



INTRODUCTION

AEA is delighted to be able to submit a response to this vitally important Consultation process on the proposed Scottish Climate Change Bill. We recognise the need to address the harmful effects of climate change both through mitigation measures and to put in place adaptation measures to respond to the changes already occurring in our environment.

Within AEA we already play a key role in assisting address climate change issues and we offer a strong cross-sectoral adaptation expertise in energy, buildings, transport, health, water, agriculture and biodiversity. We have a complementary climate change mitigation and energy background, with expertise in carbon footprinting, carbon management, mitigation strategies and renewables. Having worked with clients at international, European, national, regional and local levels, we are part of an extensive adaptation network that involves key players in climate change.

We also provide UK and Scottish National Greenhouse Gas Inventories which are an essential element of monitoring progress in addressing climate change and which are also the key metrics by which the UK and Scottish Government demonstrate compliance with international protocols.

Moving forward and as the Bill progresses, we would be pleased to work with the Scottish Government to develop and enhance Scotland's aspiration to play a leading role internationally in taking action on climate change.

TARGETS

1. Should a Scottish target be based on carbon dioxide only or the basket of six greenhouse gases?

Using the six greenhouse gasses would represent a more meaningful Climate Change impact although we recognise this will make the 80% target even more challenging if all six gasses are to be taken into account. We recognise the limited measures available to reduce CH₄ or N₂O from agriculture.

The Climate Change Policy Options Study we undertook for the Government gives more detailed information on emissions reduction potential for the other greenhouse gases.

2. Should the Bill contain provisions to alter which gases are included, for example if the reliability of data for a particular gas improves or if science changes in the future about which gases cause climate change?

It would be sensible to be able to be responsive to new evidence and scientific advances, but this assumes key Government targets are retained.

3. The Scottish Government wishes to ensure that the Bill gives sufficient incentives to invest in energy efficiency and renewable electricity. Should the targets be based on source emissions; an end-user inventory; or on individual targets for energy efficiency and renewable electricity? Do you have any other suggestions?

The optimum response would be to consider all support options on a £ per tonne of carbon equivalent basis, as this would avoid picking “winners” or increasing the costs to the Scottish economy associated with Climate Change mitigation. However we note that Scotland has a role to play in achieving the UK’s targets for renewables deployment and it would make sense to set specific targets here. There are also potential benefits to Scottish Industry in establishing a strong renewables industry within Scotland.

4. Do you agree that the Bill should allow the means of measuring the target to be changed through secondary legislation to reflect international developments or unforeseen consequences of the Bill?

It would be logical to retain a degree of flexibility but it is essential that future Governments are tied into long term saving targets.

5. Should the emissions reduction target take account of the abatement effort made by companies under emissions trading schemes? If so, how?

Good practice should be rewarded however unsure as to the mechanisms by which this would be done.

6. Do you agree that international credits should be counted towards Scottish targets? Should there be limits on credits counted towards Scottish targets?



If Scotland is to be a leader in Climate Change action then there can only be limited reliance on international credits.

7. Should the Bill allow the level of the 2050 target to be changed through secondary legislation? If so, should this only be allowed on the basis of independent, expert advice, to reflect international developments or unforeseen consequences of the Bill? Should any changes to the target be limited to an increase in the target?

No response.

SUPPORTING FRAMEWORK

8. What factors should be taken into account when setting the level of budgets?

The key factors for consideration here are the abatement potential of sectors and the relative costs of abatement action. The Marginal Abatement Cost Curves (MACCs) being developed for the UK Committee on Climate Change could be adapted to the Scottish situation. It would also be worth giving consideration as to whether stricter targets in early years would be advantageous or whether they would lead to a technological lock-in.

9. How long should interim budget periods be?

To be consistent with the UK and international periods there should be 5-year budget periods.

10. How many years in advance should emissions budget periods be set in order to provide sufficient time to develop infrastructure?

We would suggest that they should be set out every 5 years to 2050 with an option to change if required.

11. What should be the limit (in terms of absolute quantity or as a percentage of the budget period) on the amount of emissions which the Government can borrow from a following budget period?

We would suggest that there should be no banking or borrowing and that actual figures should be reported.

12. Should the Bill include an interim point target? If so, what year (or years) should it be for (2020, 2025, 2030, etc.)? How should the level be chosen?

A 2020 target would fit best with other national and European targets. However we can see benefits in setting a shorter term target.

REPORTING SCRUTINY AND FRAMEWORK

13. Should the Scottish Ministers be required to report on any other issues related to climate change in addition to the requirements already set out. If so, what and how often?

The Scottish GHG Inventory is a good basis for emissions reporting but it requires further development to reduce uncertainties. However, climate change should be a cross cutting agenda and therefore all Government departments should play their role in addressing Climate Change issues.

14. Is a process of Parliamentary scrutiny the appropriate way of holding the Scottish Government to account if targets or budgets are not met?

We would agree that this is an appropriate way forward.

15. What should be the primary source of advice to the Scottish Government for setting emissions targets or budgets and why? Options include: the proposed UK Committee on Climate Change, a new Scottish Committee on Climate Change, an existing public body in Scotland, or the Scottish Government itself.

We suggest the UK Committee on Climate Change rather than setting up new Scottish body, but we would expect that issues specific to Scotland should be properly addressed.

16. If it were to be an existing Scottish public body, which public body is most suited to carrying out this task and why?

N/A

17. Which organisation should be tasked with monitoring the progress of the Scottish Government on reducing emissions and why? Options include: the proposed UK Committee on Climate Change, a new Scottish Committee on Climate Change, an existing public body in Scotland, or the Scottish Government itself.

This depends on what level of scrutiny is required? The National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) should provide the basic numbers to compare with targets, but if policy effectiveness, responsibilities etc need to be scrutinised then more effort will be needed by some body. It may be appropriate that the Scottish Government Climate Change Team monitor and report on this.

18. If it were to be an existing Scottish public body, which public body is most suited to carrying out this task and why?

N/A

19. Should additional independent mechanisms for scrutinising the effectiveness of the Scottish Government's policies in reducing emissions be created by the Bill (in addition to any scrutiny already provided by the Scottish Parliament)?

No, because whoever scrutinises the results should be subject to audit by an appropriate independent organisation.

20. If so, which organisation is best placed to carry out this function and why? Options include a new Scottish Committee on Climate Change or an existing public body in Scotland.

N/A

21. If it were to be an existing Scottish public body, which public body is most suited to carrying out this task and why?

N/A

22. Are there any other functions related to climate change, existing or new, which should be carried out at arm's length from the Scottish Government and why?

N/A

SUPPORTING MEASURES

23. Should the Bill contain enabling powers to introduce a duty on certain parts of the public sector (i.e. local authorities and large public bodies) to take specified actions on climate change or other specified environmental issues? Why?

We would suggest yes. While not major contributors themselves to emissions, public bodies play a key leadership role and can make significant in-roads on their own emissions and emissions from their geographic area, through a wide range of policies and projects, from procurement to building management and in other areas such as transport and public engagement.

24. What should such a duty (or duties) include?

The duty could include the development and publication of a local inventory to inform target setting and policy development, giving guidance to appropriate local action.

25. Should the Bill contain enabling powers to introduce statutory guidance for certain public sector bodies (i.e. local authorities and large public bodies) on specified climate change or other environmental measures? Why? Are there gaps in any existing guidance?

Yes the Bill should set a level playing field within which public bodies can operate, showing leadership and effecting change. Common recording and understanding of Climate Change data should also be a statutory issue. Without statutory guidance there is a danger that in some public bodies responsibility for this important area will fall between departments thereby reducing action.

26. What should this guidance include?

There should be guidance on the development and monitoring of local Inventory data to allow Local Authorities to set policy, monitor progress and actively engage with their Community Planning Partnerships, as well as others to bring about change.

27. Should the Bill contain enabling powers to create a requirement for certain public sector bodies (i.e. local authorities and large public bodies) to make regular reports on specific measures they are taking to tackle climate change (whether mitigation or adaptation) or other environmental issues? Why? What should be included in such reports?

Yes all major public bodies should have a duty to present Climate Change Action Programmes, outlining policy responses and targets in line with National ambitions, in order that they can regularly report on progress.

28. As a potential non-legislative measure, should current Best Value guidance be amended to take specific account of climate change mitigation and adaptation? If so, how should Best Value guidance be amended?

We agree that it does have potential but only if it is audited regularly and resources are dedicated to building understanding of how climate change can be tackled from all areas of service delivery. The sustainability element of Best Value hasn't delivered as much change as it potentially could and therefore this should not be replicated with Climate Change.

29. Are there any amendments to existing legislation or any enabling powers needed to allow for variable charging (for example by local authorities) to incentivise action or eliminate perverse incentives?

Good practice should always be encouraged and where appropriate rewarded, there is therefore a case for variable charging and creating an incentive for others to effect changes on practices which address Climate Change issues.

30. Are there any provisions to help Scotland adapt to the impacts of climate change which should be included in the Scottish Climate Change Bill?

No response.

31. Should provisions within the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, be amended in order to provide clearer links with emissions reduction? If so, how should this be done?

We would agree and recognise the need to ensure that Climate Change issues are reviewed in Strategic Environmental assessment and Environmental Impact Assessments.

32. What are the equalities implications of the measures in the proposals for the Scottish Climate Change Bill?

No response.

33. Is there any existing legislation within the competence of the Scottish Parliament (devolved) which needs to be amended so that appropriate action on climate change can be taken by sectors in society?

No response.