

Press release: The British firm pumping water in Africa

- The firm's top export markets include Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda.
- UK aid funding has provided more than 40 million people in 30 countries with access to drinking water or a toilet since 2015.
- The United Nations' World Water Day (Friday 22 March) reminds us that 2.1 billion people live without safe water at home.

With advice, market research and support from the Department for International Trade (DIT), exports of solar water pumps – mainly to African countries – now account for 52% of Exmoor based SCL Water's sales.

Since 2015, UK aid has funded projects which have given more than 40 million people access to drinking water or a toilet in 30 countries. Availability and sustainable management of water is one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the theme of this year's World Water Day: Leaving no one behind.

SCL Water was established following the family's need to drill a borehole to irrigate their Devon farm, and has since grown to four people with another employee expected this year. DIT advisers helped the company research their market by taking co-owner Steve Kingdon-Saxby on trade missions to Ghana and Uganda, organised exporting workshops and helped SCL establish an online presence through its E-Exporting programme.

The family started selling water pumps overseas in 2012, and exports now account for 52% of all sales.

Steve Kingdon-Saxby, co-owner of SCL Water, said:

It is wonderful to think we are helping people obtain such a basic human need and we are proud to be able to support these projects, be they large or small.

My top tips for anyone thinking about exporting are: visit your market on a DIT trade mission, really understand your products so that you can add value by backing up your sales and service proposition with support, only sell top quality products and, finally, be prepared for calls, texts and emails 24/7! If we can export, you can.

SCL Water's top export markets are Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda. The business also supported the work of an American charity by supplying complete solar

pumping systems to clean water projects in Sierra Leone. The company has sold as far away as Australia, New Zealand, the Caribbean, French Polynesia and Turkmenistan.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP said:

SCL Water is a brilliant example of a UK company showing ingenuity, ambition and a willingness to share its products and expertise around the world.

My international economic department is here to support businesses of all sizes to realise their exporting potential, and I would encourage any company thinking about selling overseas to visit great.gov.uk or contact their local DIT office.

ENDS

Further information:

- Contact the DIT Media and Digital Team on +44 (0)20 7215 2000

[Press release: 10,000 children to benefit from new £5 million performing arts programme](#)

- Croydon, Derby, Medway, Plymouth and Salford to share £5 million to set up Youth Performance Partnerships
- Projects will offer children the chance to perform drama and dance and learn skills from behind the scenes skills such as lighting, sound and set design
- World-class cultural organisations will team up with local schools to encourage young people into the performing arts, Jeremy Wright, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, announced today.

More than 10,000 five to 18 year-olds will get to work with the likes of The BRIT School, BBC North and The Lowry with theatre skills, rap, performance and creative writing all part of the £5 million Youth Performance Partnership programme.

Delivered in Croydon, Derby, Medway, Plymouth and Salford, and particularly focused on engaging young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, participants will be given the opportunity to learn practical skills both on and off stage and work with playwrights to develop new works that students will then perform. They will also get the chance to design sets, learn about lighting and sound and take part in dance and drama.

Culture Secretary Jeremy Wright said:

As I know from my own experience, performing on stage can be transformative for young people. It can boost self esteem, build confidence and teach skills they will use throughout their lives.

While I've seen first hand some of the excellent work by schools and theatre groups, too many children around the country still do not have the opportunity to take part either on stage or behind the scenes.

Our Youth Performance Partnerships will give thousands of young people the chance to work directly with world-class cultural organisations and inspire the next generation of playwrights, actors or producers.

The Culture Secretary made the announcement during a visit to the BRIT School, Croydon.

Overseen by Arts Council England, one partnership was selected in the North, the Midlands, the South West, the South East and London. Proposals from areas where the level of young people engaging in the arts, culture and theatre are low and where there are less opportunities for young people to take part in performance were prioritised.

The Youth Performance Partnerships build upon the existing government investment in cultural education, in particular the successful Music Education Hubs which have so far helped more than 600,000 children a year access activities such as playing an instrument or joining a choir.

Darren Henley, Arts Council England CEO said:

Taking part in performances, whether on stage or behind the scenes, has huge benefits for children. They can express themselves, boost their mental health and wellbeing through creativity, and learn about career paths they might never have considered before. We're very pleased that the government is making these benefits more widely available to young people from all backgrounds through Youth Performance Partnerships.

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Notes to editors:

Details of the five successful Youth Partnerships Programme are:

London – Croydon Music and Arts

Led by Croydon Council, through the Croydon Music and Arts hub with a large number of partners including The BRIT School, this partnership will work with young South Londoners to create new performances that tell the story of young people of colour in Croydon. The project will include a talent academy, live performances and the opportunity to experience working backstage during live performances.

Working with 12 primary and eight secondary schools and over 2,500 students, the Croydon project will focus on young people from low income families, those with Special Educational Needs and young people at risk of exclusion.

Midlands – Derby Theatre (owned by the University of Derby)

Derby Theatre (owned by the University of Derby) will develop a programme that will work with partners from across the city to open up theatre making to young people taking influence from the local community. The scheme will target children aged between 8 and 18 from areas with high levels of poverty to nurture new skills and help young people find routes into creative careers.

Each of the hubs in this area will deliver weekly workshops and a year-long project working towards a high quality production of new commissions led by the partnership. Young producers will be on steering groups and opportunities for participants to take part in shadowing industry professionals.

North – The Lowry – Salford

Led by The Lowry who will be working with partners such as the BBC North, the programme will work with young people to support them as they move from primary to secondary school and from secondary education to work, focusing on mental health and wellbeing by developing transferable skills.

Twelve schools will take part in the programme in areas with low cultural engagement and high levels of poverty. It is expected that the programme will reach over 2,000 young people where they will work with artists to co-create new work including new performance companies in schools. A key focus of the programme will be on career opportunities so that young people, their families and schools understand the range of careers. The project will launch a Creative and Cultural Careers Fair for the North West to support this arm of the programme.

Partners in the programme also include: University of Salford, Walk The Plank, Salford Community Leisure and Salford City Council.

South East – Medway Council Brook Theatre

Building on the successful ART31 model of youth leadership, Theatre31 will allow young people in Medway and the Isle of Sheppey to take part in activities to support leadership, build confidence and team working, and improve literacy skills and wellbeing. A youth panel will provide leadership decisions with experts on hand to support. The project will also offer young people the opportunity to visit performances and experience life backstage.

Art 31 is a project led by The Gulbenkian Theatre for 13 to 25 year olds which enables young people to lead in designing and taking part in creative activities. The new Theatre31 model will be designed by young people with supporting expertise from the cultural sector. There will be opportunities for young people to develop performance skills, stagecraft, writing, set design and production.

South West – Theatre Royal Plymouth

In the South West the Theatre Royal will lead “With Flying Colours”, an ambitious performance programme that aims to work over 3,000 young people and their communities in Plymouth. The project will work with young people in areas of high deprivation and low cultural engagement to create pop ups, perform in community libraries and create plays in five schools.

Speech: PM statement at the EU Council: 21 March 2019

I have just met with Donald Tusk following the EU Council’s discussion on the UK’s request for the approval of the Strasbourg supplementary documents and for a short extension to the Article 50 process.

Firstly I welcome the Council’s approval of the legally-binding assurances in relation to the Northern Ireland backstop which I negotiated with President Juncker last week.

This should give extra assurance to Parliament that, in the unlikely event the backstop is ever used, it will only be temporary; and that the UK and the EU will begin work immediately to replace the backstop with alternative arrangements by the end of December 2020.

After a lengthy discussion, the council today also agreed, subject to a successful vote next week, that in order to provide time for the UK Parliament to agree and ratify a Brexit deal, the date of our departure will now be extended to 22 May.

If Parliament does not agree a deal next week, the EU Council will extend

Article 50 until 12 April. At this point we would either leave with no deal, or put forward an alternative plan.

If this involved a further extension it would mean participation in the European Parliamentary elections.

As I have said previously, I believe strongly that it would be wrong to ask people in the UK to participate in these elections three years after voting to leave the EU.

What the decision today underlines is the importance of the House of Commons passing a Brexit deal next week so that we can bring an end to the uncertainty and leave in a smooth and orderly manner.

Tomorrow morning, I will be returning to the UK and working hard to build support for getting the deal through.

I know MPs on all sides of the debate have passionate views, and I respect those different positions.

Last night I expressed my frustration. I know that MPs are frustrated too. They have difficult jobs to do.

I hope we can all agree, we are now at the moment of decision.

I will make every effort to ensure that we are able to leave with a deal and move our country forward.

Speech: Minister Field visits Paris to discuss anti-corruption and disinformation

Mark Field, Minister for Asia and the Pacific, attended the annual Global Anti-Corruption and Integrity Forum at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on 20-21 March. The forum was attended by more than 2,000 participants from government, private sector and civil society from over 120 countries.

This year's forum was focused on 'Tech for Trust': looking at how new technologies are not only changing government, business and society but also opening new avenues for corrupt behaviours and simultaneously offering new tools to address them.

In his speech to forum attendees, the Minister said:

Secretary General, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. It is a great pleasure

to be here with the corraling power of the OECD to bring together such a wide range of people from across the globe. Something I feel passionate about, I look upon this organisation as being one of the absolute pillars in this work and hope that you continue to stand up for these values.

And it's a great pleasure to follow you, Secretary General. I very much endorse what you said about using technology to help us tackle corruption, and I thank you for including the example of our Serious Fraud Office using Artificial Intelligence.

That is just one example among many.

Another is the OECD's Global Anti-Corruption & Integrity Hub, which the UK will be funding as part of our new £45 million Global Anti-Corruption Programme that I launched here yesterday.

The Hub will give all its users access to a huge bank of OECD data and analysis, and enable them to engage both with the OECD and with everyone else who is working to tackle corruption.

The UK is also successfully using technology to improve transparency and prevent corrupt interests inserting themselves in the public procurement process, thanks to our Government Digital Service.

Under our new Anti-Corruption Programme, we will be sharing this digital model with target countries to help them achieve greater transparency and scrutiny of bids for public contracts.

Secretary General, you rightly say that technology can also prove destructive in the wrong hands, which is why the theme of this conference – Tech for Trust – is so apt.

As technology becomes part of every sphere of life, trust – or lack of it – is becoming a real issue. This particularly applies to the media, including social media, so I am pleased that today's discussion will focus on that, and the dangers of disinformation.

Because as we are increasingly aware, corruption is not just about money. To its great credit, the OECD is trying to address the issue holistically, as this discussion shows.

Disinformation

Of course disinformation is by no means a new phenomenon.

Indeed, to be frank with you, at the height of the Cold War the UK was involved in activities which might today be characterised as propaganda or fake news. But those were very different times.

Today, mindful of our values, and the vital importance of freedom of speech, propaganda is not a tool we deploy, but an evil we strive to counter and expose. And there is a growing need to do so. Changes in how we read and process information, and the rise of the internet, have given new wings to an

age-old problem.

Technology has become a breeding ground for new and insidious ways to deceive audiences, and allow false or manipulated information to spread further and faster than ever before, often at low cost.

We know that more and more people rely on social media for their news and that many of them are aware that the information they are reading could have been manipulated. This has led to a growing sense of suspicion and distrust – even towards reputable news outlets.

In fact last year the Reuters Institute found that less than half of the UK population had faith in the news they were reading.

Of course the problem goes beyond undermining public trust in their news sources. When the information around us is deliberately confused, it can have serious, and much wider, consequences.

Conspiracy theories and malign information on social media can also fracture community cohesion; reduce trust in institutions; and undermine the perception of the integrity of governments, constitutions and democratic processes.

The UK Government is deeply concerned about this threat and we are taking action to confront it. Our aim is to take a ‘whole of society’ approach and to address the issue on three fronts:

First, by bearing down on the sources of disinformation themselves;

Secondly, by tackling vulnerabilities in social media that enable disinformation to spread;

and thirdly, by empowering audiences to recognise disinformation and protect themselves from it.

We are very aware of the balance between tackling online threats effectively on the one hand, while promoting technological innovation and respecting freedom of expression on the other.

Protecting media freedom, and our citizens’ freedom of expression, is absolutely fundamental because they are essential elements of any healthy democracy.

Whatever we do to tackle disinformation, we will not put those fundamental freedoms at risk. That’s because, as we all know, a robust, free, vibrant and varied media will itself help to challenge disinformation and raise awareness of it.

And we also know that the countries with the freest and most trusted media also suffer the least corruption.

London Conference

This is why, this year, the flagship campaign of the UK Foreign Office is about championing media freedom and the protection of journalists. As the centrepiece of that campaign, we will co-host, with Canada, a major international conference in London in July.

We will bring together ministers, key industry figures, civil society, academia and the media to push for a greater appreciation of the value of an independent media, and a more co-ordinated approach to securing the safety of media professionals.

I hope we can count on your support.

Conclusion

To conclude, ladies and gentlemen, while we must continue to embrace innovation and reap the benefits of new technologies, we must also ensure sufficient safeguards are in place against the threats they pose. Those threats are global and cannot be addressed by any one country alone.

It is therefore vital that we work together, in forums like this, to ensure that we keep abreast of new technologies – and ideally one step ahead of those who would misuse them.

The UK has a long tradition of championing good governance and fundamental human rights, including a free media. We are a steadfast opponent of corruption, in all its forms, and a steadfast advocate for an online environment that is free, open, peaceful and secure.

We are committed to working with our OECD partners, and with tech companies, industry, academia and civil society to create such an environment, one that is worthy of the trust of our citizens, and that respects and safeguards our fundamental human rights.

[Speech: Steady investments in a changing climate](#)

Emma Howard Boyd, UK Commissioner to the Global Commission on Adaptation and Chair of the Environment Agency speech at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

London, 21 March 2019

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Where we invest matters.

Last year, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said we have 12 years to hold global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels... and even if we do, the impacts of climate change – like floods, heatwaves, storms, the spread of disease, and drought – will significantly increase.

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We don't yet know the full extent of the impact of Cyclone Idai on Mozambique, Malawi, and Zimbabwe, but the UN estimate that 600,000 people are affected in Mozambique and 900,000 in Malawi.

The UK government is providing £18 million in aid to the region and will also match public donations up to £2 million.

The UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Mami Mizutori, said: "Cyclone Idai is a clear demonstration of the exposure and vulnerability of many low-lying cities and towns to sea-level rise as the impact of climate change continues to influence and disrupt normal weather patterns."

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The World Bank says one hundred million people are at risk of being pushed into poverty by climate change by 2030, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

The Overseas Development Institute says this will rise to 720 million by 2050.

Most developing countries face a 40% shortfall in meeting their water demand by 2030.

(You may have seen the Environment Agency Chief Executive's speech about the potential for water shortages here in England earlier this week – if not, please look it up).

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Around the world, there is not enough large scale investment in the systems needed to manage climate change.

For example, we know early warning and social protection systems are more effective than humanitarian responses to disasters – in human and economic terms – yet investment doesn't reflect this.

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Even if you don't usually think about humanitarian aims through the prism of finance – that is economically short-sighted.

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However complex the language of finance and climate change may seem, the two simple truths are:

- A. We are not reducing emissions fast enough.

And,

- B. Businesses, infrastructure, technology, and people are not prepared for weather impacts that we are certain will get worse in the next 11 years.

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It makes financial sense for our investments to meet both of these concerns.

Four years ago, Mark Carney said “the tragedy of the horizon” is that the catastrophic impacts of climate change will happen beyond the planning cycles of most banks.

By the time the impacts are felt, it will be too late to act.

He discussed 3 risks to the financial system posed by climate change.

- Liability risks (i.e. can people be sued for their previous emissions when the impacts hit?);
- Transition risks (i.e. the risks of destabilising the economy as we reduce emissions and prepare for impacts);

And,

Climate change already costs money.

A UN study found there were 335 weather-related disasters each year around the globe from 2005 to 2015, almost twice the number seen from 1985-1994.

Swiss Re estimates natural disaster losses have averaged \$180 billion annually in the last decade. And, remember, that is only insured losses.

In January – the World Economic Forum’s Global Risks Report ranked extreme weather events first, and the failure of climate change mitigation and adaptation second, on its table of global risks by likelihood.

Now, I know what you’re thinking...

“What does that mean for my mortgage?”

The insurance industry initiative ClimateWise – run from the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership – says losses on UK mortgages could double if global temperatures increase by 2°C and triple if warming hits 4°C...

Would mortgages be top of everyone's minds in a 4°C scenario?

I doubt it.

But – think about it, because we are currently on track for 3.5°C.

Weather events cause shocks to the economy by suddenly changing the availability and price of products.

For example:

In 2007/2008, drought in South and Southeast Asia reduced rice harvests.

India and Thailand put an export ban in place to protect domestic food security, which led to a spike in rice prices elsewhere.

In Senegal, a country that depends on imported rice, the increase in price led to food riots in Dakar in April 2008.

If a financial system is resilient – and can get back to normal again relatively quickly – then banks generally avoid taking action to stabilise the economy – because that could have unforeseen consequences further down the road.

But...

Last week, Guy Debelle, Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia, said:

The recent IPCC report documents that climate change is a trend rather than cyclical, which makes the assessment much more complicated. What if droughts are more frequent, or cyclones happen more often? The supply shock is no longer temporary but close to permanent. That situation is more challenging to assess and respond to.

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From the European Central Bank, executive board member Benoît Cœuré, has said:

Climate change will make it more difficult to correctly identify the shocks hitting the economy – which begs the question of banks: should they take non-standard, pre-emptive policy measures to avoid such risks... Catastrophic climate change could thus test the limits of how far monetary policy can go and, in the extreme, force us to rethink our current policy framework.

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Critics of these interventions say it is all very well bankers talking about this, but they haven't yet promised significant action.

Even in my most positive moments I don't pretend that green finance is now mainstream, but I do think something is beginning..

I look forward to Sarah Breeden talking about the Bank of England's action in a moment – which involves including climate change in its bank stress tests, and helping to set up the Network for Greening the Financial System.

This isn't only about banks.

All investors need to understand their money's impact better – whether they work in finance, or they have been automatically signed up to a company pension fund.

People need to ask:

Do businesses have the right skills at board level to manage climate change?

Are they properly considering their environmental impact?

Are boards putting aside capital expenditure for resilience measures to ensure business continuity?

Are asset managers telling the truth about green funds? Or are they blinding us with greenwash?

The Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures is helping investors understand the impact of their money.

And, the Environment Agency Pension Fund has set up the Transition Pathway Initiative with the Church of England National Investing Bodies to assess how companies are preparing for the transition to a low-carbon economy.

These initiatives help.

In the autumn, I became the UK Commissioner to the Global Commission on Adaptation.

Led by Ban Ki-moon, Bill Gates, and Kristalina Georgieva, CEO of the World Bank, the GCA will present an agenda for scaling up adaptation ahead of the UN Climate Summit in September.

It will guide Action Tracks on food security, infrastructure, finance, local action, cities, and nature-based solutions.

These will build on existing initiatives, giving them added impetus to set and scale tangible targets.

The Commission will facilitate a Year of Action, culminating in a Climate Adaptation Action Summit in 2020.

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Also at the UN summit, the UK government will lead on climate resilience.

The government wants to deliver:

1. A systemic shift in the way the public and private sectors think about investment. With \$6 trillion per year to be invested in infrastructure up to 2030, investment decisions should account for, and respond to, climate risk.
2. Better capacity to manage climate shocks around the world. This includes better targeting of investments and building human and physical capacity to cope with current and future climate risks.

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This spring, the government has committed to publish the UK's first ever Green Finance Strategy, setting out the steps they are taking to attract investment into a clean, and resilient, economy and cementing the UK's position as a global leader.

I want to thank the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and everyone here today, for helping us develop the GCA's paper on climate resilience and finance. I look forward to discussing this further as the evening goes on.

I also look forward to hearing about further developments from the UK government and the GCA during London Climate Week in July.

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In 2019 and 2020, there are many moments to help shift perceptions, increase demand, and co-ordinate action and investment on climate change.

All of this presents long-term opportunities for investors.

In a world that feels increasingly unsteady underfoot, investments with a modest, stable return – that may have looked pedestrian in the past but are resilient to the impacts of climate change in the future – are beginning to look pretty good.

As market interest increases, we should be looking to incorporate resilience, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in the development of infrastructure, technology, and economies everywhere – from the vast Belt and Road Initiative of the Chinese government, to the 300,000 new homes a year our government is aiming at by the mid-2020s.

I recently spoke at a conference with a co-panellist who suggested that the implications of the economic transition to manage climate change were so great – that they could prove insurmountable in a democracy.

I disagree.

Our responsibility, as professionals in the finance industry is to show leadership, so that governments and the public can disprove that suggestion.

Why?

Because soon we will all be over the hill.

If we don't act, we may well reflect on where the horizon once was...

...and consider that the real tragedy was we spent our money in a way that was not just financially myopic, but morally bankrupt.

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Thank you very much.