

Press release: UK Hydrographic Office supports G7 Healthy Oceans commitments

Ocean plastics, coastal resilience and the Blue Economy were high on the agenda at the G7 summit in Canada earlier this month, where a commitment to support and drive ocean science and sustainability was signed. The Charlevoix Blueprint for Healthy Oceans, Seas and Resilient Coastal Communities sets out G7 commitments on ocean plastics, and creates a blueprint for the development of a more sustainable and climate-resilient future for oceans and coastal communities, with a focus on ocean science and effective, transparent data gathering and utilisation.

As a leading maritime nation, the UK is well placed to support many of the goals set out in the Blueprint and is ready to spearhead the expansion of global interest in ocean data. Through the UK Hydrographic Office's (UKHO) marine geospatial expertise, the organisation is well placed to support the delivery of many of the commitments set out in the Blueprint. Marine geospatial information provides the foundations for critical decisions affecting trade, maritime safety and security decision-making, the sustainable use of marine resources and development of marine infrastructure, as well as protecting habitats and ensuring resilience against forces of nature.

As well as supporting the UK's position as a great maritime nation, the UKHO is also the Primary Charting Authority for 71 coastal states around the world, and supports safe navigation globally through the provision of nautical charts, publications and services to over 90% of ships trading internationally. In addition, the UKHO is currently working with partners on two programmes across the globe to support emergency preparedness and recovery, support the management of coastal zones, expand ocean data observation and seabed mapping, and manage fisheries and marine protected areas (MPAs) – all initiatives identified by the Blueprint as priorities for healthy oceans and economies globally.

The UKHO is contributing to projects across 31 coastal states. The Overseas Territories Seabed Mapping Programme, funded by the UK Government's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) and co-ordinated by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), is focused on undertaking seabed mapping in territories under the jurisdiction and sovereignty of the UK, such as Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands (BVI), the Cayman Islands and Montserrat. Furthermore, the UKHO also plays a leading role in the FCO's Commonwealth Marine Economies (CME) Programme, alongside the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) and the National Oceanography Centre (NOC). The CME Programme aims to unlock over £2bn return for the economies of 17 Small Island Developing States (SIDS), some of which are the most economically vulnerable states in the world, through a range of Blue Economy developmental work.

John Humphrey, Chief Executive of the UKHO, commented:

We worked long and hard with our partners across Government to underpin the development of effective global goals for healthy oceans and sustainable Blue Economy growth in advance of the G7 summit.

It is extremely gratifying to see this global coalition of leaders commit to ocean goals that the UKHO knows from experience have a direct benefit on individuals and economies in coastal communities and nations around the world.

For example, we are continually building our capacity and understanding of how best to support emergency preparedness and recovery efforts. Meanwhile, we have also seen first-hand how accurate and up-to-date seabed mapping can contribute to dual aims of marine protection and the development of the Blue Economy. The associated positive economic benefits of hydrography are clear: with the average return of approximately £7.50 for every £1.00 spent. However, this ratio can exceed 1:250 for more remote, more geographically challenged and less developed nations.

As a world leading marine geospatial data agency, we look forward to continuing to support our partners achieve the goals of the Charlevoix Blueprint for Healthy Oceans, Seas and Resilient Coastal Communities signed at the G7 summit earlier this month.

Recognising the importance oceans play in the global climate system, supporting communities, jobs and livelihoods, food security, human health, biodiversity, economic prosperity and way of life, the Blueprint commits the G7 to:

1. Support better adaptation planning, emergency preparedness and recovery
2. Support innovative financing for coastal resilience
3. Launch a joint G7 initiative to deploy Earth observation technologies and related applications to scale up capacities for the integrated management of coastal zones
4. Increase the availability and sharing of science and data
5. Address Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and other drivers of over-exploitation of fish stocks
6. Support strategies to effectively protect and manage vulnerable areas of our oceans
7. Take a lifecycle approach to plastics stewardship on land and at sea, moving towards the more resource efficient and sustainable management of plastics

The UKHO is continuing to invest in its technology, staff and facilities in its office in Taunton, to ensure they can continue to provide leading global marine information for decision makers across the globe. The UKHO is expanding marine geospatial capabilities through data science and software development and will be working with government partners to support active strategies to achieve the G7 Blueprint.

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News story: UK exports at record high

Exports grew faster to Canada (up 12.7 per cent), India (31.8 per cent) and China (15.3 per cent) than to the EU (10 per cent).

Goods exports were up 10 per cent, driven by a demand for manufactured goods, while services exports rose 4.2 per cent due to strong global interest in the UK's prestigious financial and travel services.

Non-EU countries remain the main destination for UK services (£167.4 billion), making up 60.4 per cent of all services exports.

The figures also reveal the trade deficit continuing to narrow over the last year by £7.7 billion to £23.1 billion.

Over the same period, the UK's current account deficit also narrowed to £80.3 billion, down by £12.2 billion from twelve months earlier. This is the narrowest deficit as a percentage of GDP since 2012.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox said:

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of UK businesses up and down the country, exports of goods and services rose to a record high of £620 billion. Demand for high quality British products remained strong from countries outside the EU including China, India and Canada and we are putting companies in position to benefit from growing global opportunities.

Far from the negative forecasts after the EU referendum, there is every reason to be optimistic. Our trade deficit narrowed and UK business is delivering for Britain and succeeding on the world stage. As an international economic department we are banging the drum for the growing demand for our goods and services.

The country also remains a strong destination for investment with nearly 76,000 new jobs created as a result of inward investment from foreign direct investment projects in 2017/18, more than the previous year.

Figures from the Department for International Trade published this week show 2,072 new projects recorded, creating 75,968 new jobs and safeguarding 15,063, amounting to nearly 1,500 new jobs per week across the country.

Through GREAT.gov.uk, the department gives UK businesses access to millions of pounds' worth of potential overseas business. It also puts firms in touch with global buyers and since its launch it has promoted 17,500 export opportunities, and helped around 3.6 million users either begin or grow their exporting journeys (from November 2016 – May 2018).

Research from Barclays Corporate Banking found that 64 per cent of consumers in India, 57 per cent in China, and 48 per cent in the UAE were prepared to pay more for goods made in the UK, because they perceive the quality as higher. [Brand Britain – Export opportunities for UK businesses, February 2018]

Working to promote the UK as a great trading nation, DIT has set up 14 trade working groups covering 21 countries to scope our future trade deals and strengthen commercial ties with key trading partners.

Background:

- [Figures from the ONS Balance of Payments 29 June](#)
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Research and analysis: EU Emissions Trading Scheme: report on indirect compensation payments made to industry in the UK, 2017

Article 10a(6) of the revised EU ETS Directive, which took effect on 8 April 2018, requires member states to publish annually the amount of compensation paid to sectors exposed to:

genuine risk of carbon leakage due to significant indirect costs

that are actually incurred from greenhouse gas emission costs passed on in electricity prices.

See also: [EU emissions trading system and carbon price support: companies awarded compensation](#)