

Submission on the Scottish Climate Change Bill

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on behalf of

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We regret that we have not had the time to produce a detailed response to the Bill, but would briefly make the following points.

[a] We are a member of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, and support their ten top Bill priorities, at...

<http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/files/docs/SCCS-top-lines.pdf>

[b] Spokes made a detailed submission to the consultation prior to the Bill. As far as we can see, none of the points in that submission have found their way into the Bill, and therefore we re-iterate those concerns. That submission may be found at...

www.spokes.org.uk/downloads/Campaign_submissions/Scottish_government+_national/0804_ClimateChangeBillConsultn.pdf

[c] With regard to both (a) and (b) above, a primary concern is that emission reductions of at least 3% annually should be achieved from the start, and not from a date well in the future.

[d] The mechanisms by which emissions reductions can and will be achieved both in the short term and the long term must be an urgent priority, and we are not clear how far the Bill will achieve that, rather than just setting abstract targets.

[e] In particular, there must be mechanisms to ensure that short-term 'quick wins' are acted on urgently. To expand somewhat on this point, in the light of our own recent experience...

The value of 'quick wins' (at the same time as moving as urgently as possible towards a non-carbon-powered more electric future) was emphasised by Lord Adair Turner, head of the UK Advisory Committee on Climate Change in his recent lecture at Edinburgh University's McEwan Hall. In particular, in terms of quick wins, he referred to (a) a rapid programme to insulate all domestic properties in Scotland and (b) immediate investment in making our towns and cities walk and cycle-friendly.

Regrettably, and remarkably in this context, the Scottish Government, which professes 'Sustainable' economic growth, took a diametrically opposed stance in the recent 2009/10 Scottish Budget - rejecting a 10-year all-Scotland street-by-street house insulation programme; and ignoring (not even assessing) the evidence-based all-party recommendation of the Transport, Environment and Climate Change Committee to increase the present (miserable) level of investment in walking and cycling infrastructure. Funding clearly was available for such quick wins, given that trunk road spending is increased by over £150m as compared to 2008/09, whilst walking and cycling investment is frozen at (in total) far, far below even the levels of the increase in trunk road spending. Clearly, it is just a question of priorities, and the government's priorities in terms of Climate Change quick-wins are quite topsy-turvy.

As the Bill stands, it is difficult to see how it would persuade the government to adopt any quick wins at all - particularly given that the 3% annual reductions will not come into force until over a decade into future.