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Portugal to welcome UK tourists from May 17, tourism board says

London.—Portugal will allow tourists from Britain to enter from May 17, following Britain's go-ahead last week for its holidaymakers to travel to Portugal from that date, the national tourism board said yesterday.

European Union rules prohibit non-essential travel from outside the bloc, making Portugal's decision to allow British tourists an exception. Tourists from Britain will be required to present upon arrival evidence of a negative PCR taken in the previous 72 hours, said the Turismo de Portugal authority, which is part of the Economy Ministry.

It added that the tourism authorities were

making sure that Portugal's testing capacity meet the demand from tourists and that the air travel capacity between Britain and Portugal was being reinforced.

Britain added Portugal to a "green" list of foreign destinations a week ago, allowing Britons to travel there from May 17 without needing to quarantine when returning home.

The European Commission proposed on May 3 easing travel restrictions from outside the EU for people who were fully vaccinated or came from countries with low case numbers. The European Council is due to discuss the proposal on May 17.

SPAIN LOGGED HOTTEST YEAR ON RECORD IN 2020

● Seven of the 10 hottest years in Spain occurred in the last decade, according to the report.

Spain experienced its hottest year on record last year, the Environment Ministry said yesterday, a day after parliament passed a landmark bill to combat climate change.

In a year marked by extreme weather events and heatwaves, Spain's average temperature reached 14.8 degrees Celsius, according to the ministry, around 1.7 degrees hotter than the pre-industrial average, and above the 1.5 degree target for the world set out in the Paris agreement.

Some 76% of that increase has occurred in the last 60 years, the ministry said.

The findings echo recent studies by the European Union and the United Nations, which found last year was the hottest on record in Europe and among the top three warmest years globally.

Seven of the 10 hottest years in Spain occurred in the last decade, according to the report, which warned the average temperature could rise by as much as 5 degrees above pre-industrial average by the end of the century.

Concentrations of greenhouse gases also reached historic highs, despite a temporary reduction in emissions caused by measures to curb the COVID-19 pandemic, the ministry said.

Alongside three heatwaves - one of which was among the longest on record - Spain was hit by a barrage of extreme weather last year, including Storm Gloria, which left 13 dead and unleashed record rainfall on the Mediterranean coast in January.

"Extreme meteorological events of this type cost our country around 700 lives and 900 million euros a year," the ministry said.

After several years of parliamentary wrangling, lawmakers on Thursday passed Spain's first national climate-change law, which aims to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2050. Criticised by left-wing parties as unambitious, the emissions reduction targets will be revised in 2023.

Germany, by comparison, recently pledged carbon neutrality by 2045 and China targets it by 2060.



Long hot summer in the Balearics.

Balearic President: if the rest of Spain had our figures we would be welcoming British tourists

Palma.—The President of the Balearic government, Francina Armengol, said during a TV interview this morning that if the rest of the country had the same figures as the Balearics,

the islands would now be welcoming British tourists.

She said that the low number of cases in the Balearics would mean that the islands would be on

Britain's green list, for quarantine-free travel. Armengol defended the restrictions which her government has introduced in the Balearics, despite a wave of protest, especially

from bar and restaurant staff. The Balearic President had wanted the islands to be excluded from the rest of the country so that it could attract British tourists.

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