

# PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING

Make polluters pay for climate action at home and abroad



June 2025

## Summary

Oil and gas giants have knowingly pushed us to the brink of climate breakdown while making staggering profits. Millions are paying the price for climate damage, both here and abroad.

And the public agrees. 85%<sup>1</sup> say those most responsible for pollution should shoulder the costs of addressing the harm it causes.

As global temperatures breach the critical threshold of 1.5°C warming, there are fears the Government may actually cut - rather than scale up - climate investment in the Comprehensive Spending Review.

In 2024 alone, just five oil and gas companies made over \$100 billion [£75bn] in profits<sup>2</sup>. Fair taxes on the UK's biggest and wealthiest polluters could raise over £20bn in a year, according to Oxfam<sup>3</sup>. At a time when public finances are under pressure, it is both fair and fiscally responsible to ensure that those driving the crisis help fund the solutions, at home and abroad.

**Please support our Make Polluters Pay Pledge, raise these issues with the Chancellor and in parliamentary debates, and support the EDM Climate Finance Fund (Fossil Fuels and Pollution) Bill to make polluters pay for climate action.**

## 1. Growing momentum behind making polluters pay

**Public opinion and civil society:** There is overwhelming public support for the polluter pays principle - 85% of those polled by YouGov in March agreed that those most responsible for pollution should shoulder the costs of addressing the harm it causes. This support is cross-party. Another poll in May 2025 found 7 in 10 Reform-leaning voters support higher taxes on oil and gas companies and other high-emitting businesses to fund climate action<sup>4</sup>.

Ahead of the Comprehensive Spending Review, over 80 charities and civil society groups wrote to the Prime Minister asking him to Make Polluters Pay for international climate funding<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> March 2025 YouGov poll for Friends of the Earth <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/latest/protection-lowincome-households-key-net-zero-support>

<sup>2</sup> <https://energy-profits.org>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/media/press-releases/fair-taxes-on-the-uks-biggest-polluters-could-have-raised-up-to-23bn-last-year-to-combat-the-climate-crisis/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://globalwitness.org/en/press-releases/reform-voters-among-majority-in-uk-that-want-higher-taxes-on-fossil-fuel-polluters/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/may/20/only-strong-action-on-emissions-can-restore-economic-stability-un-climate-chief-says>

**Political backing is growing:** 14 governments are exploring policy options through the Global Solidarity Levies Taskforce<sup>6</sup> led by France, Kenya, Barbados and backed by the IMF, World Bank, OECD, G20, European Commission, African Union and Coalition of Finance Ministers. In the USA, New York and Vermont states<sup>7</sup> have passed legislation to make polluters pay and other states are taking legal action. UN Secretary-General António Guterres champions the cause<sup>8</sup>.

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## 2. Urgent need for climate investment

**UK transition to boost living standards:** Climate breakdown is already hitting people in the UK - costing each household around £3,000 a year through rising food prices and insurance costs<sup>9</sup>. Our communities are increasingly battered by flooding, wildfires and other climate impacts.

Government investment to move the UK away from oil and gas dependency as well as protect communities from climate impacts is a huge opportunity to boost living standards. It means lower energy bills through clean, secure renewables. It means warmer homes, reliable public transport, and good-quality jobs across the country. But press reports suggest the Warm Homes budget could be cut<sup>10</sup> and flood protection commitments are under-spent.

**International climate funding for a safer Britain and world:** While high-income countries are responsible for the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions since pre-industrial times, there is no pathway to climate safety without supporting low income countries to transition from coal, oil and gas to renewable energy as they develop their economies and improve energy access.

The UK will not escape a surge in global instability and broken supply chains if developing countries are left to shoulder the costs of adapting to global warming and pay up to \$500 billion a year in climate-driven loss and damage by 2030<sup>11</sup>. Now is the time to increase, not cut, international climate finance. Yet the UK's aid budget, that holds the international climate funds, has been slashed.

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## 3. Make Polluters Pay Bill

**The Climate Finance Fund (Fossil Fuels and Pollution) Bill** proposes a package of new taxes on the oil and gas industry and other major polluters, measures to redirect subsidies away from fossil fuels

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<sup>6</sup> <https://solidaritylevies.org/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.pillsburylaw.com/en/news-and-insights/climate-superfund-new-york.html>

<sup>8</sup> UN chief: Tax profits for climate damage: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-62970887>

<sup>9</sup> <https://globalwitness.org/en/press-releases/uk-households-facing-3000-climate-damage-costs-this-year/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/27/dont-cut-132bn-warm-homes-pledge-over-winter-fuel-payments-labour-told>

<sup>11</sup> World Resources Institute <https://www.wri.org/insights/loss-damage-climate-change>

and towards climate action, new levies on luxury travel, including on private jets and super-yachts. It sets out how climate finance should be allocated - both domestically and internationally.

We're pleased Minister **Kerry McCarthy** has agreed to meet with Make Polluters Pay Coalition campaigners about the Bill tabled by Richard Burgon MP.

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#### 4. How you can support

- Add your name to the **Make Polluters Pay pledge** '*I pledge to call for the biggest polluters to pay their fair share towards the costs of climate damage - costs that my constituents, and frontline communities across the globe, are already paying*'.  
[office@makepolluterspay.co.uk](mailto:office@makepolluterspay.co.uk) [www.makepolluterspay.org](http://www.makepolluterspay.org)
  - Share a **photo on social media** with the 'Make Polluters Pay for climate damage' sign
  - Raise these issues at **Treasury questions** or with the Chancellor
  - Sign the **EDM** 'The Climate Finance Fund (Fossil Fuels and Pollution) Bill'
  - Ask the government to join the **Global Solidarity Levies Taskforce**
  - Organise or participate in a **parliamentary debate** on making polluters pay
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#### 5. How we can support you

- More **detailed briefings** including how different policy proposals to make polluters pay can raise different amounts for climate action
  - Draft **parliamentary questions**
  - **Speaking points** for debates
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Make Polluters Pay is a national and global campaign. In the UK the Coalition includes:



For more info please contact [office@makepolluterspay.co.uk](mailto:office@makepolluterspay.co.uk) [www.makepolluterspay.org](http://www.makepolluterspay.org)