

2022 is a critical year for biodiversity and our planet: UK statement to the OSCE

The protection, restoration and sustainable management of natural resources are essential to mitigate the impacts of the climate and biodiversity crises, which pose a threat to international peace and stability. This is no truer than in the case of water, which is increasingly a threat multiplier.

In 2013, there were 27 events in which water was a trigger for conflict. Four years later, this had risen to 71.

This upward trend is caused by the growing global water crisis. With only 3 percent of the earth's water freshwater – and most of this inaccessible, degraded or unevenly distributed – scarcity is compounded by population growth, food and energy demands, and climate change. Estimates suggest that four billion people now live in areas with severe water scarcity; and that by 2030 there could be around 700 million people displaced because of water scarcity, affecting national and regional security.

We see these trends play out in our region regularly, particularly in Central Asia where tensions over scarce water resources, and unilateral water infrastructure developments, have aggravated existing disputes and contributed to new conflicts.

Accessing water continues to be a grave issue for those living in conflict zones. Russia's deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure has led to extensive power and water shortages, causing further suffering for the Ukrainian people. Just two weeks ago, parts of the Ukrainian city of Kryvyi Rih were flooded after Russia attacked a nearby dam.

The OECD has said that as a result of damage to water supply infrastructure in Ukraine, an estimated 1.4 million people currently have no access to safe water, and a further 4.6 million people have only limited access. To help relieve Ukraine from these effects of Russia's brutal aggression, the UK has donated 856 generators to Ukraine to power essential services, including water pumping stations.

However, there is potential for water to play a role in reducing conflict. Water historically has more often led to cooperation than conflict between countries. For example, in the period 1948-2000, co-operative events over international waters outweighed conflictual ones by two to one.

Cooperation over water can also benefit other areas, such as peace, security and prosperity through positive impacts on food security, economic stability, improved regional integration, and better trade relations.

Promoting this cooperation, states need to apply diplomatic tools such as

negotiations, fact-finding missions, and the establishment of consultation platforms for existing or emerging disagreements. This is where the OSCE is well placed to play a role. We celebrate the work the OCEEA does to enhance co-operation over transboundary water resource management, and to integrate women's voices.

Mr Chair,

2022 is a critical year for biodiversity and our planet. The UK is committed to working with the OSCE and other international partners to secure an ambitious [post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#) to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. We will continue to champion protection of at least 30% of land and ocean globally.

In collaboration with others, the UK has developed a [10 Point Plan for Financing Biodiversity](#), launched at UNGA last month. The plan defines a clear pathway for bridging the global nature finance gap, and I invite all colleagues here to endorse the 10 point plan ahead of the biodiversity COP later this year. Further, I hope states will join the UK in taking steps to ensure all Overseas Development Assistance becomes 'nature positive'; and supporting the full and effective implementation of the [Multilateral Development Banks' COP26 Joint Statement on Nature, People and Planet](#).

[Inquiry opened into Brighton Mosque](#)

Press release

The Charity Commission has opened a statutory inquiry into Brighton Mosque & Muslim Community Centre (1122974) and appointed an Interim Manager.



The Commission opened the inquiry due to regulatory concerns resulting from a failure to resolve a dispute at the charity which is having a detrimental impact on the charity's governance and administration.

On 28 September 2022, the inquiry exercised the Commission's legal powers and

appointed an Interim Manager to the charity to the exclusion of the parties in dispute. Mr Andrew Wilkinson of Shakespeare Martineau LLP takes charge of the management and operation of the charity and amongst other things will identify and appoint new trustees to the charity.

Earlier this year, the regulator issued the charity with an [Official Warning](#) after a former trustee was convicted of encouraging terrorism in a speech given on the charity's premises. The Commission determined that the trustees knew or ought to have known the risk that this individual posed to the charity and set out the actions trustees should take to protect the charity and its beneficiaries from abuse. However, due to an ongoing dispute at the charity about control of its administration and management, there is an increased risk that appropriate actions will not be taken to protect the charity from further undue risk of harm.

The charity has also experienced financial management issues and submitted its statutory annual returns late for its past four financial periods. The Commission is concerned generally about the impact of the dispute on the charity's ability to operate sustainably and for the benefit of its beneficiaries. The parties to the dispute have not, as advised repeatedly by the Commission, been able to appropriately settle the dispute in the best interests of the charity.

In order to investigate relevant matters further, and use its powers of protection and remedy, the regulator opened a statutory inquiry on 3 August 2022. The inquiry will examine the administration, governance and management of the charity and in particular:

- Whether the trustees have been properly appointed and/or removed at the charity since autumn 2021, in accordance with the governing document of the charity.
- Whether there is an accurate and clear understanding at the charity about establishing its members, including in terms of notifying and consulting with members about all relevant events at the charity.
- Whether the trustees have learnt from the issues which led to the charity receiving an Official Warning from the Commission in May 2022 and are willing, and able, to further the charity's objects in an appropriate manner.
- Whether the charity's income and expenditure has been properly accounted for, since autumn 2021, as part of appropriate financial management.
- Whether the charity's expenditure has been used to carry out activities that exclusively furthered a charitable purpose.

The Commission may extend the scope of the inquiry if additional issues emerge.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales.

Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

2. Section 76(3)(g) of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission power to appoint an interim manager to a charity to act as receiver and manager in respect of the property and affairs of the charity.
3. Interim managers are appointed where the Commission has identified misconduct and/or mismanagement in the administration of a charity, or where it is necessary or desirable to protect a charity's property. It is a protective measure.

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[First containers sealed into Dounreay low level waste vaults](#)

News story

Dounreay's waste team is carrying out the first in a series of campaigns to seal the waste into place in the low level waste vaults.



As part of the waste disposal process, the spaces between the containers in the low level waste vault are being filled with grout.

The team undertook a series of trials to confirm that the grout would readily flow between the containers and also tested the membranes that will be used to seal the grout shutters.

A first campaign of grouting has now been completed within the vault and 16 waste packages have been sealed into their final positions. Further grouting campaigns of increasing size are planned.

In parallel with this work, the external space around the outside of the walls of the vault has been backfill filled with aggregate. In the first phase of this work, enough aggregate to fill an Olympic sized swimming pool

has been used to fill up to 2.5m high around the structure. This is only 2% of the total volume of material that will be needed to backfill, cap and close the 2 vaults once they are full.

Project Manager Graeme Morgan said:

This work is a strategically important demonstration that we can carry out this crucial part of the disposal process, which will eventually enable us to close the vault.

Senior Engineer Angus Mackay added:

We've had a fantastic level of support from so many people across the site and the quality of the workmanship has been superb. It's great to see the disposal process moving forward.

The work has been completed by a team from Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd along with local contractors Arch Henderson, John Gunn & Sons, JGC Engineering and Hugh Simpson Contractors.

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[Teenagers could be missing out on a stash of cash](#)

Tens of thousands of teenagers in the UK who have not yet claimed their matured Child Trust Funds savings could have thousands of pounds waiting for them, reminds HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Child Trust Funds are long-term savings accounts set up for every child born between 1 September 2002 and 2 January 2011. To encourage future saving and start the account, the government provided an initial deposit of at least £250.

The savings accounts mature when the child turns 18 years old. Eligible teenagers, who are aged 18 or over and have yet to access their Child Trust Fund account, could have savings waiting for them worth an average of £2,100.

If teenagers or their parents and guardians already know who their Child Trust Fund provider is, they can contact them directly. This might be a bank, building society or other savings provider.

Many eligible teenagers who have yet to claim their savings might be starting university, apprenticeships or their first job. The lump-sum amount could offer a financial boost at a time when they need it most.

Angela MacDonald, HMRC's Second Permanent Secretary and Deputy Chief Executive, said:

Teenagers could have a pot of money waiting for them worth thousands of pounds and not even realise it. We want to help you access your savings and the money you're entitled to.

To find out more search 'Child Trust Fund' on GOV.UK.

An estimated 6.3 million Child Trust Fund accounts were set up throughout the duration of the scheme, containing about £9 billion. If a parent or guardian was not able to set up an account for their child, HMRC opened a savings account on the child's behalf.

Teenagers aged 16 or over can take control of their own Child Trust Fund if they wish, although the funds can only be withdrawn once they turn 18 years old.

Where children have a Child Trust Fund, families can still pay in up to £9,000 a year tax-free. The account matures once the child turns 18 years old and no further money can be deposited. They can either withdraw the funds from the matured Child Trust Fund account or reinvest it into another savings account.

Until the child withdraws or transfers the money, it stays in an account that no-one else has access to.

The Child Trust Fund scheme closed in January 2011 and was replaced with [Junior Individual Savings Accounts \(ISA\)](#).

More information about [Child Trust Funds](#).

The government is offering [help for households](#). Check GOV.UK to find out what cost of living support you could be eligible for.

[Call for Bids: Australia Network's UK Trade Partnerships Fund FTA Utilisation](#)

World news story

The FTA is an opportunity for the UK to engage with Australian industry, policy makers, implementers and regulators to deliver and fully implement the FTA and identify any future barriers to trade in goods and services.



Background

The UK and Australia Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was signed in December 2021 and will be critical to strengthening the UK-Australia bilateral trading relationship. It will set new global standards in goods and services and is expected to unlock £10.4 billion of additional trade.

Scope of work

The FTA is an opportunity for the UK to engage with Australian industry, policy makers, implementers and regulators to deliver and fully implement the FTA and identify any future barriers to trade in goods and services. The FTA encapsulates the future trading relationship with Australia to include pioneering chapters in innovation, gender equality and the transition to net zero.

Through a scalable number of activities including (but not limited to) workshops, roundtables, trade missions, business engagement and reporting, we would like to demonstrate the benefits of fully implementing the intentions of the following UK-AU FTA chapters;

Further benefit includes building bilateral business networks and raising the profile of the FTA to ensure its future utilisation.

Timelines

The bidder is required to deliver phased outputs against set timelines (subject to confirmation).

The duration of this project is likely to be around five months (November 2022 to April 2023).

No.	Deliverable	Anticipated activities (not limited to)	Milestone date
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No.	Deliverable	Anticipated activities (not limited to)	Milestone date
1	Accountable Grant signed with chosen bidder and start the implementation	Proposed work plan for the whole programme	Last week of October 2022
2	Programme design report	Detailed list of finalised activities for the programme	2nd week November 2022
3	Delivery of activity	Finalise activity events, dates, locations	November 2022 onwards
4	Final report of delivery activity and findings	Summarise delivery activity	April 2022

Selection Criteria

Bids will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Project design: Feasibility of activities and outputs including the capacity of the implementing organisation to deliver outcomes.
- Impact: Supporting identifiable, meaningful activities to enhance impact of the project.
- Scalability: The potential for the project to act as a building block for subsequent FTA implementation activity.
- Viability and risks: Clear engagement/buy-in of key stakeholders. Robust analysis of key risks and a plan of action to manage and mitigate those risks.
- Value for money: Comparable and reasonable costs against the scale of achievable outcomes.

We draw your attention to the below key points:

- Proposals should be between £8,000 – £20,000 (\$13,000 – \$34,000 AUD).
- All funding must be activity-based (i.e. not for general support staff costs (admin, finance support), office rental etc.).

Process

1. Project proposals must be received by 23:59 (GMT) on Monday 17th October 2022. Late proposals will not be considered.
2. Proposals must be submitted using the attached forms only.
3. Proposals must be submitted to: Australia.ProgrammeFunding@fcdo.gov.uk

Attachments

[Activity Based Budget Template](#) (ODS, 9.84 KB)

[Project Proposal Form up to £10k](#) (ODT, 54 KB)

[Project Proposal Form above £10k](#) (ODT, 61.3 KB)

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