

SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

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SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP ANNOUNCES MAJOR PUBLIC PROGRAMME ON CLIMATE CHANGE AS GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES UK YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION

- Prime Minister launches the UK Year of Climate Action at Science Museum, joined by Sir David Attenborough
- Science Museum Group announces climate as the theme for Manchester Science Festival in October 2020
- A free exhibition about carbon capture to open in November 2020 at the Science Museum.



Sir David Attenborough, Sir Ian Blatchford, and CEO of the Woodland Trust Darren Moorcroft plant trees with school children at the Science Museum to mark the Science Museum Group's climate-focused public programme as part of the UK Year of Climate Action © Science Museum Group

The Science Museum Group today announced a major public programme focused on climate and solutions to the urgent challenges facing the world, in support of the UK Year of Climate Action which was launched by the Prime Minister at the Science Museum this morning, where guests included Sir David Attenborough and the Italian Prime Minister, Giuseppe Conte.

Sir Ian Blatchford, Director and Chief Executive of the Science Museum Group, revealed that climate will be the theme for this year's Manchester Science Festival in October, while the Science Museum will present the UK's first significant exhibition on carbon capture and storage to explore solutions for greenhouse gas removal from the atmosphere. Both projects will open to coincide with COP26, the 26th United Nations Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow in November 2020, when world leaders and 30,000 delegates will convene to develop an international response to the climate emergency.

The Prime Minister and Sir David Attenborough joined school children taking part in climate workshops at the Science Museum to mark the launch of the Year of Climate Action, a Cabinet Office COP26 initiative which aims to increase awareness of and support for changes needed to reach the UK's net zero emissions target by 2050.

Sir Ian Blatchford said: 'It is a privilege to host the Prime Minister and Sir David for the Government's launch of the UK Year of Climate Action. There is no more pressing issue facing the world, and the five museums in the Science Museum Group are uniquely placed to engage a huge audience around the science of climate change, and the technological challenges and solutions around the crucial energy and food transitions we need to achieve. Our visitors are the engaged citizens and scientists of now and tomorrow.'

A decade after the Science Museum opened its climate science gallery Atmosphere, which has now been visited by more than 5 million people, Sir Ian also revealed how exploring solutions to the challenges posed by a warming world will be a central theme in the next decade of transformation of the museum.

The Prime Minister Boris Johnson said: 'Let's make this year the moment where we come together with the courage and the technological ambition to solve man-made climate change and to choose a cleaner and greener future for all our children and grandchildren.'

Sir David Attenborough, broadcaster and natural historian, said: 'The moment of climate crisis is with us and our planet needs us all to act now. The UN's 26th Climate Change Conference in Glasgow is a critically important opportunity for governments to act decisively – we know what has to be done to cut carbon emissions, and we can't afford to put off a decision again because each delay makes it so much harder to avert more damaging climate change. It is also important that we all do our bit. That is why I welcome the Prime Minister's announcement of the UK Year of Climate Action and I hope it will galvanise real change. I also look forward to seeing how the Manchester Science Festival and the Science Museum's exhibition about carbon capture spark discussion about how to protect our fragile planet.'

Complementing the Science Museum Group's public programme on climate, the Science Museum will host a series of conferences exploring the theory and practice of sustainable curating in the museum and heritage sectors, the first taking place in spring 2020.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

For further information or to arrange interviews please contact Naomi Burgoyne (Naomi.Burgoyne@sciencemuseum.ac.uk) or Amrita Pal (Amrita.Pal@sciencemuseum.ac.uk / 020 7942 4096). Images are available to download via: <https://we.tl/t-thu8UJhrPR>

Manchester Science Festival

Manchester Science Festival, produced by the Science and Industry Museum from 23 October – 1 November 2020, will be dedicated to the theme of climate and how we should respond through three lenses: our cities; our natural world; and ourselves. As the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, Manchester was the catalyst for scientific innovation and unprecedented change worldwide. Now, with Greater Manchester's vision of becoming carbon-neutral by 2038, the city is primed to influence future progress. From art commissions to immersive and participatory experiences, outdoor events to live debates, Manchester Science Festival will inform, engage and ignite curiosity about climate change, the defining issue of the modern age. More information at: <https://bit.ly/2v3L8K1>

Carbon capture exhibition, Science Museum

The Science Museum will open a new free exhibition about carbon capture (6 November 2020 – October 2021). The first significant UK exhibition to be presented on the subject of carbon capture and storage, it will explore the latest techniques being developed for removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to mitigate climate change. Visitors will explore a range of approaches to removing carbon: from nature-based solutions such as the protection of ancient forests and preserving our peat bogs or planting native trees, to chemical and mechanical processes – many of which are not yet proven at scale – that might help to further reduce carbon in the atmosphere. More information at: <http://bit.ly/2t7qQig>

The Science Museum Group and sustainability

The Science Museum Group (SMG) has been a leader in raising climate awareness through its public programme while the Group's approach to sustainability has transformed its working practices and collections care. Highlights from the past decade include:

- Since 2011/12, SMG has cut energy usage by 25% and carbon emissions by 69%, despite increasing floor area by 24% as a result of mergers and Masterplan developments;
- The [National Collections Centre](#) site at Wroughton hosts a solar farm business that generates almost four times the total amount of energy used by the whole of SMG;
- The [Atmosphere gallery](#) exploring the science of climate change, which opened in 2010, has been seen by more than 5 million people;
- In 2019, the Science Museum Group [announced fresh commitments](#) to biodiversity including planting at least 1,000 trees a year on its own land throughout this decade;
- In 2005, the Science Museum became the first national museum to install solar panels on its roof;
- Climate change has been a recurrent theme in SMG's public programme, with exhibitions including: [Unlocking Lovelock](#); [The Rubbish Collection](#), an art installation made of waste; Luke Jerram's spectacular artwork *Gaia*, as part of the National Science and Media Museum's [Hello Universe](#) exhibition; and the Lovelock Art Commissions for Manchester Science Festival: [The Sounds of Others: A Biophonic Line](#) with artist Marcus Coates and Cape Farewell (2014); [Evaporation](#) with artist Tania Kovats and Cape Farewell (2015) and [Cloud Crash](#) with Nerc / Cape Farewell and artists HeHe (2016/17).

For more information about Sustainability and the Science Museum Group:

<https://www.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/category/sustainability/>

About the Science Museum Group

The Science Museum Group is the world's leading group of science museums, welcoming over five million visitors each year to five sites: the Science Museum in London; the National Railway Museum in York; the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester; the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford; and Locomotion in Shildon. We share the stories of innovations and people that shaped our world and are transforming the future, constantly reinterpreting our astonishingly diverse collection of 7.3 million items spanning science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine. Standout objects include the record-breaking locomotive Flying Scotsman, Richard Arkwright's textile machinery, Alan Turing's Pilot ACE computer and the earliest surviving recording of British television. Our mission is to inspire futures - igniting curiosity among people of all ages and backgrounds. Each year, our museums attract more than 600,000 visits by education groups, while our touring exhibition programme brings our creativity and scholarship to audiences across the globe. More information can be found at group.sciencemuseum.org.uk.

About the UK Year of Climate Action

The Government has launched a Year of Climate Action to inspire positive action and engagement on climate change across the UK in the run up to the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26).

The Year of Climate Action is working across government, and with businesses, organisations, civil society groups, creative and cultural institutions and young people to encourage action to tackle climate change. This work will include building partnerships, organising events and activities that will have a positive impact on climate change.

This is a critical year for the future of our planet. We have an opportunity to make changes to stop the activities which are polluting our land, water and skies; impacting people's lives, and making parts of our planet uninhabitable.

By working together, we have an opportunity to build a cleaner, greener, brighter future for our children, grandchildren, wildlife and our planet.