

March 30, 2008

The Scottish Government Climate Change Bill Team 1-G North Victoria Quay Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ Scotland

To the Climate Change Bill Consultation Team:

Please accept my submission to the consultation on the Scottish Climate Change Bill.

In my opinion the Scottish Government's intention to introduce an 80% emissions reduction by 2050 is an absurdity. What "climate change" is it supposed to address? The possibility of a new ice age is just about as likely as the generally-touted scenario of global warming. I presume the Bill relates to the latter, but why rail against higher temperatures, which would surely be a good thing for a country like Scotland, given its cool, northerly situation?

My main objection to the 80% emissions reduction target is that it would be totally impossible without major technological breakthroughs. Any "go it alone" attempt by Scotland to meet such a target would be completely futile, yet horrendously expensive and potentially crippling to the economy. It is well documented that Kyoto will achieve a projected temperature reduction of a fraction of a degree by the end of the century, at vast expense. It will be impossible to reach full international agreement on such targets, as developing countries will not agree to hold back their economic growth and resultant poverty reduction. So why waste so much money and effort here in Scotland on even trying?

An alternative strategy would be to spend money and effort on adaptation to the effects of any climate changes, as and when they appear. If we are really concerned about the plight of developing countries, why not spend the money instead on increased aid, for example to reduce malaria which kills hundreds of thousands each year? Maybe this could be channelled through the Bill Gates Foundation or other such philanthropic agencies, which I'm sure achieve more cost-effective results than any government agency. A third prong would be to spend more on R&D into alternative power generation methods.

I agree that it would be beneficial to reduce our CO₂ emissions, not so much for alleged climate change reasons as for reducing our dependency on deserts in Russia and the Middle East for our oil and gas supplies. I would also support R&D spend on alternative technologies. I suppose tidal power falls into this category. However I am very dubious about wind power which is doubly expensive in that it is very capital-intensive and costly to install yet still needs conventional power station backup. The turbines also despoil the scenery, one of the main USPs of the Scottish tourist industry. It particularly grates that the Scottish Executive is ideologically opposed to the use of nuclear power in the face of its apparent worries about CO₂ emissions.

I am responding as an individual and agree for my name, but not my address to be made public.

Yours sincerely,