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PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING

UN climate change negotiations, Doha

December 2012

Summary

- WWF Scotland welcomes the opportunity for Parliament to debate the important outcome of the UN climate negotiations in Doha, Qatar. The annual conference concluded with a *process* text with very little *substance* in terms of emission cuts and finance and a very shaky foundation for 2015 deal.
- If it is to continue to set an example to other countries aspiring towards low carbon development, the Scottish Government must step up its efforts to implement our Climate Change Act. This means cutting emissions from all sectors of the Scottish economy, but particularly in homes and transport where emissions are higher now than in 1990.
- The forthcoming Report on Proposals and Policies (RPP) is an opportunity for the Scottish Government to ensure that we never miss a climate target again.

Doha outcomes

WWF's overall goal for Doha was to achieve urgency and ambition as well as a solid foundation for the 2015 global agreement. Sadly, there was neither a sense of urgency nor a desire to increase ambition in these talks. The Doha Outcome has not met WWF's expectations: What we have is a *process* text with very little *substance*, particularly in terms of emission cuts and finance, a very shaky foundation for 2015 deal and a deepened polarisation between developed and developing countries.

Doha needed to demonstrate that countries were willing to move towards a level of climate ambition that matches the best available science, which suggests that global emissions peak by 2015 and then start to decline. This will require developed countries to plan for almost complete decarbonisation by 2050.

Thankfully, this ambition is in line with targets under the Scottish Climate Act and we welcome the involvement of the Scottish Climate Minister as part of the UK delegation.



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Implementing the Scottish Climate Change Act

On the international stage, we wish for Scotland to be a beacon of hope, proving that world-leading emissions reductions targets are achievable. In January 2012, the First Minister even spoke passionately about 'Climate Justice', committing to 'set our own house in order, to be part of the solution not the problem, but also to lead by example'. However, the international standing of Scotland's Climate Act is being placed in doubt against the background of a missed 2010 target for domestic emissions reductions and an apparent reluctance to implement world leading policies to match our targets.

In early 2013, the Scottish Government will publish its second climate change action plan – the Report on Proposals and Policies (RPP) - to meet targets out to 2027. On 21 November 2012, Minister Paul Wheelhouse MSP told the Rural Affairs Committee that 'we will achieve our targets on climate change only if we implement as many as possible of the proposals and policies in the RPP.'

We therefore urge MSPs to encourage the Government to take the opportunity to take this lead and demand more measures are turned into action. The next version of the RPP must mark a step change in policy effort, introducing new policies to reduce emissions from our homes and transport sectors, together responsible for almost 40% of our emissions. The RPP cannot be reliant on what currently look like unlikely changes to the EU ambition or overly dependent on attributing emissions savings to proposals that may never be implemented.

The Report on Proposals and Policies

WWF believes a credible and ambitious low carbon action plan for Scotland is needed to deliver warm homes, cut fuel bills and eradicate fuel poverty, enable people to walk and cycle more, clean up our air and reduce congestion. In order for this document to be sufficiently credible and ambitious, Government must follow the advice of the UK CCC, step up current policy effort to reduce emission including:

- Reduced reliance on an EU shift to 30% emissions reductions by 2020
- Reduced reliance on voluntary measures that may not deliver emissions cuts;
- Commitment to fully funding the policies within the RPP to ensure their delivery;
- New policies to substantially reduce emissions, such as;
 - HOUSING - A minimum standard of energy performance for all private housing at the point of sale or rental, as of 2015. The minimum standard should be an 'E' on the Energy Performance Certificate scale and a 'C' in 2020;
 - TRANSPORT - Road traffic demand management measures (such as parking management, workplace parking levies or road user charging) implemented in Scotland's four major cities by 2016, as part of integrated travel plans.

WWF Scotland calls on the Scottish Parliament to work with Ministers to ensure that the unanimous passing of the Climate Change Act is supported by unanimous support for its delivery. The next RPP is a unique opportunity for MSPs to do this. We hope MSPs will join our call for increased policy effort to ensure that Scotland remains an excellent example of international climate leadership at the next COP19 in Poland.

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