

UK Government sustainability policy and delivery: a status update

Topic	Pre-election government policy Commitment to Net Zero by 2050	Change	Labour manifesto pledges The institutional framework for policy-making will reflect net zero and carbon budget commitments	Change	Progress/delivery since election New target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 81% (compared to 1990 levels) by 2035 - new UK NDC announced at COP29
1. Electricity decarbonisation	Commitment to decarbonise the UK power system by 2035, subject to security of supply	Increased commitment	All electricity generated in the UK to be from clean energy by 2030	Reduced Commitment Active progress Active progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New target of 95% low carbon generation by 2030 Great British Energy Bill introduced (currently at HoL Committee stage) Energy Independence Act included in King's Speech
2. Wind generation	50GW offshore wind energy capacity by 2030 (currently around 14GW)	Increased commitment Increased commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quadruple offshore capacity to 55GW by 2030 Double onshore capacity to 35GW by 2030 	Active progress Passive progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ban on onshore wind lifted CfD funding through AR6 for 9 offshore wind projects
3. Solar generation	70GW of solar energy capacity by 2035 (currently around 15.6GW)	Slightly reduced commitment	Triple solar power generation to 50GW by 2030	Passive progress	CfD funding through AR6 for 93 solar projects
4. Fossil fuels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue annual licensing rounds for North Sea oil and gas licences Support new 'net-zero ready' gas power stations (proposed for consultation in March 2024) 	Increased commitment No change New commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ban new licences for exploring oil and gas fields Continue a strategic reserve of gas power stations Stop the planned new coalmine in Cumbria 	Active progress No progress Passive progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy Profits Levy changes implemented Post Finch court cases: Cumbria coalmine planning permission quashed by courts; ongoing judicial review into permission for Rosebank and Jackdaw oil and gas fields
5. Network infrastructure	£960m Green Industries Growth Accelerator fund to support offshore wind and electricity networks, plus CCUS and hydrogen	Slightly increased commitment	Energy Independence Act will include a focus on upgrading the UK's power transmission infrastructure – no concrete proposals	Active progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget mentions working with NESO and Ofgem to develop a robust grid connection process Planning and Infrastructure Act included in King's Speech
6. Carbon capture, use and storage	Aim to store 20–30 million tonnes of CO ₂ per year by 2030 and support 50,000 jobs by 2030. £20bn in funding over 20 years and £1bn for current clusters	No change in short term; Silent on long term commitment	Invest £1bn in CCS, with money coming from £7.3bn National Wealth Fund	Active progress on reduced commitment Active progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Wealth Fund capitalised with £5.8 billion (with £1.5bn reserved for flexibility) Budget allocated £3.9bn for CCUS Track-1 projects
7. Hydrogen	Deliver up to 10GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030	Unclear	Invest £500m in hydrogen, money also coming from National Wealth Fund	Active progress	Budget allocated £2.3bn in revenue funding for 11 green hydrogen projects (Hydrogen Allocation Round 1)
8. Nuclear power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24GW of nuclear capacity by 2050 (3–7GW every 5 years from 2030–2044), Delivery of Sizewell C and Hinkley Point C, SMR technology selection process Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project reforms to planning 	New commitment No change Increased commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the lifetime of existing nuclear plants Deliver Hinkley Point C and support Sizewell and SMRs Create a new National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority to set strategic infrastructure priorities and update national planning policy 	Passively achieved Active progress Active progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EdF announced extension of four existing UK plants SMR programme in negotiations with shortlisted vendors National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority planned to be operational by Spring 2025
9. Carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM)	Introduce a CBAM from January 2027 applying a carbon price to imported goods from the following sectors: aluminium, cement, ceramics, fertiliser, glass, hydrogen, iron, and steel	No change	Support the introduction of a carbon border adjustment mechanism	Active progress	UK CBAM will be introduced on 1 January 2027 – glass and ceramics no longer in scope; registration threshold of £50,000
10. Electric cars	80% of new cars sold in Great Britain to be zero emission by 2030, increasing to 100% by 2035 (Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate)	Increased commitment	Phase out date of 2030 for new cars with internal combustion engines	No progress	Upcoming consultation on restoring 2030 phase out date