

The Scottish Government
Climate Change Consultation
1-G North
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

17 March 2008

Dear Sirs

Climate Change Bill Consultation

We welcome the consultation paper, and the Government's commitment to set a target for an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050. Like most people we are worried by the increasing evidence of climate change, but equally like most people we are not scientists and find the complexity of the subject difficult to comprehend.

We see evidence of warmer winters, wetter summers, increasing storms, and serious reductions in the breeding success of Scotland's seabirds. These are happening now, and we wonder therefore whether it is enough just to set an overall target? We believe that there must be annual targets, whereby the process can be regularly and challengingly audited, and that these targets must be at least 3%. We further believe that the reductions must cover all greenhouse gases. We also believe that the legislation must require both central Government and Local Authorities to report annually on how they are meeting these targets.

Much work has been done by conservation bodies to demonstrate that these targets can be met, and in a way that does not cause further harm to the environment, but resources will have to be made available to achieve this on a substantial and meaningful scale. Increased investment will be needed for protected areas, both on land and at sea, and for more environmentally friendly management of the wider countryside. Working with nature, by preserving for instance our peat bogs which retain carbon stores, by reforestation with native trees rather than exotic species, and by restoring wetlands and floodplains to reduce the flow of flood water, will all help towards these targets, yet also provide a better environment and socio-economic improvements for local communities, as well as improve the attractiveness of Scotland as a tourist destination.

Whilst noting that the paper refers to Scotland as a minor player on the world stage, we also feel that this is an opportunity for the country to take a leading role at a time when the Government is trying to establish Scotland's credentials as a country in its own right. We have to accept that many relevant decisions are in the hands of Westminster, but we would for instance welcome proper taxation on aviation fuel and a new commitment to nuclear energy, and indeed the reinstatement of CEH Banchory, where there was so much expertise in terms of sea and climate change.

In summary, we believe that the Bill must deliver real greenhouse gas reductions, protect our environment, improve the life of our communities, and support the wildlife that is now so threatened by man's irresponsible developments over past years.

We are content to have our names made public if necessary.

Yours faithfully

Mr and Mrs M W Betts