

UK and India deepen work on climate change on the road to successful COP26

Press release

UK and India agree urgent action to tackle climate change during leader-level call



- UK and India agree joint roadmap including plans to combat climate change by 2030, as Prime Ministers meet virtually
- It includes new collaboration on clean energy transition and protecting forests, and joint leadership to develop resilient infrastructure in climate vulnerable countries
- The roadmap will support global efforts to limit global temperature rises and achieve an ambitious outcome at COP26

The UK and India agreed on urgent action to tackle climate change through new, shared commitments during today's leader-level call.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Prime Minister Narendra Modi signed off on a new shared roadmap during their virtual meeting that includes measures to help limit global temperature rises and support the communities most vulnerable to the impact of climate change.

They reaffirmed their personal commitment to work together for an ambitious outcome at the COP26 climate summit in November and sustained action beyond.

COP26 President-Designate Alok Sharma said:

The UK and India share a longstanding partnership and I am greatly encouraged by the steps we have taken today to bolster our joint efforts on tackling climate change.

If the world is to become net zero by the middle of the century and keep 1.5 degrees in reach, everyone must raise their ambition within this decade and work together to make real change for a cleaner, greener planet.

I am proud of the close collaboration on this crucial issue which our two countries have forged, especially during this very difficult time for India as it battles with COVID.

The roadmap sets out an ambitious agenda for UK-India collaboration on fighting climate change, including:

- A new partnership on clean energy transition, which will drive progress on development of renewables like offshore wind, improved energy efficiency and storage, and advances in electric mobility. Both countries also committed to collaborating on green hydrogen.
- Jointly launch a new global Green Grids Initiative at COP26 for countries to work together on interconnected grids for renewable energy, to help deliver India's vision of One Sun One World One Grid
- Joint action through the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), which the UK and India co-chair. This will support Small Island Developing States to prepare for the impacts of climate change by bolstering their infrastructure.
- Positioning the UK and India as global leaders on biodiversity through strengthening collaboration to protect and restore nature, including through a new joint partnership on forests. This will strengthen how we share expertise and information and accelerate a global transition to more sustainable supply chains by bringing together producer and consumer countries of forest risk commodities to share ideas and take action.
- The two sides will explore the possibility of enhanced partnerships with major private finance leaders, including with the Climate Finance Leadership Initiative, to mobilise both public and private finance for green development.
- A new phase of collaboration on the India Energy Security Scenarios Calculator initiative, to support climate policy and planning.

India and the UK have also welcomed climate action by businesses and encouraged other companies to do the same. Businesses who have recently made Net Zero commitments through the UN's 'Race to Zero' campaign include the Neev Fund, Engineering Export Promotion Council of India, Gayam Motor Works, M/s Claro Energy Ltd, Commonwealth Inclusive Growth Services Ltd, Evolve India, Suryadesh, Rolls Royce, Diageo and Grundfos Pumps India Pvt. Ltd.

Ends.

Published 4 May 2021

Stephen Gibson appointed chair of Regulatory Policy Committee

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng has today (4 May) named Stephen Gibson as chair of the Regulatory Policy Committee.

The Regulatory Policy Committee (RPC) assesses the quality of evidence and analysis used to inform regulatory proposals and verifies the costs that regulations place on business. It is an independent body sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Mr. Gibson's appointment follows an open competition. He has held the role in an interim capacity since December 2019, having been a member of the committee since May 2018.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

The UK is recognised worldwide as a great place to do business and further strengthening this reputation means keeping an eagle-eye on regulation to ensure the burdens on business are minimised.

Stephen brings a wealth of experience, energy and expertise to the role, and I'm delighted to appoint him as chairman as the committee continues its vital work in scrutinising the evidence and analysis underpinning regulatory decisions.

Regulatory Policy Committee Chair Stephen Gibson said:

I am honoured to have been offered this position. The Regulatory Policy Committee plays a key role in ensuring that new regulatory measures do not impose unjustified costs on business. I very much look forward to helping to ensure that UK regulation is supported by robust evidence and analysis as well as promoting transparency and accountability in the regulatory decision-making process.

Minister for Better Regulation Lord Callanan said:

The Regulatory Policy Committee offers important advice and scrutiny to government on regulatory change, ensuring we can effectively deliver policy while keeping the burdens on business to a minimum.

I am pleased to see Stephen appointed as chair. As an existing committee member, and recently as interim chair, he brings the vital experience and continuity the RPC needs to take forward its work in these exceptional times. I look forward to continuing to work with him on this important agenda.

Mr. Gibson has over 25 years' experience as a professional economist across a range of regulated sectors including:

- post
- water
- ports
- rail
- aviation
- energy
- broadcasting
- advertising
- telecoms

He has worked as a consultant and from both sides of the regulatory fence. In 2011 he set up SLG Economics, a consultancy providing expert regulatory and competition economics advice to regulators, regulated companies and consumer bodies.

Mr. Gibson is a member and current interim chair of the Regulatory Policy Committee and Director of SLG Economics. He is also a Member of the CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) Senior Advisory Board advising on the regulatory framework for Heathrow and NATS and is on the expert panel for ICCAN (the Independent Committee on Civil Aviation Noise). He also lectures in economics at Birkbeck University.

Mr. Gibson's previous roles include:

- Chief Economist at Postcomm
- Interim Chief Economist at Ofwat
- Principal Economist at Ofcom
- Deputy Chair of Bowel Cancer UK

[Prime Minister welcomes new era in UK-](#)

India relationship

- '2030 roadmap' includes commitments to deepen cooperation on health, climate, trade, education, science and technology, and defence
- Prime Minister has praised the overwhelming display of support from the British people to India over the last week

The Prime Minister and Prime Minister Modi have made an historic commitment to strengthen work between the UK and India over the next decade, bringing our countries, economies and people closer together.

The UK's [Integrated Review](#), published earlier this year, highlighted the importance of the Indo-Pacific region to the UK's security and prosperity. India is an indispensable partner in that region.

The Prime Minister and Prime Minister Modi have pledged to achieve a quantum leap in the UK-India relationship, boosting our cooperation in areas that matter to the UK and India. India has elevated the status of its relationship with the UK to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' – the first European country to be granted that status.

During a virtual meeting today the two leaders agreed a '2030 Roadmap' which will provide a framework for UK-India relations across health, climate, trade, education, science and technology, and defence. The Roadmap includes commitments to:

- Expand the UK-India health partnership to enhance global health security and pandemic resilience. This includes firming up international supply chains to ensure critical medicines, vaccines and other medical products reach those who need them most.
- Work together to achieve the ambitious goals set out by the Prime Minister and Prime Minister Modi on tackling climate change and preserving nature. Accelerating the development of clean energy and transport, protecting biodiversity and helping developing countries adapt to the impact of climate change.
- Deepen the economic relationship between the UK and India through an Enhanced Trade Partnership and confirming our intent to negotiate a Free Trade Agreement with a view to doubling UK-India trade over the next decade.
- Increase cooperation between British and Indian universities on crucial research in areas like health, emerging technologies and climate science.
- Work in lockstep to tackle threats to our shared security in all their forms. The UK's Carrier Strike Group will visit India later this year to boost this work with our navies and air forces undertaking joint training exercises to enable future cooperation on operations in the Western Indian Ocean.

The breadth and depth of India's relationship with the UK is underpinned by the living bridge between our people. 1.6 million Brits have Indian ancestry,

there are more Indian companies in the UK than in the rest of Europe combined, and our people share history, culture and values.

During their meeting, the Prime Minister and Prime Minister Modi undertook to work closely together in support of those values, including at next month's G7 in Cornwall which India will attend as a guest nation.

Over the last week British business, civil society and the wider public have demonstrated the strength of the relationship between the UK and India by donating much-needed medical supplies to the country. During their call, the Prime Minister and Prime Minister Modi agreed to continue to work together on our shared fight against coronavirus. They pointed to the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, currently being produced by India's Serum Institute, as an example of the power of UK-India cooperation.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

The UK and India share many fundamental values. The UK is one of the oldest democracies, and India is the world's largest. We are both committed members of the Commonwealth. And there is a living bridge uniting the people of our countries.

In the last week the British people have stepped up in their thousands to support our Indian friends during this terrible time in a demonstration of the deep connection between the UK and India.

This connection will only grow over the next decade as we do more together to tackle the world's biggest problems and make life better for our people. The agreements we have made today mark the beginning of a new era in the UK-India relationship.

Work towards the goals of the 2030 Roadmap will be reviewed annually by the British and Indian Foreign Ministers and Ministers across Government will hold regular meetings with their Indian counterparts to make progress on our shared ambitions.

[Chancellor announces first in-person Finance Ministers meeting of UK's G7 Presidency](#)

News story

The Chancellor has today confirmed that Finance Ministers from across the G7

nations will meet at Lancaster House in London on 4-5 June.



Speaking at a Wall Street Journal event, the Chancellor confirmed plans for a major G7 Finance Track meeting ahead of the G7 Leaders' Summit in Carbis Bay, Cornwall.

During the course of the UK's G7 Presidency the Chancellor has hosted three virtual meetings with his global counterparts to discuss key international policy priorities. June's meeting will seek to progress the Chancellor's G7 priorities of building a green and inclusive global economic recovery, protecting jobs, and supporting vulnerable countries to recover from the COVID pandemic.

G7 Finance Ministers will be joined by the European Commission, Eurogroup, World Bank, IMF, and OECD for what will be the first in-person Finance Track meeting in over a year.

Ahead of this, the Chancellor will convene a virtual meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors on Friday 28 May 2021.

The Prime Minister will host leaders of G7 nations at the Leaders' Summit in Carbis Bay, Cornwall on 11-13 June. They will discuss opportunities for international cooperation as we build back better from COVID to create a lasting, green recovery.

Further info

- the G7 comprises the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States
- readouts from the previous FMCBG meetings during the UK's G7 Presidency can be found [here](#)
- photographs of the call can be found on our [flickr page](#)

[COVID-19 in schools: study shows drop in infections](#)

The latest round of the [Schools Infection Survey \(SIS\)](#) suggests a significant reduction in the percentage of secondary school pupils and staff testing positive for COVID-19 infection since schools reopened compared to last November.

The fourth round of the SIS – research jointly led by Public Health England (PHE), the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) – tested 7,271 secondary school pupils and 2,744 staff for COVID-19 infection between 15 and 31 March.

The results suggest infections fell significantly among both staff and pupils compared to previous findings in November and December 2020.

The latest study, which looked at schools from across 14 participating local authorities, found that 0.34% of secondary school pupils tested positive for current infection (95% confidence interval: 0.16% to 0.63%) and 0.19% of secondary school staff tested positive for current infection (95% confidence interval: 0.04% to 0.58%).

In comparison to the first 2 rounds, using data from secondary schools across 11 local authorities, the latest study found:

- the percentage of pupils testing positive (0.33%) was significantly lower than in [Round 1](#) (1.42%) and lower than [Round 2](#) (1.22%)
- the percentage of staff testing positive (0.32%) was significantly lower than in Round 1 (1.36%) and Round 2 (1.64%)

The number of positive test results in round 4 for primary schools was too small to present due to statistical disclosure criteria.

Dr Shamez Ladhani, Consultant Paediatrician at PHE and the study's chief investigator, said:

Results of this study shows current COVID-19 infection among secondary school staff and pupils has fallen significantly from the already low levels recorded last November.

These findings are reassuring and contribute to wider evidence that shows the risk of transmission in schools is low.

This also indicates the importance of public health measures in schools for reducing transmission.

Professor James Hargreaves, co-chief investigator of the study at LSHTM, said:

This round of testing took place just after schools in England fully reopened. The lower levels of infection compared to the previous round is encouraging, possibly reflecting both lower community incidence and, perhaps, the roll out of mass community-based testing. However, some schools did record positive cases so continued efforts are crucial to both limit infections entering schools and prevent transmission within the school site.

Fiona Dawe, Deputy Director, Wider Surveillance Studies, ONS, said:

The data shows that during Round 4 of testing, there was a reduction in current infection rates in schools taking part in the study. In secondary schools there was a significant reduction in current infection levels in both pupils and staff.

As we see the vaccine roll out across the country, it's essential that we continue testing for COVID-19 infection and antibodies in school settings. The Schools Infection Survey remains an important study in assessing the role of schools in the pandemic and how the virus is transmitted in school settings.

I would like to thank all the staff and pupils who are taking part in the study for their continued participation, without which this important study would not be possible.

The SIS is conducted using PCR tests and is independent to the mass asymptomatic testing programme in schools using lateral flow devices.

Results are only available for those who enrolled in the survey and present at school on the day of testing. Round 1 of the survey took place between 3 and 19 November 2020 and Round 2 between 2 and 10 December 2020.

Round 3, which was due to take place in late January 2021, was cancelled due to schools in England being closed to the majority of pupils during lockdown.