

Turning ambition into action for adaptation to the effects of climate change ahead of COP26

Good afternoon. And thank you to everyone for joining this event, and to our German friends for co-hosting it.

It is a real pleasure to help to launch this water sector initiative today.

For too long, adaptation has been the poor cousin of mitigation.

And – I can tell you – adaptation is very much a top priority for the UK's COP26 Presidency.

That is why the UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, launched the Adaption Action Coalition earlier this year, with our friends in Egypt, Bangladesh, Malawi, Netherlands and St Lucia.

And I am very pleased so many members are with us at this event to share their experiences.

The AAC builds on the Call to Action I launched with partners when I was UK Secretary of State for International Development, in 2019.

It's about converting the political ambition into action.

So it is fantastic to see the AAC going strong, with this first event today. And, of course, its first international collaboration: the water tracker.

We all know that, even if we reached net zero today, the world would still need to deal with significant climate shocks and disruption.

And too often, water is a casualty.

Whether through droughts, floods, or sea level rises, extreme weather events make it harder for communities to access clean water.

This impacts health, it impacts livelihoods, food production and more. And ultimately threatens economic growth.

But the very fact that water is so fundamental to life means responsibility is split between many different areas of individual governments.

Policies can suffer from a lack of integration, and are harder to fund as a result.

The tracker the Adaptation Action Coalition is launching today seeks to tackle those problems.

And look at how water can be integrated across countries' Nationally

Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans, and national climate plans, creating detailed, consistent plans to help attract public and private funding, and demonstrating the impact we can have when we work together.

This tracker is supported by the UK, and delivered in partnership with the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation, Sanitation and Water for All, as well as the Global Water Partnership.

I very much look forward to hearing in Glasgow later this year about the progress that has been made.

And I wish you the very best for your discussion today, which is about putting the vital ambitions of the AAC into practice.

And of course helping to create a safer, more resilient world for all of us.

Thank you.