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28 September 2019

Central Edinburgh
Quaker Meeting

..., MSP
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh EH99 1SP

Action on climate emergency

Dear ...,

Earlier this year Edinburgh Interfaith Association circulated civic leaders on the subject of Climate Disruption. We understand that there has been a disappointing lack of response.

Since then the UK government has proposed to amend the Climate Change Act 2008 to end the UK's contribution to climate change over the next 30 years and the Scottish Parliament has passed the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill, which aims to make Scotland a net-zero emitter of CO₂ by 2045.

Scotland's First Minister is also urging Scotland to go "further and faster" in tackling climate change and set its target five years ahead of the UK as a whole. A few month's ago the Scottish Government published an analysis of consultation responses to the Climate Change Adaptation programme. Some responses requested a greater sense of urgency in the proposals for action, and many asked for additional policies to be brought forward in the adaptation programme.

In their letter the Edinburgh Interfaith Association said that much more needs to be done to address the climate emergency. We agree. Amongst the many policy areas which are within the remit of the Scottish Government to enhance we would like to offer some examples:

- Ten conservation organisations have written to Scotland's First Minister proposing a five-point plan to deliver net-zero carbon emissions by 2045 through woodland expansion and other nature-based programmes.
- Transport is a major emitter of pollutants, the Scottish Government should work towards decarbonising fuels used by passenger and freight transport by road, rail, sea and air on journeys within Scotland. For a number of years the 'Switched-on Scotland' programme has been working to almost complete decarbonisation of the road transport sector by 2050. This programme should be stepped up to achieve an earlier completion date and broadened to cover other modes of travel within the Scottish Government's remit.
- Scottish Government, authorities and agencies, and Scotland Excel should work towards reducing food-miles when setting up catering contracts, be it in schools, hospitals, prisons, care homes, workplaces, etc. "Recipe for Success" is now ten years old but food-miles ap-

pears not to be amongst the criteria used when selecting food suppliers. Most chicken sourced by local authorities still comes from abroad, often Thailand, some turkey and beef is sourced from Brazil. The Rural Economy Secretary has been quoted as saying that of the £150m spent on procuring food in the public sector the amount sourced in Scotland has increased to 48%. That means 52% by value could be queried. Additionally, the Scottish Government Produce public guidance on sustainable, climate-friendly, healthy diets.

- In their extensive report on 'Zero Carbon Britain: Rethinking the Future' the Centre for Alternative Technology identified three areas where reductions in emissions must be particularly sought; one of these is improved energy efficiency in our existing building stock and infrastructure. The disparity between the energy efficiency of new buildings and existing building stock is increasing. Better heating controls in existing buildings and changes to behaviour will reduce average internal temperatures. Insulation (and ventilation) of existing buildings also need to be retrofitted too. All buildings should be brought to at least EPC Band C by 2030 and zero-carbon by 2045.

Last month the Climate Emergency Response Group set out a 12-point-plan of measures it wants the Scottish Government to consider. The Scottish Government refers to this 12-point plan in its 'Programme for Government 2019-2020 – Protecting Scotland's Future'. The government document describes itself as containing the first package of additional measures that it will take in response to the climate emergency. As the Edinburgh Interfaith Association said in their letter, much more needs to be done to address the climate emergency.

Humankind is author of this dire situation and, as an MSP, you can help to take immediate, direct action to safeguard the future of our planet and avert mass extinctions.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Williams, David Sterratt

Clerks to Central Edinburgh Quaker Meeting