Dear Paul,

**Low Carbon Scotland: A Behaviours Framework and the draft Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme**

The Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee has been scrutinising two separate pieces of work by the Scottish Government in relation to climate change. The first is the *Low Carbon Scotland: A Behaviours Framework* which was published to support the Scottish Government’s *Low Carbon Scotland: Meeting our Emissions Reduction Targets 2013-2027* - *The Draft Second Report on Proposals and Policies* document (RPP2). The second is the Scottish Government’s draft *Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme* (the draft programme) which has an overall aim of increasing the resilience of Scotland’s people, environment and economy to the impacts of a changing climate.


As part of its scrutiny the Committee took evidence from stakeholders on 25 September\(^4\), 9 October\(^5\) and 30 October\(^6\) and heard from you on 6 November\(^7\) which further informed its views.

The purpose of this letter is to outline the views of the Committee regarding the Behaviours Framework and to outline the issues it believes require consideration by the Scottish Government when finalising its Climate Change Adaptation Programme. The detailed views of the Committee are attached in the Annex to this letter.

The Committee looks forward to receiving a response from you and understands the Scottish Government plans to use the information obtained from its consultation, the Chamber debate and the views of the RACCE Committee to inform the final Adaptation Programme. The Committee looks forward to receiving this in due course.

Yours sincerely

Rob Gibson MSP  
Convener

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\(^4\) Scottish Parliament Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee. *Official Report 25 September 2013*  


\(^7\) Scottish Parliament Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee. *Official Report 6 November 2013, Col 2224.*
Low Carbon Scotland: A Behaviours Framework

Areas of consideration

The Committee considered the Behaviours Framework in the context of its RPP2 scrutiny.

ISM Tool

The Committee heard from stakeholders that the Scottish Government’s ISM Tool represents a welcome shift in emphasis from focusing on behaviour change and the individual to reflecting the broader context in which behaviour takes place. Stakeholders believed the ISM Tool was a suitable mechanism to take forward what is often a complex area. However, the Committee also heard that the ISM Tool should be more prominent within the RPP2 and that it should be used in the consideration of every RPP2 policy and proposal.

The Committee was interested to receive an update on the progress of the roll out of the ISM Tool throughout all Scottish Government departments and to local authorities. The Committee notes that two local authorities are currently deploying the ISM approach. The Committee was pleased to hear that the 2020 climate group was also trialling the ISM approach with the 2020 businesses which have signed up to the group’s transport pledges.

The Committee welcomes the shift to a more holistic approach and welcomes the roll out of the ISM tool to all Scottish Government Departments and to local authorities. The Committee encourages the Scottish Government to continue supporting the roll out to all local authorities and the Committee will seek regular progress updates from the Minister on the roll out of the ISM Tool.

The Committee believes the ISM tool should be more prominent within the RPP2 and encourages the Scottish Government to apply the ISM approach to considering how all the policies and proposals in the RPP2 are implemented.

Engagement and leadership

Much of the evidence heard by the Committee expressed strong support for the role that the public sector plays in delivering low carbon behaviour change, however witnesses identified the need to enable action at an appropriate scale and promote conversations between different bodies to help foster innovation. The Committee also heard that knowledge and understanding is developing in local authorities and across the public sector but there is still some way to go.

Stakeholders spoke of the importance of community engagement in influencing behaviour change and of how people are often motivated and influenced by what is happening in their own community and by what other people are doing. The Committee heard of the importance of making the appropriate tools available to community leaders to enable them to effectively communicate the correct messages, recognising that people can have different motivators for action.
The Committee recently received a letter from the Minister on his intention to establish a Public Sector Climate Leaders Forums and an invitation to the Committee to have representation on the Forum. The Committee has agreed Claudia Beamish MSP will be its representative.

The Committee agrees that leadership must be demonstrated by everyone, from Ministers in the Scottish Government, public sector organisations and private businesses, to local communities.

The Committee welcomes the establishment of the Public Sector Climate Leaders Forum and urges the Scottish Government to provide strong support to public sector bodies to help them promote practical action on low carbon behaviours.

The Committee also welcomes confirmation that Scottish Government officials are working with the Climate Challenge Fund on how the ISM approach could be used to benefit community groups.

Behaviour change areas and assessment of progress

The measurement and assessment of the level of progress in each of the 10 behaviour change areas was also of interest to the Committee, particularly since Scotland failed to meet the 2010 and 2011 annual climate emissions reduction targets. However, the Committee heard concerns that the Framework does not establish specific targets for each of the behaviour areas.

The Committee is of the view that a failure to set specific and measurable targets will mean that the Government will find it difficult to assess the required level of progress in each area.

The Committee also heard evidence that in order to make significant progress we need to bring the 10 behaviour change areas together, to ensure they are not considered in isolation and to present low carbon living as the new norm.

The Committee agrees that the on-going work in relation to advertising and marketing campaigns coupled with the continuous programme of social research to monitor the success these have in changing behaviour is important.

The Committee considers that more could be done with regard to setting targets and assessing progress. The Committee encourages the Government to establish and monitor specific targets for each of the behaviour change areas, as it believes that this is necessary to enable effective evaluation of progress. The Committee also encourages the Government to consider the behaviour change areas holistically, to ensure they are not viewed in isolation, but are intrinsically linked, to give further consideration to the presentation of low carbon living as the new norm.

A specific question was raised by the Committee in relation to the progress being made by the agricultural sector and the Minister undertook to provide the Committee with the most recent figures for that sector. The Committee looks forward to receiving this information.
*Educating young people*

The Committee was pleased to hear from stakeholders on the work of an Advisory Group to the Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland’s Languages. The Committee understands the Advisory Group has made recommendations on how the school system could be reoriented to put sustainability at the heart of education and these recommendations have subsequently been taken on board. The Committee is also aware that Learning for Sustainability Scotland is currently working with the General Teaching Council (Scotland) to roll out relevant training to Scotland’s teachers.

The Committee heard from stakeholders of the positive values young people share, and of their knowledge and passion in relation to their communities, climate change and the environment. The Committee understands that 98% of local authority schools are currently participating in the eco schools programme and the Committee heard that the education system can play a key role as a lever for change, as children take what they have learned home, and pass the messages on to their parents and grandparents.

The Committee recognises the value that educating young people has in changing behaviour and how this can also encourage young people to become active in their communities. The Committee recommends that the Minister works with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning to explore how the behaviour change programme could also be reflected in the curriculum.

*Media*

The importance of the role of the media in influencing behaviour was highlighted by stakeholders. The Committee heard that the media, including local and social media, is one of the main influences on our values and attitudes and can also be influential in how people become involved in their local communities. The Committee is also aware of the importance of the media, in particular the broadcast media as an effective tool for campaigns to deliver messages to initiate and support behaviour change.

The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government continues to utilise the broadcast media and also gives consideration to the broad range of media approaches available to it to support communication of the behaviour change message.

*Draft Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme*

*Areas of consideration*

*General*

The Committee heard evidence from stakeholders welcoming the mainstreaming that had been carried out by the Scottish Government to prepare the draft Adaptation Programme. The Committee is pleased to hear that the Minister holds regular
bilateral meetings with his ministerial colleagues on this issue. The Committee understands that, in addition to integrating adaptation measures within Scottish Government policies, the ultimate aim is to facilitate partnership working across organisations, business, the public sector and individuals to improve understanding of and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The Committee welcomes the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation across Scottish Government departments and the recognition that a wider approach extending this to other bodies and organisations is also necessary.

The move to an integrated approach was also welcomed by stakeholders, although disappointment was expressed that the draft Programme only provides a five year programme of objectives. Some stakeholders believe a much longer term approach is required if we are to be successful in building Scotland’s resilience to climate change, while others spoke to the Committee about the difficulties of long term planning due to uncertainty. Stakeholders highlighted the necessity to consider the different range of possible climate futures and stressed the importance of recognising and planning for uncertainty to help reduce the potential impact of any loss of confidence people may have in making resilient decisions when faced with an uncertain future.

The Committee heard that further clarity is needed across all three Programme themes with regard to project timescales, budgets and responsibility for development and implementation. Stakeholders felt it was not always clear in the draft Programme where project finance is already secured or is still required, who the lead organisation in implementing the project is and, where a project is set to extend beyond the five year life span of the Programme, how progress will be monitored.

The Committee welcomes the confirmation provided by the Minister that the Scottish Government continues to be committed to do what it can to contain increases in global surface temperature to less than 2°C. The Committee believes that the final Programme must enable people to make resilient decisions with confidence despite the uncertainty of climate changes we may face.

The Committee urges the Scottish Government to provide clarity on issues around project timescales, budgets and responsibility for development and implementation and on how progress will be monitored and assessed when the lifespan of a project exceeds five years. The Committee also recommends that the final programme takes a longer term view and, where possible, assists stakeholders to develop longer term approaches.

Monitoring and assessment

The Committee heard there is a lack of clarity as to what is being put in place to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the adaptation Programme and it would be helpful if the objectives were as outcome focussed as possible. Stakeholders stressed the importance of monitoring and assessment processes being built into the strategy at the start and not added on once the policies are in place. In addition the Committee heard that the draft programme needs a much stronger focus on targets, whether they are aspirational or fixed targets. This view was expressed by a number
of stakeholders who believed that while the draft adaptation Programme provides a good starting point and overall structure it needs to go further and include greater clarity on how the outcomes of the final Programme will be achieved.

The Committee understands that an independent assessment must be commissioned within two years of the Programme being laid before the Scottish Parliament and notes that the UK Climate Change Committee is currently designated to perform this independent scrutiny role for the Scottish Programme.

The Committee welcomes confirmation from the Minister that he agrees it is crucial to develop indicators which effectively measure progress towards the aims and objectives of the Programme. The Committee acknowledges the Scottish Government’s wish for the Programme to be a document which will evolve over time and one that can be updated where necessary. However the Committee recommends that the Minister takes on board the views of stakeholders that the final Programme should include a stronger focus on targets and set out a robust monitoring and evaluation framework.

The Committee understands the difficulties faced by those seeking to make adaptations when the evaluation and effectiveness of a strategy or programme is reported on significantly after the event. The Committee welcomes the commitment of the Minister to engage with local authority partners on how best to provide real time information.

Resilience and response to emergency situations

The Committee heard how the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) is making adaptations in response to climate change. The Committee also heard how long term planning was being applied when new assets are purchased and how the experience of recent flooding events has led to improved working between the Service and partnership agencies in response to predictions and flood warnings. The Committee understands the Service aims to ensure, using the information available to it through SEPA, that it has the right resources in the right place at the right time.

Some witnesses believed that a more regional approach was required and the Committee was encouraged to hear of instances where emergency services were working in partnership with local volunteers such as mountain rescue teams and where local authorities worked with farmers to clear roads of snow.

The Committee recognises the work of all emergency and volunteer services and that, in addition to responding to extreme weather events, they also continue to respond to requirements of their daily business at the same time.

The Committee considers local partnerships are vitally important in helping build the resilience of local communities. The Committee notes that the draft Programme provides an overarching framework to enable local strategies for partnership working between the emergency services and local volunteers to be developed. The Committee agrees with the point made by stakeholders that extreme weather is everyone’s problem and a collective approach is required in order to meet the challenges presented to us in the future.
The Committee heard from stakeholders of the interdependencies between power supplies and the emergency services where, for example, an extreme weather event impacts on a source of power supply and the emergency response is consequently compromised. The Committee also heard evidence of power companies working together in such situations.

The Committee understands that the power supply industry is currently working with the Met Office to assess and monitor how the weather is likely to impact on its key assets, to enable it to minimise disruption to its operational activities. At the same time the industry is looking at how it can make its assets more resilient and how they can be strengthened and reinforced, particularly in areas that are vulnerable to the impacts of weather. The Committee also understands that the industry is taking a proactive approach to building resilience into the design process for new infrastructure, with the aim of seeking to minimise the potential for disruption to power services.

The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government explore the scope for the final Programme to be more explicit on the support to be provided to enable and sustain the development of regional partnerships between emergency and volunteer services, and the importance of engaging with the power industry.

The Committee recognises the significant role of the utilities in ensuring that communities and businesses are resilient to climate change. The Committee welcomes the proactive approach of the power industry, which has already taken steps to improve how it responds to climate change.

**Infrastructure and the built environment**

The Committee sought the views of stakeholders on how well the draft Programme addresses the concerns raised by the UK Committee on Climate Change, in 2011, about how adequately climate change impacts were considered in infrastructure decisions in Scotland, particularly in renewables and broadband developments and in the siting of new developments and infrastructure.

The Committee heard that the draft Programme could perhaps better reflect a number of plans that had already been prepared by businesses at a UK level for particular sectors such as water and energy. Stakeholders agreed that the final Programme could be strengthened by setting out how the planning process could be used to embed adaptation and the forthcoming work on the National Planning Framework 3 and the revised Scottish Planning Policy would allow further opportunity for this to occur.

The Committee explored the impact that climate change poses to Scotland’s transport system and heard there are three principal risks - flooding, landslips and high winds, all of which can impact on transport and connectivity. Concern was also expressed that a number of the critical national infrastructure networks, such as transport, energy and information and communication technology are concentrated in strategic corridors and, as such, are exposed and vulnerable to extreme weather events and landslips. It was also noted that under such circumstances the speed and effectiveness of any emergency response is then likely to be compromised. In
addition, this could also impact negatively on the ability of businesses and the public sector to demonstrate continuity and could impact on the resilience of local communities.

The Committee was encouraged to hear that the Minister has regular meetings with the Minister for Local Government and Planning and has discussed how policies could be adapted to take greater account of the need to deliver on climate change issues. The Committee recommends the final Programme is strengthened by setting out how the planning process could be used to embed adaptation.

The Committee will also consider climate change issues as part of its own scrutiny of the National Performance Framework 3.

The Committee encourages the Minister to ensure that the final Programme gives consideration to the impacts of climate change on the siting of new developments and new infrastructure, particularly in relation to the renewable energy programme and broadband roll out.

In relation to the built environment section of the draft Programme stakeholders were generally of the view that this was strong and that good progress had been made in relation to new builds. However, stakeholders recognised that there is a challenge in relation to adapting existing buildings and in ensuring the related skills base is sufficiently developed in order to be able to adapt older buildings to make them resilient to climate change. The Committee was interested to hear stakeholders views on how the concept of adaptation could be included in routes to professional qualifications and could support capacity building in the construction sector. Similarly the Committee heard that the Scottish Government had previously set up an initiative to train postgraduate hydrologists in response to the introduction of flood legislation.

The Committee believes that it is important we have the correct mix of skills to enable successful adaptation to climate change and welcomes the commitment of the Minister to discuss this issue with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning and to consider how this could be addressed. The Committee looks forward to receiving an update on the outcome of these discussions.

Business

The Committee heard from stakeholders that many of Scotland’s key economic sectors such as food, drink, tourism and energy, are sensitive to the climate and to the global nature of Scotland’s economy. This means there is also the potential for exposure to international impacts of climate change which needs to be considered. The importance of the sustainability of supply chains which are critical to businesses in Scotland was raised and this view was supported by the suggestion that the final Programme could be strengthened in line with other countries’ adaptation plans to help protect the supply chains for businesses, including airports and telecoms, from the impacts of extreme weather events.
The Committee heard specific evidence on the benefits of local and shorter agricultural and aquaculture food supply chains in supporting a successful adaptation programme. Stakeholders agreed on Scotland’s great potential to develop these supply chains, with the appropriate support in place.

The Committee also heard concerns about the potential vulnerability of small and medium enterprises to climate change and extreme weather events and while the work of the 20/20 climate group is positive stakeholders were of the view that more attention needs to be given to smaller businesses.

The Committee recognises the difficulties that can occur as a result of extreme weather events and recommends that the Scottish Government ensures that the potential international impacts of climate change are taken account of in the final Programme. The Committee also recommends that the Scottish Government reviews and, if necessary, updates existing maps to show alternative road and rail routes that could be used by businesses and individuals.

The Committee welcomes the Minister's acknowledgement of the importance of the agri-food sector and the wider food supply chains and the importance of seeking to shorten supply chains. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government works with stakeholders such as Nourish Scotland, to strengthen the final Programme in this area.

The Committee recognises the potential vulnerabilities of small and medium sized businesses and urges the Scottish Government to ensure that the final Programme reflects the need to provide strong and targeted support to assist such businesses in adapting to climate change.

The Minister undertook to look into the legal position on how the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Bill may be able to assist Scotland in maximising its opportunities and report back to the Committee, the Committee looks forward to receiving this information.

Agriculture and forestry

In respect of farming and the agricultural sector the Committee heard that climate change is already impacting and farmers are struggling to keep pace with the changes. Growing seasons have changed and farmers have to adapt what they grow because extreme weather events are making potentially higher profit crops more risky to plant.

The Committee heard concerns around climate change escalating the problem of invasive non-native species (INNS) in both agriculture and aquaculture environments. The Committee also heard that there is a willingness amongst farmers to make changes, however stakeholders were concerned that the knowledge transfer and financial incentives to allow them to do so were not available. Farmers want to know what they can do to retain their farms in good condition and to help their neighbours and the local community. The Committee heard of the need for practical guidance, which might involve incentives, to make it easier for farmers to make the necessary changes.
Stakeholders pointed out the importance of the Future Proofing Programme being delivered by the Soil Association and the SRDP in getting the practical, on the ground work done and how this needs to be in place to enable farmers to see what other people are doing and to understand what is achievable for them. The Committee heard that it was important that these programmes and those such as Farming for a Better Climate were properly resourced and the SRDP and CAP made user friendly.

The Committee recommends that the Minister undertakes an evaluation of the extent to which the SRDP has delivered multiple benefits, for example for biodiversity and for climate change adaptation. The Committee also urges the Scottish Government to ensure that all of the programmes it runs that could help support climate change adaptation are user friendly and adaptable.

Concerns were also raised with the Committee about the vagueness of the draft Programme on some of the agricultural policies such as CAP, where all it mentions is that the CAP reform will be implemented.

The Committee also considered the importance of the agricultural industry taking action to adapt its current practices to help tackle climate change and build resilience. It heard from stakeholders that for this to be successful both knowledge transfer and financial incentives are required.

The Committee recognises that the agriculture industry has a responsibility to ensure that process of food production does not exacerbate the effects of climate change.

The Committee recommends that the section on agriculture and forestry is strengthened in the final Programme to provide clearer guidance on what implementing the reform of CAP will mean in practice and to ensure that support measures aimed at increasing the resilience of Scotland’s food system are explicit.

The Committee heard that one of the biggest challenges facing the forestry industry is the loss of confidence people have suffered in relation to making resilient decisions for the future. Stakeholders also made the point that when looking at the agricultural industry it was important to also look at forestry as decisions could have impacts for both. Stakeholders identified the three main risks for forestry as wind, pests and diseases. The Committee heard that people are being encouraged to take a more diverse approach than before, to adapt to the uncertainties faced by the sector, however to do that, research and funding to support diversity needs to be in place. The Committee heard that research into agroforestry is underway and it is to be discussed in the context of the next SRDP. Stakeholders also told the Committee about the practical work that had been undertaken to provide information and advice to farmers on agroforestry as part of the future proofing farming programme.

The Committee notes the research that is underway in relation to agroforestry and welcomes future updates on the progress of the research from the Minister. The Committee also notes the importance of information and of providing people with knowledge to enable them to make resilient decisions in the face of a changing climate. The Committee recommends that the final
Programme provides support for people in making decisions for the longer term.

*Land use and the natural environment*

The Committee is aware of the multiple benefits of strong, healthy ecosystems and good environmental management and of the importance of ensuring the resilience of both the ecosystems themselves and the decisions of the people managing them. The Committee is also aware of the challenges of defining what a healthy ecosystem is and how it can best be achieved in the face of competing demands and conflicting interests.

The Committee urges the Scottish Government to look at what more can be done in the final Programme to reflect the multiple benefits and opportunities available from strengthening Scotland’s ecosystems.

*Marine Environment*

The Committee heard that 18% of Scotland’s coastline is highly susceptible to erosion and given the sea level rise we are facing we need to target these areas of the coast carefully to help ensure they become more resilient to climate change. The Committee was interested to hear from stakeholders of some small scale work that is being trialled in this respect. A concern was raised with the Committee that in some coastal communities there are local partnerships that have operated on a voluntary basis for some time and the formation of river management boards has since made it unclear who is responsible for what and how work can be supported. Stakeholders asked for a resolution on this. Witnesses also raised concerns about the lack of clarity with regard to what bodies are responsible for what action when faced with challenges or when responding to events.

The Committee welcomed clarification from the Minister that the assessment of the risk of coastal erosion is an area that is actively being considered by the Scottish Government, as is how best to protect vulnerable coastal communities. The Committee looks forward to receiving an update on this work.

The Committee notes that the development and update of the marine atlas plan is taken into account in the draft Programme and it welcomes the Minister’s confirmation that funding is in place to allow this to happen. The Committee asks the Minister to confirm where in the Scottish Government’s Draft Budget 2014-15 this funding can be found.

In addition to the challenges mentioned above in relation to INNS, the Committee heard of how other current challenges faced by the aquaculture industry such as sea lice, escapes, amoebic gill disease, algal blooms etc. will all be exacerbated by climate change. The Committee heard of the importance of looking at all these issues together and how a joined up approach is required to promote the aquaculture industry and maintain the welfare of all relevant species.

It also heard that one of the obvious impacts of climate change is the migration of species into new climate spaces so we are likely to see species of fish move to
follow the changing temperature of the marine environment. The Committee heard of the uncertainty around whether the current regulatory framework and trade agreements are flexible enough to cope with changes in the fishing industry that may be caused by climate change.

The Committee agrees on the importance of the aquaculture industry to Scotland and welcomes the Minister’s commitment that the challenges faced by the industry will be addressed through sectoral approaches such as the Ministerial Group on Sustainable Aquaculture. The Committee welcomes future updates from the Minister on how this work is progressing.

Communities

The Committee heard evidence about the physical demands climate change can place on our communities and the interdependencies in the impacts on infrastructure. One example given was how school closures during bad weather can have a knock on effect on NHS services, as staff need to stay at home to look after their children. The Committee was keen to ensure that individuals and local communities are being supported to actively engage in delivering the objectives of the draft Programme.

The Committee understands that as part of the consultation on the draft Programme the Scottish Government has received representations from various interest groups and is seeking to ensure messages on adaptation are relevant to individuals. The Committee also understands the Climate Challenge Fund is being modified to facilitate community level adaptation approaches which will help communities deliver adaptation approaches and to communicate the importance of adaptation. The Committee understands the importance the Scottish Government is placing on keeping schools open to increase a community’s resilience during extreme weather events.

The Committee welcomes the work that is already on-going in relation to community resilience and recommends that the final Programme contains ways of supporting and developing local community resilience planning.

Flooding

The Committee heard a great deal of evidence in relation to flooding and the impact it has on communities, farms and business. The Committee was pleased to hear about the extent of the work being carried out by the Scottish Government, SEPA and Scottish Water to produce local flood risk plans that can be used to target resources strategically to reduce flood risk throughout Scotland. The Committee was especially interested to hear of SEPA’s work in developing and administering the new flood warning schemes alongside its partners, including local authorities, the emergency services and the Met Office. The Committee understands the flood warning scheme allows information to be available earlier which will enable others such as the emergency services, local authorities and local communities to respond sooner to predicted flooding events.

As part of its on-going monitoring of flood risk issues, the Committee has been made aware, from previous incidents of flooding, of the damage that can occur to
businesses, farms, communities and vulnerable members of society and takes the issue very seriously.

The Committee looks forward to receiving SEPA’s flood risk and hazard maps, which have been delayed but are now due to be published at the end of this year, and will continue to monitor this issue.

The Committee understands the Scottish Government has also recently published a report, *Flood Disadvantage in Scotland: mapping the potential losses in wellbeing*, which sets out the impact of flood risk on vulnerable communities and looks at issues at a domestic level.

The Committee welcomes the publication of the report on flood disadvantage in Scotland and the Minister’s commitment that the Scottish Government will reflect on the report and prioritise its investment to help those who are most vulnerable. The Committee looks forward to receiving an update from the Minister on how this is being taken forward.

*Social justice*

The Committee understands that the groups in a community that would be severely affected by climate change are those who have been identified as vulnerable, such as the elderly, the very young and the sick. The Committee heard of the work of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on climate justice and the disproportionate impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable.

The Committee also heard that the draft Programme does not adequately reflect issues associated with vulnerability and equity. Stakeholders were concerned in relation to the social dimensions of environmental change and the vulnerability issues faced by communities and individuals, and in particular those on low incomes. The Committee heard that it is not clear how threats and potential opportunities in these areas are covered in the draft Programme.

The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government ensures that the social justice aspects of the adaptation Programme are given more weight in the final Programme. The Committee welcomes the commitment from the Minister to take a lead on ensuring the vulnerability of communities and the social justice dimension of climate change impacts are addressed and awaits the Minister’s response on these issues.