

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

From the President Venki Ramakrishnan

12 June 2019

Dear Prime Minister

I welcome your announcement that the UK will eradicate its net contribution to climate change by 2050. Formalising this in legislation is a vital step, and one which will come to be seen as a key moment in the battle against climate change in years to come.

Your commitment continues the pioneering work of the Climate Change Act, and demonstrates an intent to reap the benefits of clean growth whilst safeguarding the wellbeing of present and future generations. There is rightly debate about the costs and practicalities of delivering on decarbonising our economy but that debate must also be informed by the costs of not taking action. We must also think about the potential benefits of being a world leader in developing the new technologies that will deliver a low carbon future.

As the first G7 nation to legislate to cut emissions, and now to rigorously commit to net-zero emissions, we have established our position as an ambitious and effective leader on climate change.

The UK is a global centre of excellence for research to understand and tackle climate change. The country has two world-leading facilities at the Met Office Hadley Centre and the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, joined by our vibrant and internationally recognised university research base. UK based researchers produce subject-defining research on climate change and make up a substantial proportion of authors on IPCC reports. Further, it is clear from our work on Greenhouse Gas Removal that achieving net zero emissions by 2050 is ambitious, but possible with clear policy priorities.

This action also provides a clear statement of intent for the UK bid to host COP26. A UK Summit Presidency would allow us to project our domestic progress in this vital area of international importance, whilst inspiring and enabling other nations to deliver on climate goals with a similar sense of urgency. It would also provide an opportunity to promote the creativity, ingenuity and openness of our science base and its value in understanding, mitigating and adapting to climate change. The Royal Society would welcome the opportunity to showcase British science at a UK hosted COP.



President Sir Venki Ramakrishnan
Executive Director Dr Julie Maxton

Founded in 1660, the Royal Society is the independent scientific academy of the UK, dedicated to promoting excellence in science.

Registered Charity No 207043

Again, I welcome your action in Parliament this week, and hope that your successor will carry on your legacy in this area of vital importance. The Royal Society stands ready to assist in this essential task.

Yours sincerely,



Venki Ramakrishnan

+44 20 7451 2507

president@royalsociety.org

Cc. Rt Hon Greg Clarke MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Chris Skidmore MP, Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation;
Interim Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth
Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Dr Thérèse Coffey MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment
Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP, Secretary of State for Transport
Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
Rt Hon Mark Field MP, Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific
Rt Hon Rory Stewart MP, Secretary of State for International Development