

Hung parliament is historic opportunity for climate

Friday, May 7th, 2010

For immediate release

Action on climate change must not be the loser from a hung parliament.

That was the message today (Friday 7 May 2010) from seven of the UK's largest environmental organisations as they issued a joint challenge to the political parties now haggling over the make-up of the next Government.

David Norman, head of Campaigns at WWF, said:

“Whoever becomes Prime Minister, one of their most pressing tasks will be to take rapid action to deal with the threat of climate change. They must also take action to protect our under-pressure natural environment.

“This is an historic opportunity. The next Government has the power to establish the UK as a climate leader and to reap the tremendous benefits to the UK's economy, society and security of doing so.

“Scientists say global greenhouse gases must peak during this Parliament and then decline if we are to prevent serious, irreversible consequences. All parties say they are committed; now what we need is action.”

The coalition has issued a list of top priorities that must be at the heart of the next Government's agenda:

- A cut in greenhouse gas emissions of at least 42 per cent by 2020
- Investment in green industries, infrastructure and skills to boost the economy and ensure the UK becomes a world leader in low carbon technology
- A dramatic shift to renewable sources of energy generation - at least 15 per cent by 2020
- No new coal-fired power stations unless they are able to fully capture and store their emissions
- No third runway at Heathrow and a new aviation policy compatible with the Climate Change Act
- Financial support to developing countries to help them develop cleanly, adapt to climate change and stop deforestation
- Urgent action to protect and enhance the UK's natural environment including a White Paper on nature.

Graham Wynne, Chief Executive of the RSPB, said:



Friends of the Earth



GREENPEACE



“As some have argued for a Council of Economic Security to make the tough decisions to tackle the deficit, so we urge the parties to work together to make the right decisions to put the UK on the path to a competitive and low carbon future.

“Now that the country has voted, politicians must show leadership to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels, tackle climate change and give real, permanent protection to our natural environment.

“The parties’ election manifestos demonstrate they are united on the need for urgent action to decarbonise our economy, stop tropical forest destruction and improve our environment. This is fertile ground for productive collaboration.

"This weekend, the opportunity to provide a prosperous low carbon future for the UK must be a common cause behind which all politicians rally."

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Notes to editors:

1. The environmental organisations issuing this call to action are CPRE, Friends of the Earth, Green Alliance, Greenpeace, RSPB, WWF-UK and The Wildlife Trusts.