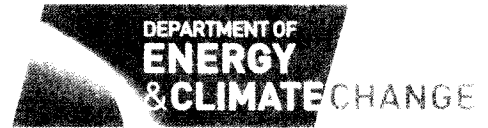


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The Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP

Secretary of State
Department of Energy
and Climate Change

Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Our ref:MC107738/ACB

Your ref:01083569

Feb 26 2009

Dear Tessa,

Thank you for your letter dated 16 October 2008 about the Climate Change Bill. This became law as the Climate Change Act on 26 November 2008. I apologise for the delay in replying.

To step up to the challenge of climate change, we need action not just by governments but people around the world. We need popular pressure – pressure on me, on local councillors, on our public services and businesses – if Britain is to keep up the ambition we need.

Thanks to support from people around the country, we now have a Climate Change Act that is the world's strongest. We have made some important changes over the last few months to strengthen it, including increasing the legal target to an 80% cut in emissions by 2050 – the science is clear this is needed.

Below I have set out elements of the Act that will take us forward on the path to meeting this target.

A comprehensive approach needs to include emissions from international aviation and shipping, so we changed the Act to require that they are included in our targets and budgets by the end of 2012, or that the Government will have to explain to Parliament why not. This provides time to reach an international agreement on how to allocate these emissions between countries.

And because businesses, along with all sectors of society, have a key role to play in meeting the challenge of climate change, the Act now includes a clause setting us on the road for requiring companies to report their carbon emissions, by 2012, in a transparent and consistent way.

Another key provision of the Act is the carbon budgeting system which caps emissions over five year periods. The Committee on Climate Change will

suggest the levels of budgets and provide an annual progress report to Parliament, which the Government must publicly respond to.

On 1st December 2008 the independent Committee on Climate Change published their report "Building a low-carbon economy - the UK's contribution to tackling climate change". The Committee advised that the budgets could be met by using existing technologies, and by putting in place a range of policies to move to a low-carbon economy:

- Moving away from using fossil fuels towards using cleaner forms of generating electricity and heat including greater use of renewables (wind power, biomass heat and heat pumps), nuclear and carbon capture and storage;
- Using energy more efficiently in our homes and office buildings and in industry through better insulation, use of more energy efficient appliances and through reducing waste by turning lights off, shutting down computers and using air conditioning less;
- Reducing transport emissions, developing electric cars, improving the carbon efficiency of engines, developing use of sustainable bio-fuels, better journey planning and more use of public transport; and,
- Through offset 'credits' (e.g. Clean Development Mechanism) whereby 'credits' are purchased from emissions reduction projects overseas to offset emissions produced in the UK.

The Government is carefully considering the Committee's advice. In mid-2009 we will publish the report setting out our proposals and policies for meeting budgets, as required by the Climate Change Act. The report will cover existing policies set out in the 2006 Climate Change Programme and the 2007 Energy White Paper, such as the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target, Carbon Reduction Commitment and Climate Change Agreements. It will also include policy developments that we have consulted on recently or we will consult on shortly, for example on renewable energy, heat and energy saving, transport, carbon capture and storage, and low carbon industry.

The Bill has now passed into law but the need for continuing community action remains, as does the need for international action. In December, the world will meet in Copenhagen to find a crucial, new international agreement. At home, communities are coming together to encourage public services, businesses and households to reduce their carbon footprint. People can get ideas and stay in touch through www.direct.gov.uk/greenerliving, or by finding a local campaign group.

I believe we can get a global deal, we can do it in a way that is fair to people and creates jobs, and we can prevent the worst of dangerous climate change. But we can only do it if government and individuals together create the conditions for change.

Yours ever,

ED MILIBAND