# Kemi Badenoch's speech signals potential shift away from Net Zero commitment



In a significant move likely to reshape the UK's environmental policy landscape, Kemi Badenoch, the leader of the Conservative Party, is expected to announce the potential abandonment of the legal commitment to achieve Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Delivering a keynote speech at the Centre for Policy Studies conference at Guildhall in London, she plans to articulate her views that achieving this ambitious target is 'impossible' without inflicting severe economic damage or compromising living standards.

Badenoch, who has been vocal in distinguishing her party's position from that of the opposition Labour Party, will criticise Labour’s Energy Secretary, Ed Miliband, for what she describes as an excessive focus on 'lofty rhetoric' rather than practical solutions. Her comments reflect a clear strategic intent to create a delineation between Conservative policies and Labour’s approach to climate change.

The UK became the first major economy to legislate a commitment to Net Zero emissions in 2019, a target involving a comprehensive balancing of greenhouse gas emissions through various offsetting initiatives. Badenoch argues that this goal, encompassing a multi-trillion-pound initiative over 30 years, was determined hastily—“decided in 90 minutes without a single vote”—and lacks a detailed plan for realisation.

In her speech, she intends to confront the Conservative Party's past decisions, suggesting that the party’s previous leadership, including Boris Johnson and Theresa May, did not fully consider the implications of such a commitment. She is likely to express that the current strategies lead to 'too high costs and too little progress' in addressing climate change, stating that this leads to a loss of public trust in politicians.

Badenoch is expected to assert the need for politicians to provide 'unvarnished truths' about the challenges of meeting climate targets, noting that many who analyse the situation seriously recognise the barriers to achieving Net Zero without significant sacrifices.

The party leader will also commence the Conservative Party's 'policy renewal process', aimed at constructing a comprehensive programme for government. She will emphasise that the party must develop credible plans aligned with core conservative values including personal responsibility and sound economic practices.

Amidst this expected pivot in policy, discussions to potentially abandon the Net Zero target will undoubtedly stir debate and dissent within her party. The Conservative Environment Network, which has been an advocate for maintaining the Net Zero target, voiced its disapproval of Badenoch’s premature decision on the policy review. Its director, Sam Hall, cautioned that such a move could undermine the heritage of previous Conservative efforts in climate policy and stressed the importance of crafting a realistic approach that bolsters both environmental integrity and economic growth.

Moreover, anti-government activists have already voiced their opposition, with demonstrators interrupting Badenoch's speech to advance claims that Conservative policies have exacerbated the climate crisis and socio-economic inequality. As discussions on revamping party and environmental policy continue, the direction taken by Badenoch and her colleagues is likely to influence both public perception and future electoral strategies for the Conservative Party.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://news.sky.com/story/kemi-badenoch-says-uk-target-to-reach-net-zero-by-2050-impossible-13331102> - This article supports Kemi Badenoch's stance that achieving Net Zero by 2050 is 'impossible' without significant economic sacrifices, and it highlights her criticism of Labour's climate policies.
* <https://www.islandfm.com/news/science-and-tech/kemi-badenoch-says-uk-target-to-reach-net-zero-by-2050-impossible/> - This source corroborates Badenoch's announcement about the impossibility of reaching Net Zero by 2050 and her plans to articulate this view in a speech.
* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2025/03/17/badenoch-reaching-net-zero-target-by-2050-is-impossible/> - This article provides details on Badenoch's speech and her assertion that the Net Zero target is unachievable, aligning with her broader policy renewal strategy.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-becomes-first-major-economy-to-pass-net-zero-emissions-law> - This source explains the UK's legal commitment to Net Zero emissions by 2050, which was set in 2019, providing context for Badenoch's comments.
* <https://www.conservativeenvironmentnetwork.org/> - The Conservative Environment Network's website can provide insight into their stance on maintaining the Net Zero target, contrasting with Badenoch's views.