

UK statement to the TRIPS Council:

Item 15

Thank you Chair.

The United Kingdom would like to thank Eswatini, Kenya, India and South Africa for introducing this agenda item and giving the Council an opportunity to discuss this very important issue.

The UK has long supported affordable and equitable access to essential medicines, including in low and middle-income countries. In this vein, intellectual property rights provide incentives to create new inventions, such as life-changing vaccines, treatments, and technologies.

The UK believes that a robust and fair intellectual property system is a key part of the innovation framework that allows economies to grow, while enabling society to benefit from knowledge and ideas.

In the current pandemic, we must acknowledge the IP system is not just made up of rights, but it also contains built-in mechanisms to support the sharing and dissemination of innovation and creativity. Flexibilities such as limitations and exceptions to IP rights have already proved invaluable to the development of digital solutions to support diagnostics and treatment. Text and data mining exceptions have been used in initial research into COVID-19, including for tracking and predicting its spread and are being used in the search for treatments.

Beyond hypotheticals, we have not identified clear ways in which IP has acted as a barrier to accessing vaccines, treatments, or technologies in the global response to COVID-19.

A waiver to the IP rights set out in the TRIPS Agreement is an extreme measure to address an unproven problem. The UK is of the view that pursuing the proposed path would be counterproductive and would undermine a regime that offers solutions to the issues at hand. Rather, we should consider how to meet the objectives of prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19 as set out in the communication.

Multiple factors need to be considered to ensure equitable access for all to COVID-19 vaccines. These include increasing manufacturing and distribution capacity, measures to support or incentivise technology transfer, ensuring global supply chains remain open, and ensuring that effective platforms are utilised to voluntarily share IP and know how.

There are existing mechanisms that facilitate the sharing of IP through voluntary licensing of intellectual property. Organisations like the WHO are developing initiatives by learning lessons from these mechanisms. For example, expanding the mandate of an existing organisation such as the Medicines Patent Pool to address needs emerging from COVID-19.

The world urgently needs access for all to safe, effective, quality, and affordable vaccines, diagnostics, medicines, and other health technologies to enable an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is why a strong and robust multilateral IP system that can meet this challenge is vital.

The UK has played a leading role in financing the global effort and working with our international and national partners, to identify end-to-end solutions that ensure affordable access for all and ensuring no-one is left behind, including the poorest and most vulnerable.

For example, the UK has been leading the way in delivering a multilateral solution to COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics such as by committing £298 million to the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), with £250 million more available as “matched funding” if others commit \$1 billion by December. We urge other Members to join the COVAX AMC in order to secure manufacturing capacity for 92 low and middle-income countries. This will support equitable access and will demonstrate that a multilateral response can rise to global challenges.

We are also committed to collaborating with public and private partners in the UK and internationally, including exploring voluntary arrangements and approaches such as non-exclusive voluntary licensing which promote affordable access for all while also providing incentives to create new inventions, to accelerate development and equitable access in all countries to affordable health technologies for responding to COVID-19.

We would like to encourage active dialogue between industry and governments to explore how best to work together to prevent, contain and treat COVID-19, including by using TRIPS-compliant licensing models in developing countries. While we welcome discussion of this issue and acknowledge the concerns of the co-sponsors as set out in their communication, we do not consider a waiver of the TRIPS Agreement to be an effective way to achieve the objectives outlined in the communication.

As we said in the informal consultation on standing TRIPS Council matters, we would be happy to participate in a workshop or other event that can support understanding how best the IP system can meet the objectives of Members in relation to COVID-19.

Thank you Chair.

[Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus \(COVID-19\): 16 October](#)

2020

Good afternoon, I am joined this afternoon by Dr Susan Hopkins of NHS Test and Trace and Public Health England and Sir Patrick Vallance Chief Scientific Advisor.

On Monday, I explained that we would seek to consult with mayors and local authorities in areas moving into the Very High alert level.

I am grateful to all those in local government in hotspot areas who have been working with us over the last week on how to control the virus in their areas.

In particular, I would like to thank Steve Rotheram in Merseyside, Sadiq Khan in London and local leaders in Lancashire who have worked constructively with us.

In Merseyside, where the situation is most acute, we were able to conclude talks quickly. In London, we have worked with the Mayor to respond to rising infections across the capital as well as particular spikes in some boroughs. And in Lancashire today, we have worked with both Labour and Conservative leaders to agree a package.

These were tough discussions, difficult decisions. No one wants to have to implement these measures which damage local businesses, curtail individual freedom and impose significant strains on people's mental health.

But these decisions were necessary because of the rate of increase not just of infections but also in hospitalisations and admissions to intensive care. Without action, there is no doubt that our NHS would soon be struggling to treat the sheer number of people seriously ill with Covid. Non-Covid treatments and surgeries would need to be cancelled in order to cope. And many more people would die.

So taking action is the right and responsible thing to do. And it is backed up by significant support for areas on Very High alert:

- The Job Support Scheme, combined with Universal Credit, means that those on low incomes who are affected by business closures will receive at least 80% of their wages.
- We are providing up to £465 million to help Very High alert level areas to implement and enforce the restrictions, in addition to the £1 billion of extra funding for local authorities across the country.
- We will work with local authorities to allocate testing and introduce local contact tracing.

Now, we have not yet reached an agreement with Greater Manchester. I completely understand the reluctance of the Mayor and his colleagues to take Manchester into the Very High alert level. It is far from a pain-free course of action and it will mean a difficult time for the people of that great part of the country – on top of the restrictions they have already had to endure since the summer.

But I must stress, the situation in Greater Manchester is grave, and it worsens with each passing day.

Cases doubled in the last 9 days. High infection rates are creeping up the age range: while cases are 690 per 100,000 for 16-29 year olds, they have now risen to 224 per 100,000 for the over-60s.

The number of COVID in-patients in Manchester's ICU beds is already over 40% of the number at the height of the first wave. That number will inevitably rise further, given that hospitalisation occurs 2-3 weeks after infection. On present trends, in just over 2 weeks there will be more Covid patients in intensive care than at the peak of the first wave.

So I urge the Mayor to reconsider and engage constructively. I cannot stress enough – time is of the essence. Each day that passes before action is taken means more people will go to hospital, more people will end up in intensive care, and tragically more people will die.

Of course if agreement cannot be reached, I will need to intervene in order to protect Manchester's hospitals and to save the lives of Manchester's residents.

But our efforts will be so much more effective if we work together.

Some have argued that we should introduce a national lockdown instead of targeted local action and I disagree. Closing businesses in Cornwall, where transmission is low, will not cut transmission in Manchester.

So while I cannot rule anything out, if at all possible I want to avoid another national lockdown, with the damaging health, economic and social effects it would have.

Alongside our local strategy we have been working throughout to find other ways to suppress this virus.

We are backing our brilliant scientists leading the global effort to find a safe and effective vaccine. We have also secured early access to over 350 million vaccine doses through a portfolio of promising new vaccines to ensure we are in the best place, and we are taking every possible step to ensure we can move as quickly as possible to deploy a vaccine if and when one is found to work.

And we've created a huge diagnostics industry from scratch, scaling up the ability to test from 2,000 in February to more than 300,000 today.

I also want to update on our future approach to testing.

We are now testing more people than any other country in Europe but we always want to go further.

One of the most dangerous aspects of this disease is that people without any symptoms can infect many others without realising it. If we can catch more asymptomatic people before they unknowingly pass on the disease to the vulnerable, we can help to stop the virus' vicious spread.

So far it has been difficult to do this. But that is changing.

Scientists and companies in Britain and around the world have been developing new tests which are faster, simpler and cheaper. They have been working hard to discover and evaluate new testing technologies. Though there is work to do, It's becoming clear over the past few weeks that some of these new tests are highly effective and can help us save lives and jobs over winter.

We have already bought millions of these tests, some of which are very simple – meaning you simply need to wipe the swab inside your mouth – and can give a result as quickly as in 15 minutes. Some of these fast tests work with saliva and we are already using these in hospitals.

We have started building the infrastructure for domestic manufacture of these tests, ensuring that Britain has the ability to produce millions of fast tests here.

Over the next few weeks we will start distributing and trialling these tests across the country. This will enable us to do quick turnaround tests on NHS and care home staff much more frequently. By testing more frequently and quickly than ever before, we can hope we can help prevent the virus entering and spreading through care homes.

And we will be able to test students in universities with outbreaks, as well as children in schools, helping us to keep education open safely through the winter.

And we will make tests available to local directors of public health to help control localised outbreaks – handing more control from London to all parts of our country so that those on the ground can use the tools we give them as they think best. And I have instructed my team to ensure that Liverpool City Region, Lancashire, and any other areas which enter into the Very High alert level are immediately prioritised for those tests.

This will make a big difference in how we protect people from this disease. But it's vital that we all take a cautious approach to this new technology.

First, it will take time to develop this plan. No country in the world is regularly testing millions of people, so we need to take the time to establish how to do this effectively and safely, and to build the logistics and distribution operation necessary for a large-scale operation across the country.

Second, we won't be able to use testing to get business back to normal quickly. In time, we want to use tests to open, and keep open, more parts of

the economy that have sadly been closed. But it is crucial that we make sure such systems work safely and I must level with you that it will take time to get this right before many organisations can buy and operate these tests themselves.

Third, this will need a huge effort across the country, and we will need hospitals, care homes schools, universities and other organisations to work with us as we develop this plan.

But the most important thing is that people isolate if they test positive. If you test positive with one of these fast new tests, then you must stay at home.

If everyone follows the rule and self-isolates if you have symptoms, get a positive test, or have come into contact with someone who has the virus, we will suppress the disease.

And we must all remember that this virus thrives on human contact. So we must do everything in our power to limit its spread. Always think: Hands Face Space, ventilate your buildings, wear a face covering in enclosed spaces, keep your distance from others. And make sure – as I say – you improve ventilation when spending time indoors. If we all do these simple things we'll protect each other from the virus and we will defeat it together.

I'll hand over to Patrick Valance who will run through the latest data and we'll then go to your questions. Sir Patrick.

[Joint Statement on the Anglo-Chilean Trade Dialogue](#)

News story

This week, the United Kingdom and Chile held the first Anglo-Chilean Trade Dialogue, in advance of the United Kingdom-Chile Association Agreement



1. This week, the United Kingdom and Chile embarked on a new chapter in our trade relationship, forged over 200 years. Ministers from the two countries held the first Anglo-Chilean Trade Dialogue, in advance of the United Kingdom-Chile Association Agreement coming into force on 31st December.
2. Ministers discussed the impact of the Covid pandemic on our economies. They commended the collaboration of our hospitals and scientists in the search for the vaccines and therapeutics that will defeat the virus and highlighted the importance of the COVAX Facility in supporting fair and equitable access to vaccines globally. Ministers emphasised the central role of free and open markets in facilitating the effective supply of medicines and PPE and agreed to work closely together on this. The United Kingdom and Chile look forward to hosting a joint event on the financing of vaccine distribution via COVAX in the coming weeks.
3. Ministers warmly welcomed the United Kingdom-Chile Association Agreement, which will come into force at the end of December 2020, and the opportunities it represents for our two nations. Chile was the first country to sign a trade continuity agreement with the United Kingdom, providing early certainty to British and Chilean businesses. Ministers agreed to work closely together on a political and technical level to ensure a smooth transition to the new agreement, which will be even more important as we manage a global crisis. We also agreed to work closely together to make sure that it brings tangible benefits to our businesses and consumers.
4. Ministers agreed to focus on the following trade and investment areas: Agribusiness, Green Economy, Infrastructure, Financial Services and Life Sciences. Ministers looked forward to seeing progress on these issues ahead of Chile Day 2021 and emphasised the importance of working together ahead of COP26.
5. Ministers agreed that the new agreement offered an excellent basis on which to forge our future trade relationship. Ministers reaffirmed their ambition to further enhance and modernise the thriving trading relationship between Chile and the United Kingdom in the future.
6. The United Kingdom and Chile can also enhance their trading relationship through the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). As a founding member of the CPTPP, Chile expressed strong support for British accession to the trade agreement, welcoming the opportunities it would bring on both sides.
7. Finally, Ministers agreed on the importance of the rules based international system and the role of free and open trade in offering opportunity and tackling poverty and inequality. They vowed to work

together to support an effective WTO, where Chile looked forward to supporting the United Kingdom as an independent member for the first time.

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[Jubilee River weir set for repairs](#)

Press release

Work will protect structure from effects of 'scouring'.



The Environment Agency is announcing repairs to one of the weirs on the Jubilee River. This man-made flood relief channel forms part of the Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton flood alleviation scheme that reduces flood risk from the River Thames for local communities.

Maria Herlihy, Thames Area Operations Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

We carry out regular engineering surveys of all the structures we are responsible for. A recent inspection of Black Potts Weir, carried out by a dive team, found that part of the structure which provides protection against scouring – damage caused by water erosion – was showing the effects of this process itself.

The structure remains sound, but we need to restore it to prime condition now to prevent any further scouring occurring over the winter. To do this, we'll be installing 1,000 tonnes of rock armour before the end of the year.

Site preparation will start on Monday 19 October, with work beginning on 2

November and continuing throughout December. While the work is underway, the Jubilee River will not operate as a flood relief channel. The Environment Agency is developing alternative arrangements to ensure people's homes and businesses remain protected from flooding from the River Thames.

The Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton flood alleviation scheme is also made up of numerous flood gates, walls and bunds, which are not affected by the planned repairs.

Maria Herlihy added:

It's important we carry out the work on Black Potts weir sooner rather than later, to prevent any damage to the weir itself which could have a longer-term impact.

Our advice to anyone living in a flood risk area remains the same as always: sign up to our flood warning service, and have a flood plan in place.

Anyone can find out if their property is at risk of flooding, sign up for flood warnings, and find out how to prepare and get help during flooding [on GOV.UK](#).

You can also find [more information on the Jubilee River and the work on Black Potts Weir](#).

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[**FCDO US State Green Economy Report: call for bids**](#)

The British Embassy Washington is pleased to announce a call for bids for US State Green Economy Report as part of the UK Government's Prosperity Fund. The resulting analysis from the project will be used in support of UK engagement on climate and energy policy priorities and to prioritise UK trade and investment engagement in the United States.

The deadline for completion of all work is 5 March 2021 and the budget must not exceed £130,000.

The deadline to submit bids is 30 October 2020. Please submit bids using the attached templates to Talia.Calneksugin@fcdo.gov.uk.

Background

The UK is hosting the 26th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP26) in November 2021. It is vital that in order to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement that COP26 focuses on increased climate action at all levels of government, business, and civil society.

The UK is a global leader in clean growth, climate ambition, and on engaging the private sector in national plans (for example, through the Clean Growth Strategy, Industrial Strategy, Sector Plans, etc). The UK's Climate Change Act (2008) was a pivotal economy-wide, legally-binding climate change legislation and has become a structure replicated around the world.

The UK is a world leader in green finance and offshore wind capacity, and it has a strong focus on the innovation and technology needed to meet its net zero commitment including carbon capture utilisation and storage (CCUS), electric vehicles (EVs), building efficiency, and energy networks and storage.

Climate action and low carbon innovation are top foreign policy, and international trade and investment priorities for the UK. The UK also firmly believes that a clean and resilient economic recovery must be at the forefront of the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UK and US have a strong history of close collaboration on low carbon innovation at both the national level and subnationally with universities, states, and the private sector. However, in this quickly evolving sector there remains limited tailored data to advance this agenda, particularly at the state level.

Project objectives and parameters

This report will help inform the UK's state-level engagement on policy priorities related to the green economy and support prioritisation of trade and investment opportunities in green economy sectors (e.g. renewable energy and clean infrastructure).

To achieve this objective, the project will deliver detailed mapping of the current and projected green economy in a selection of US states. We hope that this mapping will include at least 20 US states, with the final states to be agreed in collaboration with the Project Board that will work with the grant recipient.

For each state, the report should focus on sub-sections of the green economy which are of most relevance to that particular state and align with the UK's climate/energy objectives (for example, offshore wind, CCUS, hydrogen, EVs, energy storage, electrical networks and smart grids). The reports for each state will be used to identify current trends, the drivers and opportunities for future growth, the short-term and potential longer term impact of COVID-19 on the state's green economy, and the policy and investment/export environments.

Bidders will be responsible for proposing precisely how to achieve the objectives. Proposals should include how the bidder will:

1) Use existing data sources (and primary data if relevant) to provide information on the current green economy in the state, aligned with UK priorities and definitions where possible

Potential metrics are:

- current state policies/regulation
- GHG emissions;
- energy mix (generation)
- energy imports/exports
- green jobs and the quality of those jobs
- size of the green economy including tax revenues
- data on the EV market including sales, charging infrastructure, jobs etc
- relevant data and action plans on climate adaptation and infrastructure resilience
- role of ambitious businesses
- role and importance of green finance in the state

2) Provide projections for future green economy opportunities for each state, including the impact of COVID-19. This will likely be through novel analysis, for example economic modeling. It is expected that the final reports could include:

- an assessment of the commitments made by the state to date
- future impact of current incentives to support green growth
- potential renewable energy capacity
- green jobs projections
- likely impact of COVID-19 on the green economy in the short and longer term (focusing on the sectors most relevant to the state)
- data on state and/or major city energy transition plans in place or planned
- major funding sources for innovation and low carbon businesses

In addition to the detailed reports for specific states, the Project should include a summary report providing an overview of the current and emerging opportunities for climate engagement across the states assessed. The grant recipient will also be expected to present findings and recommendations to UK Government stakeholders via video teleconference.

The grant recipient will be expected to provide interim products to the UK Project Board for its review and guidance. Bidders are encouraged to include a timeline in their proposal that includes regular opportunities for feedback on draft reports and a phased approach to delivery.

All work must be completed by 5 March, 2021. Bidders should include a realistic timeline in their proposals demonstrating ability to deliver against the Project's objectives within this timeframe.

Bidding process

Bidders should submit their proposals to Talia.Calneksugin@fcdo.gov.uk no later than 30 October 2020 using the attached Proposal Template and Grant Eligibility Documentation, linked below. Proposals should not exceed 15 pages.

Proposals will be evaluated using the attached evaluation criteria. Bidders may be asked for additional information to support their initial proposals.

If the bidder is a consortium, the following information must be provided: Full details of the consortium; the role of each member of the consortium in delivering against the project's objectives; and a primary bidder, who will be the principal point of contact with the project board.

Please email Talia.Calneksugin@fcdo.gov.uk with any questions regarding the project or the bidding process. These questions must be received on or before 21 October 2020.

Documentation

[Grant Eligibility – Green Economy Report](#) (ODT, 60.5KB) [Proposal Template – Green Economy Report](#) (ODT, 53.6KB) [Evaluation Criteria – Green Economy Report](#) (PDF, 497KB, 3 pages) [Grant Agreement – Green Economy Report](#) (PDF, 559KB, 24 pages)