

Climate and Nature Bill

Second Reading

24th January 2025



Background

- The Climate and Nature (CAN) Bill proposes a new UK law to address climate change, global warming and the nature crisis in line with the most recent science. It would require government to produce a new environmental strategy and to set new legally-binding targets on climate and nature.
- Humanity faces an existential threat from climate change and nature loss. From [devastating wildfires](#) in Los Angeles and [deadly flooding](#) in Pakistan, to worsening winter flooding and extreme summer heatwaves at home, the effects of climate breakdown are already being felt in the UK and globally.
- The UK's Climate Change Committee has [been clear](#) that current progress on climate is not enough. Emissions reductions must speed up and broaden to more sectors, whilst many policies and plans integral to meeting our climate targets are still not in place.
- The average size of wildlife populations globally has fell by 73% over the past 50 years, [according to](#) WWF research, whilst the UK is the [most nature-depleted](#) country in the G7. The Office for Environmental Protection's [latest progress report](#), published last week, found the window of opportunity to meet legally-binding environmental targets is closing fast.
- The CAN Bill is being brought to Parliament as a Private Members Bill by Lib Dem MP Roz Savage, supported by the campaign group Zero Hour. It was formerly known as the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill.

What does the bill do?

- If Parliament passes the CAN Bill, the government would need to set new legally binding targets on climate and nature, aligned with international commitments under the Paris Agreement and the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- The bill also requires the Energy Secretary to develop a new climate and nature strategy to ensure the new targets are delivered. The public would help to develop this strategy through a Climate and Nature Assembly, and the result would need to be approved by the House of Commons.
- The CAN Bill pushes the government to bolster its ambition on tackling the climate and nature crisis. In doing this, it must ensure that any creation of new targets, strategies and legislation does not delay on-the-ground action to reduce emissions, protect nature and build a resilient future.

What immediate steps can government take to tackle the climate and nature crisis?

- *Ensure the Future Homes Standard will deliver homes fit for the future.* Emissions from homes [accounted for](#) a fifth of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK in 2022. Due imminently, the Future Homes Standard is pivotal to ensuring new builds help to reduce these emissions. Solar panels must be required on all new builds – [as supported by 79% of MPs](#) – and government should also seize this opportunity to encourage use of heat pumps, high-grade insulation and battery storage.
- *Bolster the farming budget to deliver for nature, climate and farming communities.* With 70% of UK land farmed, agriculture has a key role to play in restoring our natural world and

delivering vital emissions reductions. Without support for farming, it will be difficult to meet both our legally-binding climate and nature targets. Government must assess how much is needed in the farming budget to do this, with [independent analysis](#) commissioned by the RSPB, The Wildlife Trusts and the National Trust suggesting the farming budget should be £3.1bn per year for England to meet this challenge.

- *Ensure the Warm Homes Plan gets support to those most in need.* Government energy efficiency schemes, like the Home Upgrade Grant, must be scaled up and targeted at the most vulnerable households, including those in fuel poverty or with ongoing health issues. Prioritising these groups can rapidly reduce inequality, as well as reducing energy use in homes.

What do voters think?

- 80% of the UK public are very or fairly concerned about climate change, [according to](#) DESNZ's Public Attitudes Tracker.
- Four in five Britons think it is important that the government cares about tackling climate change, including nearly 80% of Conservative voters and two thirds of Reform voters, [found](#) More in Common polling from July 2024.
- 80% of people worldwide want stronger climate action by governments and 86% want governments to set aside geopolitical differences to work together to tackle the climate crisis, [according to](#) polling from the UN Development Programme and Oxford University.

Suggested interventions

- Will solar panels be made mandatory on all new builds under the upcoming Future Homes Standard?
- Will the government bolster the farm budget to the £3.1bn per year for England which it is estimated by the RSPB, the Wildlife Trusts and the National Trust is needed to deliver for nature, climate and farming communities?
- Will the Warm Homes Plan target support towards the most vulnerable households to reduce inequality and cut emissions?