

Green Party reacts to COP28 draft text: 1.5C on life support



11 December 2023

Reacting to the draft text issued at the COP28 climate summit in Dubai today, Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“We urged COP28 to achieve three vital things – the changes needed now to keep 1.5 alive; the phasing out of fossil fuels; and tackling climate inequality by making the polluter pay and ensuring generous contributions to the loss and damage fund to support the poorest and most vulnerable countries [1].

“The absence of a phase out of fossil fuels in the draft text leaves the 1.5C target on life support. Calling on nations to reduce consumption and production of fossil fuels fails to treat climate breakdown as the emergency it is and leaves the planet on course for a hellish future.

“As for climate inequality, it is clear that lobbyists from the wealthy fossil fuel industry and petrostates have been driving this summit, wielding way too much power and leaving vulnerable nations, women, young people and campaigners on the sidelines.

“COP28 may have failed to do enough to meet the urgent demands of the climate crisis but it has made our demands for more action now ever clearer and louder.

“In the UK that means cancelling new oil and gas licences in the North Sea; it means ramping up investment in onshore and offshore wind, and other forms of renewable energy; and it means funding local councils to deliver a nationwide programme of home and business insulation to cut energy use and lower people’s bills.”

Notes

[1. Keeping 1.5 alive, phasing out fossil fuels and tackling climate inequality must be priorities for COP28 climate talks](#)

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[Rwanda plans are an affront to democracy and human rights, say Greens](#)



6 December 2023

Responding to the government publishing plans to disapply sections of the Human Rights Act to get around a Supreme Court ruling banning the deportation of people seeking asylum to Rwanda for processing, Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“The fact that the government is going to try to use its parliamentary majority to over-ride established human rights protections is an affront to democracy.

“We need a system that welcomes refugees through clear, open, safe and legal routes, that offers quick and efficient determinations and support for resettlement into local communities with properly funded local services.”

“Instead of creating an asylum system that works, the government is deliberately making it chaotic and inaccessible to put people off using their right to seek asylum.

“It is the use of cruelty and inhumanity as a tool of public policy and cannot be allowed to go unchallenged.

“Everyone deserves to be treated in a way that is fair and humane. This new legislation will remove fundamental legal protections designed to protect us all from the arbitrary power of the state.”

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[Green Party response to new immigration rules](#)



5 December 2023

Responding to new immigration rules which will significantly limit the current shortage occupations list and make it harder for those working in the UK to bring partners or family members to join them [1], Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“The idea that we need to keep immigrants out of the UK is a nonsense. In reality they have been plugging the labour gaps in our country for years, particularly in hard pressed areas like our health and care services.

“Because of that there is both an economic need and just a level of decency, that dictates immigrants should be treated with some respect and made to feel welcome. They should not be met with barriers to building a life in the UK like making it more challenging to bring family members to join them.”

Notes

[1] [Tougher visa rules unveiled in plan to cut migration – BBC News](#)

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[Back small businesses to make the most of a fairer, greener economy](#)



2 December 2023

The Green Party of England and Wales is calling on government to offer a Small Business Saturday support package to help firms thrive in their green transition.

Co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“I visit independent businesses and social enterprises up and down the country, and so many say that they want to make a success of greening their operations.

“But they need government to get behind them and offer the right support.

“Analysis by the British Business Bank found that small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) account for almost one third of all UK carbon emissions and around half of total UK business emissions, but the Net Zero Review highlighted the challenges SMEs face in making the change to meet net zero.

“We need a competitively fair transition to net zero that benefits rather than hinders the small and independent businesses that bring so much benefit to our local communities.

“That’s why, this Small Business Saturday, we are calling for government to act and help small businesses thrive in their green transition.

“The Green Party’s alternative Autumn Statement identified £30 billion that could be raised by making the super-rich pay a little more tax [1]. Just £3 billion of that could be used to double funding for Green Transition Grants – to help small businesses prepare for and make the most of the opportunities of greening the economy.

“From assisting small businesses to decarbonise their transport needs, to reforming VAT and suspending Covid repayments, there is much more the government should be doing.

“Small and independent businesses and enterprises are the heart of local communities. The Green Party has long been the party of small business, and we want to see them thrive.”

This Small Business Saturday the Green Party are calling for:

1. An additional £3 billion in Green Transition Grants for small businesses to help them prepare for and take advantage of the opportunities offered by greening the economy [2].
2. Assistance for small businesses to decarbonise their transport needs. Independent traders and tradespeople need access to electric vans and other low carbon transport solutions on the same terms as large companies. [3]
3. Support for small businesses to improve employee wellbeing. Measures should include exempting all childcare providers in England from business rates.
4. Reform of VAT to support small businesses and suspension of Covid repayments. The government must reform our VAT system so that it differentially supports smaller shops and businesses compared to larger and online businesses. Likewise, there should be an immediate suspension of Covid loan repayments to provide much needed relief for businesses.

NOTES

[1] Full details of the Green Party's alternative Autumn Statement available here:

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2023/11/21/autumn-statement-greens-offer-10-point-plan-of-distinctive-tax-and-spend-policies-to-create-a-fairer,-greener-country/>

[2] This would include investing an additional £3 billion in Green Transition Grants for small businesses to help them prepare for and take advantage of the opportunities offered by greening the economy. Analysis by the British Business Bank found that SMEs account for almost one third of all UK emissions and around half of total UK business emissions. The Government is currently providing very little financial support for small business in the transition to Net Zero. Despite Chris Skidmore's Net Zero Review highlighting the challenges faced by SMEs, small sums from the UK's Shared Prosperity Fund have been channelled via local authorities. We need a competitively fair transition to Net Zero that benefits rather than hinders SMEs.

[3] SMEs face greater barriers to decarbonising their transport than do large businesses. For instance, they are impacted by market shortages of second-hand, low emissions vehicles which has meant larger businesses have been able to obtain suitable vehicles while smaller businesses have not. Greens want to see government offering information, advice and market interventions such as grants so that SMEs are able to obtain suitable vehicles and have the right incentives to overcome these and other barriers.

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[Keeping 1.5 alive, phasing out fossil fuels and tackling climate inequality must be priorities for COP28 climate talks](#)



29 November 2023

As the COP28 climate talks begin today in Dubai, the Green Party has set out three key demands. They are to 'keep 1.5 alive'; an agreement on the fair and managed phase-out of all fossil fuels; and measures to address 'climate inequality.' Greens are challenging the UK government to lead by example and put into practice policies that will help meet these demands.

Co-leader of the Green Party, Carla Denyer, said:

"We need to hear a clear unambiguous commitment from the UK government to the

1.5C Paris Agreement target which was signed up to by 196 countries eight years ago at COP21. The government must agree to whatever climate action is needed to get this target back on track. It's going to require a hugely ambitious strategy, but the massive scaling up of climate action that is now necessary is because of dither and delay by countries like the UK in taking the bold action needed.

“Another vital outcome of COP28 must be the fair and managed phase-out of all fossil fuels. As one of the rich countries most responsible for the climate crisis, the UK must stand on the side of future generations and those on the front line of climate breakdown and agree to urgently move away from fossil fuels. The UK government must resist pressure from the petrostates and others at COP who wish to continue with business as usual and keep the world hooked on fossil fuels. At home this means leading by example with an immediate end to all new oil and gas licences and a rapid acceleration towards renewable energy.

“Thirdly, these climate talks must recognise that it is a super-rich elite who are super-heating the planet. The UK government must be willing to challenge the grotesque inequality driving climate breakdown and reform our tax system to make the polluter pay. This means taxing the wealth of the super-rich and introducing a carbon tax on the most polluting corporations and individuals. Such taxes, introduced globally, could generate the funds needed for a generous new Loss and Damage Fund to finance climate action in the poorest countries – those suffering the most from the impacts of climate breakdown but contributing the least to the crisis.”

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