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## **Environmental talent key to economic growth: Ministers**

DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS News Release (News Release ref:124/08) issued by The Government News Network on 1 May 2008

Britain must remain at the forefront of the green industrial revolution, creating jobs and economic growth, ministers said today as they published plans to work with business to build a low carbon economy in Britain.

The Government has committed to working with business to make the UK one of the best places in the world to develop and introduce low carbon, resource efficient products and services, and has today published Building a Low Carbon Economy: Unlocking Environmental Innovation and Skills in response to the Commission on Environmental Markets and Economic Performance (CEMEP), which reported late last year.

The Government has identified four main prerequisites for building a low carbon economy:

- A clear, consistent long-term policy framework to provide business with the confidence to invest and to enable the timely development of innovative products and services;
- Policies that positively support innovation, to create the conditions that allow innovation to flourish;
- Developing the right skills by drawing on the talent and creativity of the British people;
- Fostering true partnerships between Government, business, trade unions, higher education bodies and others.

Environment Secretary Hilary Benn said:

"The UK has a history of moving early on green issues. For example, the Climate Change Bill currently before Parliament is the first of its kind in the world, and it will create certainty for businesses and investors in green industry for decades to come.

"The Government is committed to building a low carbon economy, here and around the world. That means a complete change in the way we live and an economic transformation that will put Britain at the forefront

of a technological revolution in the way we use and source our energy. It is the talent of our people that will bring about that revolution."

Business Secretary John Hutton said:

"By the end of the decade, global green industries will be worth as much as the global aerospace industry - in the order of £350 billion a year - and with the potential to create thousands of new green collar jobs in Britain. So there is a clear business case for maximising the opportunities presented by climate change and making sure that Britain unlocks these business opportunities.

"That's why next month we will hold, with the Royal Bank of Scotland, a low carbon economy summit to help identify what further action both government and business need to take. At the same time, we continue to work to ensure a secure, diverse and increasingly low-carbon energy mix for the UK."

Innovation, Universities and Skills Secretary John Denham said:

"By unlocking talent, upgrading skills and backing innovation wherever we can, we will be world leaders in this sector - creating thousands of new businesses, safeguarding millions of jobs, and exporting our knowledge and expertise around the world."

The Government has already:

- announced that it will revise its Manufacturing Strategy to include a low carbon element;
- arranged to host a Low Carbon Economy summit for business on 25 and 26 June;
- committed to launching a consultation on renewable energy, leading to the Renewable Energy Strategy;
- launched a carbon capture and storage (CCS) demonstration competition;
- established the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS), which sets a carbon price for around half of European and UK emissions;
- announced the Carbon Reduction Commitment, a cap and trade scheme covering around 4000 - 5000 large organisations not covered by the EU ETS such as supermarkets, government departments, and hotel chains;
- established the Carbon Trust Business Incubator Programme;
- agreed a timetable for all new homes to be zero carbon from 2016, and an ambition for all new non-domestic buildings to be zero carbon from 2019;
- launched the Low Carbon Vehicle Innovation Platform;
- established a network of advice and support for businesses to look at their environmental impacts;

- announced its decision to allow companies to come forward with proposals for new nuclear power stations.
- The City of London has become a global hub for carbon trading and the UK is also poised to become the world leader in installed capacity of offshore wind. We have a strong history of innovation and remain world leaders in scientific research.

CEMEP was established in November 2006 to examine what Britain needed to do to ensure we are in the best possible position to seize the new opportunities presented by the environmental sector, and how Government can support this. Chaired by two Cabinet ministers, the Commission's members were drawn from business, trade unions, NGOs and universities across a range of sectors.