



Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

Funding climate action – writing to your MSPs

September 2011

Introduction

The Scottish Climate Change Act came into being in 2009, and since then the Scottish Government has done a great deal to promote its world-leading legislation, which includes a 42% reduction in Scotland's own emissions by 2020, and 80% by 2050. Since then, the Scottish Government has produced an action plan called the '[Report on Proposals and Policies](#)' which sets out how Scotland will achieve these targets.

This next Scottish Budget must reflect Scotland's climate change ambitions. The Scottish Government are currently putting together the 2012-13 Budget as well as a four-year spending review. The Scottish Parliament will then scrutinise the budget and it will be agreed in February 2012. But this autumn is the key time to influence it, while it's still in its early stages.

Why it matters

Achieving the 42% target will be crucial if Scotland is to take meaningful action to tackle climate change and move towards a cleaner, greener and more sustainable economy. Doing this would add credibility to the targets in the Climate Change Act and would uphold Scotland's reputation as a country which is taking climate change seriously.

People across Scotland will also benefit in a range of other ways, for example improved health as a result of cycling and walking more or from homes being warmer through improved energy efficiency. There are also opportunities for Scotland in terms of job creation, with the Scottish Government anticipating the creation of 60,000 green jobs by 2015¹.

Targeting funding towards climate-friendly activities will also save us money in the long run. Economist and academic, Lord Nicolas Stern, stated in his important 2006 'Report on the Economics of Climate Change' that: '*(t)he benefits of strong, early action on climate change outweigh the costs*' and that '*ignoring climate change will eventually damage economic growth*'². More recently, in its advice to Scottish Ministers, the UK Climate Change Committee stated that: 'Scottish emissions reduction targets can be met at manageable economic cost... and should be accepted given the costs and consequences of not acting'.³

As a minimum, everything in the Scottish Government's own action plan must be fully funded in the forthcoming budget. It's that simple.

How you can help

You can help make this happen by sending a short personal letter or email to your MSPs. This will be most effective if you write in your own words. You can use the information in this briefing as a basis for what you write.

You should aim to do this **before the 30th of September.**



What to write about - essential information:

Just keep it simple and concise, and use the information below as the basis of what to write. By using our online action facility, each of your MSPs will receive the same copy of your letter.

¹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/331364/0107855.pdf>, p7

² http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/Executive_Summary.pdf, P1

³ <http://downloads.theccc.org.uk/Scottish%20report/CCC-Scottish-Report-web-version.pdf>

- Tell your MSPs why climate change concerns you.
- You could mention that the targets in Scotland's Climate Change Act are something that we can be proud of, but they'll be meaningless if we fail to actually achieve them.
- You could point out that spending money now on reducing carbon emissions will save Scotland money in the long run.
- Highlight that there's a great economic opportunity for Scotland if we choose to create jobs by encouraging investment in low-carbon industries.
- You could also mention the social benefits that'll result if measures like increasing energy efficiency in homes or improving public transport are properly funded.

• **This is the key point to ask your MSPs:**

I would like you, as my MSP, to write to John Swinney MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth and urge him, in the forthcoming budget, to fully fund actions needed to achieve the 2020 target in the Scottish Climate Change Act, as set out in the government's Report on Policies and Proposals

- Finish by saying that you look forward to hearing from your MSP about what else they'll do to influence this issue.

Optional extra detail:

Although it's crucial that all of the proposals in the Government's action plan are fully funded and acted on without delay, you may wish to pick out a few of the proposals which are of particular interest to you. Here is a summary of all the proposals – don't be put off by the technical detail:

- Tackling fuel poverty and investing in home insulation;
- Creating energy standards for new houses and other buildings from 2013;
- Investment in eco-driving awareness;
- Enforcing the 70mph speed limit;
- Improving the efficiency of freight by heavy goods vehicles and vans;
- Building the infrastructure for electric cars and other low-carbon vehicles;
- Making the most efficient use of our road networks by monitoring conditions, controlling traffic where necessary, and telling motorists about conditions;
- Investment in travel planning – helping people to make more sustainable transport choices;
- Supporting car clubs;
- Improving and building the infrastructure for walking and cycling;
- Improving bus services, and making buses and taxis greener;
- Encourage more transportation of freight by rail or water, rather than by road;
- Investment in 'community hubs' in rural locations – shared facilities which are set up for remote working and offer other services, removing the need for unnecessary travel and reducing travel costs for the people who use them;
- Reducing the environmental impact of transport by sea;
- Restoring peatland habitats – to stop the damaged ones emitting carbon;
- Mandatory climate change measures for farmers included as part of the conditions for receiving subsidy payments; and
- Planting more trees – 15,000 hectares each year by 2015.

Where to send your letter or email

You can use our blank online action to send a personalised email to your MSPs. You'll find this on our website at www.stopclimatechaos.org/scottish-budget-action.

For more information contact:

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Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS) is a diverse coalition of over 60 organisations campaigning together on climate change, including environment, faith and development organisations, trade and student unions and community groups.

www.stopclimatechaos.org/scotland

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland is a charity, registered in Scotland, no SC039643