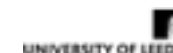


10 Years of the UK Climate Change Act

Workshop on a Dutch Climate Change Act
Utrecht, 9 October 2018

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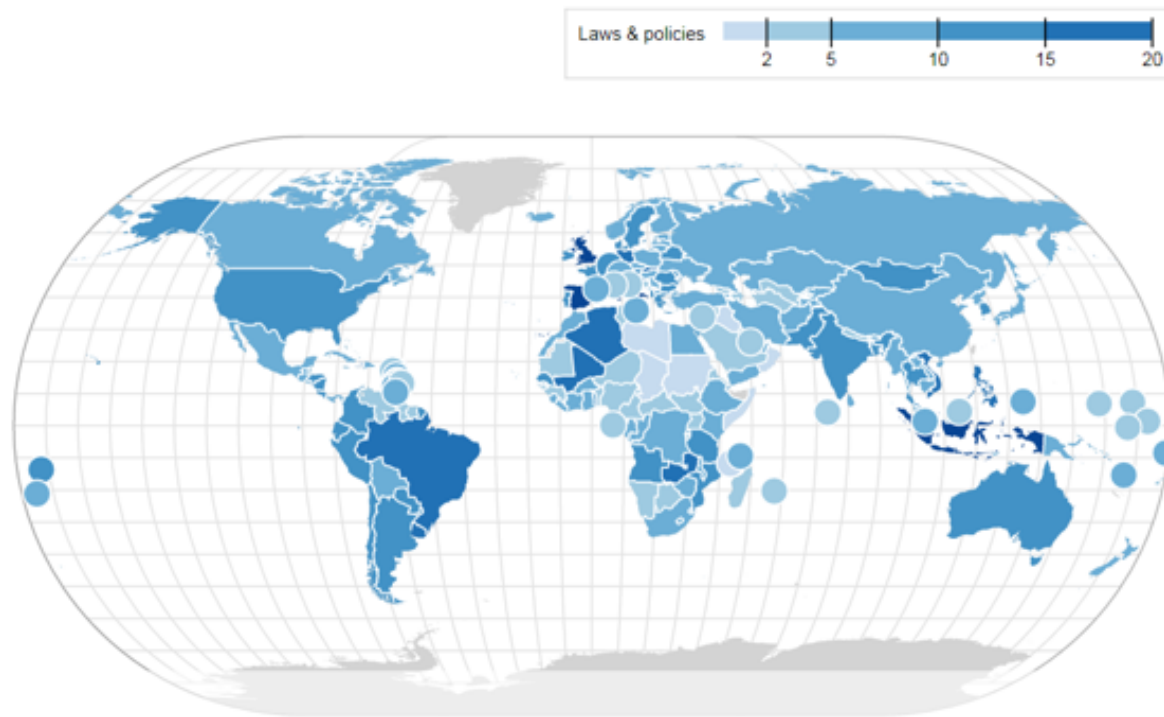
Overview

- Climate legislation internationally
- The main components of the UK Act
- Success and disappointments
- Looking ahead



The world is taking action on climate change

Over 1,500 climate laws worldwide, of which ca 140 are framework laws



Some examples of climate legislation

A mix of approaches, but most countries have a framework



UK Climate Change Act (2008)



Germany Renewable Energy Sources Act (rev. 2011)



USA Clean Air Act (rev. 1990)



China 12th and 13th Five Year Plan (2011 / 2016)



Mexico General Law on Climate Change (2012)



S Korea Framework Act on Low Carbon Green Growth (2009)



S Africa National Climate Change Response Policy (2011)

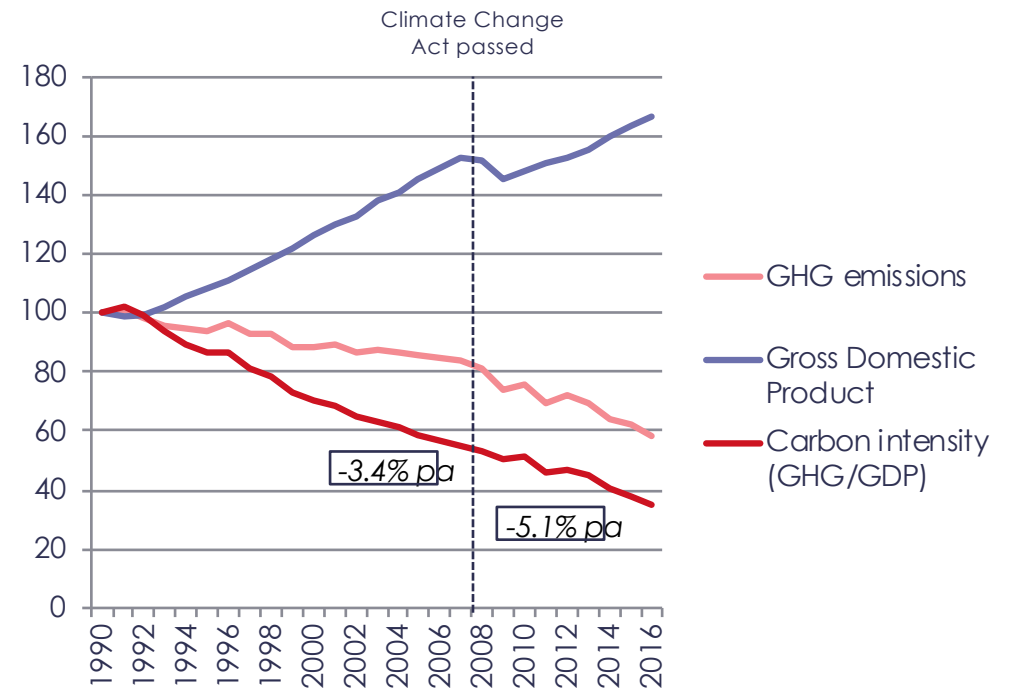
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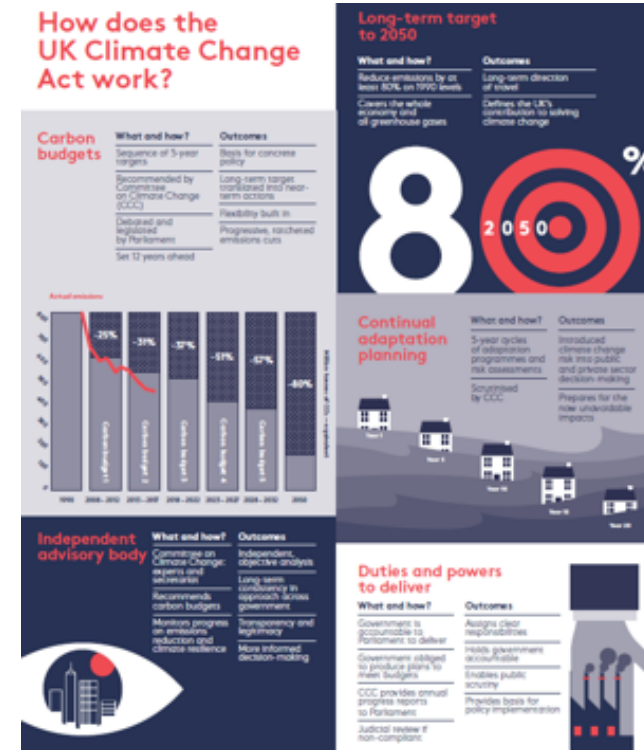
Why the UK Act is worth studying

- The UK Act is one of the earliest framework laws passed by a parliament
 - Royal assent on 26 November 2008
- The UK Act contains several elements of “good practice”
 - E.g., long-term target, carbon budgets, Committee on Climate Change
- The UK has been successful in curtailing carbon emissions
 - Emissions are down by >40% while GDP is up by ~70% since 1990



Elements of good practice in the Climate Change Act

- A long-term greenhouse gas target
 - Clarity on the direction of travel
- Binding 5-year carbon budgets
 - Define the path to the long-term goal
- Continual adaptation planning
 - Timely response to unavoidable impacts
- Scrutiny by an independent committee
 - Safeguard against political short-termism
- Duties and powers to deliver
 - Clear responsibility and accountability



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Four areas of (relative) success

- The quality of the debate has improved
 - A clear structure for debate (regular reports); CCC as the custodian of analytical rigour
- The climate consensus has held
 - Commitment to particular policies has waxed and waned, but there is no real opposition to the Climate Change Act
- The UK's international standing has grown
 - *"If you talk about the Act on the international stage you get a round of applause"*
- The power sector has been transformed
 - The carbon intensity of power is down from $>500 \text{ gCO}_2/\text{kWh}$ to $<300 \text{ gCO}_2/\text{kWh}$



1 A better political debate on climate change



2 The climate consensus has held



3 International leadership, inspiring others to act



4 Share of low-carbon power up from 20-45% by 2016

Four areas where expectations have not been met

- The Climate Change Act on its own is not sufficiently investible
- There may be insufficient protection against backsliding
- There has been more adaptation planning than adaptation action
- Government buy-in is uneven across departments



David Cameron
September 2005

"Vote blue go green"



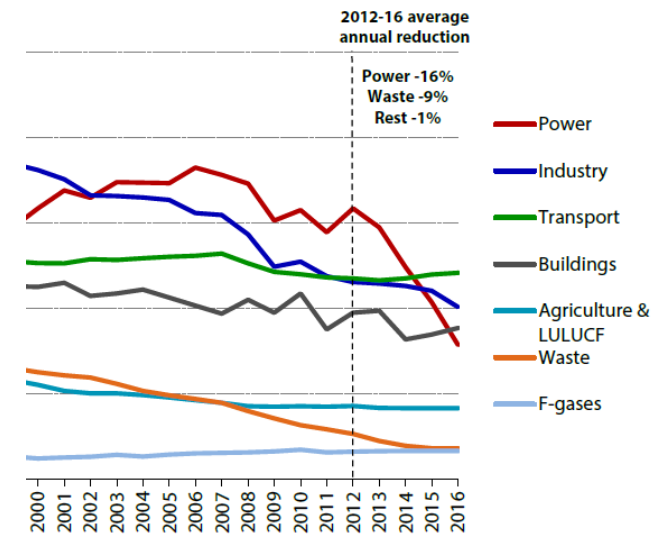
David Cameron
November 2013

"We've got to get rid of all the green crap"

Four areas where expectations have not been met

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Progress is concentrated on electric power



Source: *Progress Report 2017*,
Committee on Climate Change

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The Act remains an effective framework for climate action

But some adjustments to climate governance should be considered

- Compatibility with the Paris Agreement
 - The 2050 target is technically consistent with “well-below 2°C”, but by 2020 the UK will need a “net-zero” target
- Stronger safeguards against backsliding
 - Statutory timetable for carbon plans; financial independence of the CCC; clearer criteria for assessing compliance
- Implications of Brexit
 - Carbon accounting should be based on gross emissions, rather than emissions net of carbon trades under the EU ETS

But the main future challenges are political, rather than legal

The next ten years will be more difficult than the past ten

- Reinvigorating the climate consensus
 - A good framework law does not guarantee automatic policy delivery
 - climate action requires strong leadership and a political / societal consensus around carbon targets
- Closing the policy gap after the mid-2020s
 - The UK is not currently on track to meet its statutory carbon targets for the mid-2020s and early 2030s (4th and 5th carbon budgets)

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