

Country briefing for United Kingdom



You are a rich industrialised country. Your allies are the other Industrialised countries e.g. Australia and EU.

TASK

Using the information in your country's Climate Action Plan (see over the page for the link) and in this briefing sheet, we would like you to prepare a **1 minute High-Level statement** to outline your country's position by addressing these questions:

- Where in the world is your country and how does climate change affect you?
- What are your greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets, and what examples can you give of actions you are taking to achieve them (Mitigation)?
- What are you doing to support people, areas of your country, or key sectors, that are already feeling the negative effects of climate change (Adaptation)?

Be prepared

The poorer countries at the conference may request even more money or technological help to deal with the effects of climate change. You have already pledged £5.8 billion via your International Climate Fund so you could ask other rich countries to offer more.

You will also be asked if you want to collaborate on one or more of these major themes: oceans, cities, forests (and reforestation). Find out which is a priority for you (it may be more than one) and think about how you could share your experience or expertise.

Background to your views and needs

1) You are a rich country built on centuries of industrial growth. Carbon emissions helped you become one of the richest nations with a high standard of living for most people.

2) You agree that climate change is a big problem. In the UK summers will be hotter, winters wetter, and extreme weather events more frequent. In 2018 the UK had the joint hottest summer on record, and the driest since 1921. There were exceptionally low river flows for five weeks in a row and reservoir stocks were at historic lows.

3) You have ambitious national targets, and you were the first country in the world to set your commitments into law through the Climate Change Act 2008 with a target to cut emissions by 80% by 2050 relative to 1990. Under your '5th Carbon Budget' the UK Government is legally bound to reduce carbon emissions by 57% on 1990 levels by 2030.

4) You have achieved 43% cuts in emissions since 1990. Over 25% of your electricity is produced by renewable sources. New rules have made it easier for households to generate power with solar panels and sell it back to the National Grid. Your cities are also taking a lead. The Mayor of London has set the ambitious target to make London a zero-carbon city by 2050. Cities such as Bristol are becoming smart cities of the future, using technology to connect everything from traffic flow to energy centres to make them more efficient.

8) Much of your impressive reductions to date have been achieved by shutting down coal power stations. In April 2018 the UK had 3 working days in a row without using any coal. However you have been criticised for having insufficient policies in other sectors of the economy, eg transport and buildings, to meet your future targets.

9) So in 2017 the Government introduced an ambitious 'Clean Growth Strategy' which links economic growth directly to low carbon innovation. You are committing £2.5 billion up until 2021 for science, research and investment in low carbon energy & energy efficiency, transport, agriculture, and waste. 11 million trees will be planted in a network of forests. New diesel and petrol cars and vans will be banned in the UK from 2040. Even your critics announced this Strategy as a major step forward, while at the same time saying more action was now needed to put the aspirations into practice.

10) You are also planning to adapt to climate change, and published your 2nd National Adaption Plan in July 2018.

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More information

1) Find out about the EU's targets, of which the UK's targets are part, and plans for reducing emissions (known as Intended Nationally Determined Contributions) submitted for the UNFCCC Paris Agreement in 2015, from the list in:

<http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/indc/Submission%20Pages/submissions.aspx>

2) The background document called '**Overview of all Countries, 2018**' provides a summary of the 2015 Paris Agreement targets that you and other countries pledged. Look also at the analysis of the EU targets in the alphabetical list here:

<http://climateactiontracker.org>

3) Read about the UK's own voluntary target (independent of the UN process), your Government's official position, and the Climate Change Committee's assessments:

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/the-fifth-carbon-budget-the-next-step-towards-a-low-carbon-economy/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy/clean-growth-strategy-executive-summary>

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/independent-assessment-uks-clean-growth-strategy-ambition-action/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/oct/12/uk-climate-change-masterplan-grownups-finally-won-clean-growth-strategy>

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/reducing-uk-emissions-2018-progress-report-to-parliament/>

4) Find out how climate change affects your country, and how you are improving resilience:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/727252/national-adaptation-programme-2018.pdf

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/in-depth-how-the-uk-plans-to-adapt-to-climate-change>

5) Find out what the UK is doing to reduce its emissions:

<https://www.greenmatch.co.uk/blog/2018/03/renewable-energy-in-the-united-kingdom>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40723581>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-40699986>

6) Read about your work on City targets and Smart Cities

<http://www.wired.co.uk/article/bristol-smart-city>

<https://www.energyservicebristol.co.uk/>

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/london-environment-strategy-sets-out-vision>

7) Read about aid to other countries

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/international-climate-finance#overview>