

Please reaffirm the UK's role as a global climate leader and help your constituents enjoy cleaner, healthier lives

A newly elected government brings new opportunities to refresh the UK's entire approach to climate change. We now have a chance to embed climate commitments across all government departments and renew the UK's role as a global leader in international efforts to tackle climate change. That's where you, our MPs, can help. This week we, The Climate Coalition, are asking MPs to take a lead.

CAFOD is the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. As part of The Climate Coalition, we work to prevent climate change pushing people deeper into poverty and to support the transition from polluting fossil fuels to sustainable energy for all.

Britain has an excellent track record: the UK played a pivotal role in agreeing the Paris Climate Agreement and created the world's first Climate Change Act. However, a renewed commitment to our climate ambitions is needed so that we can establish ourselves as a long-term player in tackling climate change internationally, whilst making the UK a place where people are proud to live and do business.

We want to see global leadership and national action linked to local transformation. This means shifting to a fairer, cleaner and more secure economy, a transition that will require low carbon green growth to be front and centre of the government's emissions reduction plan and at the heart of its industrial strategy.

Maintaining the UK's role as a global leader in tackling climate change brings many other benefits: supporting communities to produce their own energy makes our power supply more secure at home and improves people's lives abroad; making our homes more energy-efficient gives us warmer, healthier homes and creates jobs across all parts of the country; and tackling vehicle emissions delivers cleaner streets and improves our health.

We want all government departments to work together to deliver this clean future and to empower businesses, communities and individuals to play their part.

We are asking MPs to write to the Prime Minister to:

1. Reaffirm the UK's role as a global climate leader, working with international allies to fully implement the Paris Agreement.

195 countries signed the ground-breaking Paris agreement in 2015, calling on the world to take urgent action. It seeks to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees, paving the way to a low carbon future. For poor people living on the frontline of climate change, this deal offers hope for a brighter future but does not yet provide the security that we'll get there quick enough.

Richer countries like the UK must help poorer countries to tackle climate change, which hits them hardest, and to develop their energy services in a way that does not lock them in to using outdated, polluting fossil fuels.

One in six people worldwide lack the electricity they need in their homes, schools, clinics and businesses. To transform lives, create jobs and build sustainable economies for the world's poorest people, the UK must shift its energy spending and investments overseas through all channels, including the World Bank, to decentralised and renewable energy.

2. Ensure all government departments work together to produce an ambitious emissions reduction plan that will meet the Climate Change Act targets.

To achieve this, the emissions reduction plan needs to:

Unlock local and community energy

People up and down the country are eager to be part of the clean energy transformation, but our energy system is skewed in favour of large energy companies, rather than supporting local people generating their own energy. We want fair taxes, planning and rules to allow local initiatives, households and authorities to play their part and share in the benefits of a clean energy future.

Cut energy waste in homes

Too many homes across the UK are leaking heat, which is wasting householders' money and posing health risks. We need the UK Government to kick-start and support a major programme of ambitious, whole-house retrofits to cut unnecessary waste of energy in millions of the UK's existing homes, starting with those in the poorest areas.

Tackle emissions and air pollution from vehicles

Transport, which accounts for about one third of UK greenhouse gas emissions, is the only sector in which emissions have actually increased over the last 27 years. Not only does this hamper efforts to tackle climate change, but diesel emissions poison our air. We need to tackle air pollution and reduce emissions by supporting cities and regions to phase out diesel vehicles by 2025 and move towards 100% electric road and rail transport, with better infrastructure for walking and cycling.

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