

SIDS require SIDS solutions

We know too well that the dual threats of climate change and environmental degradation are felt acutely by Small Island Developing States. Rising sea levels, shifting weather patterns, declining biodiversity and habitat loss, and natural disasters are already causing significant loss and damage on a regular basis, devastating livelihoods and communities. As we have heard today, COVID-19 has brought additional health and humanitarian challenges, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities.

The UK is alive to the distinct challenges that this perfect storm poses to SIDS sustainable development. Overcoming them is more urgent than ever. Building capacity, opening markets promoting investment and building adaptation and resilience will require tailored solutions, and international support.

Through our COP26 and G7 presidencies next year, we are committed to leading the international effort to address climate change and drive a green and resilient global recovery.

We will use our COP26 Presidency to encourage Member States – particularly the big emitters – to reduce their emissions in line with the Paris Agreement. We also need to do more to build resilience through adaptation, increase the availability, efficiency and accessibility of finance, and take urgent action to avert, minimize and address loss and damage.

Once we have dealt with the initial impact of COVID-19, we owe it to future generations to build back better, including through creating a fairer, greener and more resilient global economy.

Our guiding frameworks for these efforts must be the SDGs, Paris, Addis, and Sendai. Collaboration between governments, international organisations, international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector will be essential for achieving success.

With that in mind, later this year the UK will invite representatives of SIDS, donor countries, international financial institutions and civil and private sector partners to discuss solutions to the concessional and private finance challenges facing SIDS, as described so eloquently and clearly by the distinguished Minister of Fiji at the start of today's discussion.

We want this discussion to harness the expertise of SIDS from all regions and to identify long-term solutions for these challenges that go beyond short-term emergency measures in response to the economic disruptions of COVID-19.

SIDS require SIDS solutions so look forward to working with you all on these issues going forward.