



More in
Common



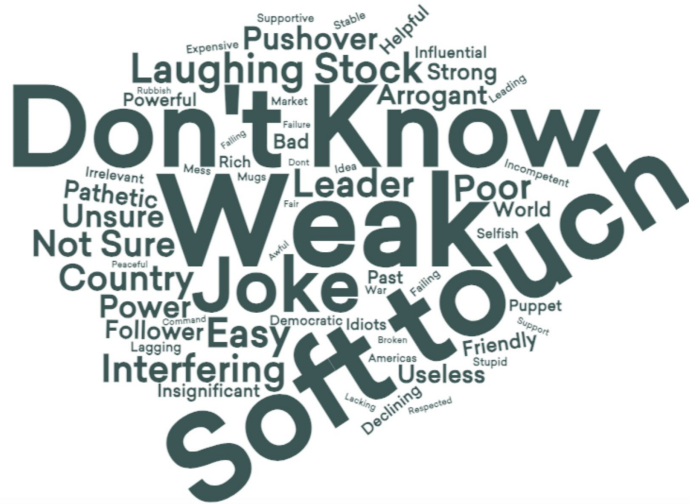
Britain Reconnected

Working together to spur global
action for climate and nature

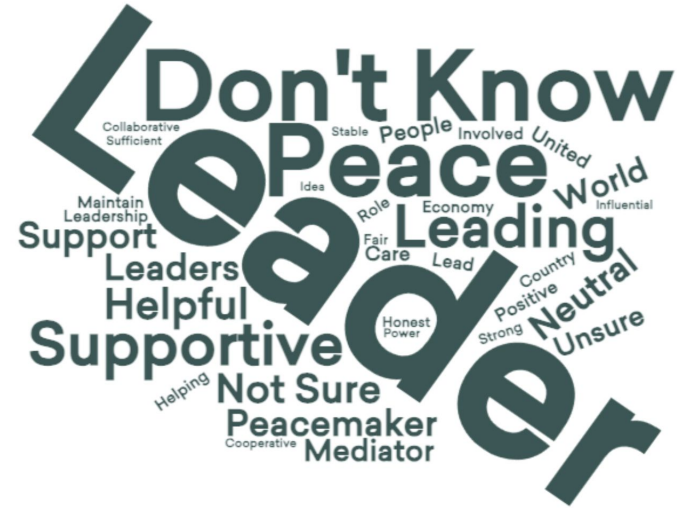
Labour Party Conference Fringe Event 2024

Public sense of malaise is not limited to domestic issues

How do you think the UK is seen by the rest of the world?



What do you think the UK's role in the world should be?

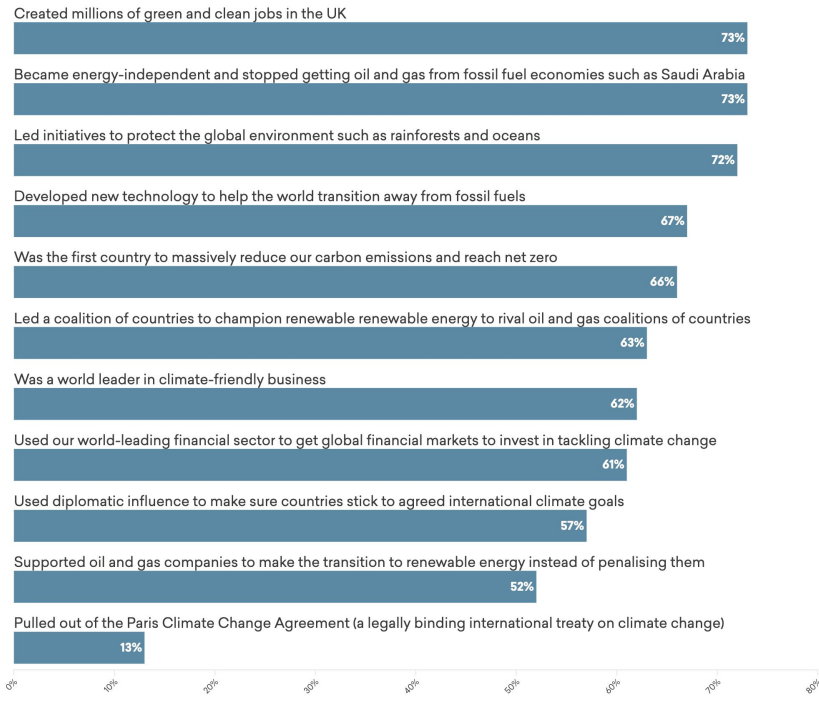


"I think there's been a shift of late. I don't think we've got much clout" - Graham, Probation Officer, Blyth

Climate foreign policy is an opportunity to restore pride in British leadership on the world stage

How proud or ashamed would you be if Britain...

% proud



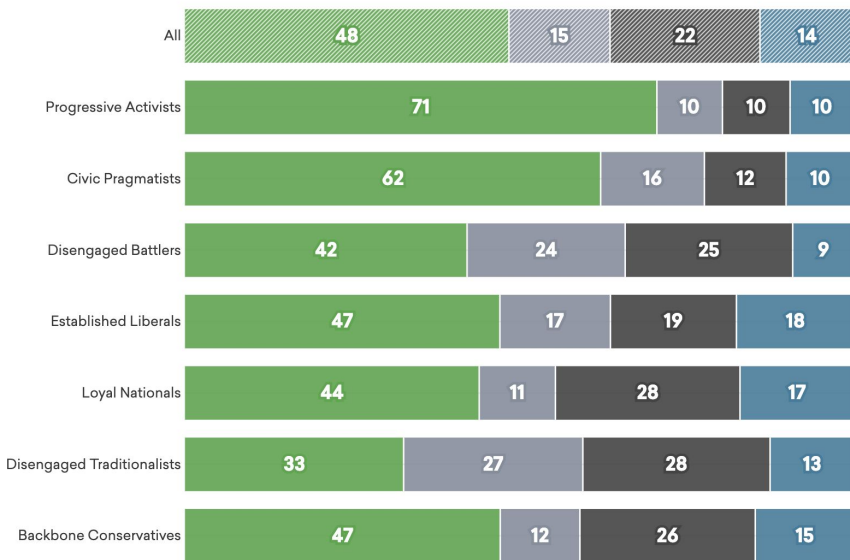
The parts of climate foreign policy that will most effectively restore the public's pride in Britain's place in the world are those which deliver tangible benefits at home and abroad

In focus groups and polling, energy security, job creation in clean industries and everyday benefits such as reduced energy bills resonate most

The public support a multilateral approach on climate

When it comes to the UK influencing international action on climate change, which of the following statements comes closest to your view?

- The UK will be more effective at getting countries around the world to act on climate change if we club together with other like-minded countries who are committed to tackling climate change.
- Don't know
- There will be no difference to how effective the UK will be at getting countries to act on climate change, whether we work with other countries or individually
- The UK will be more effective at getting countries around the world to act on climate change if we act as an individual country influencing other countries one-to-one.

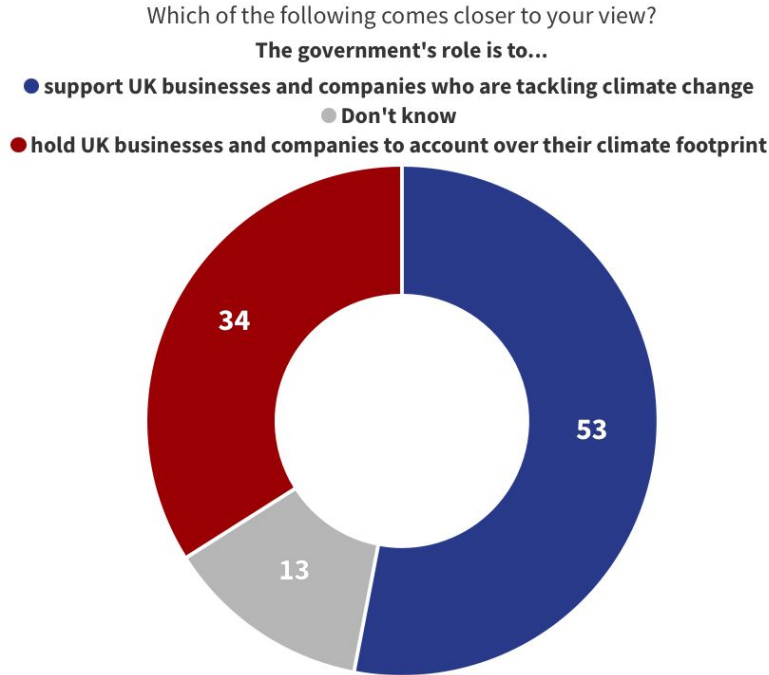


Many Britons see climate change as a global problem requiring a global response.

Without this, some question the point of Britain taking measures if others - especially those bigger economies and carbon footprints - are not doing their bit too.

The public lean towards working with other countries at the multilateral level, though among some segments - they think that the model of engagement is unlikely to make a difference or that bilateral engagement would be more effective. In focus groups, there is clear support for Britain working bilaterally with those countries we share historic ties.

Britons want government to work in partnership with business on climate and foreign policy



Britons see businesses and tech companies as 'climate problem solvers' - and a majority think it's the government's job to support businesses to tackle climate change, rather than hold businesses account for their historic climate footprint.

The public are much less interested in backward looking approaches punishing businesses for their historic environmental damage than they are in forward-looking ones focusing on how businesses can do their bit in the here and now.

However, for those continuing to pollute, two thirds of the public (67 per cent) think that those who contribute most to climate change globally should foot the bills and lead the efforts to deal with its impacts.

Most of the public see a mix of carrot and stick in the partnership with business to tackle climate change on the world stage

Focus should be on climate and nature foreign policy

We should protect [animals/nature/children/people] around the world from harmful climate impacts because the climate has no borders.

● Strongly agree ● Somewhat agree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Strongly disagree



The public prioritise a foreign policy approach which delivers first and foremost for animals and nature - the public see it as climate AND nature rather than either or. Put another way nature is one of the strongest ways into the debate about climate change.

Saving rainforests and protecting biodiversity resonates more with the British public than measures to benefit humans impacted by climate change.

Framing climate foreign policy through a nature lens can help build public support for doing more internationally on tackling climate change - including action that goes beyond protecting nature and animals.

I think nature and humans are interlinked. I think you can't see one without the other because if we're talking about climate change on nature and we're talking about you know deforestation and the climate warming up, that has a direct impact on us too. So I don't think you can separate the two really.

Jade, Bristol

The public see technology at the heart of climate solutions

The public want technology to be front and centre of Britain's approach to tackling climate change both at home and abroad.

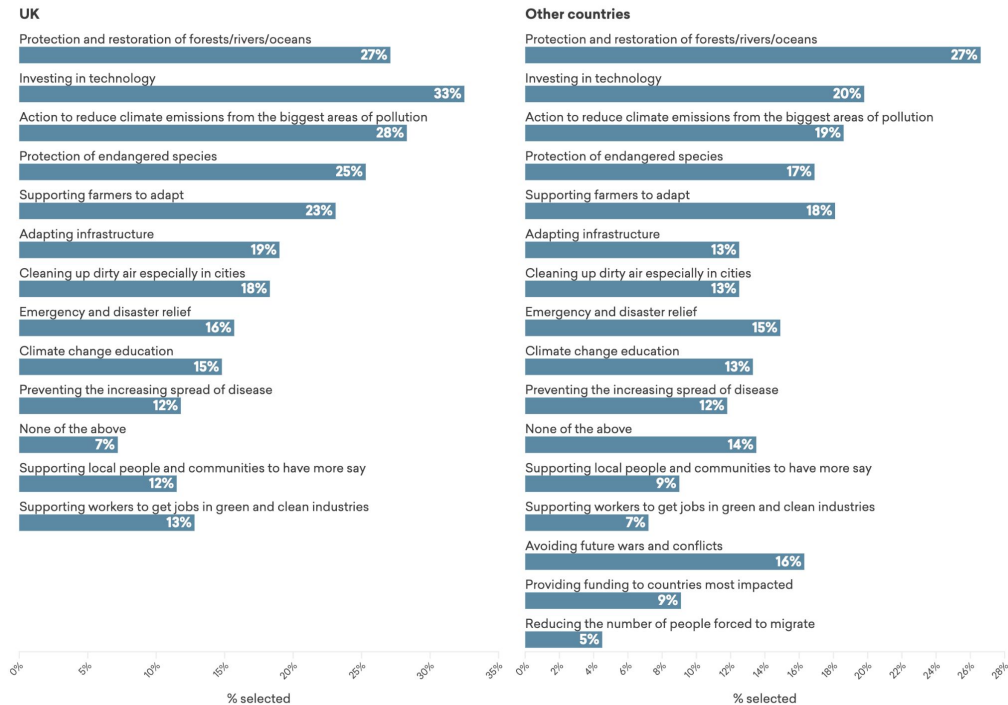
Focus group conversations reveal that the public don't view the use of technology in climate foreign policy from a traditional 'techno-optimist' perspective - a belief that technology alone will solve all our climate related problems - but from the perspective that investment in technology is a sound use of taxpayers money and will be necessary if Britain and the world is to transition to a more sustainable economy. However they want the UK to reap the benefits of that technology rather than foreign powers.

I like [overseas investment] not to go as money, but in terms of technology and building places around the world so that people can help themselves

Vishwar, Swindon

What should be the priorities for UK spending on climate change [within/outside] the UK ?

Select up to three.

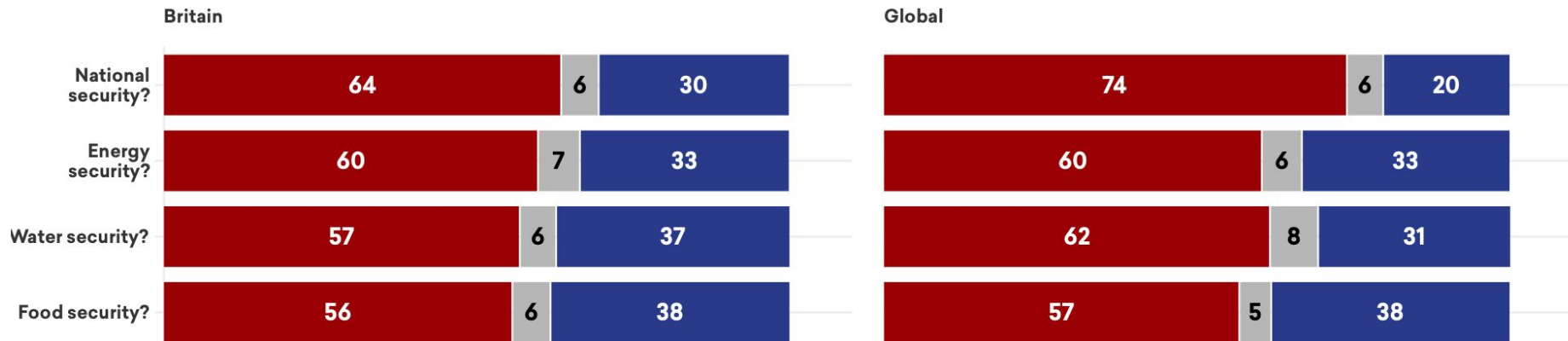


Climate is a security issue for many Britons

Britons increasingly think about climate change and its impacts as something which affects the safety and security of the country. The public take a broad view of what 'security' means in the national and global context - from the more traditional understanding of 'national security' to other security issues including energy, water, and food. The War in Ukraine has profoundly shifted Briton's attitudes to energy security with homegrown renewable energy now seen as the 'safe' option.

How worried are you, if at all, about threats to [Britain's/global] ...

● 'Quite' or 'Very' worried ● Don't know ● 'Not very' or 'not at all' worried

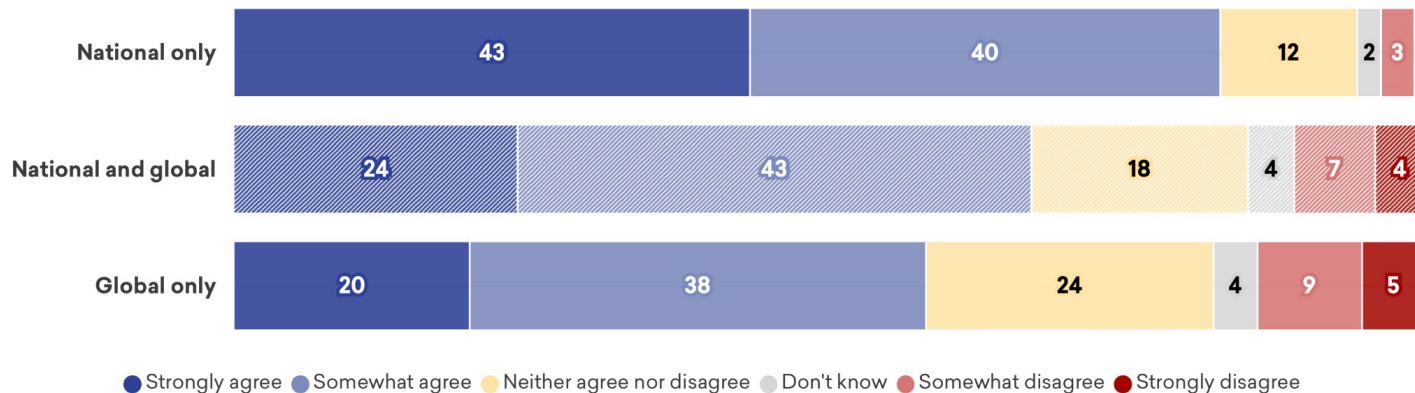


Britain's climate foreign policy needs to be grounded

While the public are more concerned about the impacts of climate change in Britain than other countries, there is an opportunity for climate foreign policy to resonate more with the public if it grounds global issues in national examples, rather than framing climate foreign policy as a global-only challenge.

Support for investing in flood defences in the UK/ in poor countries

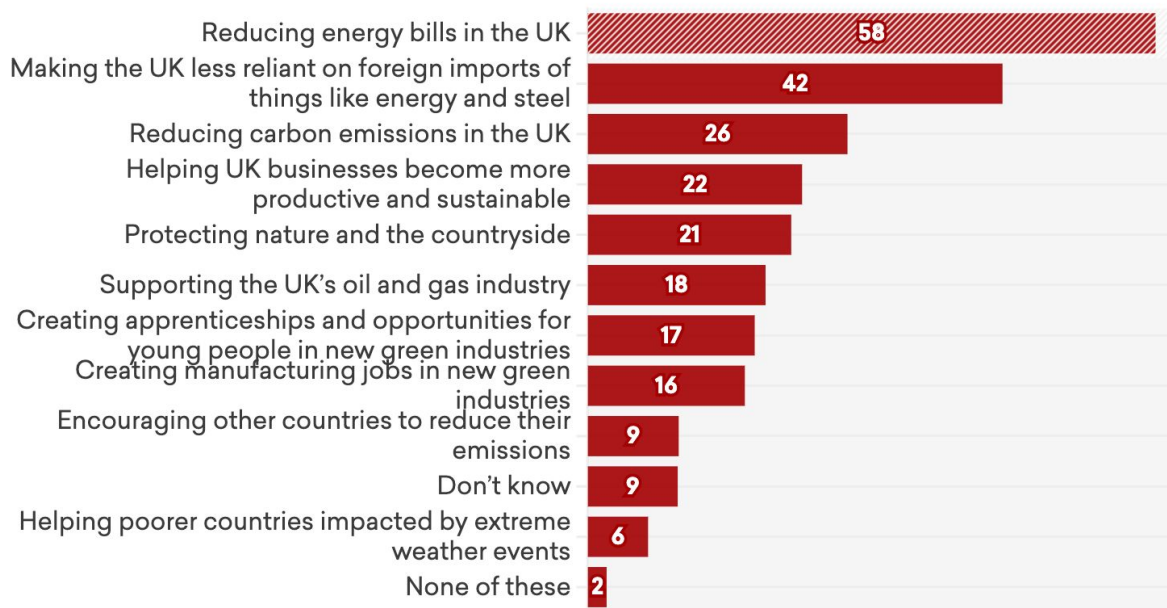
National and global message: In recent years parts of the UK, along with many countries around the world, have suffered flooding, and this is expected to get worse due to climate change. We can protect ourselves by investing in flood defences, and we should help people in poor countries facing severe flooding to do the same.



For example, mentioning flooding in the UK increases support for investment in flood defences internationally. Flooding feels close to home due to national salience of the issue - whereas for extreme heat, a significant challenge for some countries but not currently the UK, the UK example does not affect support.

The public's climate concerns are primarily domestic

Which of the following do you think should be the main job of the Minister for Energy Security and Net Zero? Select up to three.



However, support for international action can be increased with the win-win

While the public's concern on climate is primarily domestic, climate investment abroad is more likely to command broader public support if it has demonstrable benefits at home as well as abroad.

An example of how this can be done is delivering tangible benefits on energy. The public believe that renewable energy is both more secure and will lead to lower bills than 20 years ago.

Given the premium the public place on higher bills they more naturally support investment in the energy transition at home to investing to support the poorest countries - but a 'win-win' argument which talks about the benefits for both consumers in the UK and in poor countries around the world can boost public support for international investment.

Renewable energy is now the cheapest source of energy in the world. We should be producing more renewable energy...

UK only
...here at home to reduce energy costs for UK consumers



Win-win
... in the UK and in countries around the world to reduce energy costs for people here at home and in the poorest countries



Other countries only
...in the poorest countries to reduce energy costs for people in these countries



● Strongly agree ● Somewhat agree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Don't know ● Somewhat disagree ● Strongly disagree

Public's two key tests on climate and aid

Test 1: Reciprocity

What's in it both for Britain and the recipient?

Greater support for ODA can be commanded, particularly for those who are more sceptical, with an approach that focuses on what both the giver and receiver get out of the relationship. ODA needs to pass the reciprocity test: a more equal relationship where both parties have something to offer and something to gain.

If the shoe was on the other foot, we would expect some support from somewhere and if we're in the position to offer that support to those who may need it, I feel that we should - Sabrina, Bristol

Test 2: Self-sufficiency

Will this commitment help the recipient to be self-sufficient?

The public is weary of long-standing and open-ended spending commitments. It's for this reason that the public favours approaches to international aid which prioritise recipients increasing their self-sufficiency.

You give a person what is it money for him to say buy food or do you give him the tools like a fisherman, a fishing rod so he can catch fish and so he can be in a sustainable himself - Mohammed, Potters Bar

Test 3: Effectiveness and transparency

How is our overseas development assistance making a difference? How transparent is it?

The public want something to show for their investment in overseas development assistance. The more tangible the ODA proposition is (particularly around investment in technology), the more likely the public will think it can be effective. The public also have concerns about corruption and the misspending of aid that this can help address.

If we're talking along the lines of government sending money abroad, I guess, well you'd like to think that they are sure about where it's going and who they're sending it to and how it's being spent - Angela, Bristol



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