



Department for  
Business, Energy  
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The Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP  
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**The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP**  
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Dear George,

Thank you for your email dated 16 August to the Cabinet Office, enclosing correspondence on behalf of a number of your constituent, regarding climate change. I am replying as this matter falls within my Ministerial portfolio.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC's) Working Group I report published on 9 August 2021 undoubtedly represents the most authoritative and comprehensive assessment to date of the physical science of climate change. We are deeply concerned at its stark findings: it clearly shows that there is absolutely no doubt that human activities have warmed the planet and are causing widespread and rapid changes to the climate. It also shows that without immediate and drastic action, the impacts will be severe.

Tackling climate change is of utmost importance to the UK, and we are already leading the way with our action and commitment ahead of the vital COP26 Summit. These commitments are evident in our ambitious 68% Nationally Determined Contributions ([NDC](#)), as well as the UK's Ten Point Plan – which is part of the Prime Minister's mission to level up across the country. The plan aims to mobilise £12 billion of Government investment to support up to 250,000 highly skilled green jobs in the UK and spur up to three times as much private sector investment by 2030. Our collective recovery must make our economy fit for tomorrow's challenges. We know we must build back better and build back greener.

The Government has laid legislation for the UK's sixth carbon budget, proposing a world-leading target which would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels. This is in line with the latest science as the level recommended by our expert advisers at the CCC. The target marks a decisive step towards net zero by 2050. It builds on the series of ambitious plans we have announced since committing to net zero emissions in law, including through the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan and our new UN climate target to reduce emissions in 2030 by at least 68% compared to 1990 levels – the highest reduction target made by a major economy to date. Ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, we will set out ambitious plans across key sectors of the economy to meet our carbon budgets and net zero. We have already published the Energy White Paper and the Transport Decarbonisation Plan and will publish the Heat and Building Strategy in due course.

We will also publish a comprehensive Net Zero Strategy ahead of COP26, setting out the Government's vision for transitioning to a net zero economy. This will raise ambition as we outline our path to meet net zero by 2050, our carbon budgets and Nationally Determined Contribution.

Alongside our commitments, the UK's COP26 Presidency is underpinned by four key goals: to put the world on a path to secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees

within reach, to protect people and nature, to mobilise finance to tackle climate change, and to work together and encourage cooperation across borders to address the climate crisis. To help us to meet these four key goals, specific campaigns have been formed across Whitehall, where Government officials and Ministers are working unceasingly, placing climate action at the heart of the Government business.

Over 70% of global GDP is now covered by a net zero target of some form, including all of the G7, who now have net zero 2050 targets and net zero aligned NDCs. This is up from around 30% when the UK assumed the incoming COP Presidency.

Our 2019 Green Finance Strategy sets out how we will harness the strength of the UK's world leading financial sector to catalyse green investment and accelerate delivery of net zero. We have set out a strong framework for investment with a clear signal to investors in our commitment to net zero by 2050. Our approach has seen the UK power sector attract over £93 billion of green investment since 2010. In November 2020 the Chancellor hailed the start of a new chapter for UK financial services, with green finance at its core, making a series of announcements that will help the UK cement its position as a global hub for green investment.

In 2019 the UK committed to doubling its International Climate Finance (ICF) to £11.6 billion in the years 2021-2025. This will help developing countries make the transition to low-carbon and climate resilient development. We are committed to helping those countries and communities that will be most affected by climate change. We will work multilaterally to recover better, support the most vulnerable and anchor enhanced and credible climate action at the heart of recovery. Since 2011, our ICF has helped 66 million people cope with the effects of climate change; supported 33 million people with improved access to clean energy; and reduced or avoided 31 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP26 provide excellent opportunities to drive ambition on taking an integrated approach to tackling the interlinked crises of biodiversity loss and climate change. This will be hugely important if we are to deliver the step-change needed to tackle these global issues.

By making 'nature' a key focus of COP26 in Glasgow, we hope to demonstrate that Nature Based Solutions can deliver multiple benefits for climate, biodiversity, and people, and can therefore play a critical role in tackling these interrelated crises in an integrated way.

Domestically, we will ramp up our world-leading work on our ambitious legislative agenda through our landmark Environment Bill, as well as the Fisheries and Agriculture Acts. These work hand in hand to protect and recover our precious natural environment and diverse ecosystems in line with our 25 Year Environment Plan to leave the environment in a better place than we have inherited it.

Thank you again for taking the time to write. I hope you and your constituents will find this reply helpful.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G Hands', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**THE RT HON GREG HANDS MP**

Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change