



Sarah Champion MP
Chair
International Development Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

By email: indcom@parliament.uk

14 July 2021

Dear Ms Champion

Climate change, development and COP26

Clean Air in London (CAL) has fully updated its 120-page two-part report to identify the most important issues for each of the top 20 emitters of greenhouse gases globally and selected others ahead of COP26. The report highlights the need to put development issues including adaptation, air pollution, biodiversity, cities, climate finance, health, justice and nature at the heart of COP26

I am writing on behalf of Clean Air in London (CAL) ahead of the International Development Committee's (Indcom's) oral evidence session 'Climate change, development and COP26' with the CDC Group (i.e. the UK's development finance institution), CAFOD and Lord Goldsmith on Tuesday 20 July 2021¹.

My purpose is to share with you CAL's latest research into the importance of development issues in the context of climate change and COP26. CAL has fully updated its analysis of open-source intelligence to identify the most important issues for each of the world's 20 largest emitters of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and selected others ahead of COP26. CAL would like to publish its research after 20 July 2021².

CAL copied you and other select committee chairs on its letter to Alok Sharma dated 8 March 2021 (attached)³ and our letter to Tom Tugendhat MP dated 9 May 2021 (attached)⁴ which identified a number of warning signs in the preparations for COP26. This letter builds upon the two earlier letters.

¹ <https://committees.parliament.uk/event/5280/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/>

² <https://cleanair.london/sources/unccc/>

³ https://cleanair.london/app/uploads/CAL-399-Letter-to-Alok-Sharma_080321_Redacted.pdf

⁴ https://cleanair.london/app/uploads/CAL-404_Sent_1_Letter-to-Select-Committees_Final-090521.pdf

Inquiry

Indcom's important inquiry into 'Climate change, development and COP26'⁵ is examining, ahead of COP26, the progress the Government has made putting climate change at the centre of aid policy. In this context, the oral evidence session with CDC Group and Lord Goldsmith is particularly important.

CAL considers that 10 principles are important when considering climate change, development and COP26:

1. Warning signs ahead of COP26

Do interested parties agree with CAL's assessment of the top issues and positions for the largest emitters and selected others? CAL's detailed analysis of each country's position on each of 20 themes in Part Two of its report is as important as the more qualitative analysis for each country in Part One.

2. Urgency

What is being done to successfully address the issues identified by CAL's two-part report before COP26 (and beyond)?

3. 'One Atmosphere'

The 'air' comprises everything in it. We must stop thinking of 'air pollution' and 'greenhouse gases' as separate silos and start considering them together (see the 3x3 matrix or table on the first page of this letter). We must also stop conflating many issues under 'climate change' which confuses the public and makes it harder to maintain focus on the correct issues e.g. emissions, global warming, changes in the weather etc. Around 80% of the sources of air pollution and global warming are the same i.e. combustion (see page 3 of our letter to Alok Sharma dated 8 March 2021 for references).

4. 'One Environment' and Science Based Targets

Science Based Targets have existed for the 'Air' for some time i.e. 1.5c and 2.0c and World Health Organisation air quality guidelines (which are due to be updated in September 2021). But they have not existed for biodiversity, fresh water, land and oceans.

The UN's proposed target to protect 30% of oceans and land by 2030 to stem extinctions and ensure humanity lives in harmony with nature is therefore a welcome step forward. The Global Biodiversity Framework is due to be finalised in time for the UN Biodiversity Conference in Kunming between 11 and 24 October 2021⁶. It is important that development projects respect these boundaries and do not seek gains in one area at the expense of another e.g. diesel or wood burning.

We await new IPCC and other advice in the Autumn as to whether 1.5c and 2050 are still realistic or whether emissions need to be cut more deeply and urgently even than currently expected.

⁵ <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/1190/climate-change-development-and-cop26/>

⁶ <https://www.cbd.int/article/new-dates-cop15-october-2021>

5. Zero air emissions

‘Carbon neutral’ and ‘net zero’ encourage fudges on outcomes e.g. biomass or wood burning. Instead we need to focus on zero air emissions now. It is not clear, for example, why CDC Group should fund any [20-year] ‘gas’ project rather than renewables. In any event, what criteria, safeguards and checks and balances would they apply to such investments and over what time period?

6. Lifestyle changes alongside technology

CDC Group and others should consider investments that would make it easier for people (in developing countries or anywhere) to make lifestyle changes e.g. agricultural practices that reduce methane or other air pollutants. In this context, funding adaptation and resilience are as important as mitigation. In CAL’s experience, lifestyle changes range from bans and charges through campaigns to build public understanding to incentives and adoption. Campaigners can make the political costs of inaction exceed those of action e.g. as we’ve done successfully with diesel ‘bans’ in London. Relying on technology alone to reduce CO₂, as the American’s propose, could be unnecessarily costly.

7. Governance, inclusion and justice

The ongoing revolution in data and knowledge of all types at the local, national and multinational levels offers an opportunity to increase our capacity to address environmental and governance challenges and accelerate progress. Most important is the need to take bold, urgent, sustainable and inclusive action that integrates environmental, economic and social activity on pathways to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, multilateral environmental agreements, internationally agreed environmental goals and science-based targets⁷. For example, how does CDC Group ensure that civil society is consulted and engaged on its projects?

8. UN Sustainable Development Goals

The UN SDGs were adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015 i.e. a few weeks before the Paris Agreement was signed. Through its position on the High Level Intergovernmental and Stakeholder Advisory Group for UNEP’s sixth Global Environment Outlook (GEO6), CAL understands why the SDGs were ‘neutral’ on air quality and climate change i.e. no meaningful goals were agreed (unlike other targets such as ‘By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents’⁸). It was because Member States did not want to ‘over’ or ‘under’ commit on ‘air’ immediately before the negotiations in Paris. As a result, the SDGs are very important but not particularly relevant for the atmosphere.

9. Climate Change Strategies need to be entity-wide

CAL is concerned that CDC Group’s new Climate Change Strategy simply adds a new activity rather than undertaking a ‘root and branch’ review across everything it does. They could, for example, seek win-win-wins for air pollution, climate, gender and justice in every project.

⁷ https://www.unep.org/resources/assessment/global-environment-outlook-6-summary-policy-makers?_ga=2.107369666.1530751862.1626267619-1453705851.1619867619

⁸ <https://cleanair.london/solutions/world-cities-must-lead-on-sustainable-development-goals-and-agenda-2030/>

10. UK must set an example before COP26

The UK must set an example before COP26 if we are to keep 1.5c and 2.0c alive. This should include:

- ‘Walking the talk’ i.e. putting in place plans, policies, laws and funding to deliver on the UK’s commitments to reduce greenhouse gases by 68% by 2030 and achieve ‘net zero’ by 2050. A new Clean Air Act is the sort of change needed not bans on ‘wet wood’.
- Recognising the human right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment⁹ as 15 UN entities¹⁰ and most counties have done.
- Mobilising the air pollution, biodiversity, cities, climate, finance, health, justice and nature stakeholder groups and the public so that they are all talking about COP26 (and vice versa). We need much more than ‘collaboration’.

As the UK’s development finance institution, CDC Group has a vital role to play in supporting ‘companies’ [and people] in developing countries. CAL welcomes therefore CDC Group’s new Climate Change Strategy¹¹ but encourages you to probe them on the 10 principles above.

CAL recommends that you invite the Prime Minister himself to lead a step-change and whole of government effort, that includes putting the UK’s own house in order, to ensure success in Glasgow.

Analysis of open-source intelligence

CAL’s recommendations above are based on long experience and detailed evidence gathered in its 120-page two-part report.

CAL used open-source intelligence to identify the objectives and top negotiating priorities for each of the world’s top 20 emitters of carbon dioxide and selected others in relation to COP26. This research was undertaken up to and including Thursday 17 June 2021 i.e. after the G7 meetings and the UK’s Clean Air Day 2021. It fully updates CAL’s earlier report.

CAL’s fully updated two-part report includes the following analysis and information for each of the top 20 emitters, Bangladesh (which leads the Climate Vulnerable Forum), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and several other Middle Eastern countries (Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar and UAE) (Appendix 1 of this letter lists the emitters):

1. Part One: Qualitative overview providing context to the climate change and air pollution issue(s).
2. Part One: Top three to six stated negotiating priorities for COP26 with evidence (bullet point headlines are shown in Appendix 2 of this letter with full detail in the first part of CAL’s report).
3. Part Two: Relevance of each of top 20 themes about climate change and air pollution with evidence. The 20 themes and related keywords are shown in Appendices 3 and 4 of this letter.
4. Part Two: Top 10-25 players (individuals or institutions) in each country across five themes of climate change, air pollution, cities, health and justice (with their name, job title and Twitter handle (where applicable)).

⁹ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Environment/SREnvironment/Pages/HealthySustainable.aspx>

¹⁰ <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/statements/joint-statement-united-nations-entities-right-healthy-environment>

¹¹ <https://assets.cdcgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/06071437/CDC-Annual-Review-2020.pdf>

5. Part Two: Events (in English) for each of five themes of climate change, air pollution, cities, health and justice.

In addition, CAL used Sprout Social Listening to analyse all tweets globally relating to air pollution and/or climate change and 20 themes for the 12 months ended 30 June 2021 (Appendices 3 and 4 of this letter). This analysis of 6.3 million tweets with 22.8 million engagements shows that:

- most of the public conversations about climate change are dominated by a few activists such as Greta Thunberg and focused on generalities e.g. “climate change” and “climate emergency”; and
- the air pollution, cities, health and justice stakeholders are still not talking about climate change (and vice versa). The only exception to this generalisation is the success by the World Health Organisation which is expected to publish updated air quality guidelines in September 2021.

While Twitter is dismissed by some commentators or politicians as being a different ‘world’, the issues we have identified are echoed and apparent almost everywhere, 15 years after CAL first identified them.

CAL would be pleased to make its two-part report and analysis available to the Committee in other electronic formats if that would be more convenient e.g. word, excel workbook and other.

Next steps

CAL may update the above analysis in mid-September 2021 for publication in early October. We would welcome your feedback on our report before doing so.

Yours sincerely

Simon Birkett
Founder and Director
Clean Air in London

Enc.

Cc

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park
The Rt. Hon. Alok Sharma MP, President Designate COP26
The Rt. Hon. Dominic Raab MP, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
Committee on COP26, Select Committee Chairs

Appendix 1

Territorial emissions in 2019

| Rank | Country | Territorial (MtCO ₂) |
|------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | China | 10,175 |
| 2 | United States of America | 5,285 |
| 3 | India | 2,616 |
| 4 | Russian Federation | 1,678 |
| 5 | Japan | 1,107 |
| 6 | Iran | 780 |
| 7 | Germany | 702 |
| 8 | Indonesia | 618 |
| 9 | South Korea | 611 |
| 10 | Saudi Arabia | 582 |
| 11 | Canada | 577 |
| 12 | South Africa | 479 |
| 13 | Brazil | 466 |
| 14 | Mexico | 439 |
| 15 | Australia | 411 |
| 16 | Turkey | 405 |
| 17 | United Kingdom | 370 |
| 18 | Italy | 337 |
| 19 | France | 324 |
| 20 | Poland | 323 |
| 21 | Kazakhstan | 314 |
| | | |
| 31 | United Arab Emirates | 191 |
| | | |
| 39 | Qatar | 109 |
| 40 | Kuwait | 108 |
| 42 | Bangladesh | 102 |
| | | |
| 79 | Lebanon | 28 |

Source: Global Carbon Atlas <http://www.globalcarbonatlas.org/en/CO2-emissions>

Appendix 2

Stated priorities for largest emitters and selected others

| Emitter/Priority | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Australia (15th) | Net zero asap and preferably by 2050 | Criticise carbon tariffs | Green technology | Renewable energy | | |
| Bangladesh (42nd) | Developed countries to do more | Developed countries to fund mitigation and adaptation | Focus on green economy and carbon neutral technologies | | | |
| Brazil (13th) | Funding for the Amazon | Reducing greenhouse gases via carbon credit trading market | Achieving carbon neutrality | Combating deforestation | Sustainable development of the Amazon | Seeking payment for protecting Amazon |
| Canada (11th) | Net zero by 2050 | Building back better | Investing in climate finance | Powering past coal | | |
| China (1st) | Carbon neutrality before 2060 | Increasing forest cover | Carbon emissions trading rules | Green recovery and increase non-fossil fuels | | |
| France (19th) | Carbon neutrality by 2050 | Phase out coal | Transform financial system to make it climate friendly | Raise funds to help poorer countries cut carbon emissions | Innovate | |
| Germany (7th) | Renewable power generation | Carbon trading | Fund mitigation | Climate financing | Support developing countries | |
| India (3rd) | Stick to climate commitments | Framework for financial and technical support | Multilateralism and equitable solutions | Integrate low carbon efforts into recovery | Create partnerships e.g. solar | |
| Indonesia (8th) | Reducing greenhouse gas emissions | Combating deforestation | Restoring peatlands and mangroves | Developed countries to do more | | |
| Iran (6th) | Not stated | | | | | |
| Italy (18th) | Climate neutrality by 2050? | Prepare the ground for COP26 | Energy and ecological transition | Health | | |
| Japan (5th) | Net zero 2050 | Reduce net emissions 46-50% by 2030 | Funding green innovation | International collaboration on decarbonisation | Increasing focus on renewable energy | |
| Kazakhstan (21st) | Carbon neutrality by 2060 | Renewable energy | Environmental protection | Monitor protected areas | | |
| Kuwait (40th) | Resilience | Tackle air and water pollution | Waste management | Diversify energy sources | Protecting biodiversity | |
| Lebanon (79th) | Renewable energy | Green jobs and funding | | | | |
| Mexico (14th) | Multilateral approach | Innovation | Carbon market | Finance to deal with risk | | |
| Poland (20th) | Reduce greenhouse gases | Renewable energy | Nuclear power | | | |
| Qatar (39th) | Natural gas | Water and food security | Biodiversity | Desertification and drought | | |
| Russia (4th) | Emission control | Forest carbon credits | Knowledge development | No politicising of climate issues | | |
| Saudi Arabia (10th) | Transition to post-oil world | Defend the oil market | Dealing with stranded oil tanker | | | |
| SIDS | Discuss NDCs at COP26 | Global stocktake and periodic review | Finance for mitigation, adaptation/loss | Emissions trading | Technology transfer | Full participation amid COVID |
| South Africa (12th) | Low carbon economy | Transition to low carbon economy | Investment in green economy | Reduce coal dependence | Climate and biodiversity crises | |
| South Korea (9th) | Carbon neutrality by 2050 | Green new deal | Contributing to global climate action | | | |
| Turkey (16th) | International climate finance | Redefine Turkey's status | Discuss ratification of Paris Agreement | | | |
| UAE (31st) | Reduce greenhouse gases 23.5% by 2030 | Waste recycling | Protect fisheries | Ensure water security | | |
| UK (17th) | Net zero by 2050. Cut 78% by 2035 | Mitigation to keep below 1.5C | Adaptation | Finance | Collaboration | Abandoning coal |
| USA (2nd) | Climate crisis at centre of policy and security | Raised climate ambitions | Finance for developing countries' emission cuts | Finance developing co. mitigation | Net zero by 2050 | Develop the US NDCs |

Appendix 3

Twitter volume on air pollution and/or COP26 globally in the 12 months ended 30 June 2021 Relative rankings of 20 themes by 'COP26'

| Themes | Example keywords | Specific examples | Ranking by volume | |
|--|--|---|-------------------|-------|
| | | | Air pollution | COP26 |
| UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) | @Alok_Sharma_RDG, COP26, Climate Change Conference, @PEspinozaC, #togetherforourplanet, @UNFCCC | Primary input | 20 | 1 |
| Climate activists | @BlackPink, climate action, #climatestrike, #FridaysForFuture, @GretaThunberg, #schoolstrike4climate | Greta Thunberg, Black Pink (in South Korea) or equivalents and their hashtags | 14 | 2 |
| Climate change | climate change | General public concern about climate change e.g. protests | 11 | 3 |
| Climate emergency | climate crisis, climate emergency, survival, threat | Declarations of Climate Emergency or general sense of public alarm | 13 | 4 |
| Pollutants e.g. GHG and PM2.5 | carbon dioxide, emissions, greenhouse gases, methane, NO2, ozone, PM2.5 | Key polluter whether by consumption or production | 5 | 5 |
| Net zero | #carbonneutral, #netzero, #racetozero, zero | Commitments to achieve net zero by a given date in law. Excludes 'waste' | 18 | 6 |
| Fossil fuels | coal, diesel, fossil fuel, fracking, gas, oil, pipeline, wood | New coal fired power stations, oil dependency or removal of subsidies. Excludes 'greenhouse' | 7 | 7 |
| Adaptation and resilience | adapt, adaptation, coastal, desertification, protect, resilience, sea level, SIDS | Desertification in Middle East, new city of Neom in Saudi Arabia, sea level rise affecting Small Island Developing States or US defence assets | 9 | 8 |
| 'Building forward' (aka Build Back Better) | electric, clean energy, green economy, #greenrecovery, innovation, solar, technology, transition | Green economy successes, renewables or technology | 10 | 9 |
| Finance | bank, #economy, finance, investor, @markjcarney | Mobilisation of £100bn of climate finance annually by 2020 from developed countries | 16 | 10 |
| Health | asthma, death, lung, heart, health, stroke, @WHO | Concern about health, heatwaves or vector-borne diseases | 2 | 11 |
| Mitigation | coal-fired, deforestation, mitigate, mitigation, reduce | Politically challenging sources to mitigate e.g. deforestation in Brazil or coal use in Poland | 8 | 12 |
| Biodiversity and nature | biodiversity, #fornature, nature, #peacewithnature, terra carta | Countries known for biodiversity or losing it e.g. Costa Rica and Madagascar respectively | 17 | 13 |
| Sectors excluding 'Building forward' | chemicals, construction, food, iron, meat, steel, transport, waste | Catch all for major emitting or legacy sectors that are seen as laggards e.g. chemicals, food, infrastructure, livestock industry, meat, transport or waste | 6 | 14 |
| Justice | civil society, equality, gender, human right, inclusion, justice, racial, #thetimeisnow, vulnerable | Legal cases e.g. Ella Roberta Adoo Kissi-Debrah, Jakarta lawsuit | 12 | 15 |
| Global warming | global warming, temperature | Concern about temperature rise | 15 | 16 |
| Cities | cities, @c40cities, delhi, london, mayor, new york, urbanisation, migration | Cities taking a lead on climate. Urbanisation or migration. Excludes 'Glasgow' and 'Paris' | 3 | 17 |
| Extreme weather and disasters | aqi, bushfire, disaster, dust, episode, flood, glacier, heatwave, smog, storm | Bushfires, droughts, floods, smog episodes, storms, Uttarakhand Chamoli glacier | 4 | 18 |
| Fake news or denial | denial, deny, fake, fraud, scam | Climate change denial | 19 | 19 |
| Air pollution | air quality, air pollution, clean air | Primary input | 1 | 20 |

* Using Sprout Social Listening* and selected Clean Air in London keywords and metrics

* Colours are used to create a visual impression of disjunction from Red (1-4) to Green (16-20)

Appendix 4

Twitter volume on air pollution and/or COP26 globally in the 12 months ended 30 June 2021 Relative rankings of 20 themes by 'Air pollution'

| Themes | Example keywords | Specific examples | Ranking by volume | |
|--|--|---|-------------------|-------|
| | | | Air pollution | COP26 |
| Air pollution | air quality, air pollution, clean air | Primary input | 1 | 20 |
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| Fossil fuels | coal, diesel, fossil fuel, fracking, gas, oil, pipeline, wood | New coal fired power stations, oil dependency or removal of subsidies. Excludes 'greenhouse' | 7 | 7 |
| Mitigation | coal-fired, deforestation, mitigate, mitigation, reduce | Politically challenging sources to mitigate e.g. deforestation in Brazil or coal use in Poland | 8 | 12 |
| Adaptation and resilience | adapt, adaptation, coastal, desertification, protect, resilience, sea level, SIDS | Desertification in Middle East, new city of Neom in Saudi Arabia, sea level rise affecting Small Island Developing States or US defence assets | 9 | 8 |
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