

UK funding to support developing cities and regions transition to net zero by 2050



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A new multi-million UK Urban Climate Action Programme launched today to help developing cities reduce their emissions and grow sustainably

UK as COP26 Presidency calls on cities and regions across the world to commit to net zero emissions by 2050

decarbonising the world's urban buildings, which are responsible for around 40% of global emissions, crucial in combating climate change

The UK government has today (Thursday 11 November 2021) launched the new Urban Climate Action programme (UCAP) to support the cities and regions in developing countries most impacted by climate change to accelerate their transition to net zero.

Backed with £27.5 million of new UK government funding as part of the UK's International Climate Finance commitment, the programme will support cities across Africa, Asia and Latin America to take action to tackle climate change and create a sustainable future, by helping them to become carbon neutral by 2050 and prepare low-carbon infrastructure projects.

The programme will help cities like Nairobi, Kuala Lumpur, and Bogotá develop low-emission public transport systems, renewable energy generation, sustainable waste management, new climate-smart buildings codes and climate risk planning.

To date over 1,000 cities and regions across the world – over a

fifth of the global urban population - have committed to slashing their emissions to net zero by 2050.

Today, as part of the UN COP26 climate summit's Cities, Regions and Built Environment Day in Glasgow, the UK has called on cities yet to make commitments to step up and set a net zero target that will help protect the places where people live and work, future proofing the world for future generations.

Business and Energy Minister Lord Callanan said:

From our homes and workplaces to our towns and cities, the buildings we live in are a fundamental part of our daily lives, but also a significant source of global emissions.

That's why at COP26 today we are calling on cities, regions, governments and businesses to seize the moment and set bold net-zero targets as we work together as a global community to end our contribution to climate change.

The world's urban buildings, including homes, workplaces, schools and hospitals, are responsible for around 40% of global carbon emissions. By 2050, 1.6 billion people living in cities will be regularly exposed to extremely high temperatures and over 800 million people living in cities across the world will be vulnerable to sea level rises and coastal flooding. Accelerating the transition to net zero emissions for the world's cities will therefore be vital to achieving the goal of keeping global warming to close to 1.5 degrees.

Energy and Climate Change Minister Greg Hands said:

By 2050 urban areas will be home to two thirds of the world population, with the speed and scale of urbanisation set to lock in high-carbon infrastructure and inequality if we do not act now.

The UK's new programme will provide invaluable support to cities across Africa, Asia and Latin America to help them grow sustainably, and make them resilient to climate risks, securing a greener future for generations to come.

Joy Belmonte, Mayor of Quezon City, one of the cities that will be supported through UCAP said:

Quezon City's Enhanced Local Climate Action Plan was successfully developed with the support of the UK government. With the assistance of the C40 Cities Finance Facility, the city is also pioneering the deployment of solar PV on public schools and on critical public healthcare facilities, contributing to a green and just recovery.

We are immensely looking forward to continuing our fruitful partnership with C40 to implement Quezon City's Climate Action Plan as a matter of urgency, continuing the journey together with the support of the UK government.

UCAP will follow on from the flagship Climate Leadership in Cities programme, which was funded by the UK and successfully supported megacities in Latin America and Asia to develop ambitious climate action plans consistent with the Paris Agreement - including developing pathways to net zero by 2050 and committing to ambitious interim targets by 2030 to keep 1.5 degrees within reach.

As the first major economy to legislate to end its contribution to climate change by 2050, the UK is already taking action to tackle emissions from the built environment sector. As heating for homes and workspaces makes up almost a third of all UK carbon emissions, reducing these emissions is key to achieving the goal of net zero by 2050. Through the recent heat and buildings and net zero strategies, the UK government has set out how the UK will deploy the low-carbon technology needed to decarbonise homes, workplaces and public spaces.

To address emissions from the wider built environment, the UK government is investing £3.9 billion through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, the Home Upgrade Grant scheme, Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Boiler Upgrade Scheme and Heat Network Transformation Programme.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Minister Eddie Hughes said:

Net zero provides a real opportunity as we level up across the UK - delivering new green jobs and skills and boosting local economic growth.

Many local areas are already taking action and we continue to work very closely with them to meet our climate change commitments.

We are also taking action to cut the CO2 emissions of all new build homes by at least 75% from 2025 under the Future Homes Standard, and by 31% through an improvement in building standards later this year.

The transition to net zero will drive levelling up across the country while supporting communities towards a greener future – providing opportunities for economic growth and delivering new green jobs for local people.

Many local areas are already taking strong action on climate change, including:

the Gateshead District Energy Scheme, a renewable heat network for up to 1,250 new homes, backed by £5.9 million government funding

Suffolk County Council has set out plans to build new walking and cycling infrastructure, work with industry in Suffolk to utilise innovative waste heat technology, and deliver a public education campaign on the climate emergency to change behaviour

The government is supporting councils to reduce local carbon emissions and take advantage of the opportunities created, including through the Local Net Zero Programme. Almost £22 million has been invested in the programme to date for local places to build capacity and capability to deliver on net zero. A Local Net Zero Forum will also be established to bring together national and local government policymakers on a regular basis.

Notes to editors

The Urban Climate Action Programme will work with cities

including:

Africa: Addis Ababa, Accra, Nairobi, Lagos, Johannesburg, Tshwane, Dar es Salaam

Asia: Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Quezon City

Latin America: Bogotá, Medellín, Guadalajara, Mexico City, Lima

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