

# Consultation on setting an end date for the sale of new non-zero emission buses

In November 2020, the Prime Minister announced his [10-point plan for a green industrial revolution](#). Its aim to build back better from the pandemic, to use our recovery to level up the country, to scale up new industries and to support new green jobs across our industrial heartlands and throughout the United Kingdom as we work towards net zero by 2050.

Now, following the UK's demonstration of global leadership on climate change, as President and host of COP 26, I am pleased to tell the House that we continue to deliver on that plan.

In [Bus Back Better](#), we committed to set a legal end date for the sale of new diesel buses – today we are launching a [consultation to set an end date for the sale of new, non-zero emission buses](#) across the UK. Working together across the United Kingdom to provide certainty to the market, stimulating innovation and investment in alternative approaches and encourage local authorities and bus operators to plan together to deliver a decarbonised bus fleet.

Buses are at the centre of the public transport network, connecting people right across the country, playing a vital role in fostering and strengthening communities, reducing congestion and helping build a high-growth, high productivity economy across the UK.

Buses are already one of the most environmentally friendly ways of travelling and this policy will go further ensuring that their future operation produces no carbon impact – with no negative impact of passengers.

Last year, the government published the [Transport Decarbonisation Plan](#), which set out our plans to decarbonise all of transport.

The plan reaffirmed the crucial role that public transport has in tackling climate change with buses having an integral position at the centre of the public transport network – but also recognising the huge contribution from the coach and minibus industry.

To this end, we are today launching a consultation on setting an end date for the sale of new non-zero emission buses, at the very latest by 2032. Importantly this consultation also sets out calls for evidence on setting an end of sales date for coaches and minibuses.

Late last year, we announced almost £71 million in new funding to support 335 zero emission buses across 5 local areas in England, and on Saturday we announced [almost £200 million in further funding, for almost 1,000 more zero emission buses](#) – delivering on our promise to build 4,000 new zero emission

buses right across the country. We will continue to go further and provide greater support for zero emission buses through the [Bus Service Operators' Grant](#), from April 2022, ahead of a wider reform to refocus the scheme on reducing emissions, levelling up and keeping fares low.

This government's national bus strategy, Bus Back Better, lays out actions to drive this transition to zero emission buses. This consultation begins to deliver one of the key commitments in the strategy. We want zero emission buses not only to be the right choice environmentally but to be the default choice for operators economically, with maintenance and fuel saving costs making it the only logical purchasing decision.

As we recover from COVID-19, we are putting transport at the heart of our decisions. Building back better and greener will make our economy more sustainable and resilient, help us deliver cleaner air and lower carbon emissions, and benefit passengers across the country. Accelerating the transition to a zero-emission bus fleet is absolutely key to this.

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## [The United Kingdom remains committed to supporting Sudan's journey to democracy: UK at the UN Security Council](#)

Thank you, Madam President. Let me begin by thanking SRSO Perthes for his briefing, and commend his and his team's continued efforts in challenging circumstances.

Before focusing on the situation in Sudan, I wanted to note the concerns raised by the Government of Sudan in its 22 March letter to the Council. The United Kingdom fully supports UNITAMS' efforts to monitor and report on the situation in Sudan, including human rights, as mandated by this Council. For the appropriate support to be provided by the Mission, it is essential for UNITAMS to be able to provide a full and balanced representation of the situation in Sudan in its reporting.

Madam President, since we last discussed Sudan, there has been little cause for optimism. The military seized power on 25 October, claiming that the civilian-led government was failing to deliver on key aspects of the transition. In the five months since, the suffering of ordinary Sudanese people has increased. They continue to face violence, including as we heard sexual violence, human rights abuses, economic hardship and humanitarian crises.

The civilian-led government inherited enormous challenges in 2019. Despite

difficulties faced by the transition, Sudan was on a path to a more peaceful, prosperous and stable future. Regrettably, the coup has put these gains at risk, including on economic reform, the peace process and human rights, and it is our sincere hope that there can soon be a return to such progress .

In this regard, we welcome the collaboration between the UN and the African Union, in particular the efforts of SRSR Perthes and AU Envoy LeBatt towards the next phase of talks, with the aim of restoring the transition. There is a great opportunity to end the political crisis. We are encouraged by the consensus on issues like the need for a civilian cabinet, justice and accountability, and the role of women in the transition.

We urge all parties, including the military, to engage fully and in good faith in the next phase of talks.

We deplore the loss of at least 88 lives since the coup began. These people were killed while calling for freedom, peace and justice – something that thousands of Sudanese people continue to do, despite the threat of violence. We urge the authorities to allow protest without violence, to lift the state of emergency and to release political detainees, journalists and activists.

Madam President, the political crisis and actions of the military have contributed to delays in implementing the Juba Peace Agreement, leading to further violence and marginalisation in areas like Darfur.

And, a regrettable consequence of the coup is the economic hardship and increasing humanitarian need across the country. The United Kingdom has a strong track record of providing economic, humanitarian and political support to Sudan.

Let us be clear, it is the actions of the military that have led to the pause in international economic support. We hope the early restoration of a credible, civilian-led transitional government can create the conditions for much needed economic reforms and for international support, including debt relief, to resume.

Instead of calling on the international community to provide economic assistance, let us instead call on the Sudanese stakeholders, especially the military, to reach the sustainable political agreement needed to enable the resumption of such support.

In conclusion, Madam President, the United Kingdom remains committed to supporting Sudan's journey to democracy, and the realisation of the Sudanese people's calls for freedom, peace and justice. As a Council we should remain focused on these aspirations and support to the UN-AU-IGAD process.

Thank you.

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# UK announces £5 million funding to expand the Met Office's Weather and Climate Information Services activity in the MENA region

Press release

The UK has now committed £60 million over 5 years to tackle climate and biodiversity issues in the Middle East and North Africa.



COP26 Regional Ambassador for the Middle East and Africa Janet Rogan today announced £5 million UK funding to expand the Met Office's successful Weather and Climate Information Services activity to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The Weather and Climate Information Services (WISER) programme was launched in Africa in 2016 and has been delivering transformational change in the uptake of weather and climate information services across the region since then. It has enabled enhanced information for over 3.3 million households and delivered in excess of £200 million of socio-economic benefit.

Following the success of WISER in Africa, the UK's funding will be used to expand the concept to the MENA region.

The programme aims to deliver transformation in the generation and use of co-produced weather and climate services to support decision making at local, national, and regional levels, building resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Announcing the funding at MENA Climate Week, COP26 Regional Ambassador for the Middle East and Africa Janet Rogan said:

I am extremely proud to announce the UK's £5 million WISER programme for MENA in partnership with the UK's Met Office. This programme will see the Met Office expanding the scope of its

successful Weather and Climate Information Services (WISER) activity to this region, delivering impactful weather and climate services to those who need it the most.

## **Background**

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# **New Board Members appointed to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee**



Defra Ministers have appointed Catherine Denholm and Tom Meagher as Board Members of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC).

The appointments were made in conjunction with the devolved administrations, and are for a three-year term from 4 April 2022 to 3 April 2025.

The new appointments have all been made in accordance with the Ministerial Governance Code on Public Appointments published by the Cabinet Office. Appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process.

Remuneration is £9,836 per annum based on a time commitment of 2.5 days per month.

The JNCC was established in 1991 and reconstituted in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) as a non-departmental public body. The JNCC advises the UK Government and Devolved Administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales on UK-wide and international nature conservation.

## **Biographical details**

## Catherine Denholm

Catherine Denholm is the Chief Operating Officer for the Equality and Human Rights Commission. She also served as Deputy Chair of NatureScot from 2019 to March 2022. She was awarded honorary membership of the Faculty of Public Health in 2020 and is Vice Chair of Impact Arts.

## Tom Meagher

Tom Meagher is a botanist and Professor and Chair of Plant Biology at the University of St Andrews. Tom is a former Trustee of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh and was previously a member of the Natural Environment Research Council and the Defra Science Advisory Committee.

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Last updated 25 April 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

### 1. 25 April 2022

Edited as Rosie Hails is no longer taking up the role of Board Member for the JNCC.

### 2. 28 March 2022

First published.

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# [Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space \(COPUOS\): UK statement at the 61st Legal Sub-committee](#)

Chair, Distinguished Delegates

Space has a way of bringing us all together around a common goal and we're proud of our collective achievements through the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) in the advancement of the peaceful use and exploration of outer space.

The United Kingdom appreciates that whilst we are here to talk about the peaceful uses of space, we cannot and should not ignore violations of international law when they occur on Earth.

Russia's assault on Ukraine is an unprovoked, premeditated attack against a sovereign democratic state. The UK and our international partners stand united in condemning the Russian government's reprehensible actions, which are an egregious violation of international law including the UN Charter.

We call on Russia to urgently de-escalate and withdraw its troops. It must be held accountable and stop undermining democracy, global stability, and international law.

The UK also expresses our serious concern at the proposed establishment of a new regional centre for space science and technology education in the Russian Federation, which was referred to in UN General Assembly resolution 76/76 and which is supposedly meant to build partnerships across the Eurasian region.

Russia's actions in recent weeks have demonstrated that it is not 'peaceful' and that it no longer holds the respect or endorsement of its Eurasian partners. We cannot ignore Russia's aggression against Ukraine. These troublesome times show that it is not business as usual, and in this regard, we reiterate our serious concern at the proposed new regional centre.

Chair,

It is within this context, that I would like to provide an update to COPUOS on the progress taken by the UK to implement and operationalise our domestic regulations and strategies since the last Legal Sub-Committee.

In September 2021 the UK released its [National Space Strategy](#). This first ever National Space Strategy brings together the UK's strengths in science and technology, defence, regulation and diplomacy to pursue a bold national vision.

The Strategy highlights the UK's commitment to work with industry and internationally to ensure we have the safest and most effective regulation of space activities. We will continually improve safety standards, implement relevant consents, and mitigate the negative environmental impacts of our space activities.

The [UK's Space Industry Act](#) was enacted in 2018 and created an enabling framework for regulating space launch from the United Kingdom. In July 2021, the UK Space Industry Regulations which underpin the Space Industry Act were signed into law, enabling both horizontal and vertical launch from the UK.

These regulations also enabled the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to take on the role of the UK's independent Spaceflight Regulator. The CAA will be providing a technical presentation tomorrow, 29 March in the morning session, on the approach to the regulation of UK activities, which you are all invited to.

Furthermore, our national legislation provides us with a mechanism to implement the commitments set out in the 21 agreed Long Term Sustainability (LTS) of space guidelines. The UK is playing a leading role in supporting an inclusive approach to capacity building and implementation of the LTS guidelines. The UK was pleased to fund our first project with UNOOSA which included publishing the LTS guidelines in all 6 official UN languages, convening international expert events and interviews with Member States on implementing the guidelines.

The UK also became the first country to annually submit a conference room

paper setting out our national implementation of the guidelines.

The UK has significant experience in developing a new regulatory framework, and we are very happy to discuss our experiences with Member States considering doing the same.

As well as UK launch, the UK National Space Strategy highlights the commitment to position the UK at the forefront of modern regulation for novel space activities whilst keeping space sustainable, safe and secure.

This includes advancing UK missions involving in-orbit debris removal, servicing, refuelling and assembly technologies – what we refer to under the umbrella term of proximity missions. We aim to bring together industry, academia, and government to ensure the UK is ready to grasp the opportunities of the future space economy. The UK sees the importance of these activities to contribute to the sustainability of space, utilising technology to extend the life of satellites in orbit and by removing hazardous debris. For such missions to be successful, close international collaboration is vital as well as transparency about activities within the international community.

It is our view that a cohesive international approach to the registration of space objects will provide a key foundation for developing international approaches to proximity missions as well as constellations and the utilisation of space resources.

The future use of space resources impacts us all. It will help us unlock deep space exploration, ensure the sustainability of human life on celestial bodies and will allow us to unlock new tools and technologies that were only previously considered stuff of fiction.

By signing the Artemis Accords, the UK is joining international partners to agree a common set of principles which will guide space exploration for years to come. The Artemis Accords will ensure a shared understanding of safe operations, use of space resources, minimising space debris and sharing scientific data.

We welcome the formation of a working group on space resources and look forward to beginning our work in this area. We wish to thank the Chair Andrzej Misztal and the Vice Chair Steven Freeland, for all their hard work on the terms of reference and work plan for the group. We will provide a further statement under the dedicated agenda item.

Chair, we look forward to a productive legal sub-committee. Thank you.