



The Legal Sector Alliance Communiqué on Climate Change

The Legal Sector Alliance is an inclusive movement of 124 law firms and legal services organisations committed to working together collaboratively, for greater impact, in the area of climate change.

We recognise that there is broad consensus that climate change is manmade and poses global economic, social, and environmental risks. The world must effect deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the climactic changes already occurring and that are predicted to occur. Much of this action depends on governments in the G20 and elsewhere developing and deploying regulation to enable and incentivise these actions.

For regulation to be effective, it should adhere to the following principles:

- regulation and its enforcement should be clear and proportionate and form part of a coherent, integrated regulatory and enforcement framework
- legal and regulatory regimes should be reviewed and reformed to correct any failure to price or minimise carbon emissions and to remove perverse incentives which, for example, promote disproportionate investment in one technology at the expense of others
- broadly consistent national and international rules are required to clarify rights and responsibilities associated with emissions reductions or sequestration
- product, industry and reporting standards should be agreed at global level, where practical, or otherwise at regional level. Multiple national standards should be avoided
- incentives for investment in and deployment of emerging technologies should provide certainty to those businesses that take significant technology or commercial risk
- time limited involvement of business in the development or piloting of climate regulation should be used to maximise effectiveness of regulation.

The UK legal sector is a leader in the legal services market, with wide ranging experience of the impact of regulation on corporate and individual behaviour. The LSA is willing to contribute to the formulation of effective regulation in the UK and anticipates that many law firms in other jurisdictions will want to do likewise.

The nature of the threat posed by climate change means that there is an urgent need for mitigation and adaptation programmes to be incorporated into national law. The Legal Sector Alliance calls upon governments in the G20 and elsewhere to adopt regulations to achieve this and to implement any commitments they make at the Copenhagen COP/MOP in December 2009 promptly and in accordance with these principles.