

# Carbon neutrality will cost the UK tens of billions per year. Can we save the world?

*Every week, Maddyness looks at the good, the bad and the ugly in climate change news. Today, we mull over Boris Johnson's ten point climate action plan and spotlight battery recycling, smallholder bee farming, and green space creation further afield.*

Temps de lecture : minute

---

25 November 2020

Perhaps the most important environmental news piece for us in the UK this week was Prime Minister's Boris Johnson's announcement in the *Financial Times*. 'Now is the time to plan our green recovery', wrote Johnson, asking readers to 'imagine Britain when a Green Industrial Revolution has helped to level up the country'. I must admit - that sounds a lot nicer than the arid +5°C hellscape that I often find myself imagining.

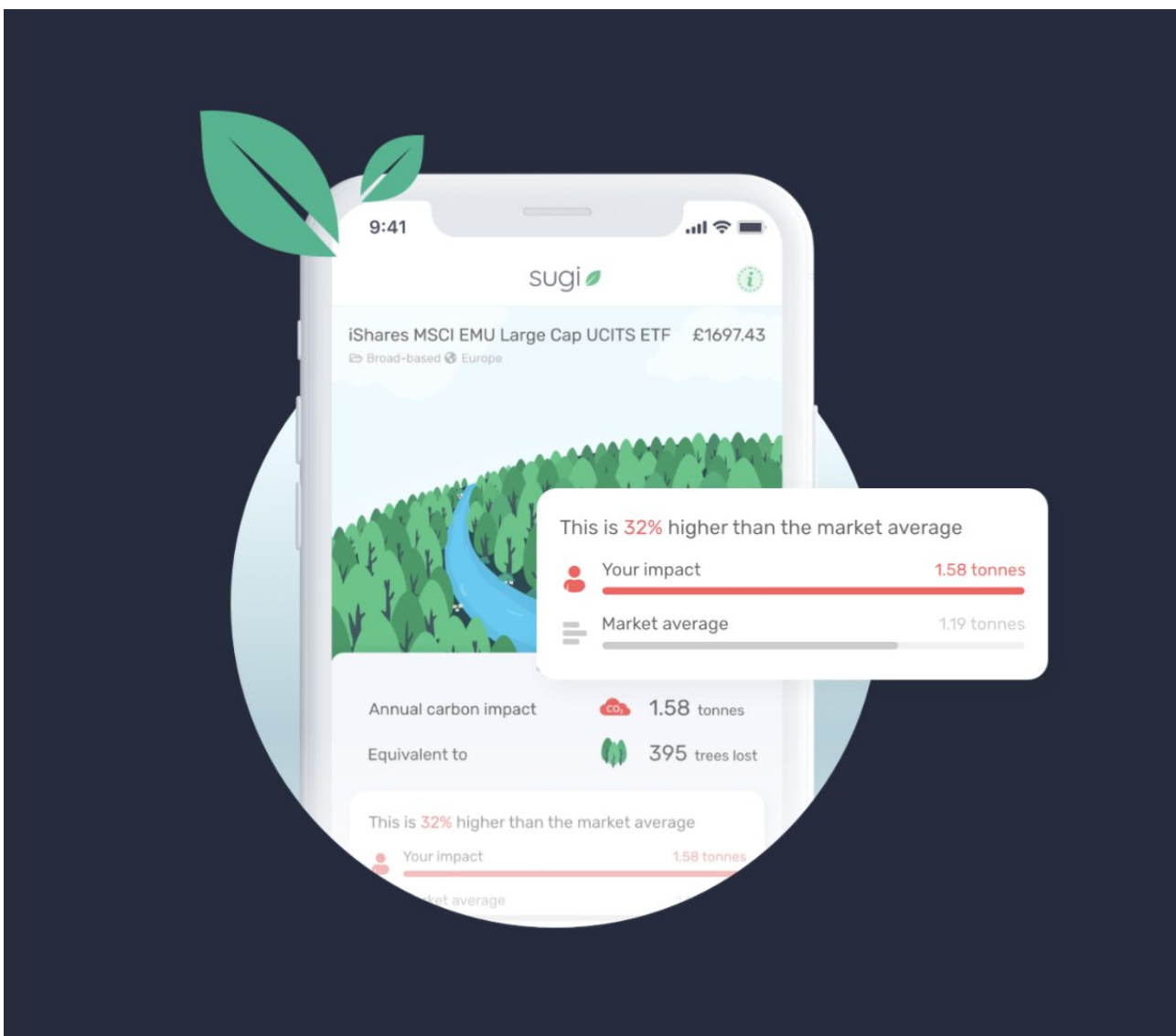
How will we get to this post-Green Industrial Revolution world? This time, it's all about cutting back on the dark satanic mills. Johnson has promised £12B of government investment, and up to three times as much from the private sector, plus the creation of 250K green jobs. He's promised to green transport (public and otherwise), enough offshore wind capacity to power the UK's homes within this decade, and a big levelling up of hydrogen, nuclear and carbon capture.

It's a good start, and sees the UK sending a firm signal to the rest of the world in the right direction but *The Economist*, quite rightly I think, bemoans its 'bold ambition and modest detail'. And in fact, though £12B sounds pretty bold, estimates suggest at least 2% of GDP per year will be

needed in the global climate fight. Hence, a formidable group including Greenpeace and the WWF last year called on the government to allocate at least £42B public spending per year (5% of government spending/ 2% of GDP).

## The big ideas

On Monday, *Maddyness* published this article on the extent to which the plans outlined above stack up - highlighting just how key private sector investment will be in plugging the multibillion investment gap - and this one on the new app that helps its users understand the carbon impact of their investments and build a greener portfolio.



Beyond this, have a look at the ideas and innovations from across the spectrum of politics, social justice and big business that caught my eye this week:

- Extensive logging and climate change are drying up the waterways feeding into the Panama Canal. Finca Cuango is a former cattle farm that is now home to a regenerative agriculture project, following €15M in investment from 12Tree.
- Is the 2010 Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which aims to ensure financial protection and stability, Biden's key to tackling climate change?
- Casa Pueblo is a nonprofit that, since 1991, has installed close to 1,000 solar panels on homes and businesses throughout Adjuntas in Puerto Rico.
- Teslas may soon be significantly easier to repair, thanks to a 'right-to-repair' law that just gained approval in Massachusetts.
- Gamuda Parks, an initiative by Malaysian township developer Gamuda Land, has so far created 1,500 acres of parkland. Gamuda Land itself has outlined three guiding principles that form the backbone of their sustainable townships as 'green innovation' 'sustainable development' and 'sustainable community'.
- Following its commitment to becoming a net zero carbon business by 2038 (12 years ahead of the aviation industry target), Manchester Airports Group has announced a prize for the first airline to run a zero-emission commercial flight from one of its airports.
- China's City Waste Battery Recycle and Reuse Project uses tech to integrate dry cell recycling networks, and has partnered with battery and vehicle manufacturers to facilitate proper recycling of batteries.
- Fourth Line is an agribusiness managing product distribution for smallholder bee farmers in Zambia. Its low cost beehive is made from unwanted wood offcuts. It has just been chosen as a finalist in the Space-Tech Challenge.



- The ValuSect (valuable insect) consortium, by Interreg NWE, will launch a voucher call on 1 December to support SMEs in accelerating the development of insect-based foods in Europe, providing overall funding worth €800K. “Sustainable alternatives for resources for food are needed”, it says.
- Check out these 30+ highlights of fashion’s shift towards sustainability for the month of October, including Tommy Hilfiger’s new circular initiative, Miomojo cactus leather and Burberry’s partnership with IBM in pursuit of a garment traceability prototype.

Further reading

If you’re still reading, here’s even more reading:

- Can you ever be rich and green? via the *Financial Times*.
- ‘We’ll be left behind’: Australia’s electric car inertia is getting it nowhere, via *The Guardian*

- [Why we should be funding more Solyndras, via \*MIT Technology Review\*](#)
- 

Article by Florence Wildblood