Written Submission from Stop Climate Chaos

14 September 2016

Dear Cabinet Secretary, Convener,

I am writing to you both to follow on from the correspondence between you about the timing of the publication of Scotland’s Climate Change Plan, the third report on proposals and policies, required by the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

I understand from your correspondence that the Climate Change Plan will be published at the start of January. Within the civil society movement that is Stop Climate Chaos Scotland we are very much looking forward to seeing the draft plan published. We would like to warmly welcome the timing of publication that you have agreed, increasing as it does public engagement and parliamentary scrutiny of the document.

We look forward to continuing to engage with you both, as well as your colleagues, to develop a strong Climate Change Plan that puts in place the policies that ensure Scotland progresses to a positive zero-carbon future.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Ballantine
Chair of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

Summary of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland priority proposals for the Climate Change Plan

1. Invest in active travel

The Scottish Government should commit a minimum 10% of the overall transport budget to supporting active travel by 2020. As well as encouraging walking it would help deliver the commitment to 10% of journeys in 2020 being made by bike. Transport is responsible for around a quarter of Scotland’s emissions; a shift to active travel would reduce emissions, cut pollution and improve public health.

2. Cross-city cycle highways

A duty on Local Authorities to build at least one cross-city cycle route per city should be introduced, as part of a package of wider measures to support improvement of cycling infrastructure.

Cycling is an important lever in reducing car travel, and therefore emissions. Investing in cycling infrastructure makes it easier and safer for people to travel by bike.

3. No reduction to Air Passenger Duty (APD)

Air Passenger Duty (APD) should be maintained at least at current levels when powers are devolved to Scotland. Aviation is the most carbon intensive form of travel, and cutting APD would be inconsistent with Scotland’s ambitious climate
targets. The Scottish Government should work towards developing a fair taxation framework for aviation that reflects aviation’s social and environmental impact.

4. Improve the energy efficiency of all Scotland’s homes

Scotland’s new energy efficiency programme should support all homes to achieve an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of at least a ‘C’ rating by 2025, through a mixture of public funding, loans and minimum energy standards. Improving energy efficiency carries many benefits; saving an estimated 1 million tonnes of CO₂ a year by 2025, while lifting homes out of fuel poverty, improving public health and creating jobs.

5. Solar Homes

A new planning requirement should be introduced to require the installation of solar technology in new buildings, domestic and commercial, to be maximised. A reliable and established method of technology, each domestic solar system saves approximately 1 tonne of CO₂ every year. The policy could save 1.5 million tonnes of CO₂ by 2030, while creating jobs and saving consumers money on energy bills.

6. Low carbon heat networks

A regulatory framework should be introduced, through the proposed Warm Homes Bill, to support the much more rapid growth of district heating in Scotland. Heat accounts for over half of Scotland’s emissions, yet only 4% of our energy for heating currently comes from renewable sources. District heating can reduce emissions by 0.4 million tonnes CO₂ per year, while also reducing heating costs and supporting jobs.

7. Sustainable farming

A package of advice, incentives and regulatory measures to cut emissions from farming should be introduced by 2018. With rural land use currently accounting for 25% of Scotland’s emissions, support for sustainable farming can reduce emissions across the sector while providing additional benefits such as flood mitigation, river quality and biodiversity.

8. Increase renewable energy for heat, transport and electricity

The Scottish Government should set a new target to source at least 50% of Scotland’s total energy use across heat, electricity and transport from renewable sources by 2030 - up from 13% today. This could save 9.3 million tonnes of CO₂ across power, heat and transport by 2020.