# Sir Tony Blair calls for a reset of net zero strategies amid growing public scepticism



Sir Tony Blair has urged a significant reassessment of current net zero policies, stating that strategies focused on limiting energy consumption and fossil fuel production are "doomed to fail." The former Labour prime minister, in a report published by The Tony Blair Institute, argues that voters are reluctant to accept financial sacrifices and lifestyle changes when they perceive their impact on global emissions as minimal. While he does not suggest Labour abandon its commitment to decarbonising the UK economy, he emphasises the need for all governments to reconsider their approaches to climate action.

The report, titled "The Climate Paradox: Why We Need to Reset Action on Climate Change," critiques global institutions such as COP and the UN for insufficient progress in combating climate change. It highlights a growing public disillusionment with climate policies, attributed partly to a failure in delivering promised green jobs and economic growth amidst global instability and the Covid-19 pandemic. Sir Tony writes in the foreword, "Though most people will accept that climate change is a reality caused by human activity, they're turning away from the politics of the issue because they believe the proposed solutions are not founded on good policy." He further cautions against the "alarmist" rhetoric surrounding climate debates, describing it as "riven with irrationality."

The report calls for an accelerated deployment of carbon capture and storage technology, enhanced use of artificial intelligence to optimise energy grids, and investment in small-scale nuclear reactors. It also advocates for increased attention to climate change mitigation measures like flood defences and a renewed international effort to engage China and India in cutting emissions.

Government officials have responded by affirming their commitment to net zero targets. A Downing Street spokesperson reiterated that the UK will achieve net zero in a way that "treads lightly on people's lives, not telling them how to live or behave." The spokesperson described net zero as "the economic opportunity of the 21st century," suggesting it has the potential to "reignite our industrial heartlands, create good jobs for the future and lower bills in the long term." The government highlighted that its net zero strategy has attracted £43 billion of private investment since the previous July and that climate policies currently support around 600,000 jobs across the UK.

Within Labour, sources have dismissed claims that leader Sir Keir Starmer is retreating from the net zero agenda, citing a recent speech where he affirmed that the clean energy mission is "in the DNA of my government." Energy Secretary Ed Miliband welcomed parts of Sir Tony’s report, particularly those advocating for carbon capture and AI, acknowledging that the government is active in these areas. However, the report has been leveraged by opposition parties. Reform UK leader Nigel Farage took to social media, stating, "Even Tony Blair now says the push for Net Zero has become 'irrational' and 'hysterical'. We are winning the argument!" Conservative acting shadow energy secretary Andrew Bowie called for an urgent policy reversal, asserting, "It seems even Tony Blair has come to the realisation that Keir Starmer and the Labour Party's mad dash to net zero by 2050 is simply not feasible, or sustainable."

The Green Party, represented by co-leader Adrian Ramsay, countered that Sir Tony’s stance was flawed both morally and pragmatically, asserting public support for decisive climate action and leadership from politicians. Among Labour-aligned environmental groups, there was surprise and disapproval at the timing of Sir Tony’s intervention. One campaigner described it as "an oddly public and oddly-timed intervention" more typical of individuals seeking political access. They emphasised that the Labour government is advancing many policies similar to those in the report, recognising their popularity within key voter coalitions ahead of the next election. The campaigner also warned that adopting anti-net-zero positions popularised by some Conservative figures and Reform UK would be out of step with public opinion.

At the time of reporting, the Liberal Democrats have been contacted for comment but had not responded.

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

## References

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* <https://www.ft.com/content/a1b29671-3938-4e40-a617-522e6f26cef1> - This piece examines the UK's political landscape concerning net-zero emissions, highlighting the challenges and debates surrounding the implementation of climate policies.
* <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/tony-blair-paper-warns-against-net-zero-dogma/> - This article reviews a report by the Tony Blair Foundation, which critiques the UK's current net-zero strategy and warns against a dogmatic approach to achieving emissions targets.
* <https://blogs.bath.ac.uk/edswahs/2024/05/24/tony-blair-and-net-zero/> - This blog post discusses Tony Blair's perspective on the UK's net-zero strategy, highlighting concerns about the feasibility and effectiveness of current policies.
* <https://www.theunfiltered.co.uk/reimagining-the-uks-net-zero-strategy/> - This article presents an overview of the Tony Blair Institute's report on reimagining the UK's net-zero strategy, emphasizing the need for a transformative approach to climate policy.
* <https://moneyweek.com/investments/energy/the-backlash-against-net-zero-begins> - This article discusses the emerging backlash against net-zero policies, referencing Tony Blair's critique of the UK's approach to achieving emissions targets.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cpvrwyp0jx3o> - Please view link - unable to able to access data