roadmap to a net zero economy, including how emissions might be reduced and the expected costs and benefits of doing so.

The case for tackling climate change is more stark than ever before. This Green GB Week, we need everyone – the government, businesses and communities – to renew their efforts to confront this global challenge head on while seizing one of the greatest industrial opportunities of our time.

Gareth Redmond-King, Head of Climate at WWF said:

Last week scientists from around the world said we had 12 years to tackle climate change. Governments can no longer shirk their responsibilities. It's time to act and, crucially, embrace the opportunities a green economy presents. Done right, this could be the biggest economic opportunity in history, driving innovation, job creation and better living standards.

To mark the start of Green GB Week the government today unveiled a package of measures to help transform energy infrastructure to make it cleaner and greener, including:

- proposals for new laws for smart energy appliances like washing machines and electric heating, laying the groundwork for a smart and clean electricity system of the future with the ambition of making all new buildings smart by 2030
- opening the £18 million Heat Recovery Support scheme to help businesses become more energy efficient, which could save industry up to £500

million on their energy bills while making manufacturing firms more competitive

- launching a £320 million government fund in low-carbon heating for cities, appointing Triple Point Heat Networks Investment Management to it
- and in 2019 we will launch a competition to design the house of the future, more energy efficient, with quality affordable design and easily adaptable to help healthy ageing

Showing its leadership on the global stage, the government today also announced £106 million to encourage greener construction practices in developing countries to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions, creating opportunities for UK businesses to invest in new markets.

This comes just weeks after the government announced £160 million to help countries transition to cleaner, greener energy. This included £60 million to share the UK's world leading expertise on energy market reform, green finance and climate legislation to help developing countries seize the opportunities of clean growth.

The week will see more than 100 events hosted around the country designed to promote the opportunities that come from clean growth and raise awareness of how businesses and the public can contribute to tackling climate change.

Polling commissioned for Green GB Week revealed 60% of 18 to 24 year-olds are interested in 'green collar' jobs in the environmental sectors of the economy, the equivalent of more than 3 million young people in the UK. When asked why they wanted to pursue a career in the green economy, two-thirds said it was because they wanted to help tackle climate change while 70% of those surveyed underestimated the number of jobs which could be created in the sector.

To help grow the sector, the government is creating the right conditions to ensure businesses can seize those opportunities through our modern Industrial Strategy. Our world-leading [Clean Growth Strategy](#) sets out how we're investing more than £2.5 billion in low carbon innovation as part of the largest increase in public spending on science, research and innovation on over three decades.

The government has also earmarked more than half a billion pounds for emerging renewable technologies to give them the certainty developers need to invest while driving down costs for consumers.

1. See [Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry's letter to the CCC](#).
2. Green GB & NI Week launched today, with a series of events planned around the country. [Find out about Green GB Week](#).
3. A 'net-zero' target means emissions of greenhouse gases driven by human activity are balanced by methods of removing emissions from the atmosphere.
4. Last week the IPCC published its [Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C](#)

which found that to meet the goals set under the Paris Agreement – to limit global warming to 2°C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C – globally we must increase our efforts to tackle climate change.

5. Our current 2050 target, set out in the Climate Change Act 2008, is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% relative to 1990 levels.

6. The UK is already committed to working with other countries to achieve global net zero emissions in the second half of the century, as set out in the government's ambitious Clean Growth Strategy.

7. The government will today publish:

- the response to the CCC's annual progress report to Parliament on reducing UK emissions
- a response to a consultation on setting standards for smart appliances

8. Tomorrow we will be publishing an update on the Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan.

9. The £106 million Market Accelerator for Green Construction is a collaboration between the UK and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to drive the financing and construction of more energy efficient buildings in developing countries:

- buildings account for around a fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions and improving building design and construction will play an important role in avoiding climate change and meeting our Paris Agreement goals
- funded through the UK's International Climate Finance – part of the UK aid budget – the Market Accelerator for Green Construction will mobilise up to \$2 billion in public and private investment into new green construction
- by helping to build new clean growth markets in emerging economies and opening up opportunities for UK industry's leadership, technical expertise and innovation, the Market Accelerator for Green Construction will create an international dimension to the Industrial Strategy Buildings Mission