



Briefing: Scottish Parliament debate 26th & 27th November

PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT 2014-15

Scotland already has world-leading climate change legislation, created with cross-party support. The current challenge for the Scottish Government is implementing the policies that will deliver on that legislation. However, Scotland is not on course to hit any of the annual climate change targets between now and 2020. If Scotland is to achieve the full benefits of a managed transition to a low-carbon economy and society, much greater policy effort is urgently needed. Therefore the Scottish Government must make identifying and announcing new policies that put Scotland on course for meeting its climate change targets a major priority for the year ahead.

The Scottish Climate Change Act - world leading legislation unfulfilled

Scotland's climate legislation – the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 – is rightly regarded as world leading climate legislation, and Stop Climate Chaos Scotland has recently produced a film 'Scotland's Climate Action Story' to help promote Scotland's legislation at a global level.

However, creating strong framework legislation cannot be an end in of itself. WWF Scotland is disappointed that the first three annual targets under the Act have now been missed. This is due to a number of reasons, including insufficient policy delivery, inadequate funding and changes to the historical emissions inventory.

More than simply being marks on a scorecard, each missed target represents a missed opportunity to make Scotland a better place. Building a low-carbon Scotland will reap many rewards. Recent research by Cambridge Econometrics has shown that strong climate policies lead to higher household income, stronger economic growth, more job creation and healthier government revenues versus a higher carbon alternative.¹ **Having earned global praise for the ambition of its Climate Change Act, it is now vital that Scotland sets a global good example and reaps the benefits presented by a low-carbon transition.** This must be a priority for the Scottish Government in the year to come.

Greater policy effort required

Looking to the future, Scotland is off-track to meet future statutory annual greenhouse gas emissions targets. Analysis by WWF Scotland of data in the Scottish Government's RPP2 (Second Report on Proposals & Policies), shows that **a significantly greater policy effort is still needed, if Scotland is to secure the rewards of transitioning to a low-carbon economy and society, as required by the Climate Change Act.** Indeed, this was frequently acknowledged by the previous Minister responsible for Climate Change:

"We recognise that keeping up progress on tackling climate change will require new commitments and policies to be brought to bear year on year."²

Paul Wheelhouse MSP, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, 1st October 2014

"The Cabinet sub-committee [on climate change] is clear that we must significantly accelerate and focus our domestic efforts if we are to avoid dangerous climate change."³

Paul Wheelhouse MSP, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, 4th November 2014

WWF Scotland is of the view that the Scottish Government has not exhausted its policy options for addressing climate change, and **we must see a concerted effort over the coming year to develop proposals into policies and implement new policies to reduce emissions across the economy.** This concern was echoed by the UK Committee on Climate Change in its 2014 report where it recommended a number of areas in need of stronger policy action, including more funding for home insulation schemes, more effort on renewable heat and scaling up pilot projects in transport and agriculture.

WWF Scotland is not calling for any specific new Climate Change legislation to appear in the Programme for Government 2014-15. However, there is a clear and significant need for new policies to be brought forward over the year to come. Therefore **the identification and announcement of new policies, that help to reduce Scotland's climate change emissions, must be a priority for the Scottish Government over the course of the year ahead.**

The Scottish Government's draft budget for 2015-16 does not represent a clear decision to choose the low carbon path. WWF Scotland is concerned that the draft budget only commits the same level of funding to energy efficiency measures as the previous year. WWF Scotland would like to see energy efficiency become a national infrastructure priority, and having previously called for the energy efficiency budget to be increased to at least £125m, we now believe substantially more is needed. Nor does the draft budget signal sufficient support for renewable heating, despite space and water heating accounting for approximately 50% of Scotland's carbon emissions. Lastly, as further example, Scotland's carbon emissions from transport still languish at 1990 levels and represent a quarter of Scotland's emissions. Yet the Scottish Government's carbon emission reduction plan (RPP2) does not currently contain a single domestic policy designed to reduce transport emissions in Scotland. **The Scottish Government's Budget for 2015-16 could therefore do much more for energy efficiency, renewable heating and for low-carbon transport.**

¹ Cambridge Econometrics (2014) The Economics of Climate Change Policy in the UK:
http://www.wwf.org.uk/what_we_do/tackling_climate_change/how_we_re_tackling_climate_change/our_climate_work_in_the_uk/the_value_of_a_low_carbon_britain/

² Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Meeting of the Scottish Parliament, 1st October 2014
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28862.aspx?r=9536&i=86437&c=1736799>

³ Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Meeting of the Scottish Parliament, 4th November 2014
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28862.aspx?r=9601>



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.
www.wwf.org.uk

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