

# Scottish Greenhouse Gas Statistics

Proposal to change the emissions categories used in the statistics release.

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## Outline of proposal

The purpose of this short paper is to seek the views of users of the Scottish Greenhouse Gas Statistics publication<sup>1</sup> on a proposal to alter the emissions-categories used throughout this publication.

This publication has, for many years, presented emissions data by sector using a unique categorisation in charts and tables which differs from the categories typically used by other nations. It is proposed that, for the next release these categories are changed to “National Communications” categories. We believe that this change will confer a number of benefits:

1. National communication (NC) categories are the standard categories used by the UK in their statistics release and also feature in the UK’s submissions of greenhouse gas emissions to the UNFCCC<sup>2</sup>. As a result, we believe that adopting these categories will ease comparison of Scottish emissions to the UK for most users.
2. NC categories adhere more closely to the emissions categories used in the Scottish Government’s Climate Change Plan<sup>3</sup>. As a result, we believe adopting NC categories as the headline measure will provide an easier means for users to track progress against Scotland statutory emissions-reduction targets.
3. As many users will be aware, the UK and Scottish inventories will soon be revised to include a range of additional emissions associated with the historical drainage and rewetting of peatlands. This is a substantial change in the scope of the Scottish GHG inventory and we anticipate that this will lead to an increase in net land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) emissions in the order of around 7 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per annum over the whole historical time-series. As things stand, this change will be spread over a number of emissions categories (forestry, development and agriculture). Aggregating these emissions under the standard NC “LULUCF” category will simplify their presentation.

We completely understand that any change in published statistics will cause concern for some users. In order to alleviate such concerns, it is proposed that we continue to release the full GHG inventory in spreadsheet format<sup>4</sup> which will allow users to create custom tabulations of the data to the categories currently used, in addition to a range of alternative classifications if they so wish. We will also consider a range of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-greenhouse-gas-emissions-2017/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/NationalReports/Documents/19603845\\_United%20Kingdom-NC7-BR3-1-gbr%20NC7%20and%20BR3%20with%20Annexes.pdf](https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/NationalReports/Documents/19603845_United%20Kingdom-NC7-BR3-1-gbr%20NC7%20and%20BR3%20with%20Annexes.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-governments-climate-change-plan-third-report-proposals-policies-2018-9781788516488/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/statistics/2019/06/scottish-greenhouse-gas-emissions-2017/documents/scottish-ghg-dataset-2017/scottish-ghg-dataset-2017/govscot%3Adocument/scottish-ghg-dataset-2017.xls>

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additional standard tables using the current emissions categories as an annex to the next publication if there is sufficient demand from users.

## What changes are proposed?

The following section will characterise the impact of this proposal upon users of the greenhouse gas statistics upon users of the main statistics release.

Table 1: Scottish GHG emissions in 2017. Correspondence between existing GHG categories and proposed national communications categories.

| Existing emissions category                               | National communications category |          |               |                                     |                    |        |        |             |           |                  |             |
|---|----------------------------------|----------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|--------|--------|-------------|-----------|------------------|-------------|
|   | Agriculture                      | Business | Energy Supply | International Aviation and Shipping | Industrial Process | LULUCF | Public | Residential | Transport | Waste Management | Grand Total |
| Agriculture and Related Land Use                          | 7.6                              |          |               |                                     |                    | 2.1    |        |             |           |                  | 9.7         |
| Business and Industrial Process                           |                                  | 8.1      |               |                                     | 0.6                |        |        |             |           |                  | 8.7         |
| Development   |                                  |          |               |                                     |                    | 2.0    |        |             |           |                  | 2.0         |
| Energy Supply   |                                  |          | 6.0           |                                     |                    |        |        |             |           |                  | 6.0         |
| Forestry  |                                  |          |               |                                     |                    | -9.5   |        |             |           |                  | -9.5        |
| International Aviation and Shipping                       |                                  |          |               | 1.9                                 |                    |        |        |             |           |                  | 1.9         |
| Public Sector Buildings                                   |                                  |          |               |                                     |                    |        | 1.1    |             |           |                  | 1.1         |
| Residential   |                                  |          |               |                                     |                    |        |        | 6.0         |           |                  | 6.0         |
| Transport (excluding international aviation and shipping) |                                  |          |               |                                     |                    |        |        |             | 13.0      |                  | 13.0        |
| Waste Management  |                                  |          |               |                                     |                    |        |        |             |           | 1.7              | 1.7         |
| Grand Total   | 7.6                              | 8.1      | 6.0           | 1.9                                 | 0.6                | -5.4   | 1.1    | 6.0         | 13.0      | 1.7              | 40.5        |

The above table shows the relationship between the current emissions categories and the NC categories. The rows show Scotland's emissions in 2017 using the current categories, whilst the columns show these same emissions using the proposed NC categories.

The table shows that most of the current emissions categories will not change. However, changing to NC categories will entail that:

1. 2.1 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e of emissions associated mainly with croplands and grasslands will be recategorised from agriculture and related land use to LULUCF;
2. Business and industrial processes are split into separate categories;
3. Forestry, development and the aforementioned agricultural land categories will be combined into a single LULUCF category.

We appreciate that the latter means a loss of statistical resolution in headline results, and this may be unwelcome for some users, despite the above promise to continue

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to publish the full database of emissions. For this reason, we will consider requests for a breakdown of the LULUCF category in the published tables favourably, for example by providing a separate table in the publication which provides further detail on the LULUCF component.

## Questions for users

We are keen to receive feedback on any aspect of the statistics publication although we would appreciate it if users could give us their views on the following specific points.

1. Do you agree with the proposal to adopt the NC categories in the publication?
2. Will this change cause any problems/issues in your use of these statistics?
3. If yes, what additional materials could we make available to mitigate any problems?

Please send feedback by 4 May to:

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