

UK Minister for International Environment stresses need to work with Bangladesh to tackle climate change

UK Minister of State Lord Zac Goldsmith saw the impact of climate change in Bangladesh, on agriculture, health and livelihoods, as increased flooding in both rural and urban areas is displacing people from their homes. The Minister discussed ways in which nature-based solutions – working with, rather than against, nature – can help overcome these challenges.

Bangladesh, located on the delta of three major rivers and with a dense population, is one of the world's most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change. More than 70 percent of the population is exposed to cyclones, and the resulting economic impact is significant.

The UK has supported Bangladesh in its efforts to adapt to and build resilience against climate shocks, including by giving 27 million people in the country access to early warning systems for floods and cyclones and protecting 40,000 hectares of cultivable land against monsoon flooding.

UK Minister of State Lord Zac Goldsmith said

“Developing countries like Bangladesh are the hardest hit by climate change. The work taking place here to help adapt to its impacts and build resilience is an example for the world to follow. The UK is proud to support it.

“As COP26 Presidents, we are encouraging countries to come forward with ambitious visions to put nature-based solutions at the heart of plans to tackle climate change.”

During his virtual visit, Lord Goldsmith met with Mr Nasrul Hamid, State Minister for the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources and discussed Bangladesh's increasing demand for reliable energy, and the potential to replace coal with renewable energy generation.

He also met with Professor Saleemul Huq, Director, International Centre for Climate Change and Development, which is working with Oxford University to encourage the integration of nature-based solutions in Bangladesh.

The British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert Chatterton Dickson said

“The climate emergency is a vital issue for the world. As COP26 and Climate Vulnerable Forum Chairs, the UK and Bangladesh have key roles to play together in leading global efforts to tackle it.

“I am very pleased that Lord Goldsmith has met key Bangladeshi partners in Government, the research community and civil society. They had useful discussions to learn about how we can work together both locally and internationally as a joint force for good in tackling climate change, and

helping the world build back greener from the COVID pandemic.”

More Information

- Next year, the UK will host the UN climate change conference COP26 in Glasgow with its partner Italy.
- Since 2008, UK aid funding has helped over 27 million people in Bangladesh gain access to early warning systems for floods and cyclones; installed 249 solar irrigation pumps serving 6,062 farmers, has protected 40,000 hectares of cultivable land against monsoon flooding; and provided emergency assistance and recovery support after disasters to more than 900,000 people.
- To address this year’s devastating floods in Bangladesh, UK aid has provided £950,000 of rapid release funding to NGOs through the START Fund. This is supporting cash assistance, water, sanitation, hygiene, health, shelter, and search and rescue to over 83,000 people.
- The UK is the third largest bilateral donor overall in Bangladesh, providing more than £350 million in aid since 2018.
- Since 2011, UK aid investment globally has provided 33 million people with improved access to clean energy, including connections to off-grid renewable energy sources, access to solar lanterns and clean cook stoves. It has also helped 66 million people to cope with the effects of climate change, for example by providing training on how to grow climate-resilient crops.

Further information

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