



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

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I am writing to you in response to a number of emails we have received as part of the 'Stand Strong on zero Carbon' campaign launched by Avaaz.org.

The UK Government regards climate change as one of the biggest challenges facing the world today and I agree that if globally we do not act now, the effects could be catastrophic.

We have made progress internationally. In the climate talks that have just ended in Lima countries reached agreement on the 'Lima Call for Climate Action'. The UK's leadership has been important in helping deliver this outcome and while the negotiations were challenging we are on track to secure a global deal in Paris. In particular, we agreed the process for countries to bring forward their post-2020 targets before Paris and made progress developing the draft elements of a negotiating text which give us a good basis for this final year of negotiations.

The UK Government is committed to play its part and I am personally committed to deliver progress on this agenda. Domestically, the Climate Change Act 2008 specifies that the UK must reduce its emissions by at least 80% by 2050 (relative to 1990 levels) and by at least 34% by 2020. The Act also introduced carbon budgets, which set the trajectory to ensure the targets in the Act are met. These targets represent legally-binding limits on the total amount of greenhouse gases that can be emitted in the UK for a given five-year period. I was pleased to announce in February 2014, that the UK had met the first carbon budget for the period 2008 to 2012. Final emissions figures confirmed that over this period, UK emissions were 23.6% lower than 1990 emissions. Latest published projections show that the UK is also on track to meet the next two carbon budgets, up to 2022.

We introduced the Energy Act in the UK last year, which sets the framework for the world's first low-carbon electricity market. Renewable electricity capacity has more than doubled since 2010 and almost 15% of electricity was produced by renewables for the first time in 2013. We are building a market for renewable heat through the Renewable Heat Incentive, which has been available to non-domestic customers since 2011 and opened to domestic customers in April 2014.

Since 2010, an average of £7 billion has been invested each year in UK based renewable energy, compared to £3 billion a year in the previous parliament, helping up to meet our target of 15% renewable energy generation and creating up to 250,000 low carbon jobs by 2020. In fact, the UK is ranked as the best place in the world to invest in offshore wind and marine renewables; we are on track to deliver over 10GW of installed offshore wind capacity by 2020, enough to power almost 7 million homes.

But climate change is a global problem that requires a global response. All countries need to be part of the solution in the move towards decarbonisation. This is why the UK and other countries are working hard to agree an ambitious global agreement on climate change in Paris next year - which keeps the internationally agreed goal to limit the average global temperature increase to below 2°C within reach. The UK has set out what it thinks is required from a new agreement in its recent publication 'Paris 2015 – Securing our prosperity through a global climate change agreement', which was published in September 2014.

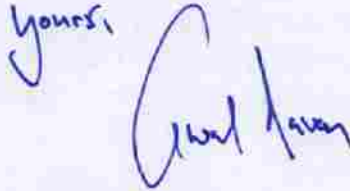
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/paris-2015-securing-our-prosperity-through-a-global-climate-change-agreement>.

Momentum is clearly building towards agreeing a deal. The EU, China and the US, which account for over half the world's emissions, are leading the way in taking ambitious action. The UK led the drive to agree in October an ambitious new EU target of an at least 40% cut in GHGs domestically by 2030 compared to 1990, building trust and generating momentum for the global climate deal in Paris. Following the EU lead, the US and China made announcements, the former that they would reduce emissions by 26-28% by 2025 compared to 2005 and China that their emissions would peak by 2030 and potentially sooner. This represents a significant step forward.

The UK is committed to meeting the \$100 billion target of public and private climate finance per year for developing countries by 2020. Through the International Climate Fund (ICF) the UK is providing £3.87 billion to reduce poverty by helping developing countries to take up low carbon development, protect forests and to adapt to the impacts of climate change. The UK is also a strong supporter of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), as the key new vehicle for helping developing countries adapt to climate change and follow low-carbon development paths. That's why we have recently pledged up to £720m, to the GCF. The fund will target developing countries, including the most vulnerable, to help them adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A total of over \$10bn has been pledged so far and we appeal to all partners to contribute their fair share and to ensure the GCF can be brought into operation as soon as possible.

The UK Government will continue to work closely with other countries, businesses and NGOs to deliver further progress on this important agenda.

We will be publishing a copy of this response on the DECC website, and we are happy for you to share and circulate our response via your website also.

Yours,

EDWARD DAVEY