

Labour warn of threat to public finances from climate change

The Shadow Chancellor will today warn of the cost implications of climate change on the public finances.

In a speech at the IPPR think tank in central London, he will call on the Government to include the fiscal risks posed by climate change in future fiscal forecasts.

He will lay out how under the next Labour government the Office of Budget Responsibility will be made truly independent of government, and asked to model for the effects of human-made climate change on the public finances.

Recent research has shown the potential loss to UK GDP from climate change and environmental degradation as much as £75bn a year by 2050.

John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, speaking today at the IPPR conference in London, is expected to say:

"The truth is that meeting the challenge of climate will require more than marginal adjustments. It will require a transformation of our institutions and how our economies are run.

"Over the last few years the Office for Budget Responsibility has established itself as an independent, authoritative voice on economic analysis. The next Labour government will guarantee and reinforce that independence by making the OBR report not to the Treasury but to Parliament.

"We want thorough and genuine oversight of our own fiscal plans. We want the public, whether businesses or voters, to be absolutely confident that the public finances are properly scrutinised and managed.

"And we want to ensure that the overwhelming challenge of climate change is addressed from the very centre of government. This includes the potential

losses to the public finances.

“The next Labour government will therefore ask the OBR to include the impact of climate change and environmental damage in its long-term forecasts. The public deserve to know what impacts we might expect on the national purse from the degradation of our environment. Sound, responsible economic management should already be accounting for this.

“We’ll make sure the OBR has the resources needed to deliver the best available modelling of the economic impacts of the environment. It will become a new centre of expertise for environmental macroeconomics.

“And we will make sure not just the next Labour government, but future governments, will be absolutely committed to addressing this, our greatest single public challenge.”

[Extremely worrying that EU doctors making plans to leave UK – Ashworth](#)

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour’s Shadow Secretary of State for Health, responding to the British Medical Association’s findings that almost a fifth of EU doctors have made plans to leave the UK, said:

“It is extremely worrying that almost a fifth of EU doctors have already made solid plans to leave the UK following the EU referendum result. On the day the EU Withdrawal Bill returns to the Commons, this shocking news must spark immediate action from the Prime Minister.

“Theresa May must urgently safeguard the future of EU workers and stop treating them as bargaining chips in her reckless Brexit negotiations. Failure to do so seriously risks increasing staff shortages and exacerbating the already dire crisis in our health and care system.”

UK must pledge long-term support for Barbuda after Hurricane Irma

The UK Government must do more to help Barbuda rebuild for the long term after Hurricane Irma, Labour says after a meeting with the Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne.

Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn, Shadow International Development Secretary Kate Osamor and Shadow Home Secretary Diane Abbott MP met Prime Minister Browne and High Commissioner Karen-Mae Hill today to get an update on the latest situation on the island.

Barbuda was entirely evacuated after the hurricane in September and requires \$250 million to rebuild its infrastructure. In the longer term, it needs support to develop resilience to the impact of climate change.

The meeting comes after Kate Osamor visited the island and met Prime Minister Browne last month.

Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labour Party, said:

“Barbuda was devastated by Hurricane Irma but the response from our Government was painfully slow. I was pleased to welcome the Prime Minister and High Commissioner to discuss what more needs to be done.

“The UK must provide the help Barbuda needs to rebuild now and for the long term. And we must face up to the reality of climate change and the impact it is having around the world, particularly on small island states.”

Kate Osamor, Shadow International Development Secretary, said:

“When I met with Prime Minister Browne last month and saw the devastation from Hurricane Irma in Barbuda with my own eyes, it was obvious the world must do much more to help those worst hit by climate disaster, who are often the least of the polluters.

“The UK’s international development policy must do more to level the playing field, and tackle the root causes of inequality, poverty and climate change.”

Diane Abbott, Shadow Home Secretary, said:

“The effects of climate change and rising sea levels have only worsened after the hurricanes we have seen in the past months. The Caribbean produces only a fraction of the world’s carbon emissions, so there is a responsibility on the part of big industrial countries to help those regions most at risk.

“Simple aid packages and building projects are not good enough. Those Caribbean islands most affected need support in creating sustainable defences and structures against the hurricanes to come.”

[This is a significant climbdown from a weak government – Starmer](#)

Keir Starmer, Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, responding to David Davis's announcement about a Withdrawal Agreement [and Implementation] Bill, said:

"This is a significant climbdown from a weak government on the verge of defeat.

"For months, Labour has been calling on ministers to guarantee Parliament a final say on the withdrawal agreement. With less than 24 hours before they had to defend their flawed Bill to Parliament they have finally backed down. However, like everything with this government the devil will be in the detail.

"Ministers must now go further. They need to accept Labour's amendments that would ensure transitional arrangements, and protect jobs and the economy from a cliff edge."

[It appears Michael Gove is more interested in protecting Boris Johnson's job than the liberty of a British citizen in jail in Iran – Jon Trickett](#)

Jon Trickett MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for the Cabinet Office, responding to Michael Gove's comments on the Andrew Marr Show this morning, said:

"Boris Johnson's cavalier approach to international diplomacy is compounded this morning by Michael Gove claiming he has no idea what Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe was doing in Iran. It has always been clear, she was on holiday visiting her family.

"It appears Gove is more interested in protecting Johnson's job than the liberty of a

British citizen in jail in Iran.

“Theresa May must ensure Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe does not pay the price for her ministers’ bungling.”