

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
OFFICIAL REPORT

Sixth Delegated Legislation Committee

DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE (TARGETED  
GREENHOUSE GASES) ORDER 2022

*Wednesday 11 January 2023*

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**The Committee consisted of the following Members:**

*Chair:* PHILIP DAVIES

Evennett, Sir David (*Bexleyheath and Crayford*)  
(Con)

Farris, Laura (*Newbury*) (Con)

† Foster, Kevin (*Torbay*) (Con)

† Gibson, Patricia (*North Ayrshire and Arran*) (SNP)

† Hardy, Emma (*Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle*) (Lab)

† Hillier, Dame Meg (*Hackney South and Shoreditch*)  
(Lab/Co-op)

† Hollinrake, Kevin (*Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy*)

† Lavery, Ian (*Wansbeck*) (Lab)

Mahmood, Mr Khalid (*Birmingham, Perry Barr*)  
(Lab)

† Milling, Amanda (*Cannock Chase*) (Con)

† Morden, Jessica (*Newport East*) (Lab)

† Morrissey, Joy (*Beaconsfield*) (Con)

† Mullan, Dr Kieran (*Crewe and Nantwich*) (Con)

† Smith, Chloe (*Norwich North*) (Con)

† Stevenson, Jane (*Wolverhampton North East*) (Con)

† Villiers, Theresa (*Chipping Barnet*) (Con)

† Whitehead, Dr Alan (*Southampton, Test*) (Lab)

Guy Mathers, William Opposs, *Committee Clerks*

† **attended the Committee**

# Sixth Delegated Legislation Committee

Wednesday 11 January 2023

[PHILIP DAVIES *in the Chair*]

## Draft Climate Change (Targeted Greenhouse Gases) Order 2022

9.25 am

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Kevin Hollinrake):** I beg to move,

That the Committee has considered the draft Climate Change (Targeted Greenhouse Gases) Order 2022.

It is a pleasure to serve with you in the Chair, Mr Davies.

The draft order was laid before the House on 19 October 2022. It updates the Climate Change Act 2008 by introducing nitrogen trifluoride, which I will refer to as NF<sub>3</sub>, as the seventh targeted greenhouse gas, and thereby brings it into scope for the UK's carbon budgets. NF<sub>3</sub> is a synthetic gas that occurs naturally but not in the volumes we need. It is primarily used in the production of electronics such as solar panels and flat-screen TVs, but is considered a potent contributor to climate change and is estimated to be 16,000 times more potent than carbon dioxide. The order will rightly introduce new duties on the Secretary of State to report on these harmful emissions.

I assure the Committee that NF<sub>3</sub> emissions have been captured in the UK's national greenhouse gas emissions statistics and international reporting to the United Nations framework convention on climate change since 2015. NF<sub>3</sub> is also within the scope of the UK's nationally determined contributions under the Paris agreement. The order will ensure that the Climate Change Act and statutory reporting pursuant to the Act are aligned with our greenhouse gas inventories and international reporting practice, and that our domestic targets continue to align with the latest science.

The inclusion of NF<sub>3</sub> does not put our domestic targets at risk, as NF<sub>3</sub> emissions represented less than 0.0001%—I think that is a ten-thousandth of a per cent.—of total UK territorial emissions in 2020. Its inclusion in the carbon budgets does not make a material difference to the challenge of meeting them, and it can therefore be included without reviewing the levels of those legislative targets. That view is supported by the Climate Change Committee, for whose support and advice I am grateful.

Let me turn to the wider impacts of the order. The inclusion of NF<sub>3</sub> in the Act will require businesses to report on NF<sub>3</sub> emissions under the streamlined energy and carbon reporting framework. That is a reporting requirement for all quoted companies and large businesses. Due to the very low use of NF<sub>3</sub> in UK production, and because existing reporting methodologies such as the widely used greenhouse gas protocol only require NF<sub>3</sub> to be included in companies' inventories, I can assure the Committee that the impact on business from the instrument coming into force will be minimal.

I thank all the devolved Governments for their support during the consultation on the order. I thank the Welsh Minister for Climate Change for bringing before the Senedd a statutory instrument consent memorandum stating that this order is the most practical legislative vehicle for the provision in question to apply to Wales.

The Government want to ensure that as we transition the economy to net zero, the Climate Change Act 2008 evolves with the necessary developments in science and our international commitments. It is therefore right that this harmful and extremely potent gas becomes part of our domestic targets and is reflected in our efforts to track progress against them. I commend the order to the Committee.

9.29 am

**Dr Alan Whitehead** (Southampton, Test) (Lab): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Davies. I think we can be brief in our discussions.

As the Minister has stated, nitrogen trifluoride is an unbelievably potent greenhouse gas—17,000 times as potent over a 100-year period as carbon dioxide—but it is not at present on the inventory list in the Climate Change Act 2008. That is partially because, particularly at the time of the passing of that Act, it was not recognised quite how potent nitrogen trifluoride was.

As the Minister says, nitrogen trifluoride is not used to an enormous extent in industry, but it is overwhelmingly human made, with very little occurring in nature. Pretty much all of it is a result of its manufacture for industrial processes. That was known about shortly after the Climate Change Act came into place; indeed, it was included in the greenhouse gas protocols in about 2013, with the requirement that countries should introduce it into their national inventories.

We absolutely welcome the addition of nitrogen trifluoride to the list of designated greenhouse gas substances in the Climate Change Act, but there is a slight question mark as to why it has taken this long. It really should have been designated a number of years ago, albeit I appreciate that there has been a process of discovery about nitrogen trifluoride over a period.

I am slightly concerned that nitrogen trifluoride is still being used to some extent in the UK for industrial processes. I hope the Minister will join me in saying that, particularly as a result of this designation, under no circumstances should nitrogen trifluoride continue to be used in industrial processes anywhere in the UK. I say that because there are perfectly good alternatives for the purposes for which it was historically manufactured and used, albeit possibly at slightly greater expense to industry. We face a position in which industry is possibly using nitrogen trifluoride simply for cost purposes, when its greenhouse gas potential is now well known and, as of today, clearly designated in the Climate Change Act.

I hope the Minister will say that we are not just recording the use of nitrogen trifluoride but earnestly pursuing its non-use in this country for the future, and that we look forward to the time when, although it is designated in the Climate Change Act, there will actually be no emissions of the gas to record as far as the UK base is concerned.

9.33 am

**Kevin Hollinrake:** It is a pleasure to respond to the shadow Minister, whom I thank for his support. He is right that nitrogen trifluoride is a very potent gas, but it

occurs in minuscule quantities. As I said in my opening remarks, we have been recording emissions internationally and it is right that we now do that domestically. We are learning more and more as we go.

On the shadow Minister's point about how we eradicate the gas completely from processes, he will be familiar with the review of the F-gas regulation that was published last month. We intend to consult next year on proposals for change. That process will be used to assess how we can go even further, with a focus on what additional reductions can be made to help us to meet our obligations to meet net zero by 2050. The shadow Minister can be assured that that is the direction we are going in.

The Climate Change Act requires the Government to ensure that our emissions reporting meets the standards that are set internationally. I am proud that this Government are doing exactly that in bringing forward this legislation.

I point out to the shadow Minister and others in the Committee that an international comparison of the efforts of different countries around the world to mitigate climate change is compiled by an organisation called Germanwatch; I am sure the shadow Minister is very familiar with it. It lists every single country in the world, and we are eighth in that list. According to that independent report, the only countries ahead of us are Denmark, Sweden, Chile, Morocco, India, Estonia and Norway. Every other country that the shadow Minister or anyone else in the Committee can name is following our lead in terms of our efforts to mitigate climate change. With that, I commend the draft order to the Committee.

*Question put and agreed to.*

9.35 am

*Committee rose.*





