

# UK sets ambitious new climate target ahead of UN Summit

- Prime Minister announces ambitious new emissions target setting the UK on the path to net zero by 2050, leading the way in tackling climate change globally
- new plan aims for at least 68% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the end of the decade, compared to 1990 levels
- UK commits to reducing emissions by the fastest rate of any major economy, ahead of the Climate Ambition Summit later this month
- target follows the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan to create and support 250,000 jobs whilst helping to eradicate our contribution to climate change

The Prime Minister has today (Friday 4 December) announced a new ambitious target to reduce the UK's emissions by at least 68% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.

Recognising the urgency to go further to tackle climate change, the UK's new target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions – our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Climate Agreement – is among the highest in the world and commits the UK to cutting emissions at the fastest rate of any major economy so far.

Today's target is the first set by the UK following its departure from the EU, demonstrating the UK's leadership in tackling climate change. Over the past decade, the UK has cut carbon emissions by more than any similar developed country and was the first major economy to legislate for net zero emissions by 2050.

The announcement comes ahead of the UK co-hosting the Climate Ambition Summit on Saturday 12 December, which will coincide with the fifth anniversary of the historic Paris Agreement. The summit calls on countries around the world to submit ambitious NDCs or other climate plans as we head towards the UN COP26 climate talks, which the UK government is hosting in Glasgow next year.

This new target meets the recommendation of experts at the independent Climate Change Committee who advise the government on emissions targets.

The UK's path to meeting this target is backed by the Prime Minister's [Ten Point Plan for a green industrial revolution](#), which will create and support up to 250,000 British jobs by 2030. The plan sets out ambitious policies and investment, with the potential to deliver over £40 billion of private investment by 2030, so that we can develop innovative technologies and make significant strides in cutting emissions across energy, transport and buildings. It also provides a roadmap of further action the UK will be taking to reduce emissions in the coming decades, encouraging similar levels of ambition from businesses, organisations and nations around the world.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

We have proven we can reduce our emissions and create hundreds of thousands of jobs in the process – uniting businesses, academics, NGOs and local communities in a common goal to go further and faster to tackle climate change.

Today, we are taking the lead with an ambitious new target to reduce our emissions by 2030, faster than any major economy, with our Ten Point Plan helping us on our path to reach it.

But this is a global effort, which is why the UK is urging world leaders as part of next week's Climate Ambition Summit to bring forward their own ambitious plans to cut emissions and set net zero targets.

Business and Energy Secretary and COP26 President Alok Sharma said:

Tackling climate change is the one of the most urgent shared endeavours of our lifetimes, demanding bold action from every nation to prevent catastrophic global warming.

As a country, we have demonstrated we can both rapidly cut carbon emissions, while creating new jobs, new technologies and future-proof industries that will generate economic growth for decades to come.

The UK's new emissions target is among the highest in the world and reflects the urgency and scale of the challenge our planet faces. I hope other countries join us and raise the bar at next week's UN Climate Ambition Summit, and ahead of the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow next year.

Each party to the Paris Agreement – including countries and international blocs such as the European Union – determines what domestic action it will take and communicates it in a Nationally Determined Contribution.

NDCs are at the heart of the Paris Agreement goal, set at COP21 in 2015, to hold the global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees and pursue best efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C.

Together, these plans will determine whether the world will achieve the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement, including global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible.

Many countries have now made net zero commitments and this round of NDCs, which set a 2030 emission reduction target, will need to be consistent with those longer term commitments. The UK's announcement, which reflects the independent Climate Change Committee's advice on net zero, does just this.

Today's announcement comes ahead of the UK co-hosting a virtual Climate Ambition Summit on 12 December, which will coincide with the fifth anniversary of the historic Paris Agreement.

The Climate Ambition Summit provides a platform for leaders who are ready to come forward with announcements of new, more ambitious nationally determined contributions and long-term strategies to net zero, as well as new climate finance pledges and ambitious adaptation plans.

Peter Simpson, CEO of Anglian Water and Co-Chair of The Prince of Wales's Corporate Leaders Group, said:

Credible plans matter in the race to zero, so today's announcement is welcomed. It's why the water industry recently launched its own routemap to net zero by 2030. There's never been a more important time for companies to step up, invest, and take action to support both national ambition and global need, and this expectation is something our customers have been very clear about. COP26 means the spotlight is on. Climate change won't wait for us, and the time for action is now.

Alison Rose, Chief Executive Officer NatWest Group, principal partners of COP26:

NatWest Group is committed to helping the government deliver green investment and growth. As the leading bank in the UK for business customers we have a significant responsibility to lead the way in helping people across the UK tackle climate change and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and we welcome the government's announcement today.

Anders Opedal, CEO of Equinor, said:

As a significant and growing investor in the UK, Equinor welcomes this increased climate ambition, which will encourage more investment and job creation in a UK low-carbon economy. Equinor aims to be a net-zero company by 2050, and works together with the UK government and society to develop solutions towards a low-carbon future. Equinor is currently actively involved in technology development, offshore wind, and hydrogen and carbon capture and storage projects in the UK. We look forward to future exciting announcements.

Alistair Phillips-Davies, Chief Executive, SSE, said:

The UK's 2030 ambition set out by the Prime Minister today is among

the most ambitious in the world and we're excited about working alongside government to deliver it. This kind of bold and decisive policy-making will help unlock the investment needed to deliver on our net zero ambitions, tackle climate change and help spur a green recovery from the coronavirus crisis.

This target provides a clear, long-term signal for businesses like SSE to get on and deliver. With a £7.5 billion low-carbon investment programme, including building the world's largest offshore wind farm at Dogger Bank, we're playing our part and want to do more to demonstrate the UK's international leadership as we build towards COP26 next year – from pioneering carbon capture and storage technology to building the network infrastructure needed to accommodate the coming surge in renewables, electric vehicles and heat pumps.

Stephen Moorhouse, Vice President and General Manager, Great Britain, Coca-Cola European Partners, said:

At Coca-Cola European Partners in GB we have reduced our carbon impact by more than a third over the last decade but we know much more is needed. We are one of many organisations who have signed the Business Ambition for 1.5 pledge as we understand the importance of businesses collaborating with clear and ambitious targets to tackle climate change. We welcome the bold commitment from the UK government as a crucial step to accelerate the transition to net zero.

Jason Tarry, CEO, UK & Republic of Ireland, Tesco, said:

It's critical Britain sets a clear pathway of action to lead the fight against climate change, and this confirmation of an ambitious NDC is an important step on that journey. Our supply chain and long-term business sustainability depend on the health of the natural environment, and our customers and colleagues expect Tesco to play its part in caring for the planet, which is why we've brought forward our own ambition to reach net zero in our UK operations by 15 years, to 2035.

Jeremy Darroch, Group Chief Executive, Sky, said:

This is a vital step forward and should focus all our minds on the urgency of the climate crisis. How we respond to this crisis will define our generation, so it's right that the government has set bold and ambitious targets. We only have one chance to get this right and business wants to work with the government as we approach COP26 to be a positive part of the solution, helping us build back

in a sustainable way.

Keith Anderson CEO ScottishPower said:

Today's announcement marks a significant acceleration in the race to zero and aligns with our own ambition at ScottishPower to build back greener and help lead the response to the climate emergency.

We are investing £10 billion in the next 5 years towards doubling our renewable generation capacity, delivering the network infrastructure required to support decarbonisation across transport and heat as well as offering our customers 100% clean power – all of which will create jobs, strengthen supply chains and drive innovation across the energy sector. This ambitious new target will help shape a decade of delivery with both purpose and momentum, putting us all on the path to a better future quicker.

Andy Wales, Chief Digital Impact and Sustainability Officer at BT Group said:

We welcome today's announcement by the UK government, which sets ambitious targets and sends a clear signal that we need to transition to a low carbon economy. It's encouraging to see the UK using its presidency of the G7 and COP26 to demonstrate leadership on climate action and inspire others to raise their ambitions.

BT has long recognised the importance of setting ambitious carbon reduction targets. We were one of the first companies in the world to set a 1.5°C aligned science-based target – to reduce the carbon emissions intensity of our business by 87% by 2030. Beyond that we've pledged to become a net zero carbon emissions business by 2045.

The UK's previous NDC target was 53%.

The UK will communicate its full Nationally Determined Contributions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by the Climate Ambition Summit on 12 December, including the accompanying Information to Facilitate Clarity, Transparency and Understanding (ICTU).

Departments across government have worked to identify the highest possible ambition for the UK's target, building on robust analysis of domestic decarbonisation potential; reflecting advice from the CCC and reflecting the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement and the equity principles identified in the IPCC 5th Assessment Report.

The UK's NDC target does not include international aviation and shipping. This is in line with common NDC practice. The UK is supportive of multilateral action to tackle international aviation and shipping emissions

through the International Civil Aviation Organisation and International Maritime Organisation, and has set out action to reduce emission in aviation and shipping as part of the 10 point plan.

The UK was the first major economy to legislate for a net zero target, which as the CCC has outlined is compatible with the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement.

In July 2020, the COP26 President-Designate, Alok Sharma, [set out the UK's ask](#) for countries to submit more ambitious NDCs and long-term strategies to net zero emissions.

We intend to meet our NDC through domestic action, and not through using international credits.

As incoming COP Presidency, we remain firmly committed to working with all UNFCCC Parties to agree Paris Agreement rules on international market cooperation at COP26.