



**UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2020**
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY



Cabinet Office

1 Victoria Street
London
SW1 0ET
www.ukcop26.org

To: UNFCCC National Focal Points
Re: Proposed new dates for COP26

26 May 2020

Dear Colleagues,

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we hope that you and your families and colleagues are doing well in these difficult times.

As you know, on 1 April the Bureau took the decision - in light of the pandemic - to postpone the Subsidiary Body meetings until October, subject to further revision, and also to postpone COP26. The primary considerations were to safeguard the health and safety of COP26 participants, to ensure inclusiveness and maximise the potential to build climate ambition. The UK and Italy would like to thank the Bureau, the Secretariat and the COP25 President Carolina Schmidt for their cooperation in reaching that difficult decision. As COVID-19 spread, it was clear to all that the conditions did not exist for an inclusive COP in November 2020.

The Bureau invited the UK as incoming Presidency to consult with Parties and other stakeholders and present to the Bureau a proposal for new dates for COP26 for its consideration. This letter is to update you on our consultations ahead of the Bureau meeting on 28th May.

Since the Bureau decision we have been reaching out extensively to Bureau members, Group Chairs, Parties, representatives of Non-Party Stakeholders and our operational delivery partners to understand the views of the different constituencies. Our priorities when considering a new date were: the health of participants, the representation of Parties and Non-Party stakeholders, allowing time for preparation of work to deliver on negotiations mandates and the ambitious and inclusive event we are committed to, and operational considerations. Everyone we consulted agreed with these priorities.

We have also been working closely with the Secretariat, the SB Chairs, the Chilean COP Presidency and Italy so that Parties will be able to understand the practical implications of the postponement on our work. We have engaged particularly closely with the African Group given implications for the timing of COP27.

Having consulted widely, and taking into account the international event calendar, **the UK is proposing to hold COP26 on 1- 12 November 2021.**

The incoming Presidency has concluded that, given the uneven spread of COVID19, this date would present the lowest risk of further postponement, and the best chance



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of delivering an inclusive and ambitious COP. We will present this proposal to the COP Bureau at its meeting on 28 May

Our consultations also revealed unanimity that the postponement of COP26 should not mean postponement of climate action. The science is clear that we must urgently scale up action to respond to the threat of climate change, particularly for the most vulnerable countries and communities at the frontline of climate impacts. The delay to COP puts an even greater premium on events to maintain momentum.

As the incoming Presidency, we are committed to working with all Parties and stakeholders to accelerate climate ambition in 2020 and 2021. We will work with all Parties through a series of multilateral, regional and high level climate events over the next 18 months to achieve this. An initial high-level overview is set out in the attached roadmap. All dates are indicative and subject to decisions by host governments and organisers. We have not at this stage included regional events and would welcome input from Parties on their plans to evolve this overview. This overview will continue to evolve and is not being presented for approval. Please be reassured that as incoming Presidency, we will pay particular attention to the balance and distinction between formal UNFCCC discussions and related (but separate) events.

Finally, we are well aware of the challenge we are all facing, with COVID 19 causing deaths, ill health and economic impacts in all corners of the globe. As we work to protect our citizens and repair our economies, we must also act on climate change, and meet these two joint challenges together. As the UN Secretary-General and UK COP President have made clear, the COVID19 economic recovery is an opportunity to build more sustainable and inclusive economies and societies, and a more resilient and prosperous world, and we will put this at the centre of our Presidency.

Thank you all once again for your understanding of the situation regarding COP26 and for your cooperation in finding a new date. We look forward to discussing the new date proposal with Bureau representatives on 28 May and continuing to work with you to make COP26 an inclusive and ambitious event in 2021.

Yours sincerely,

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OVERVIEW ROADMAP TO COP26

Given the gap between COP25 and COP26, the incoming UK Presidency will work with our partners Italy; the Chilean Presidency; the UNFCCC; the UN Secretary General; all Parties and stakeholders to ensure that **climate ambition is accelerated in 2020, 2021 and beyond.**

Postponement of COP26 does not mean postponement of climate action. We must scale up action to respond to the climate emergency. It is vital that all Parties increase ambition by submitting enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and long-term strategies that chart a path to net zero; that support is enhanced and the \$100bn climate finance goal is met; and through scaling up action and support for adaptation. These are crucial to the implementation of the Paris Agreement, which must be central to building a clean and resilient recovery from COVID-19. The UK will play our full part.

COVID-19 has shown the importance of international cooperation. Together, we have the capacity to respond to major shared challenges. In responding to one shock, we cannot ignore or exacerbate another. **As we restart our economies, we must do so in ways that protect our planet in the face of the climate emergency;** investing in industries and infrastructure that can turn the tide. Numerous studies are showing the economic benefits of harnessing the falling costs of renewables and creating green jobs; and the benefits of building resilience to shocks has been made all too clear in the coronavirus response.

As incoming UNFCCC COP Presidency, we have a responsibility to play a leading role, and in 2020-2021 we will champion this approach with all Parties and stakeholders to accelerate climate action at key moments in the months ahead, including:

- **UN Financing for Development 28th May**
- **'June Momentum for Climate Change' and World Environment Day in June**
- **The September UN General Assembly high-level stocktake on ambition**
- **The 52nd meeting of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies in October**
- **World Bank/IMF Annual meetings and other meetings of Development Banks; including the 'Financing in Common' meeting in November**
- **5 year anniversary of the Paris Agreement: UNDP NDC climate promise event**
- **G7 and G20 meetings; including a commitment from the UK and Italy to use our 2021 Presidencies to scale up climate action**

Throughout 2020 and 2021, **we are committed to making progress on all issues in the UNFCCC negotiations**, building on mandates and timelines mapped out by the Secretariat and SB Chairs. The technical work must continue: we are working with Presiding Officers to ensure this is taken forward in a constructive and inclusive manner through Constituted Bodies, workshops and other technical events as well as the formal negotiations sessions. This will include specific Presidency-led workshops and consultations where required. We respect the distinct and important role of formal UNFCCC processes, while recognising the value of wider fora to maintain momentum outside the negotiations.



We will work with all parties through a **series of high-level events in the key areas of NDCs, adaptation, finance including the \$100bn climate finance goal, energy, nature, and transport**, bringing countries and other stakeholders together to accelerate progress towards resilient and low carbon growth; and accelerating action on the nature-based solutions that are key to climate outcomes, biodiversity, and public health. The High-Level Champions will also play a key role in driving this forward. These will focus on:

- Platforms for countries to demonstrate progress and share experience on **NDC ambition and implementation, and Long-Term Strategies**;
- Encouraging greater ambition and commitments to support practical **adaptation and resilience** action to protect communities and economies;
- Accelerating the flow of **finance** from high to low-carbon and resilient investments, improving access to finance especially for developing countries, and ensuring that support is enhanced and the **\$100bn climate finance goal** is met;
- Accelerating investment in clean energy in the **power sector**, and supporting communities in making a just transition away from coal;
- Maximising the potential of **nature-based solutions** to enhance prosperity, reduce emissions, and safeguard resilience;
- Accelerating the global transition to zero emission vehicles in **transport**, bringing cleaner air, lower costs, and new opportunities for industry.

We will work with all partners, including the incoming African Presidency when confirmed, and through multilateral and regional events (including regional climate weeks) to maintain the drumbeat of ambition ahead of COP26 and through to COP27 and beyond. We must deliver on our collective Paris Agreement and Convention goals. Leaders will be engaged and invited to COP26 to ensure the highest political priority.

An indicative timeline of key multilateral events on the road to COP26 is below.

Multilateral Roadmap timeline

All dates are indicative and subject to decision by hosts and organisers. Any events listed as TBD in 2021 have been placed in the order they would have been in 2020 (prior to COVID-19), with no preconceptions that this would be the final outcome.

2020
UN Financing For Development [May 2020]
June Momentum for Climate Change [June 2020]*
G7 Summit [10-12 June 2020]
Ministerial on Climate Action [TBC - July 2020]
IEA Clean Energy Transitions Summit [9 July 2020]



UN General Assembly (UNGA) [21-25 Sept 2020]
Session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies (SB52) [4-13 Oct 2020]*
World Bank / IMF Annual Meetings [16-18 Oct 2020]
Paris Peace Forum, Finance in Common Summit [12 Nov 2020]
G20 Summit [21-22 Nov 2020]
5 year Paris Agreement Anniversary UNDP NDC Climate Promise Event [Dec 2020]
2021
Climate Adaptation Summit [Jan 2021]
World Economic Forum Annual Meeting / Davos [26-29 Jan 2021]
World Bank / IMF Spring Meetings [9-11 April 2021]
Session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies [TBD mid 2021]*
UN Oceans Summit [TBD 2021]
G7 Summit [TBD 2021]
Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) [TBD 2021]
Partnering for Green Growth & the Global Goals (P4G) summit [TBD 2021]
UN Food Systems Summit [1 July 2021]
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) [TBD 2021]
UN General Assembly (UNGA) [14-30 Sept 2021]
Italy Pre-Cop and Youth Event [TBD 2021]*
World Bank / IMF Annual Meetings [15-17 Oct 2021]
UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) 15 [TBD 2021]
G20 Summit [TBD 2021]
UNFCCC COP26 [1-12 November 2021 TBD]*

*Denotes under auspices of UNFCCC/Presiding Officers/Presidency