



Our response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the
Climate Change Bill

September 2017

I

2050 Climate Group
A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Scottish Charity Number SC047206)
c/o Young Scot, Rosebery House, 9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5LZ
contact@2050.scot

Written Evidence Submitted in Response to the Climate Change Bill by the 2050 Climate Group

The 2050 Climate Group aims to engage, educate and empower future leaders in Scotland to take action on climate change. Our remit is to inspire and facilitate young people to get involved not only in the 2050 Climate Group, but in the design of policy affecting their future, providing our members with the skills and confidence to act as catalysts for change to facilitate a decarbonised Scotland and ensure a sustainable, equitable future beyond the year 2050.

The 2050 Climate Group represents a diverse membership of young professionals across Scotland. Our membership consists of almost 300 Young Leaders across all sectors and regions within Scotland who have participated or are currently participating in our Young Leaders Development Programme, or are involved in the operational functions of the Group.

Our response to this consultation represents the views of this diverse membership, gathered through the delivery of three engagement events, in addition to an online survey. Through this process, we have engaged with over 50 Young Leaders and volunteers through vibrant discussion and debate at the engagement events delivered in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Inverness and a further 25 through an online survey. We undertook an inclusive, deliberative process discussing the bill and our future, as young people, within the context of climate change in Scotland.

The delivery of this consultation response has been led by a team of volunteers to gather and reflect the views of our membership. The delivery team were astonished at the level of commitment shown by young people throughout the engagement process, noting one Young Leader's comment: "I didn't want the opportunity to have my say pass me by." As such, we have focused on questions which we believe we can add the greatest value and insight, reflecting the views, concerns and hopes of young people within Scotland. The 2050 Climate Group believe it is imperative to involve young people - future leaders -, in decision making to mitigate climate change now. There is untapped potential in the expertise, skills and commitment of this generation to support the Government in leading Scotland to a decarbonised, sustainable and equitable future beyond the year 2050, a sentiment encompassed by one Young Leader below:

"I would argue that this Bill is most important for young people over any other sector or demographic and that it is vital that we are listened to and empowered to help design our future. As the 'future leaders' we believe that we can be more ambitious and create a new normal for Scotland. We need to have ambitious decisions now so that in 10, 20 or 30 years time we are in a position where we can lead Scotland to a prosperous, clean, fair 2050 and

provide leadership for the rest of the world. I firmly believe that Scotland's young people want a clean, fair, healthy future for our people and our planet.”

Young Leader, 2050 Climate Group

Having been through this process, the 2050 Climate Group recommends the Climate Change Bill should: 1. Set a net zero target of greenhouse gas emissions, thereby showcasing Scotland as an ambitious and trailblazing nation in reaching a decarbonised future. 2. Commit to actions to deliver a greener, cleaner and more equitable society, reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, made possible through:

- a. Implementation of pragmatic policies to support all sectors in the transition to a decarbonised Scotland.
- b. Involving young people in decision-making around climate change policies to empower and involve the next generation in protecting Scotland’s future.
- c. Changing the way climate change is viewed in Scotland, showcasing the opportunity for Scotland’s people, businesses and economy and being explicit in Scotland’s ambition to become a global leader to ensure a sustainable future.

1. Do you agree that the 2050 target should be made more ambitious by increasing it to 90% greenhouse gas emission reduction from baseline levels?

Yes

The 2050 Climate Group believes the emission reduction target for 2050 should be made more ambitious by raising it to at least 90%. However, innovation and infrastructure investment follows from ambitious targets and progressive, predictable policy. Therefore, the 2050 Climate Group believes there is scope for greater ambition within this Bill and that the target should be set at net zero.

Scotland plays a world class and vital role in driving technology and advancement in decarbonisation, and an ambitious target shows Scotland’s commitment to instigate change. Scotland, as a good global citizen, has a duty to create stringent climate change mitigation targets as a high historical contributor to climate change, following the principles of climate justice.

In addition to setting targets, it is crucial to provide practical solutions for meeting them. This will ensure the targets do not remain arbitrary goals and that there are implications for missing targets. The 2050 Climate Group do not feel that this is adequately addressed in the Bill.

2. Do you agree that the Climate Change Bill should contain provisions that allow

for a net-zero greenhouse gas emission target to be set at a later date?

The 2050 Climate Group strongly believes that the Scottish Government must set an ambitious target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 in this Bill, rather than creating provisions for this to be set at a later date. Our informal organisation motto is #2050 starts now, which emphasizes the sense of urgency around climate action amongst young people. In addition to the urgency that our community feels about safeguarding our collective futures, we believe that setting an ambitious net-zero target now sends an important signal to business and society that this is where we are headed and that change is needed. It will also act as a powerful signal to the international community, reinforcing Scotland's reputation as a world leader on climate action.

3a. Do you agree that the 2020 target should be for greenhouse gas emissions to be at least 56% lower than baseline levels?

Yes

The 2050 Climate Group believes that the 2020 target should be set to at least 56% lower to reduce greater greenhouse gas emissions reductions. The Group believe the 56% reduction target should be the minimum floor for ambition and we would strongly encourage the Government to commit to action which would see a percentage reduction in excess of 56% against the baseline levels as the minimum target for 2020.

To date, Scotland has made very positive steps in reducing its carbon footprint and having achieved its initial 2020 target considerably ahead of time, there should be a stretching ambition to galvanise action domestically and remain at the forefront of international climate action.

3b. Do you agree that a target should be set for greenhouse gas emissions to be at least 66% lower than baseline levels by 2030?

Yes

The 2050 Climate Group agrees that there should be a target set that is a minimum percentage reduction against baseline levels. However, we are in favour of setting a more ambitious initial target in excess of a 66% reduction to reinforce Scotland's commitment to taking action on climate change now.

3c. Do you agree that a target should be set for greenhouse gas emissions to be at least 78% lower than baseline levels by 2040?

Yes

The 2050 Climate Group believes that having set and achieved more ambitious greenhouse gas

emission reduction targets for 2020 and 2030 it is imperative for Scotland to have a target for 2040 that is more ambitious than at least a 78% reduction.

4. Do you agree that annual emission reduction targets should be in the form of percentage reductions from baseline levels?

Yes

The 2050 Climate Group recognises the importance of providing the simplest narrative to communicate progress on climate change to the widest audience. Any step to invite a wider audience to feel empowered and informed in climate change is welcomed by the 2050 Climate Group. Taking steps to break down barriers in understanding Scotland's role and responsibility in tackling climate change will be vital in ensuring all of Scotland's society is equitably informed and engaged in our journey in becoming decarbonised. Therefore, we agree that annual targets should be in the form of percentage reductions to ensure the greatest possible stakeholder engagement.

However, we recognise percentage targets may oversimplify the reporting process and recommend that absolute figures are also published. The 2050 Climate Group believe absolute figures will promote greater transparency and enable more accurate comparisons of progress year on year. It will also enable stakeholders, such as government, academia, research or interested organisations (such as ourselves) to delve into more detail and communicate the journey. For these reasons, on balance, we recommend absolute figures to be published annually alongside percentage reductions.

5. Do you agree that annual targets should be set as a direct consequence of interim and 2050 targets?

The 2050 Climate Group believes it is vital annual targets are set as a direct consequence of interim and 2050 targets for monitoring purposes. We believe this process will promote transparency and accountability with annual monitoring and therefore assist in monitoring and communication of success in reducing emissions. Annual targets create and maintain a societal focus and short term ambitions to reach and communicate messaging that climate action is starting now.

We support and recognise the importance of creative approaches in measuring the impact of behaviour change to reduce emissions, for example; smaller businesses may have the opportunity to report over a 3 to 5 year interim rather than submit an annual measure. Interim timeframes in line with business cycles will create simplicity and encourage investment, and promote strategic planning.

The 2050 Climate Group believes transparency is key; however, we recognise the need to instill pragmatic and deliverable reporting mechanisms to promote widest engagement from businesses across Scotland. Therefore, flexibility for medium and SME businesses may be

required.

6. Do you agree that all emission reduction targets should be set on the basis of actual emissions, removing the accounting adjustment for the EU ETS?

N/A

7a. What are your views on allowing the interim and 2050 emission reduction targets to be updated, with due regard to advice from the CCC, through secondary legislation?

The 2050 Climate Group is strongly of the opinion that if emissions targets are to be updated, they must only be increased to achieve more ambitious greenhouse gas reductions. If targets are to be reduced, this must be done through primary legislation.

The Group support the proposal to allow targets to be updated through secondary legislation; however, any changes should be consulted upon and undergo parliamentary scrutiny. Reporting and monitoring of changed targets must remain consistent.

7b. What do you think are the most important criteria to be considered when setting or updating emission reduction targets?

The 2050 Climate Group supports the existing criteria and believe the criterion of ‘the objective of not exceeding the Scottish emissions budget’ is the most important to consider.

Science and equity must also be key criteria when setting or updating targets. Science-based targets should be pursued with appropriate urgency. Equity should take into account Scotland’s historical responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions as well as intergenerational equity.

8a. What are your views on the frequency of future Climate Change Plans?

N/A

8b. What are your views on the length of time each Climate Change Plan should cover?

N/A 8c. What are your views on how development of future Climate Change Plans could be aligned with Paris Stocktake Processes?

N/A

8d. How many days do you think the period for Parliamentary consideration of draft Climate Change Plans should be?

N/A

9. What are your views on the proposal that any shortfall against previous targets

should be made up through subsequent Climate Change Plans?

N/A

I0. What are your views on these initial considerations of the impact of the Bill proposals on Scotland's people, both now and in future generations?

The 2050 Climate Group believes that all policy must take a holistic view which recognises and protects the environment as well as social and economic welfare of the nation. The Bill has the potential to drive a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish and it

should be placed at the heart of achieving this. The 2050 Climate Group believes that achieving the ambitions in the Climate Change Bill must be delivered, not only to create a future we can survive in, but a future we can thrive in.

As an organisation run by young people for young people, the concerns of future generations and intergenerational equity are at the core of everything that we do and believe. Therefore, we believe that when we advocate for net zero emissions or ambitious climate action, we do so on behalf of our own futures and the livelihoods of future generations. One Young Leader explained:

“Young people also see the world in a different way to everyone else. While leaders around the world bury their heads in the sand over climate change, we are seeing it as an opportunity to change the world for the better. New ways of doing business, of working, communicating etc. We don't have blinkers on, a net zero target doesn't scare us, it excites us and motivates us to change Scotland and indeed the world for the better.”

The 2050 Climate Group notes the importance of mapping and mitigating the potential unintended consequences across society, economy and environment, created as a result of the Climate Change Bill. It is vital that environmental adherence does not run the risk of creating further poverty or social inequality. The true definition of the term ‘sustainability’ should be considered within the legislation, to ensure that social issues, alongside economic and environmental, are held in equal regard. Therefore, it is vital that the Scottish Government ensures incentives which are aligned to reduce any negative impacts and ensure Scottish businesses, individuals and all of society, and which will be supported in the delivery of the Climate Change Bill.

The 2050 Climate Group believes the positive impacts of this Bill will far outweigh any negative consequences. Further positive impacts may include:

1. The potential to increase Scotland’s energy security through a reduction in the need for imports of oil & gas, brought about by energy being supplied from renewable sources. 2. New technical challenges will provide opportunity to drive new businesses and business growth, skills and job creation. For example, electric vehicles, new forms and generations of renewable energy or new and improved forms of public transport are just some of sectors we believe will continue to grow in a decarbonised society. 3. There is strong potential for new jobs and economic opportunities arising from meeting the targets in the Bill, Scotland can maximise its benefit as a first mover through early actions, showcasing our expertise and becoming a global example of good practice. 4. Implementation of

the Bill will help empower individuals in Scotland to take action on their own part of Scotland's carbon footprint and promote wider engagement among the population. 5. Taking an ambitious and unapologetic stance on Climate Change will reinforce Scotland's voice as a Global Citizen and commitment to creating an equitable and happy, healthy society.

The wellbeing and livelihoods of the current young people of Scotland, and its future generations, depend on strong, positive climate action worldwide and the Climate Change Bill is the Scottish Government's key contribution to this. Ultimately, the 2050 Climate Group believes this Bill will play a fundamental role in achieving a more equitable and prosperous society. It is the responsibility of government to guide businesses and society, through progressive policy and funding, to embrace this change.

11. What are your views on the opportunities and challenges that the Bill proposals could present for businesses?

The 2050 Climate Group firmly believes the Climate Change Bill plays a central role in cementing Scotland as a leader in low carbon technologies. However, to ensure that Scotland is ready for a low carbon global economy, it is vital that the Scottish Government invests in low carbon industries and supports the transition to a sustainable society.

The 2050 Climate Group recognises any potential changes to Scotland's economy has the potential to have varying impact across different businesses and different sectors, creating winners and losers. It is therefore important to map out and consider the impacts on different industries, different sectors and different types and size of businesses to ensure that every part of Scotland's economy is able to make necessary reductions in carbon emissions and thrive in a low carbon economy.

The 2050 Climate Group believes it is vital the Government supports, advises and encourages businesses, particularly SMEs who may lack the resources and expertise, to tackle carbon emissions, and helps equip Scottish businesses for the future. The 2050 Climate Group believes more must be done to change the tone surrounding climate change, and promote the opportunities for business to make improvements to their existing operations.

The 2050 Climate Group believes further investment into sustainable businesses and industries, and further improving performance within Scotland's priority industries to increase environmental sustainability, will present an opportunity to create new jobs (e.g. in renewable energy, circular economy), and provide the workforces of future generations with skills and knowledge in low carbon industries. Scotland already has expertise in many key industries, for example renewable energy, and should aim to capitalise on this by positioning itself as a global

leader able to export technologies and knowledge for the future to other countries.

The 2050 Climate Group understands the potential financial benefits associated with adopting low carbon operations such as renewable energies and energy and resource efficiency. It is imperative businesses are made aware of these opportunities and supported in their transition to low carbon practices.

The 2050 Climate Group recognises that future generations will be most heavily impacted by climate change and the transition to a sustainable economy. Therefore, it is vital that the Scottish Government engage and cooperate with young people and the leaders of tomorrow in decision making around the opportunities for the low carbon economy in Scotland. Failing to do so risks alienating the next generation from the transition to a sustainable economy.

“What Scotland chooses to do now in terms of climate change will affect all young people now and in the future. Their health and wellbeing as well as quality of life will all be affected by climate change and therefore by the Bill. Stricter and more ambitious targets and proposals will help to mitigate climate change in Scotland and beyond, helping young people have a better standard of life now and in the future.”

Young Leader, 2050 Climate Group

I2a. What are your views on the evidence set out in the Environmental Report that has been used to inform the assessment process? (Please give details of additional relevant sources)

N/A

I2b. What are your views on the predicted environmental effects as set out in the Environmental Report?

N/A

I2c. Are there any other environmental effects that have not been considered?

N/A

I2d. Do you agree with the conclusions and recommendations set out in the Environmental Report?

N/A

I2e. Please provide any other comments you have on the Environmental Report.

N/A

I3. Please use this space to tell us any other thoughts you have about the proposed

II

Climate Change Bill not covered in your earlier answers.

“The proposals and targets are a step in the right direction, but I think that at present, they are perhaps a gross underestimation of the young people in this country's willingness to tackle climate change, innovate and pioneer. Give them something to take to the World in the future, with a far more ambitious bill that will make other countries and the World stand up and take note.”

Young Leader, 2050 Climate Group

It is crucial that Scotland provides strong and bold leadership in tackling climate change. To achieve this, it is imperative to ensure all voices are heard. In particular, the 2050 Climate Group believes young people should be provided with formal and informal spaces to be involved in decisions that impact Scotland's society, economy and environment today- and not only those issues that are considered to be the interests of young people. Our organisation endeavors to do this, working closely with the Scottish Government and other Government agencies, however we believe there is potential for more inclusion in decision-making.

Climate change action needs to be built into all aspects of society, with the aim of ensuring equitable impacts of climate change mitigation and adaptation, and in particular, to address existing social inequalities. To support this, the Bill should consider all options, including but not limited to sector-specific targets, tax measures on high emitters, and clear measures in public sector spending and budgets.

It is important for the Climate Change Bill to provide a positive narrative about climate change through the opportunities and positive impacts of climate change mitigation, beside the doomsday narrative of the catastrophic impacts of not acting on climate change. This includes, for example: business opportunities, attracting overseas investment to green technology, exporting expertise elsewhere and new highly skilled job opportunities.