

UK Minister addresses Arctic Circle Assembly

Lord Offord, the UK Government Minister for Scotland, arrived in Iceland today to address the Arctic Circle Assembly and to meet key figures in biotech and gaming sectors.

He is representing the UK as one of more than 60 countries participating in the largest gathering of Arctic nations called annually.

Lord Offord is to make the UK address at the Assembly and the government say he will discuss the post-Brexit renewed Arctic Policy Framework due for publication this year. This will set out the commitment to science, environment, climate change and commerce.

The Minister said: "The Arctic is warming four times faster than the rest of the planet and this has profound implications for the UK, in terms of our weather, our environment and our security. We must therefore take action domestically. By reducing our own emissions and showing global leadership, we can encourage others around the world to join the effort.

"Scotland and Iceland have strong economic, academic and cultural links, and we greatly value these important ties. In particular, I'm keen to promote Scotland's vital role within the United Kingdom and globally in terms of trade, energy and innovation.

“Building our relationship with the Nordic countries – including Iceland – will bring direct benefit to Scottish business and to communities right across the UK.”

As well as having shared environmental goals, the UK and Iceland are significant commerce partners, with trade between the two countries worth around £1.1 billion in the year to March 2022. Scotland exported goods worth £31m to Iceland in 2021.

Icelandic companies have a number of high-tech and asset investments in the UK, and the University of Edinburgh offers a popular foundation course in Icelandic. In addition, both Scotland and Iceland have strong fishing and fish processing industries and tourism between the two countries is bolstered by direct Reykjavik-Glasgow flights.



The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Scotland, Lord Offord at Dover House. Picture by Tim Hammond / No 10 Downing Street Malcolm Offord was Scottish businessman who was appointed a Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to the Scotland Office on 4th October 2021 having been made a peer on 30 September that year.