



## Climate change: serious risks, serious opportunities

British Science Week is a celebration of the best of British science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The Royal Meteorological Society wishes to join this celebration and highlight the opportunities for science-led innovation to drive forward our response to the climate change challenge.

The theme for this year's British Science Week is "Change", encouraging young people to think about and investigate the changes happening in the world all around us; from seasons and climate to materials and energy. It is also a chance for young people to consider the changes they can make to have a positive impact on our planet.

Scientific evidence has led to the firm conclusion that the climate is changing and that the activities of people are largely responsible for this change through emissions of greenhouse gases. Governments around the world have now committed as part of the Paris Agreement to limit future temperature increase. Signatory nations have agreed to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero in the second half of this century.

The impacts of climate change threaten food and water supply, people's health, security and economic activity, as well as wildlife and the natural world. The risks increase disproportionately as the temperature increases.

Responding to the challenge will require deploying the full breadth of human talent and invention, drawing on science, technology, engineering and mathematics. This will require a sustained commitment to entrepreneurship, research and development, as well as to education and public engagement.

While the threats posed by climate change are far-reaching, the ways in which we tackle them can be a source of great opportunity and could improve the quality of people's lives in many different ways. For example, there exists vast potential for innovation in clean technologies. Capturing this potential quickly and effectively will create new trading relationships and new jobs. Other interventions could have the added benefit of reducing illness caused by poor air quality.

Governments, individuals, businesses, local communities and public institutions all need to play a part if we are to tackle this global challenge and deliver the agreed cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. British Science Week is an excellent opportunity to explore just how the problem-solving capacities of science, engineering, and technology can help us meet the challenges and opportunities ahead of us in responding to climate change.

### Notes:

The Ladybird Expert guide to climate change, peer-reviewed by the Royal Meteorological Society, provides an overview of the key scientific facts central to climate change. It explains the history, dangers and challenges of global warming and explores possible solutions to limit future changes to the climate.