

Press Notice

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For immediate distribution

Green NGOs assess main political parties' manifestos

In the week that saw each of the major political parties launch their manifestos for the forthcoming General Election, eight of the UK's leading environmental organisations¹ today issue their assessment of the commitments made on climate change and the natural environment.

In September 2009, the same group of environmental organisations published *Common Cause: The Green Standard Manifesto on Climate Change and the Natural Environment*.² This set out ten manifesto commitments on climate change and the natural environment, as the basis for action in for the next Government.

Today's assessment³ provides a summary of the specific commitments in the main manifestos of the parties specified, against the Green Standard's manifesto priorities⁴.

The following spokespeople are available for interview⁵:

Greenpeace: John Sauven, Executive Director, 07929 638296
WWF: David Norman, Head of Campaigns, 07857 615426
The Wildlife Trusts: Paul Wilkinson, Head of Living Landscapes, 07825 601558
CPRE: Neil Sinden, Director of Policy and Campaigns, 07739 332795
Friends of the Earth: Martyn Williams, Senior Parliamentary Campaigner
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Notes for Editors:

1. You can download the General Election Manifesto Assessment at <http://www.green-alliance.org.uk/grea1.aspx?id=1326>
2. The organisations that are part of the Green Standard initiative are: CPRE, Friends of the Earth, Green Alliance, Greenpeace, RSPB, The Wildlife Trusts, Woodland Trust and WWF-UK
3. In September 2009, the eight organisations that make up the Green Standard published *Common Cause: the Green Standard manifesto on climate change and the natural environment*. In it they presented ten specific manifesto commitments they believe must form the basis of action for the next government and invited all political parties to include these in their manifestos.
In an urgent message to parliamentarians, the Green Standard declared that the stakes are high. Addressing these issues presents an historic opportunity for any government prepared to rise to the challenge, for example by releasing the UK's huge potential for renewable energy and by laying the foundations for a prosperous and secure society in the future. The price of failure will be paid by those in the UK and internationally who are most at risk from climate change, and in the irreversible loss of countryside and biodiversity.
4. **The 10 manifesto proposals for 2010**
 - Put the UK on track to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020, and 80 per cent by 2050.
 - Ensure future energy and transport infrastructure is consistent with a rapid transition to a low-carbon economy by generating at least 15 per cent of energy from renewables by 2020; introducing an immediate ban on new unabated or substantially unabated coal plants and an end to airport expansion.
 - Commit to strong UK leadership at the highest levels in the EU and globally, to deliver EU energy and climate targets and to ensure global greenhouse gas emissions are falling by 2015.
 - Provide the UK's fair share of finance for adaptation, low-carbon development and to reduce deforestation in the developing world of a least \$160 billion a year from 2012.
 - Commit to making significant progress towards restoring the natural environment by 2020, including the doubling of UK woodland cover, meeting other habitat targets and ensuring that protected sites are in good condition; through utilising reforms to agricultural incentives, planning policy and other measures to create high quality landscapes rich in nature and able to adapt to climate change.
 - Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to experience and enjoy nature by providing access to natural green space within walking distance of where they live.
 - Commit to reorienting the planning system so that sustainable development rather than simply economic development is at its heart, requiring all major development plans and planning applications to show how they will contribute to carbon reduction targets.
 - Dedicate all income generated by the emissions trading scheme after 2012 to tackling climate change in the UK and internationally.
 - Protect and increase Defra and DECC budgets and introduce significant new policies to stimulate private investment in the low-carbon economy and the natural environment.
 - Launch a nationwide housing retrofit programme by 2011, which will deliver improved energy efficiency and renewable energy systems across the UK.
5. The listing of parties' policies in the manifesto assessment does not signify any endorsement of the policies or of any party or parties. The inclusion of policies does not imply support or opposition. All organisations involved in *The Green Standard* are entirely independent of all political parties.
The policies and commitments listed are only those relating directly to the specific asks set out in *The Green Standard*. The parties' manifestos each contain a number of additional policies and commitments that relate to the natural environment and climate change. The manifesto asks set out in *The Green Standard* are a set of shared priorities, but do not necessarily reflect the only or priority issues of individual organisations.