

United Kingdom Adaptation Communication Update 2021

The UK government published its first [Adaptation Communication](#) in December 2020, an important step in upholding the transparent reporting system of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). As incoming president and host of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow this year, the UK publishes this letter to update Parties on its ambition and progress on climate adaptation action, a key priority for COP26.

At the Climate Adaptation Summit on 25 January, the UK Prime Minister launched the [Adaptation Action Coalition \(AAC\)](#) in partnership with Egypt, Bangladesh, Malawi, the Netherlands, Saint Lucia and the United Nations, which brings together States with the aim of accelerating global action on adaptation, including through delivery of sector-specific action oriented workstreams, to drive innovation and build climate resilience. Launched in tandem by the UN High-level Champions, the Race to Resilience is mobilising non-state actors to build the resilience of 4 billion people by 2030. Together, these initiatives are designed to advance adaptation action across sectors and scales.

Since publication of the 2020 Adaptation Communication, the UK Government has continued to progress domestic action on adaptation. This is underpinned by a robust statutory framework outlined in the [Climate Change Act \(2008\)](#) and other acts of the devolved legislatures, including [Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)¹. This legislation requires the presentation of a UK Climate Change Risk Assessment to parliament every five years which forms part of the UK's evidence base.

Working to ensure that climate change risks faced across the UK are well understood is a fundamental prerequisite to their effective management through adaptation interventions. In June, the UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) published its updated [Independent Assessment of Climate Risk](#), highlighting the priority climate change risks and opportunities faced by the UK. This landmark report is rooted in leading-edge science and research, drawing on a comprehensive programme of analysis, consultation and consideration by the Committee involving over 450 people across 130 organisations, resulting in the publication of more than 1,600 pages of evidence and analysis. The publication of this updated evidence is an important step forward in the UK's progress on adaptation and will be used to inform the third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3), due in 2022, and subsequent adaptation programmes across the four nations.

We resolve to continue to progress and report on the adaptation action we are taking domestically and globally to contribute to climate resilience for people and the planet.

¹ The Adaptation Communication published December 2020 contains further information on the UK's statutory cycle.

Adaptation actions across our nations:

UK: For England, the UK government continues to implement the actions set out in its second [National Adaptation Programme](#) (NAP) (2018-2023) and begins to prepare for its third programme, informed by CCRA3. Progress in implementing these adaptation programmes is independently assessed by the Climate Change Committee through a range of mechanisms. In the case of England, it is reported to the UK Parliament every two years. The latest progress report was published in summer of this year and the UK government responded to each of the Committees recommendations in full.

Highlights of recent adaptation actions and milestones include:

- Updating the government's [Green Book Supplementary Guidance on Accounting for the Effects of Climate Change](#) to encourage climate change risks to be embedded in policy and programme decisions, drawing on climate evidence and assessments.
- Establishing new government-wide adaptation governance to provide senior-level oversight and strategic direction on the delivery of statutory duties on adaptation and resilience policy across the government.
- Establishing a project with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) which seeks to tackle the challenges faced in the UK and internationally on the monitoring of adaptation progress.
- Under the UK G7 Presidency, the Foreign and Development Ministers welcomed the Principles for Locally Led Adaptation, following the UK's endorsement of the Principles at the Climate Adaptation Summit in January 2021. The Principles for Locally Led Adaptation aim to shift the dynamic so that adaptation interventions are developed and implemented in a way that is equitable and informed by local priorities, knowledge and expertise.
- Investing in international disaster risk reduction: The UK made a contribution of £120 million to regional risk pools during the G7 Leaders' Summit, to support an improved response to extreme weather and climate-linked disasters.
- Investing in nature: including our £640 million Nature for Climate Fund for the creation, restoration and adaptive management of woodland and peatland, our £80 million Green Recovery Challenge Fund as part of the government's wider green economic recovery package, and the government Policy Statement on flood and coastal erosion risk management which commits to doubling the number of government-funded projects which include nature-based solutions to reduce flood and coastal erosion risk.
- Making businesses more resilient: The government is implementing economy-wide, climate-related financial disclosures for businesses and investments products, which will support investment decisions to be aligned with our transition to a lower-carbon, climate resilient economy – not just in the UK, but globally.
- Ensuring our homes are fit for the future: The Future Buildings Standard consultation sets out proposals to reduce the risk of overheating in new residential buildings by introducing a new overheating mitigation requirement in the Building Regulations.

Scotland: In line with devolved climate change legislation, the Scottish Government continues to implement the actions set out in its second Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme (SCCAP) (2019-2024) and begins to prepare for its third programme. As part of the initial response to the CCC's June 2021 update to its Independent Assessment of Climate Risk, the Scottish Government; i) set out plans to host a National Summit on Climate Resilience in the run up to COP26 - bringing together leadership from across the public, private and third sectors to raise collective ambition on adaptation as part of Scotland's just transition to a net-zero and climate resilient society, and ii) commissioned further advice from the CCC on the current SCCAP. Additional information on Scotland's devolved approach to climate change adaptation and resilience was included in "[Scotland's contribution to the Paris Agreement: an indicative Nationally Determined Contribution](#)", published in July 2021.

Northern Ireland: Northern Ireland Executive Departments are continuing to implement the actions contained in its second five-year [Climate Change Adaptation Programme](#) (NICCAP2) which covers the period 2019-2024. A number of new actions have been added since the Programme's publication in September 2019 through annual reviews. Executive Departments are now preparing for the comprehensive mid-programme review to be undertaken during 2022. This review will provide an opportunity to assess the impact of the Programme as well as providing an opportunity to amend the plans and actions contained within to take account of the latest Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3).

Wales: The Welsh Government is continuing to deliver the policy measures set out in its second five-year climate change adaptation plan, [Prosperity for All: A Climate Conscious Wales](#), published in December 2019. Further policy reviews are also underway in response to the CCC's updated advice in its third Climate Risk Independent Assessment.

In Wales, the climate adaptation provisions within the Climate Change Act 2008 are further strengthened by the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, the latter of which includes a number of provisions for the governance and management of our natural resources.