

Climate Change Committee Meeting

Present: John Deben, Keith Bell, Julia Brown, Nick Chater, Piers Forster, Rebecca Heaton, Paul Johnson, Corinne Le Quéré, Pete Betts (as an advisor), Chris Stark.

Member interests: www.theccc.org.uk/about/transparency

Date: 4th December 2020, 09:30 – 15:00

Held: Virtual meeting by Zoom

Climate Change Committee

1 Victoria Street,
Westminster, London,
SW1H 0ET

w theccc.org.uk

Committee members were reminded of the need to declare any conflicts of interest.

1. Reflections on the Sixth Carbon Budget advice and NDC

The Committee reflected on the Government announcing it would accept the Committee's advice to set a Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) at a reduction of at least 68% by 2030, with supplementary action on international aviation and shipping, adaptation and climate finance.

The Committee were pleased that the advice had been accepted. There was discussion of how difficult it was to communicate that this was a substantial increase in ambition, given technical changes on emissions accounting and estimation. There was also concern that future changes to the methodology for estimating emissions may mean that the appropriate reduction is more than 68% - but recognition that an NDC for a reduction of 'at least 68%' did not preclude going further.

The Committee was very pleased with the quality of the advice on the Sixth Carbon Budget advice, and expressed thanks to the secretariat for their hard work over the preceding months.

2. International update

This session sought Committee input on the international engagement workplan in the run up to COP26. The secretariat gave an update on the strategic engagement plan, including the proposed country-level prioritisation, along with the Climate Councils programme. The Committee provided feedback on these priorities, including discussing whether engagement on adaptation should focus on poorer countries that are less able to afford such measures and on the importance of large fossil fuel producers, especially major exporters, leaving fossil fuels in the ground.

3. Future work programme

The discussion covered priorities for the future work of the Committee, now that it will focus less on the recommendation of statutory emissions targets. There was a general recognition that the focus has now to be on delivery against the targets, including effective policies and engagement with the general public.

The Committee recognised that it is always likely that there will be more areas of interest than the organisation has capacity to address fully, so prioritisation will be necessary. There was interest in working jointly with other organisations that have overlapping scopes, for example on governance arrangements in delivering decarbonisation or distributional impacts of decarbonisation policies. There was discussion of the need for better data in some areas, in order to track progress with better granularity.

The Committee expressed a desire to hear from external organisations at future Committee meetings, now that there is less pressure on the agendas from delivering statutory advice.