



Climate Change: Government's Legal Responsibilities Debate on 2 May 2019

This briefing identifies relevant reports and useful documents, including recent parliamentary materials and press articles, which may be of assistance to Members in preparing for the following debate:

Lord Rooker to move that this House takes note of Her Majesty's Government's legal responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as detailed in the Climate Change Act 2008 and the implications of continuing climatic changes for global security and stability and for the world economy.

Copies of the materials are available for collection from the Library.

Key Information

- Committee on Climate Change, [‘UK Regulations: The Climate Change Act’](#), accessed 25 April 2019

Summary of the Government's legal duties under the Climate Change Act 2008, produced by the Committee on Climate Change, an independent advisory body established by the Act. Legal duties include: to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent of 1990 levels by 2050; to undertake assessments of the risks of climate change and to prepare for them; and to set ‘carbon budgets’—legally binding caps on UK emissions over a five-year period.

- Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, [The Clean Growth Strategy: Leading the Way to a Low Carbon Future](#), October 2017, pp 5–16

Executive summary of the Government's Clean Growth Strategy, summarising the Government's approach to achieving a low carbon economy.

- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, [A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment](#), January 2018, pp 9–14

Executive summary of the Government's 25 year environment plan, outlining the UK's environmental goals and the policies the Government intends to introduce to achieve them.

- Committee on Climate Change, [Reducing UK Emissions 2018: Progress Report to Parliament](#), June 2018, pp 10–22

Executive summary of the Committee's progress report, which stated that while there had been a “decade of progress” in reducing carbon emissions, the UK was “not on course” to meet the legally binding fourth and fifth carbon budgets (which set caps to 2032). The report set out four key messages to the Government to achieve its future legal obligations: “support the simple, low-cost options; commit to effective regulation and strict enforcement; end the chopping and changing of policy; and act now to keep long-term options open”.

- House of Lords Library, [Threats Presented by Climate Change](#), 17 January 2019

Briefing examining the threats presented by climate change on a global and national level. The briefing includes a summary of UK government policy on the issue.

Parliamentary Debate, Statements and Questions

- [Oral Statement on 'Climate Change Policy'](#), HC Hansard, 23 April 2019, cols 671–91
- House of Commons, ['Written Question: Climate Change: International Cooperation'](#), 25 April 2019, 245960
- House of Lords, ['Written Question: Carbon Emissions'](#), 27 February 2019, HL13752
- [Debate on 'Climate Change'](#), HL Hansard, 24 January 2019, cols 878–906

Press Articles and Comment

- Ben Chapman, ['Government Urged to Back Carbon Capture Technology to Meet Climate Change Goals and Protect UK Industry'](#), *Independent*, 25 April 2019
- Peter Campbell and Josh Spero, ['Transport Sector Slow to Reach UK Emissions Targets'](#), *Financial Times* (£), 25 April 2019
- Jillian Ambrose, ['Carbon Emissions Fall for Sixth Year in a Row but Pace of Cuts Slows'](#), *Telegraph* (£), 4 March 2019
- Neil Carter, ['What Has the UK Climate Law Achieved and Where Next?'](#), Friends of the Earth, 8 August 2018

Further Information

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, [Global Warming of 1.5°C: Summary for Policymakers](#), January 2019
- House of Commons Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, [Carbon Capture Usage and Storage: Third Time Lucky?](#), 25 April 2019, HC 1094 of session 2017–19
- House of Commons Library, [UK Carbon Budgets](#), 20 February 2019

House of Lords Library briefings provide a selection of politically balanced reading material intended to help Members prepare for debates. Briefings are published on the Library's [parliamentary intranet site](#) in advance of debates, and are also automatically emailed to those Members who have their name on the speakers' list.

Please respect the copyright of the owners of the documents cited. The Library is not responsible for either the views or the accuracy of external content. Any comments on Library briefings should be sent to the Head of Research Services, House of Lords Library, London SW1A 0PW or emailed to purvism@parliament.uk.