

# UK kicks off Climate Week NYC with a series of ambitious climate commitments

- 22 regions, 452 cities, 1,128 businesses, 549 universities and 45 of the biggest investors have now joined the Race to Zero, the global campaign for a zero-carbon world, including Facebook and Ford
- UK Government launches the COP26 Energy Transition Council, which brings together political, financial and technical leaders in the global power sector to accelerate the transition to clean energy
- £50 million UK Government funding invested in a new Clean Energy Innovation Facility, which aims to support innovative clean technologies in developing countries

COP26 President and Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Alok Sharma will announce a series of new climate commitments today at the launch of Climate Week NYC, which runs alongside [the UNGA](#).

He will confirm that major new companies have joined the Race to Zero campaign to accelerate net zero commitments from businesses, cities, regions and investors, including Ford, the first US automotive company to join; LafargeHolcim, the world's largest cement company; and global social media company Facebook. Their decision demonstrates the clear momentum behind the shift towards a decarbonised economy.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Lord Callanan, will also be speaking at a special event on Monday, about the next decade of clean energy cooperation.

Lord Callanan will announce the launch of the COP26 Energy Transition Council to bring together leaders in the power sector across politics, finance and technology to speed up the transition from coal to renewables in developing countries.

The UK will chair the Council alongside the co-chair Damilola Ogunbiyi, the UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL). Together, members will drive the shift to green energy ahead of COP26.

The launch of the Council comes as the UK Government announces a £50 million investment in a new Clean Energy Innovation Facility (CEIF) under the UK's International Climate Finance.

This funding will help developing countries more easily access innovative clean energy technologies to foster clean growth, focusing on key sectors such as industry, cooling, smart energy and storage.

Alok Sharma, COP26 President and UK Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, said:

Climate change affects every single one of us and we all have a part to play to champion climate action ahead of COP26.

Through the Energy Transition Council and the UK's ambitious climate finance commitments, I hope to drive the transition to cleaner energies, and I urge all businesses, cities and regions to join the Race to Zero coalition.

Damilola Ogunbiyi, CEO and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL), said:

We cannot achieve the promise of the Paris Agreement or Sustainable Development Goal 7 – access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all – without a clean energy transition that leaves no one behind.

Today, just under 800 million people globally lack access to electricity and we must close these gaps with renewable, efficient and affordable solutions.

The COP26 Energy Transition Council will play a leading role in supporting countries to move away from fossil fuels and unleash a prosperous, equitable and clean energy transition as they recover better from the pandemic.

Ahead of COP26, the UN High Level Dialogue on Energy will support this vision, including through Energy Compacts and multi-stakeholder partnerships that aim to accelerate universal energy transition and access.

Patricia Espinosa, UNFCCC Executive Secretary, said:

Those involved in the Race to Zero have made a commitment to build that future and to achieve specific goals and will be held to those promises.

The world cannot afford to be let down. Nor can this campaign become something that allows nations to defer action until a later date. It's about needing more climate ambition and climate action now—in 2020.

## **Notes to editors**

The 'COP26 & the Zero Carbon Growth Agenda' opening event at Climate Week NYC will bring together global leaders from business and government including:

- Alok Sharma, COP26 President and UK Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

- Michael R. Bloomberg, Founder, Bloomberg LP & Bloomberg Philanthropies, 108th Mayor of New York City
- Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary, UN Climate Change

The event will be convened by Nigel Topping and Gonzalo Muñoz, UN High Level Climate Champions and leaders of the Race to Zero campaign, in a collaboration with the Climate Group, to showcase how the economic net zero transformation is accelerating and highlight the scale of the opportunity to create good jobs, protect public health and level up society.

- Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) can now join the SME climate hub, a toolkit which makes it easier for them to join the Race to Zero. The hub is run by the International Chamber of Commerce and Exponential Roadmap with the support of the UNFCCC.
- Lord Callanan will announce the Energy Transitions Council in an event from the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM) and Mission Innovation (MI), on clean energy cooperation, where he will be joined by other Council members: International Energy Agency Executive Director, Fatih Birol, International Renewable Energy Agency Director General, Francesco La Camera, and Damilola Ogunbiyi, UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Sustainable Energy for All

### **Full list of members of the Energy Transitions Council**

- Chair: COP26 President, Alok Sharma. Minister Kwarteng as Deputy Chair.
- Co-Chair: CEO and Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Sustainable Energy for All, Co-Chair of UN-Energy, Damilola Ogunbiyi
- International Energy Agency (IEA) Executive Director, Fatih Birol
- International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Director General, Francesco La Camera
- World Bank (WB) Managing Director of Development Policy and Partnerships, Mari Pangestu
- African Development Bank (AfDB) Vice President Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth, Kevin Kariuki
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) Vice President for Sustainable Development, Bambang Susantono
- International Labour Organisation (ILO) Director of Enterprise, Victor Van Vuuren

Funding for the Clean Energy Innovation Facility forms part of the UK Government's International Climate Finance spend, which refers to UK aid support given to developing countries to deal with the causes of climate change and to prepare for its effects.

The UK [has committed at least £11.6 billion from 2021/22 to 2025/26](#).

## **About Race to Zero**

Race to Zero [is the international campaign for a healthy, resilient zero carbon recovery](#).

Led by the UNFCCC Champions for Climate Action, it aims to bring together net

zero commitments from cities, businesses and investors across the climate action community in the run up to COP26.

Race to Zero collaborates with the following international networks and initiatives, which have independently been mobilising net zero commitments. All of them require their participants to meet the Race to Zero's minimum criteria:

- The Argentinian Network of Municipalities
- B Corporations
- The B Team
- Business Ambition for 1.5 C – Our Only Future
- C40's Deadline 2020
- Chambers Climate Coalition
- Fashion Charter for Climate Action
- Global Universities and Colleges for the Climate
- ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability
- Net-Zero Asset Owners Alliance
- United States Climate Alliance
- Under2Coalition
- We Mean Business
- The Climate Pledge
- TED Countdown

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