

Five years from Paris: Greens in COP warning to host Governments



12 December 2020

Elected Greens across the UK have challenged the UK and Scottish Governments to play more of a leadership role at the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow, if it is to become a successful platform for global change.

Marking five years since the signing of the Paris Agreement in 2015, which saw 196 countries agree to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius, Green representatives have warned that as hosts UK and Scotland must bring more to the table than targets.

A UN report this week revealed the world is on track for an average temperature rise of 3 degrees Celsius. [1]

Both the UK and Scottish Governments have set targets to reduce emissions without committing to the actions to urgently meet them.

In a joint statement [2], Greens have called for the UK to follow Denmark and others to stop exploration for new oil and gas and to make sure countries in the global south, who contribute least to but are most impacted by the climate breakdown, are both heard and supported at the talks.

Commenting, Green MP Caroline Lucas said: "If COP26 is to be a success, and it has to be, the Government cannot just wing it. It has to start showing the essential leadership role that the French played in the run-up to Paris, and that means not just setting climate targets, but introducing the policies and climate action needed to start delivering on them.

"And it must reverse the decision to cut the international aid budget at a time when those least responsible for climate breakdown are facing the worst impacts in the form of more severe droughts, flooding and food insecurity."

Scottish Greens co-leader Patrick Harvie MSP, who represents Glasgow, said: "The COP summit in Glasgow is an enormous opportunity to bring new impetus to the global push to ensure our survival. And with a change of leadership in the United States, we have fresh hope that we can address the fact that the last four years have not seen the action required by Governments.

"As host nations, the Scottish and UK Governments must bring more than targets to the table if this conference is going to be a success. They must wake up to the need to transition from fossil fuels and end their obsession with expansion of roads and air travel."

Northern Irish Greens leader and MLA Clare Bailey said: "Denmark is the latest country to end exploration for new oil and gas. It's time for the UK to show leadership on this and do the same before COP26. Meanwhile, the

Northern Ireland Executive must introduce climate change legislation and legislated climate targets as a matter of urgency.”

The statement has been signed by the Scottish Green MSPs, Green Party of England and Wales MP Caroline Lucas and peers Natalie Bennett and Jenny Jones, and Green members of the Northern Irish assembly Clare Bailey and Rachel Woods.

ENDS

Notes

1

https://www.reuters.com/article/climate-change-emissions-idUKKBN28J16B?taid=5fd0d4e7f0e12b00013d9a24&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter

2

Joint statement sent to all UK Governments:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dlMJh8iYv7ve625-7xN5yNahEuXjM7fL/view?usp=sharing>

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