



NDC CHECKLIST

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

WWF'S NDC RATING GRADES

- ✔ NDC We Want
- ⓘ Short Way to Go
- ✍ Some Way to Go
- ✘ NDC We Don't Want

		2015 NDC (The assessment takes into account the EU NDC, as well as UK policy, planning and legal documents)	2020 NDC	Analysis
AMBITION				
MITIGATION				
1	Strengthened mitigation targets	In 2015 the UK was part of the European Union (EU). The EU and its 28 Member States submitted a joint NDC with a commitment of a domestic reduction of at least 40% in GHG emissions by 2030 compared to 1990. The UK contribution implied by effort sharing of the EU 2030 NDC target is a reduction of 53% from 1990 levels.	The UK commits to reduce economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions by at least 68% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.	The NDC mitigation target has been strengthened since 2015. The new target aligns with the UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) advice and has the 2050 net-zero target in mind. The CCC has indicated this could be further strengthened in the future.

2	<p>An economy-wide absolute 2030 target</p>	<p>Apart from the EU target, the UK established its own climate legislative framework and policies and set domestic five-yearly carbon budgets. The fourth carbon budget was set by UK Parliament in 2011 at 1,950 MtCO₂e for the period 2023–2027 - this is equivalent to a 51% reduction on 1990 emissions by 2025 (the midpoint of the period). The fifth carbon budget was set in 2016 at 1,725 MtCO₂e for 2028-2032 - a 57% reduction by 2030. In both cases the government agreed with advice from the independent Climate Change Committee.</p> <p>The carbon budgets are for the whole economy.</p>	<p>The NDC provides an economy-wide net reduction in GHG emissions of at least 68% by 2030 compared to reference year levels. Reference year and target year emissions will be based on the 1990-2030 UK GHG Inventory submitted to the UNFCCC in 2032.</p>	<p>Both NDCs present economy-wide absolute 2030 targets, including the sectors of Energy, Industrial processes and product use, Agriculture, Waste, Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry. The UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) advice was that the UK should submit an NDC based on the path to the Sixth Carbon Budget, requiring at least a 68% reduction in territorial emissions from 1990 to 2030 (excluding emissions from international aviation and shipping (IAS) in line with UN convention), to be delivered through domestic action, with additional actions to reduce the UK’s contribution to IAS emissions.</p>
3	<p>A 2021-2030 carbon budget aligned to 1.5°C</p>	<p>The UK Climate Change Act (2008) had a 2050 target of an 80% greenhouse gas emissions reduction on 1990 levels - this implies a level of per capita emissions in 2050, which if replicated globally, would be consistent with a path to limiting global temperature increase to around 2°C.</p> <p>The five-yearly carbon budgets are set to be on the cost-effective path to 2050.</p>	<p>The NDC mentions that the Climate Change Act introduced carbon budgets for the UK Government, which cap emissions over successive 5-year periods and must be set 12 years in advance. The first five carbon budgets cover the period from 2008-32 are aligned with a 2°C path; with the sixth carbon budget (2033-38) due to be set by mid-2021</p>	<p>UK’s 4th carbon budget, covering the period around 2023-2027 was set for a 2°C trajectory. UK needs to update policy and investment for a pathway consistent with 1.5°C alignment. The CCC has advised that an NDC of at least 68% ‘would align with the published pathways from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) for a 1.5°C goal.’ The advice of the CCC aligns with the CAT’s assessment that additional emission reductions from abroad are required for the UK to achieve a 1.5°C compatible fair share contribution to the necessary global emission reduction (CAT, 2020).</p> <p>According to the CCC’s 6th carbon budget (released in December 2020, covering the 2033-2037 period), the recommended pathway requires a 78% reduction in UK territorial emissions between 1990 and 2035. The UK government won’t respond to this advice until summer 2021.</p>

4

NDC targets aligned to a 2050 or earlier Net-Zero Long-term Strategy

By 2015, no long-term strategy was established (the fifth carbon budget was set in 2016).

The 2030 NDC target is set with a 2050 net-zero target in mind (following CCC advice).

In 2018 the UK submitted its Long-term Low-emissions Strategy (LTS) called 'Clean Growth Strategy: Leading the way to a low carbon future'. It links to the targets established in the Climate Change Act (2008) which aims to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 80% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels through legally binding five-year caps. The NDC indicates that the forthcoming Net Zero Strategy will constitute the UK's revised Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy to the UNFCCC and will be published before COP26 (by November 2021). The Strategy should set out the government's vision for transitioning to a net zero economy by 2050, making the most of new growth and employment opportunities across the UK.

In 2018 the UK submitted its Long-term Low-emissions Strategy (LTS) called 'Clean Growth Strategy: Leading the way to a low carbon future'. It links to the targets established in the Climate Change Act (2008) which, at that time, aimed to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 80% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels through legally binding five-year caps.

After leaving the EU in 2019, in June of the same year, the UK became the first major economy to set a net zero target for 2050 in law (amendment to the Climate Change Act (2008); this raised the 2050 emissions reduction target from 80% to 100% to reflect updated science. The net zero target provides an underpinning basis for UK climate ambition including the level of the 2030 NDC. The Net Zero Strategy will constitute the UK's revised Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy to the UNFCCC. Ahead of COP26, the UK also intends to publish ambitious individual plans across key sectors of the economy, including an Energy White Paper, Transport Decarbonisation Plan, England Peat Strategy and Heat and Buildings Strategy

ADAPTATION

5

Clear adaptation objectives

Adaptation was not included in the EU joint NDC. 2015 adaptation targets ambitions and policies were set out in the following documents.

The National Adaptation Programme (NAP) for England (2013): in response to The Climate Change Risk Assessment (2012), the NAP sets out a mix of policy and actions to address climate risks across sectors, including built environment; infrastructure; healthy and resilient communities; agriculture and forestry; natural environment, business and local government.

The Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme (SCCAP) (2014), which sets out policy and actions across sectors, including natural environment, buildings and infrastructure and climate ready society.

The Adaptation Strategy and Delivery Plan for Wales (2010), which sets out specific activities, objectives and outcomes to adaptation.

The cross-departmental Northern Ireland Adaptation Programme (2014-2019), which sets out a Roadmap to the Adaptation Programme and focuses on the areas of flooding, water, natural environment and agriculture and forestry.

The UK submitted its Adaptation Communication to the UNFCCC in parallel with its NDC. The Adaptation Communication sets out the UK's domestic and international ambition and action on adaptation and resilience.

The main focus is England, but also contains plans for the Devolved Administrations - Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Adaptation Communication includes strategies on flooding and coastal erosion, terrestrial and marine environments, health, infrastructure, food security, and climate security. It also mentions the Second National Adaptation Programme (NAP), published in July 2018 and focused on England, that has a time horizon of five years (2018-2023). The NAP is underpinned by a monitoring tool to track progress on adaptation actions. The Communication informs that the UK government continues to implement the actions set out in the second NAP and is furthering action to respond to priority risks identified in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2017). It also highlights that the NAP sets out actions across a wide range of sectors, including on the natural environment, infrastructure, people and built environment, business and industry, and local government. Notable adaptation progress is being undertaken in exploring and supporting the vital role of Nature-based Solutions (NbS); managing floods and coastal erosion; and transforming our financial sector to respond to and manage climate-related financial risks.

Through the legally binding UK Climate Change Act (2008), the UK government is legally obliged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build capacity to adapt and strengthen resilience to climate risks. The Act also states that all adaptation plans should be updated by 2025. Clear adaptation objectives mentioned in the Adaptation Communication are defined by a set of plans:

- 1 - The Second National Adaptation Programme (NAP),** published in July 2018 and focused on England;
- 2 - The Climate Ready Scotland: Second Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme,** that takes an outcomes-based and people-centric approach to climate change adaptation in Scotland over the period to 2024;
- 3 - The Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Wales,** entitled "Prosperity for All: A Climate Conscious Wales", that sets out how Wales is aware of the climate risks, prepared for the impacts arising from climate change and is adapting to the areas of highest risk over the period of 2020-2025.
- 4 - The Northern Ireland's second Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP2)** that was established in September 2019 and covers the period of 2019-2024.

FINANCE				
6	Finance Commitments	Not mentioned.	The NDC mentions that the UK intends to submit its Finance Biennial Communication by the end of 2020. In addition, it refers to the UK Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a green industrial revolution, which will mobilise £12 billion of government investment to create and support up to 250,000 highly-skilled green jobs in the UK, and unlock three times as much private sector investment by 2030.	<p>The UK submitted its Finance Biennial Communication in December 2020. It reaffirms doubling of climate finance, including to GCF, and that this is additional finance. It has also introduced a genuinely leading commitment to end UK public money to overseas fossil fuel projects - via UK Export Finance, Overseas Development Aid and Multilateral Development Banks rules. The Communication establishes a balanced split between mitigation and adaptation, but has makes no reference to loss and damage. In the Climate Ambition Summit, the UK restated the 2019 pledge of £11.6bn in International Climate Finance over the next five years (doubling) and announced a new £10m commitment to a multilateral Green Recovery Initiative, which will support developing countries to build back better. Climate budget is increasing in the context of an overall reduction of ODA 0.7% to 0.5% GDP. Considering fairness and equity concerns regarding the UK's share of emissions historically and globally, ambitious leadership requires that the UK should contribute significantly to emission reductions in developing countries and support them to pursue alternative development pathways.</p> <p>In January 2021, the PM committed to £3bn of the UK's climate finance to support nature. While it is welcome that climate finance is used in a way that recognises the importance of nature in tackling climate change, it is concerning that it also means that the support aimed at fighting poverty is reduced, as part of the overall aid budget cuts in 2020 and plans to cut the aid budget from 0.7% GNI to 0.5% from 2021 onwards. A pledge up to £38 million to the Climate Compatible Growth programme, supporting developing countries to accelerate their transition to green energy while growing their economies was also made during the One Planet Summit.</p>
7	Clear conditional targets	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
8	Moving from conditional to unconditional targets	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

FOSTERING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

9	Increased sectoral coverage	<p>The UK target is economy-wide. The greenhouse gas emissions inventory is regularly updated to improve scope - including moving to full coverage of Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) activities.</p>	<p>The UK target is economy-wide with comprehensive coverage of sectors, gases and pools, including the sectors of Energy (including transport); Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU); Agriculture; LULUCF; and Waste. All LULUCF pools are included in the NDC: above ground biomass, below ground biomass, litter, deadwood soil organic carbon and stocks of harvested wood products.</p>	<p>Both NDCs present economy-wide sectoral coverage. Emissions from International Aviation and Shipping within UK climate targets and carbon budgets are not included in the scope of this NDC, despite advice from the Climate Change Committee (CCC).</p>
10	Quantitative Sectoral targets	<p>There are sectoral policies to target emission reduction across the main sources of emissions, although not quantitative targets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power: the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) and UK Carbon Price Support expose electricity generators to a carbon price. The Energy Act 2013 introduced long-term contracts providing a secure return for low-carbon generators. • Buildings: building regulations require minimum standards of energy efficiency in new buildings. The Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation target retrofit improvement in the energy efficiency of homes. The EU Ecodesign Directive sets minimum energy performance standards for appliances. Public and commercial buildings face a carbon price through the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme. Low-carbon heat is incentivised through the Renewable Heat Incentive. Devolved governments are increasingly developing policies appropriate to their circumstances. 	<p>There are no quantitative sectoral targets in the NDC. However, the climate plan mentions that the UK intends to publish ambitious individual plans across key sectors of the economy, including an Energy White Paper, Transport Decarbonisation Plan, England Peat Strategy and Heat and Buildings Strategy ahead of COP26.</p>	<p>Although there are no quantitative targets mentioned in the NDC, the Prime Minister's ten-point plan (November 2020) highlights some quantitative targets in specific sectors, including energy (40GW wind; new nuclear); transport (banning new internal combustion engines by 2030; more cycling); heat (600,000 heat pumps per year by 2028); energy/transport/heat/industry (50GW low-carbon hydrogen); AFOLU (30,000 ha trees planted each year). It is also expected that more information will be provided on the individual sectoral plans and in the Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy, to be published in 2021, before COP26.</p>

- Transport: No economy wide targets on vehicle transition; EU regulations require that the average efficiency of new cars and vans increases to 2020. Government grants are available to reduce the upfront cost of new electric vehicles, and various demand-side measures are being adopted at UK and devolved levels.
- Industry: Zero Carbon Homes commitment cancelled; the EU ETS also applies to energy-intensive industries. Voluntary Climate Change Agreements offer discounts on the Climate Change Levy if companies meet energy efficiency targets. The Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme requires large companies to regularly carry out energy assessments.
- Agriculture: the agriculture sector has a voluntary scheme to increase take-up of low-carbon practices and technologies, with devolved governments developing bespoke schemes in their areas.
- Waste and F-gases: the UK landfill tax, supported by various complementary schemes, often taken by devolved governments, creates incentives to divert waste from landfill, as required by the EU Landfill Directive. EU regulations require that F-gas use is phased down.

11

Key structural sectors included

Not mentioned.

The NDC mentions the health sector connected to the UK's commitment to healthy diets supported by a sustainable food system which contributes towards a reduction in GHG emissions; promoting health and wellbeing through sustainable transport; and policies to adverse impacts on human health caused by air pollution, referring to health inequalities and the right to health as set out in the Paris Agreement. Additionally, the NDC mentions measures related to the education sector, which are related to strengthening awareness and building consensus in tackling climate change through various education initiatives at all stages of life.

The NDC mentions specific policies related to the health and education sectors in relation to climate change.

12	Just transition policies	Not mentioned.	<p>The NDC mentions that the UK is dedicated to promoting equality and inclusion, including women's empowerment and gender equality. Public authorities must fulfil responsibilities set out under the UK's Equality Act (2010), which covers a range of protected characteristics. The UK continues to consider equality issues in domestic decarbonisation policies.</p> <p>Regarding Just Transition, the NDC mentions that the Scottish Government is committed to delivering a green recovery after the impact of Covid-19, and plans outlined in the Programme for Government 2020/21 are among a range of measures to create green jobs and accelerate a just transition to net zero. A Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan (CESAP) should also focus on how to manage the challenge of a just transition to net zero. The Welsh Government is working to develop governance options for ensuring a fair and equitable transition to a decarbonised society. The UK's upcoming Net Zero Strategy will focus on new growth and employment opportunities across the UK.</p>	<p>The NDC includes policies that aim to achieve a just transition to a net zero society, focused on justice, fairness and gender equality. Specific examples on how the UK has considered equality issues in domestic decarbonisation policies are provided. However, there is no specific and structured just transition strategy and this is not yet a core part of the UK's narrative across the sectors where a just transition will be needed.</p>
13	Cross-sectoral approaches	Not mentioned.	<p>The NDC mentions that in November 2020, the UK Prime Minister set out his ambitious Ten Point Plan for a green industrial revolution. Spanning clean energy, buildings, transport, nature and innovative technologies, the plan will mobilise £12 billion of government investment to create and support up to 250,000 highly-skilled green jobs in the UK, and unlock three times as much private sector investment by 2030. It is also mentioned that the Clean Growth Strategy describes the UK Government's current policies and measures to decarbonise all sectors of the UK economy through the 2020s and beyond. A potential UK Emissions Trading System is also mentioned in the NDC.</p>	<p>The 2020 NDC mentions cross-sectoral approaches related to decarbonisation strategies, innovative technologies, creation of green jobs and unlocking private sector investment. A potential UK Emissions Trading System is also mentioned. More information related to cross-sectoral approaches is also expected to come in the Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy, to be published in 2021, before COP26.</p>

INCLUSIVENESS AND PARTICIPATION

14	Inclusive process to invite inputs from institutions and citizens in the NDC design	Not mentioned.	The NDC mentions that the decision on the UK's NDC headline target was led by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and agreed through UK Government governance structures at official and ministerial levels.	Although the UK mentions engagement with civil society, this is either ad-hoc depending on department/organisation, or highly structured and infrequent, with little real interaction on the detail of the NDC and related documents. There was a climate assembly process run by Parliamentary committees, not by the government. In addition, there have been calls for evidence - particularly from the CCC, who do engage more actively than central government departments.
15	Disclosure of information	Not mentioned.	Not mentioned.	Not mentioned.
16	Reporting back on process	Not mentioned.	Not mentioned.	Not mentioned.
17	Participatory Climate governance structures	Not mentioned.	<p>The NDC mentions that the UK employs a range of institutional structures – at national, sub-national and local level - to enable economy-wide emissions mitigation, as well as numerous policies and measures to underpin delivery.</p> <p>BEIS is responsible for the strategic oversight of the UK's international climate and energy policy, and for the UK Government's domestic climate and energy policy. The Devolved Administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have control over certain policy areas to deliver emission reductions, while the UK Government retains control over a number of other policy areas. The approach taken by each government will differ, drawing on the range of powers at their disposal. In addition, the UK Climate Change Act (2018) established the Climate Change Committee (CCC) as the independent statutory body that advises the UK Government and Devolved Administrations on climate change mitigation and adaptation, including emissions reduction targets.</p> <p>As climate change policy is devolved, the Devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales have their own statutory emissions reduction targets. Progress towards these targets also contributes to achievement of UK-wide targets.</p>	The NDC very briefly describes climate governance structures that consist in both centralised and decentralised (within the Devolved Administrations) approaches. However, it is not clear to what extent broader participation from non-state actors is secured and organised as part of these governance structures.

CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

18	Linkages with SDGs	Not mentioned.	The NDC mentions that the UK is committed to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that more information about the UK's approach to the SDGs can be found in the country's Voluntary National Review (2019).	Although there is a general mention of SDGs in the 2020 NDC, no further information is provided on how they contribute to the established SDG targets, especially SDG 7 and 13.
19	Measurable Nature-based Solutions	Not mentioned.	The NDC mentions plans that address the ocean and marine environment and terrestrial biodiversity. NbS are explicitly mentioned in the Adaptation Communication.	There is a clear statement in the Adaptation Communication on the 'vital role' on Nbs in managing climate risks. The Adaptation Communication clearly adopted the IUCN definition of NbS, and acknowledged the multiple co-benefits involved in a NbS approach including the role of biodiversity, as well as a link to the Convention on Biological Diversity. A focus on peatland restoration is a welcome target within the Adaptation Communication, though specific focus on ending the emissions from peatland ecosystems in the UK was notably absent. In addition, the PM's 10 point plan (November 2020) mentions the planting of 30,000 ha of trees each year. But overall, there is not yet sufficient detail or evidence of action on the nature-based solutions necessary to achieve net-zero by 2050 in the UK.

TRACKING PROGRESS

20	A transparent national system to track implementation	Not mentioned.	<p>As per the Climate Change Act 2008 Ministers must report on the policies implemented to meet carbon budgets and produce an annual report to Parliament on the status of UK emissions. The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) submits annual reports to Parliament on progress towards targets and budgets. The government must respond to the reports, ensuring transparency and accountability. The government must report to Parliament its policies and proposals to meet the budgets and set a limit on the purchase of carbon credits for each budgetary period. The government must report at least every 5 years on the risks to the UK of climate change, and publish a programme setting out how these will be addressed.</p> <p>The UK maintains a National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory with data back to 1990 and details of methodologies publically available. The UK annually submits a comprehensive greenhouse gas inventory to the UNFCCC.</p>	The UK counts with institutional arrangements and regulations that can be considered as a fairly transparent national system to track implementation.
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WWF checklist for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 's 2020 NDC assessment

- Mitigation
- Adaptation
- Finance
- Fostering system change
- Inclusiveness and Participation
- Contribution to Sustainable Development
- Tracking progress

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 's rating grade after assessment: 

For more information

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