



Briefing: Ministerial Statement 9th June 2015

PUBLICATION OF 2013 GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY

Delivering on the Climate Change (Scotland) Act is an opportunity to transform Scotland for the better, delivering jobs, cutting fuel poverty and improving health. Particularly if Scotland misses its 4th climate change target, the Scottish Government must use the opportunity to announce transformational policies that ensure Scotland realises the benefits of a low-carbon economy and reduces its contribution to climate change. MSPs from all parties should use this statement as an opportunity to call for transformative new low-carbon policies.

Key points

- The Scottish Government must use the opportunity provided by the target result to announce new policies, to compensate for failure to reach past targets and to ensure that Scotland gets back on track for achieving future annual targets.
- **The Scottish Government should meet any disappointment around another missed target with positive language and a new policy effort** that improves Scotland's economy and society and reduces Scotland's climate emissions.
- If the Scottish Government responds to a missed target primarily with excuses and obfuscation through focussing on the detail of how the targets are constructed, this will represent both an inadequate response and a failure to take advantage of an opportunity to introduce policies that would benefit Scotland. Nor would it be acceptable to delay further action until the next Report on Policies and Proposals (RPP) – action is required now.
- The Scottish Government has frequently committed over the past year to introducing new policies, if existing policies were failing to reduce Scotland's climate emissions.
- The Scottish Parliament's Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee, the independent Committee on Climate Change and civic society organisations have frequently advised the Scottish Government that **a greater policy effort is required if future annual targets under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act are to be achieved.**
- Potential areas for transformative policy include transport, energy efficiency & renewable heat.
- WWF Scotland will judge the Scottish Government's statement on the level of new policy ambition it contains, rather than solely on the target outcome. With a Scottish General Election less than a year away, we call on **opposition parties to also use this opportunity to identify climate change policies** that they would be pursuing, were they in government.

Greater Policy Effort Required

The Scottish Government has repeatedly committed to introducing new policies, in the event that existing policies are failing to sufficiently reduce Scotland's climate emissions. Indeed, the Scottish Government established a Cabinet sub-Committee in order to identify opportunities across portfolios to cut Scotland's climate emissions. Examples of recent commitments include:

"The new Cabinet sub-committee on climate change has met a couple of times over the past few months to ensure that we are focused on developing the new policies and proposals that are required to meet the very ambitious targets."

Richard Lochhead MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment, 2nd June 2015¹

"Where policies and proposals are not being delivered, we will seek to bring forward new policies to achieve the same, if not a greater, level of emissions abatement."

Aileen McLeod MSP, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, 7th January 2015²

"We will continue ... to look very critically at the policy interventions that we are making, where we are not succeeding in some of those interventions and where we need to do more."

Nicola Sturgeon MSP, First Minister of Scotland, 18th December 2014³

"We recognise that keeping up progress on tackling climate change will require new commitments and policies to be brought to bear year on year."

Paul Wheelhouse MSP, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, 1st October 2014⁴

Advice of the Scottish Parliament's RACCE Committee

The Scottish Parliament's Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment (RACCE) Committee most recently examined the issue of progress towards meeting the climate change targets in a series of evidence sessions towards the end of 2014, the conclusions of which were summarised in a letter to the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform⁵. The letter set out the cross-party RACCE Committee's view that despite three successive annual targets having been missed, it remained "mindful of the importance of achieving the absolute reductions as set out by the annual targets and not just the overall longer term percentage targets." More importantly, the committee expressed the view that the Scottish Government needed to step up its policy efforts,

"The Committee is concerned about the cumulative negative impact of the missed annual targets and would therefore like to see increased efforts across all sectors and parts of society in Scotland to make every effort possible to try and achieve each annual target. The Committee encourages the Scottish Government to consider what more can be done to meet the targets, what measures can be prioritised, what actions can be expedited, and how the second Report on Proposals and Policies can be more effectively implemented."

Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee, letter from convenor to Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, 28th January 2015

The Committee also reported that **there "seemed to be consensus"**, from the witnesses who provided evidence, on the areas in which "Scotland was performing very well, such as in waste and renewables" and **on the "areas which required further focus and improvement, such as transport, renewable heat, and energy efficiency"**.

¹ Responding to a topical question, 2nd June 2015 <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=9987&i=91679>

² During portfolio questions, 7th January 2015, <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=9709>

³ Speaking at FMQs, 18th December 2014. <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=9698&mode=pdf>

⁴ Speaking during a debate on the United National Climate Summit 2014, 1st October 2014, <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=9536&i=86437&c=1736799>

⁵ Letter from Rob Gibson MSP, convenor RACCE Committee to Minister Aileen McLeod MSP, 26th November 2014.

[http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_RuralAffairsClimateChangeandEnvironmentCommittee/General%20Documents/2014.11.26 - Convenor to Minister climate change.pdf](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_RuralAffairsClimateChangeandEnvironmentCommittee/General%20Documents/2014.11.26_-_Convenor_to_Minister_climate_change.pdf)

Advice of the independent Committee on Climate Change

The Scottish Government’s independent advisers on climate change, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), published its most recent Scotland progress report in March 2015⁶. The conclusion of the CCC of its analysis was clear,

“More action is needed to meet future targets: *There has been less progress in other areas including transport, renewable heat, agriculture and forestry, and the waste sector. Even in areas of good progress [deploying renewable electricity and rolling out energy efficiency programmes], further action will be needed to meet Scotland’s ambitious 2020 target.*

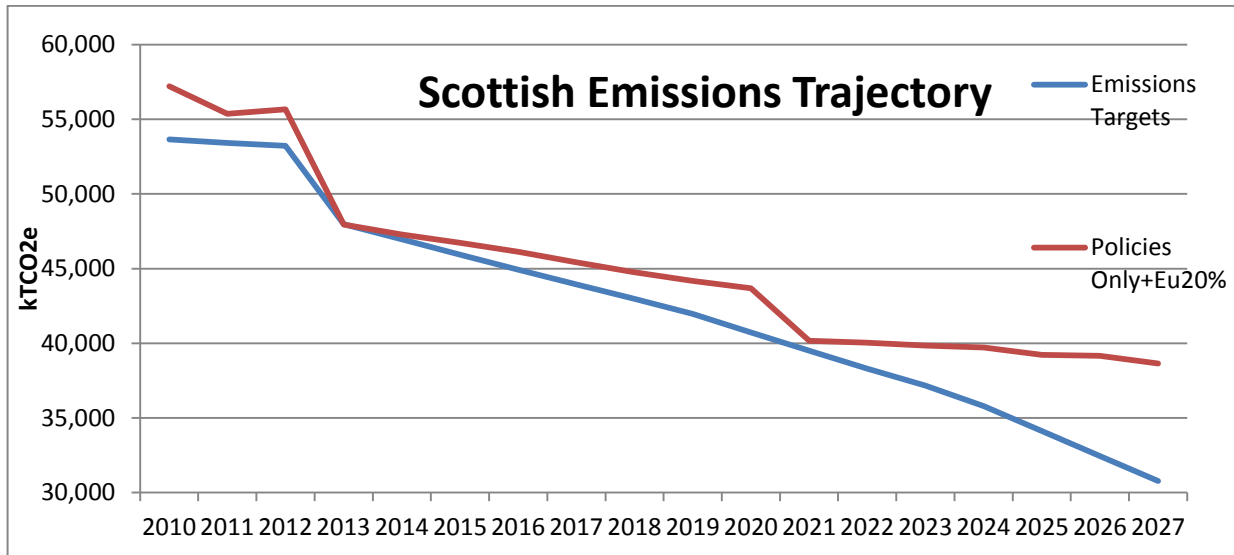
“We recommend that the Scottish Government strengthens policies for low-carbon heat, energy efficiency, the public sector, transport and agriculture and land use.”

Committee on Climate Change, 2015 Scotland progress report, March 2015

Scotland’s Future Emissions Trajectory

Looking to the future, Scotland is also off-track with future statutory annual greenhouse gas emissions targets. Analysis by WWF Scotland of data in the Scottish Government’s RPP2 (Report on Proposals & Policies), shows that **a greater policy effort is still needed, if Scotland is to stay within its future annual targets**, shown by the blue ‘target’ line below. Now that any increase in the EU’s emissions target is off the table, if the Scottish Government delivers only the policies within the Report on Proposals and Policies it will not achieve its future annual targets. This also provides the clarity and impetus for the Scottish Government to act now, rather than to wait for the next RPP3, which will not be completed for at least another year.


WWF Scotland’s view is that the Scottish Government has not exhausted its policy options for addressing climate change, and must make a concerted effort to develop proposals into policies and implement new policies to reduce emissions across the economy.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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⁶ Reducing Emissions in Scotland: 2015 Progress Report, Committee on Climate Change, March 2015 <http://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Scotland-report-v6-WEB.pdf>

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