

Turkmen University students enjoy online lecture with the British Ambassador

World news story

On 12 November, Her Majesty's Ambassador Mr Hugh Philpott joined a group of students on a lecture dedicated to the 25th Neutrality of Turkmenistan.



Just as is the case in universities worldwide universities in Turkmenistan are adapting to the challenges of delivering high quality teaching despite the current challenges of the pandemic. On 12 November, Her Majesty's Ambassador Mr Hugh Philpott joined a group of over 80 young and enthusiastic Turkmen students from the International University for Humanities and Development, Turkmen State University and Turkmen National Institute of World Languages on a lecture dedicated to the 25th Neutrality of Turkmenistan.

Congratulating the future leaders of Turkmenistan on this special occasion, the British Ambassador highlighted the importance of Turkmen foreign policy and its efforts on providing political space for the discussion and resolution of conflicts in the region. A diplomatic approach is the main tool to promote security and stability in the region.

The Ambassador gave an overview of the wide-ranging Turkmen/British diplomatic relationship highlighting the key areas such as energy, education, science, technology and climate change.

During the online lecture, the students engaged in varied interesting discussions, ranging from the career and unique life experiences of Ambassador and diplomats all the way to the local traditions and cultures.

The British Ambassador was impressed with the enthusiasm of the students, their interest in the current world affairs and was reassured that the upcoming crop of Turkmenistan's international representatives was so strong.

[Exciting new event coming soon!](#)

News story

The Operational Delivery Profession launches Power to Progress on 1 December.



It's recognised that women are under-represented in senior strategic and management roles across the Civil Service.

Power to Progress is aimed at anyone who is interested in exploring how women in the Operational Delivery Profession can progress their careers towards the attainment of these higher-level roles.

Combining presentations from inspirational guest speakers and informative 'Power Hour' sessions, the event will offer delegates practical advice and coaching on achieving career development in times of change and explore how the challenges of modern leadership can be managed.

Registration for this digital event is now open for those who have received an invitation [ODP Power to Progress website](#).

If you have not received an invite and would like to attend, please email the team at events.operational-delivery-profession@hmrc.gov.uk.

You can also keep up with all the latest news from the event on our social media pages, using the hashtag #P2PODP on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

World's most remote island helps UK exceed protected ocean target

- UK exceeds target of protecting 4 million sq km of ocean in the Overseas Territories, as Tristan da Cunha announces new Marine Protection Zone.
- The Blue Belt Programme safeguards biodiversity, wildlife habitats and ecosystems in some of the remotest places on Earth – covering an area 17 times the size of the UK.
- Prime Minister Boris Johnson calls on world leaders to follow UK's lead in protecting the planet's ocean ahead of COP26.

More than 4.3 million sq km (2.7m miles) of some of the world's most precious marine environment – 1 percent of all the world's ocean – will be protected following the success of the UK's Blue Belt Programme, the Prime Minister has confirmed.

The announcement by Tristan da Cunha of a new Marine Protection Zone will safeguard the future of sevengill sharks, yellow-nosed albatrosses and rockhopper penguins in the remote archipelago and means the Government has now exceeded its ambitious target to protect 4 million sq km of ocean.

The isolated UK Overseas Territory, home to the world's most remote human settlement, has today declared the largest fully protected marine reserve in the Atlantic Ocean at 687,000 square kilometres (265,252 square miles). This will close over 90% of their waters to harmful activities like bottom-trawling fishing, sand extraction and deep-sea mining.

The Tristan da Cunha community was supported by the UK's Blue Belt Programme, which provides £27 million over five years for marine conservation around UK Overseas Territories, and international organisations.

They join other Overseas Territories who protect their waters with the support of this initiative, including Ascension Island, the British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, the Pitcairn Islands and St Helena – covering an area 17 times the size of the UK and over 1 percent of the Earth's entire ocean.

This achievement comes with one year to go until the UK hosts the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) – to be held in Glasgow in November 2021. As President, the UK Government will bring world leaders together to drive progress on tackling climate change and forge new ways to protect marine biodiversity and tackle plastic pollution in our ocean.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

We are in danger of killing our seas. We are warming them up, making them more acidic and every day we fill them with turtle-choking, dolphin-poisoning plastic that is turning our ocean into a vast floating rubbish dump.

That's why I am delighted that the United Kingdom has now protected more than 4.3 million square kilometres of the world's ocean, following Tristan da Cunha's announcement.

I am now calling on other nations to join us in our ambition to protect 30 per cent of the world's ocean by 2030. We need collective global action if we are to bequeath a world that is every bit as wonderful and magnificent as the one we inherited.

The waters around the UK's Overseas Territories are some of the richest and most biologically diverse in the world – but they face a range of threats, including climate change, damaging fishing methods and unsustainable extractive activities.

Tristan da Cunha, for example, has 25 seabird species that breed there alone, four of which are unique to the islands and are at threat of extinction – the Tristan Albatross, Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross, Atlantic Petrel and Spectacled Petrel.

Through its ambitious Blue Belt Programme, the UK government has worked in partnership with the Overseas Territories to bring together marine experts and cutting-edge scientific research to protect and manage the waters surrounding the Territories.

UK Minister for the Environment, Lord Goldsmith, said:

We are hoovering life out of the ocean at an appalling rate, so this new marine protected area is really a huge conservation win and a critically important step in protecting the world's biodiversity and ecosystems.

Tristan da Cunha islanders and this coalition of NGOs and Foundations have done an extraordinary thing and deserve real gratitude and praise. It means our fantastic Blue Belt programme has over 4million square kms of protected ocean around the UK Overseas Territories.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), also played an important role. For the past two decades the RSPB has worked closely with the local community in Tristan da Cunha and conducted vital research to secure long-term protection.

RSPB CEO, Beccy Speight, said:

This small community is responsible for one of the biggest conservation achievements of 2020. We are enormously proud to have worked with our friends on Tristan, the UK Government's Blue Belt

programme and wider partners to achieve this world-leading designation. This will protect one of the most pristine marine environments on the planet, home to tens of millions of seabirds, threatened sharks, little-known whale species and booming seal populations.

The Blue Belt Programme makes a significant contribution to the UK-led 30 by 30 initiative, an international commitment made by the Global Ocean Alliance and launched by the UK in 2019 to protect at least 30% of the global ocean in Marine Protected Areas by 2030. A total of 32 countries have now joined the alliance.

The international partnership that supported Tristan da Cunha's decision to designate a highly protected Marine Protection Zone comprises of RSPB, National Geographic Pristine Seas, Blue Nature Alliance, Becht Family Charitable Trust together with Blue Marine Foundation, Wyss Foundation, Kaltroco, Don Quixote II Foundation and the Great British Oceans coalition.

New UK Ambassador promotes ambitious climate change collaboration in Guangdong

World news story

Caroline Wilson, the new UK Ambassador to China, visited Guangdong Province on the 12th to 13th of November to increase climate change collaboration between the UK and China.



- Ambassador promoted the 'Race to Zero' campaign to reduce emissions
- UK and China are global leaders on climate change and this year will host COP 15 in Kunming and COP 26 in Glasgow
- The UK wants an ambitious climate change partnership with China

In Shenzhen the Ambassador visited the Shenzhen Bus Group and boarded a COP26-branded electric double-decker designed by BYD at the 'Race to Zero – Green Transport Partnership Event'.

Race to Zero is a campaign to mobilise 'net zero' initiatives around the world. Road transport currently accounts for 10% of total global emissions.

At the event, the UK Ambassador to China, Caroline Wilson CMG, said:

I am really pleased to be in Shenzhen and I welcome the news that Shenzhen Bus Group and BYD have committed to supporting the Race to Zero Campaign.

The UK and South China already have a strong green partnership as we are collaborating on everything from green finance to green hydrogen and from civil nuclear to long-distance power transmission.

However I want us to be even more ambitious and expand our joint projects – a great example of this is the setting up of a new UK-China tech lab for offshore wind in Guangdong.

The Ambassador met with the Mayor of Shenzhen Mr. Chen Rugui to discuss strengthening cooperation in climate change and green finance.

As part of her visit to Guangdong, Caroline Wilson also met with leaders in business to learn about future opportunities for collaboration and trade partnership.

She also experienced charging an electric vehicle at one of BP Xiaoju's electric vehicle charging stations – showcasing a joint venture between BP and DIDI.

Starting from February 2020, the partnership has built and operated 340 EV charging points across 19 stations in Guangdong.

The Ambassador also visited the Design Society to announce a new creative collaboration between China Merchants Shekou and the UK's V&A Museum.

Titled Fashioned from Nature, the collaboration will be officially open to the public from December 19th – and focuses on sustainable fashion and ethical consumption.

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Virtual discussion on strategies to address climate change in Argentina

On 29 October, representatives of private companies, the third sector and the governments of the UK, Italy and Argentina discussed the agenda for COP26 – the United Nations Conference on Climate Change – which will take place in November 2021 in Glasgow, Scotland.

Argentine Foreign Minister Felipe Solá, Ambassadors Mark Kent (UK) and Giuseppe Manzo (Italy) and the High-Level Champion for COP25, Gonzalo Muñoz from Chile, and for COP26, Nigel Topping from the UK, all took part in the virtual event, entitled “The Road to COP26: Dialogue with the private sector on climate action in Argentina”. Participants discussed ways to achieve a carbon-neutral economy, energy transition, sustainable mobility and other issues relating to the protection of our planet.

As well as those mentioned above, the MFA Director of Environmental Affairs, Silvia Vázquez; the COP26 Ambassador for Latin America and the Caribbean, Fiona Clouder; and representatives of private companies, including Unilever, Enel, Ledesma, Sistema B, Ternium, Diageo, Jaguar Land Rover and Volt Motors also took part in the event.

Other participants included authorities from FARN (Environment and Natural Resources Foundation), CEADS (Argentine Business Council for Sustainable Development), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Argentina and the group of environmental campaigning journalists Periodistas por el Planeta.

UK Ambassador [Mark Kent](#) said:

COP26 poses the challenge of building a fairer, greener and more inclusive economy. Next year, our objective will be to increase global ambition towards a climate-resilient, net zero economy.

These global challenges require global solutions. Today, more than ever, we need co-operation, not just among countries, but also between the public and private sector. That is why we organise events like this one, so that we may all join efforts.

You can watch the event here: [Road to COP26](#)