Friends of the Earth Scotland has today (Monday 23 April 2012) released the results of a YouGov poll showing that Scots overwhelmingly support the transition to renewable energy and want to see Scotland move away from the use of gas and coal to produce household electricity.

Releasing the poll results in the run up to Donald Trump’s appearance at the Scottish Parliamentary inquiry into Scotland’s renewables targets later this week, the organisation states that Donald Trump’s well-publicised anti-renewables stance is ‘completely out of step with Scottish public opinion’.

Stan Blackley, Chief Executive of Friends of the Earth Scotland, said:

“Scotland is uniquely placed to lead the transition to a renewables-based energy future and it is clear that this move has enormous public support. This poll shows that the carbon dinosaurs who want to build new thermal power stations, and ill-informed doom-mongers such as Donald Trump, are completely out of step with Scottish public opinion.”

The poll reveals that almost nine out of ten Scots (88 percent of those polled) support reducing Britain’s reliance on imported gas and coal for the production of household electricity, and instead want to see an increase in the amount of electricity produced from domestic renewable sources, such as wave and tidal, wind and solar.

When they were asked which three specific sources they would most like to see providing their household electricity in ten years time, the most popular choice amongst those polled was wave and tidal (chosen by 71% overall, with 32 percent of first choices), the second most popular choice was wind (chosen by 65% overall, with 18 percent of first choices) and the third most popular choice was solar (chosen by 57% overall, with 15 percent of first choices). Coal and gas received only 2 percent of first choices respectively.

The poll also shows that the majority of Scots (73 percent of those polled) believe that their household electricity is already produced in Scotland, and 82% think that it should be produced in Scotland in the future. 46 percent of those polled opposed increasing the number of any new gas-fired power stations across Britain.

Stan Blackley, Chief Executive of Friends of the Earth Scotland, added:

“This poll shows that the vast majority of Scots want to move away from dirty gas and coal powered electricity generation that relies on expensive, imported fuel and have their household electricity produced in Scotland through clean, safe and renewable methods in the future, especially wave and tidal, wind and solar power.

“Recent figures released by the Scottish Government show that 35 percent of Scotland’s electricity demand in 2011 was met from renewable sources, and this figure is set to increase in the coming years as more renewables devices come on-stream. We are convinced that Scotland will achieve its target for 100 percent of electricity demand to be supplied from renewable sources by 2020 and this poll
makes it clear that the overwhelming majority of Scots want this and will welcome this when it happens.”

There is currently 7 Gigawatts of renewable projects operational, under construction or consented in Scotland, and it is estimated that Scotland has enough capacity operational and in the planning system to meet up to three quarters of its electricity demand. Furthermore, there is a pipeline of 17 Gigawatts of renewable electricity projects – nearly three times peak Scottish demand.

Friends of the Earth Scotland
23 April 2012