**IOM Climate & Migration Event:** Anne-Marie Trevelyan (UK COP26 International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience).

Hello everyone.

I am delighted to be speaking to you all today; and am incredibly grateful to be part of this panel.

We all know that this is an absolutely vital year for climate action and today is a chance to discuss some of the key and complex dimensions of migration, climate and environmental change. Today is an opportunity to hear the challenges faced by countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

We know that the impact of Covid-19 has made action more difficult, but we now have an opportunity to build back better, support communities to adapt and develop resilience, whilst protecting our climate and environment.

I wear two hats in the UK Government - as Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth, and as the UK International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience for the COP26 Presidency.

With each day I’ve understood more how urgent the need for action to respond to climate risks really is.

Natural disasters caused over 150 billion dollars in losses in 2019 and displaced nearly 25 million people.

In 2020, over 50 million people worldwide were affected by floods, droughts and storms and in extreme cases forced to move.

According to the World Bank, without action there could be 143 million internal migrants permanently displaced by climate change related phenomena by 2050.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Existing evidence shows that climate extremes and environmental degradation are often amplifiers of other migration drivers. The UK recognises the existential threat felt by some communities and that climate change will increasingly become a significant factor in driving people’s decision to move.

We must therefore learn from those who are on the frontline and who have the most experience of tackling climate change.

I also want to emphasise the importance of giving recognition to the essential leadership and efforts of women and girls in adapting to the impacts of climate change. Despite this, they are disproportionately affected by consequences of climate-related displacement.

We must listen to these voices and ensure their needs are reflected in our discussions. Donors need to do more to support the adaptation agenda, and to scale action which averts, minimises and addresses loss and damage.

**Pause**

We urgently need to better understand the complex links between migration, climate change and environmental degradation to inform our policy and action.

The UK has commissioned an assessment of existing evidence of how climate change impacts migration to support this dialogue, especially as we head towards COP 26.

The UK is also supporting countries with adaptation and resilience planning through major international climate funds like the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and programme funding. [[2]](#footnote-2)

We are fulfilling our pledge to attain the goals of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction through our contributions to the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership. Through this, the UK is leading the way in scaling up early-warning systems to make 1 billion people safer from disaster by 2025.

We have also supported the efforts for the establishment of a High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, which will look at climate change a compounding factor contributing to internal displacement. The High-Level Panel will submit a report to the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) in September with recommendations on how to resolve and prevent further displacement, including through adaption.

We believe a successful COP 26 will complement international processes around the movement of people, and in particular the aims of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).

The UK continues to actively work towards implementation of the GCM and has committed £3m to the UN Migration trust fund. We also look forward to participating in the International Migration Review Forum next year. The GCM provides support to our more focused work on climate change and environmental de­gradation.

The UK will continue to put the needs of climate vulnerable countries front and centre in international discussions, carrying the priorities we heard clearly at the climate and Development Ministerial through to the G7, COP26 and beyond.

One of our specific priorities for COP26 will be to increase action on adaptation and to avert, minimise and address loss and damage.  We will use our Presidency to encourage greater commitment to and support for practical action, helping those  
communities most at risk to deal with the impact of climate change.

*Thank you.*

1. UN groundswell report 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. We also fund Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) and Global Environmental Facility (GEF) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)