The Rt. Honourable Rishi Sunak, Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

CAN
CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK
UK

31st October 2023

Dear Prime Minister,

In July, UK civil society organisations working across environment, international development, humanitarian response, inclusion and rights issues, wrote to urge you to keep your promise to provide £11.6bn in international climate finance over five years from 2021, following which we received assurances from your government that the commitment will be met.

However, last week we learned the government has changed what 'counts' towards the £11.6bn international climate finance, instead of actually directing the finance needed to this urgent priority.

Far from living up to the UK's historical responsibilities for the climate crisis and keeping the UK's promises to countries on the frontline - promises repeated by you from the podium at COP27 less than a year ago - this is just an exercise in creative accounting and sets a worrying precedent for further weakening of UK international climate finance.

Countries and communities that have been made vulnerable to climate change deserve better from the UK, and the UK public need to trust in the government to fairly deliver its promises.

The UK held a good reputation on climate finance and played an important role in influencing other countries to raise standards on climate finance. This move fractures the UK's reputation as a trusted partner to lower income countries and risks a global race-to-the-bottom on climate finance, with devastating consequences for efforts to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C and enable communities to adapt to climate change.

With the costs of climate change escalating around the world - and falling disproportionately on those least responsible for causing the climate crisis - just relabelling finance isn't an acceptable answer by the UK to the existential and costly realities of climate change. Putting off action just makes it more costly in the future as impacts escalate, whereas early action substantially brings down the costs and reduces losses and damages.

Instead of accounting sleights of hand, the UK should be scaling up finance for vital climate action and generating new finance through polluter pays measures. Recent analysis by Oxfam estimates that the UK could have raised more than the £11.6bn five-year international climate finance commitment in the last year alone from four measures: a permanent excess profits tax on fossil fuel producers; redirecting fossil fuel producer subsidies; a Frequent Flyer Levy; and taxing high-emitting luxury travel. In addition, a system that fairly taxes extreme wealth could have contributed up to a further £10.48bn last year. Altogether in 2022, the UK may have missed out on generating £23.1bn for climate action by not making polluters and the wealthiest in our society pay. The evidence is clear, there are significant funding options available to the government for climate action that do not unfairly cost UK households.

With COP28 just one month away and the UK's credibility on the global stage hugely diminished, we urge the government not to turn its back on communities on the frontline of climate change and not drive down international standards on climate finance, but instead to fairly fulfil the promises you made on climate finance in a comparable way to previous UK climate finance, and to rebuild the UK's reputation and influence on this vital issue of climate leadership.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Pettengell
Executive Director, Climate Action Network UK (CAN-UK)

Sent on behalf of the following 74 civil society organisations from across the UK:


CAN
CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK
UK
bond
THE
CLIMATE
COALITION
christian
aid
MAKE
POLLUTERS
PAY
Friends of
the Earth
England, Wales &
Northern Ireland
care
Defending dignity.
Fighting poverty.
WORLD
ANIMAL
PROTECTION
RSPB
WWF
tearfund
Debt
Justice
World Vision
Hope and a future for all children
Changing the world
with women and girls
actionaid
Practical
ACTION
CONCERN
worldwide
UPLIFT
ISLAMIC
RELIEF
MERCY
CORPS
SCIAF
Uniting for a just world
Caritas Scotland
iied
OXFAM
eia
environmental
investigation
agency
Fauna
& Flora
CLIMATE
outreach
CAFOD
Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development
development
initiatives
STAMP
OUT
Poverty
cbm
global disability inclusion
WDC
WHALE AND
DOLPHIN
CONSERVATION
CLIMATE GROUP
FAIRTRADE
FOUNDATION
BRETTON WOODS
project
GREENPEACE
QUAKERS


humanity &inclusion
faith for the climate
UNISON
the public service union
ACTION AGAINST HUNGER
global witness
green economy coalition
Scottish Communities Climate Action Network
Datblygiadau Egni Gwledig
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FOUNDATION
Protecting People and Planet
Make My Money Matter
WATER WITNESS
GLOBAL CITIZEN
ATAL ANHREFN HINSAWDD CYMRU
STOP CLIMATE CHAOS CYMRU
RAILWAY children
No child lost to the streets
LABOUR BEHIND THE LABEL
CREU • CYMUNEDAU • GWYRDD
GWYRDDNI
COMMUNITY • CLIMATE • ACTION
RAINFOREST FOUNDATION UK
SECURING LANDS, SUSTAINING LIVES
Scotland's International Development Alliance


Climate. Cymru
Rhwydwaith Cyd-gynhyrchu Cymru
Co-production Network for Wales
Climate Action Network
TOGETHER WE CAN
Cyfarfod rhanbarth
CRYNWYR
STOP CLIMATE CHAOS SCOTLAND
Sustainable Wales
Cymru Gynaliadwy
awel aman tawe
JUBILEE SCOTLAND
Campaigning to end global debt slavery
Climate Shop
fern
MAKING EUROPE WORK FOR PEOPLE & FORESTS
Clynfyw
WCIA
WELSH CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
CANOLFAN MATERION RHYNGWLADOL CYMRU
TIR NATUR
Adfer Natur - Gyda'n Gilydd
Bringing Nature Back - Together
Grwp Resilience
Ffynnone Resilience
The One Planet Centre
CARDIFF QUAKERS
green squirrel
TIR PONTYPRIDD
TMR
The Mentor Ring
At the HEART of the community.