



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND LAND REFORM COMMITTEE

AGENDA

4th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5)

Tuesday 31 January 2017

The Committee will meet at 10.00 am in the Robert Burns Room (CR1).

1. **Decision on taking business in private:** The Committee will decide whether to take items 4, 5 and 6 in private.
2. **Draft climate change plan (RPP3):** The Committee will take evidence from—
 - Richard Dixon, Director, Friends of the Earth Scotland;
 - Dr Rachel Howell, Lecturer in Sustainable Development, School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh;
 - Andy Kerr, Executive Director, Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI), University of Edinburgh;
 - Fabrice Leveque, Climate and Energy Policy Officer, WWF Scotland.
3. **Petitions:** The Committee will consider the following petitions—
 - PE1601 by Andy Myles on European beavers in Scotland
 - PE1615 by Logan Steele on State regulated licensing system for gamebird hunting in Scotland.
4. **Draft Climate Change Plan (RPP3):** The Committee will consider evidence heard earlier in the meeting.
5. **Deer Management in Scotland:** The Committee will consider evidence heard at its last meeting.
6. **Commission for Parliamentary Reform:** The Committee will consider its response to the Commission for Parliamentary Reform.

ECCLR/S5/17/4/A

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The papers for this meeting are as follows—

Agenda item 2

Draft Climate Change Plan RPP3 Cover Note

ECCLR/S5/17/4/1

PRIVATE PAPER

ECCLR/S5/17/4/2 (P)

Agenda Item 3

PE1601 cover note

ECCLR/S5/17/4/3

PE1615 cover note

ECCLR/S5/17/4/4

Agenda item 5

Deer Management in Scotland Cover Note

ECCLR/S5/17/4/5

Agenda item 6

PRIVATE PAPER

ECCLR/S5/17/4/6 (P)

PRIVATE PAPER

ECCLR/S5/17/4/7 (P)

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee**4th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5)****Tuesday 31 January 2017****Draft Climate Change Plan (third report on policies and proposals, RPP3)****Introduction**

1. At its meeting on 20 September 2016, the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee agreed its approach to consideration of the Scottish Government's forthcoming draft Climate Change Plan.

2. This paper outlines the background to, and contents of, the draft Climate Change Plan (third report on policies and proposals also known as RPP3), as well as the details of the approach to Parliamentary scrutiny of the document.

Background*Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009*

3. The [Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#) (the Act) was passed by the Scottish Parliament in June 2009. This provides a statutory framework to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in Scotland by setting the following targets:

- Interim target of 42% reduction (from 1990 levels) by 2020¹ with the power for this target to be varied based on expert advice
- 80% reduction (from 1990 levels) by 2050

4. To help ensure the delivery of these targets, the Act also requires the Scottish Ministers to set annual targets for Scottish emissions from 2010 to 2050.

5. Under section 35 of the Act, a statutory report on proposals and policies is required, setting out how the Scottish Government proposes to meet its climate change targets. A draft version of this report must be laid in the Scottish Parliament for consideration and the Parliament has 60 days within which to complete this review.

First report on policies and proposals

6. The first such [report \(RPP1\)](#) was laid in November 2010. The draft RPP1 was structured around a number of chapters covering energy supply, homes and communities, business and the public sector, transport, rural land use and waste. Proposals and policies for meeting annual climate change emission reduction targets were identified for each chapter.

¹ On 25 May 2016, the First Minister [confirmed legislation will be introduced](#) to increase this target to reflect ambitions developed at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) in October 2015. The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform has [written](#) to the Committee on Climate Change seeking renewed advice on the 2020 interim target.

Parliamentary consideration of the draft RPP1

7. The draft RPP1 was considered by the Transport Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee (TICC), which had responsibility for scrutinising climate change matters in Session 3. Although other Committees were involved in consideration of the report, the timescale for considering and reporting was challenging and meant not all those Committees with a remit in the matters covered by the report were able to engage fully in the scrutiny.

8. The [final Scottish Government report \(RPP1\)](#), incorporating changes as a result of parliamentary scrutiny, was laid in March 2011.

Second report on policies and proposals

The draft second report on proposals and policies (RPP2) was published on 30 January 2013 and focused on how the climate change targets for 2013-2027 could be achieved. The report was structured around chapters focusing on: the background and development of the report: energy; homes and communities; business, industry and the public sector; Transport; waste and resource efficiency; rural land use and; monitoring progress and impacts.

Parliamentary consideration of the draft RPP2

9. In seeking to apply the lessons learned in scrutinising the draft RPP1 and to further strengthen the mainstreaming of climate change scrutiny, the Parliamentary committees with an interest in the draft RPP2 adopted a coordinated approach to scrutiny of the draft RPP2.

10. The [final Scottish Government report \(RPP2\)](#), incorporating changes as a result of parliamentary scrutiny, was published on 27 June 2013.

Draft Climate Change Plan (Draft third Report on Policies and Proposals, also known as RPP3)*Focus and scope of the draft Climate Change Plan (RPP3)*

11. The [draft third report on policies and proposals](#) was published on 19 January 2017 following a Ministerial Statement from the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform in the Scottish Parliament. It focuses on how the climate change targets for the period 2017-2032 can be achieved. In addition it includes an assessment of the progress towards implementing policies and proposals in respect of the targets set out in the RPP2.

Parliamentary procedure for consideration of the draft Climate Change Plan (RPP3)

12. Parliament has a period of 60 days, from the date of laying, in which to consider the draft Climate Change Plan (of which a minimum of 30 must be days on which the Parliament is not dissolved or in recess). It is open to any Committee to consider relevant aspects of the draft Climate Change Plan (RPP3) and report to Parliament, after which there will be a debate in the Chamber.

13. Before laying the final report before Parliament, Scottish Ministers are required to have regard to:

- any representations on the draft report made to them;

- any resolution relating to the draft report passed by the Parliament; and
- any report relating to the draft report published by any Parliamentary Committee.

14. The final Climate Change Plan must identify the changes (if any) that have been made in response to such representations, resolutions or reports and the reasons for those changes.

Approach to scrutiny of the draft Climate Change Plan

A co-ordinated parliamentary approach

15. Building on the experience of collaborative scrutiny of the RPP2, four Committees have agreed a joint approach to reviewing the draft Climate Change Plan (RPP3). They are:

- [Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee](#)
- [Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee](#)
- [Local Government and Communities Committee](#)
- [Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee](#)

16. The Convener of the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee wrote to the Conveners of the [Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee](#), [Local Government and Communities Committee](#) and the [Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee](#) proposing a collaborative approach be adopted. The Committee received a [formal response](#) from the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee indicating it was content to proceed as proposed.

17. The approach agreed is:

- each subject committee will take the lead in scrutinising policies and proposals within its remit;
- participating committees will issue a joint call for views and will work as collaboratively as possible in relation to stakeholder communications, engagement and on media work;
- to maximise the time available for scrutiny each committee will take evidence and report separately to Parliament on issues within their remit;
- committees will seek to lodge a motion in the names of the conveners of all committees who reported on the draft RPP3 for the Chamber debate.

Subjects and themes

18. The Committees have agreed to scrutinise the parts of the report aligned to their remits. These are:

- **ECCLR** – Overview, development of RPP3, climate change governance, (including monitoring and evaluation), water, resource use, land use (including peatlands and land use by the public sector) and behaviour change;
- **EFW** – Electricity generation, reducing energy demand, renewable energy (renewable electricity and renewable heat) and interconnection and grid issues and fuel poverty;
- **LGC** – Local government, planning and housing;
- **REC** – Rural affairs, agriculture, forestry, and transport.

19. The Committees have agreed to focus their scrutiny on four key questions:

- progress to date in cutting emissions within the sector/sectors of interest and implementing the proposals and policies set out in the RPP2;
- the scale of reductions proposed within their sector/s and appropriateness and effectiveness of the proposals and policies within the draft RPP3 for meeting the annual emissions targets and contributing towards the 2020 and 2050 targets;
- the appropriateness of the timescales over which the proposals and policies within the draft RPP3 are expected to take effect;
- the extent to which the proposals and policies reflect considerations about behaviour change and opportunities to secure wider benefits (e.g environmental, financial and health) from specific interventions in particular sectors.

Timetable for consideration of the draft Climate Change Plan

20. The Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee will be considering the draft Climate Change Plan according to the following timescales:

19 January 2017 Draft Climate Change Plan published and the call for evidence launched

24 January 2017 Evidence from Scottish Government officials on the overview of the plan, development and structure of the plan, and climate change governance (including monitoring and evaluation) - the official report of this meeting is [available here](#).

- 31 January 2017** Evidence from stakeholders on development and structure of the draft climate change plan, overall ambition of the plan, behavioural change and climate change governance (including monitoring and evaluation issues).
- 7 February 2017** Evidence from stakeholders on resource use, the water industry, public sector, peatlands and land use.
- 10 February 2017** Call for evidence closes
- 21 February 2017** Evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, Roseanna Cunningham, on the overview of the draft Climate Change Plan, evidence heard to date and the proposed Climate Change Bill.
- 28 February 2017** Consider draft report (private)
- 7 March 2017** Agree draft report (private) and publish alongside the reports of other Committees by 10 March
- Wk beginning 13 March** Chamber Debate

Evidence

Written Evidence

21. A [joint call for evidence](#) was issued on 19 January 2017 with a closing date set for 10 February 2017. Stakeholders and the public have been asked to respond to specific committees as appropriate.

22. Written evidence received in advance of this meeting from Friends of the Earth Scotland can be found at **Annexe A**.

Oral Evidence

23. The ECCLR Committee has three meetings in which to consider evidence on the draft Climate Change Plan. It has agreed that three stakeholder evidence sessions are held over two meetings followed by an evidence session with the Cabinet Secretary at a further meeting.

Briefing and background work on the draft Climate Change Plan

24. A SPICe briefing on the draft Climate Change Plan is expected to be published on Friday 27 January 2017.

25. In relation to Climate Change, SPICe previously published a briefing providing an overview of the subject in May 2016: [SB 16-41 Climate Change: Subject Profile](#)

26. The Scottish Government has produced several briefings on development of the draft Climate Change plan on:

- [Scottish Government approach to the development of plan](#)
- [TIMES Model](#)
- [Behaviours and the ISM tool](#)
- [Climate conversations \(engagement with stakeholders\)](#)

Next Steps

At its meeting on 31 January 2017, the Committee will take evidence from:

- Fabrice Leveque, Climate and Energy Policy Officer, WWF Scotland;
- Andrew Kerr, Executive Director, Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI), University of Edinburgh;
- Dr Richard Dixon, Director of Friends of the Earth Scotland;
- Dr Rachel Howell Lecturer in Sustainable Development, School of Social and Political Science, The University of Edinburgh.

Clerks

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Written Submission from Friends of the Earth Scotland**Evidence to the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee
Submitted - 25th January 2017****Overall**

The Climate Change Plan is the product of a very large amount of work and contains many welcome measures, as well as painting an attractive vision of a future Scotland as a low-carbon country. However, delays caused by the use of the TIMES model and political trade-offs have led to a Plan which sometimes lacks detail, has had limited external input and is overly reliant on technological changes rather than more fundamental change. The monitoring framework is still being developed but there is insufficient information to interrogate Scotland's financial budget.

Development and structure of the Climate Change Plan

Scottish Government civil servants have put in many long hours to produce the Climate Change Plan (CCP). We have had regular, useful contact with climate civil servants over many months, including a detailed seminar on how the TIMES model works. The use of the TIMES model has been helpful in exploring options and highlighting which sectors need to do more. This is a better approach than that of RRP1 and 2. However the TIMES model took much longer to get up and get running than expected and therefore delayed and derailed plans for more extensive stakeholder engagement.

The multi-stakeholder event held in December was of limited value since it was at a very late stage in the process, after many policy options had already been eliminated for technical or political reasons. Perhaps because it was delayed, there was poor attendance from the most senior civil servants, unlike the similar event for RPP2, which attracted almost every Director General.

The complexity of getting the TIMES model up and running meant that the original intention of including a sophisticated transport modeling component was not delivered. This would have been able to choose to substitute car journeys with other more sustainable transport choices. Instead Transport Scotland used their own model, with the starting assumption that there would be nearly 25% more car km driven in 2035 than today, and no increase in the use of buses. TIMES was only able to suggest making these vehicles electric rather than seeking alternatives to the level of traffic envisaged. Transport is the largest-emitting sector of the economy and leaving the choice of policy options almost entirely to the road-building, car enthusiasts in Transport Scotland is a key weakness of the CCP process.

Also in transport, much reference is made to the report commissioned from Element Energy on technological solutions to transport's climate emissions. It has been referred to in meetings and is mentioned a number of times in the CCP. It has been said to be being 'published soon' for a number of months now.

The CCP is logically structured but in some areas oddly lacking in detail of how a particular policy outcome will be delivered. For instance there are no policy outcomes listed in the tables for agriculture beyond 2025. While the Plan cannot be expected to have all the answers, there are many areas where how to deliver outcomes is left to a future discussion, e.g. table 8-7.

Overall ambition of Climate Change Plan

On the one hand the ambition of the CCP must be exactly what is needed, since it is designed to add up to delivering the climate targets agreed by the Scottish Parliament last October. On the other hand, there is insufficient numerical detail to be sure that it does add up, in some sectors there is a large question over how and whether the proposed policy outcomes will be delivered and in a number of areas, particularly transport, technical fixes are supposed to save us and so more difficult policies, are not discussed.

The 2009 Act required Scotland's emissions to reduce by at least 3% every year from 2020. The table below (and graphs in the Appendix) show that the highest-emissions sectors - transport, agriculture and industry - have been and are proposed to continue to be the sectors which make the least fair contribution to these percentage reductions. It is no coincidence that these are politically 'difficult' sectors. It is in these high-emission sectors that the credibility of the plan is most important and it is in these sectors that further reductions should be sought.

Sector	2014 emissions	Annual change ave 1990-2014	Annual change ave 2014-2032
Transport	12.9	-0.1%	-1.3%
Agriculture	10.7	-1.0%	-1.4%
Industry	10.4	-2.0%	-0.8%
Electricity	9.8	-1.3%	-4.5%
Residential	5.9	-1.0%	-3.0%
Services	3.4	0.5%	-3.9%
Waste	2.2	-3.1%	-3.1%

Achieved and predicted annual reductions by sector, highest-emissions sectors first; figures in red are less than the 3% overall target required across all sectors

There were several discussions with civil servants about replicating the RPP2 approach of listing the carbon reductions associated with each individual proposal and policies. Whilst these numbers were often quite approximate in RPP2 the TIMES model will have produced very precise estimates of the impact of each policy in each year - these figures exist; we are just not being told what they are. It is hard to see how anyone can have certainty that the document adds up to meeting the targets

when this information is lacking. Similarly, it is hard to see how progress on the plan will be properly measured when it is not clear how much any given policy was supposed to have delivered by a certain date.

Even where technical fix measures are desirable and necessary the proposals look weak in terms of international comparisons. For instance, the Plan envisages that 40% of all new cars will be ultra-low emissions by 2032. Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and Norway are all discussing or committed to targets of 100% by 2025 or 2030. In another example, a previous SNP transport minister promised that every rail line in Scotland would be electrified; at the rate suggested in the transport chapter this would take until 2140.

Climate change governance

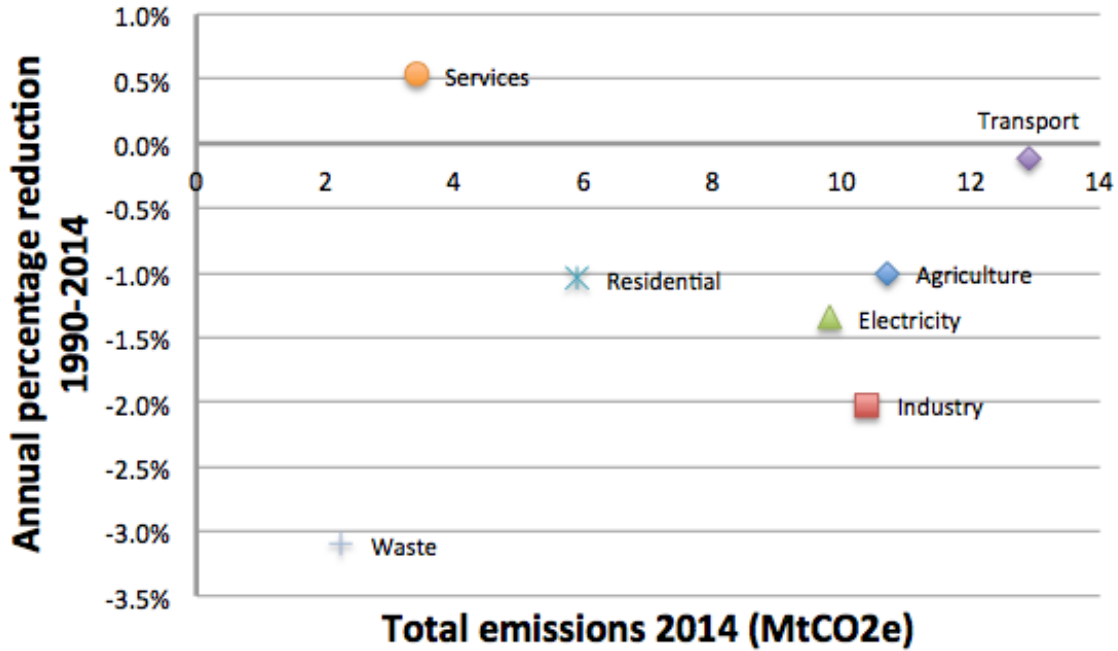
The Plan contains a chapter on monitoring and evaluation with sensible principles and aspirations, with a final monitoring framework due in 2018. Because of the lack of specific carbon abatement numbers attached to each proposal and policy, as mentioned above, the framework proposes to measure a range of outcomes, outputs and indicators, and report annually. It is not clear what status this report will have, nor when it will appear in relation to the annual targets figures, the 2009 Act §33 annual report to Parliament or the financial budget cycle. There is no commitment for a statement to Parliament and it may be up to Committees to make the most of this information.

It is not possible to tell from the CCP when and how much expenditure is required to deliver policies. So the predecessor Committee's criticism that it is not possible to work out whether the annual financial budget includes the funding needed to deliver on climate policies has not been addressed.

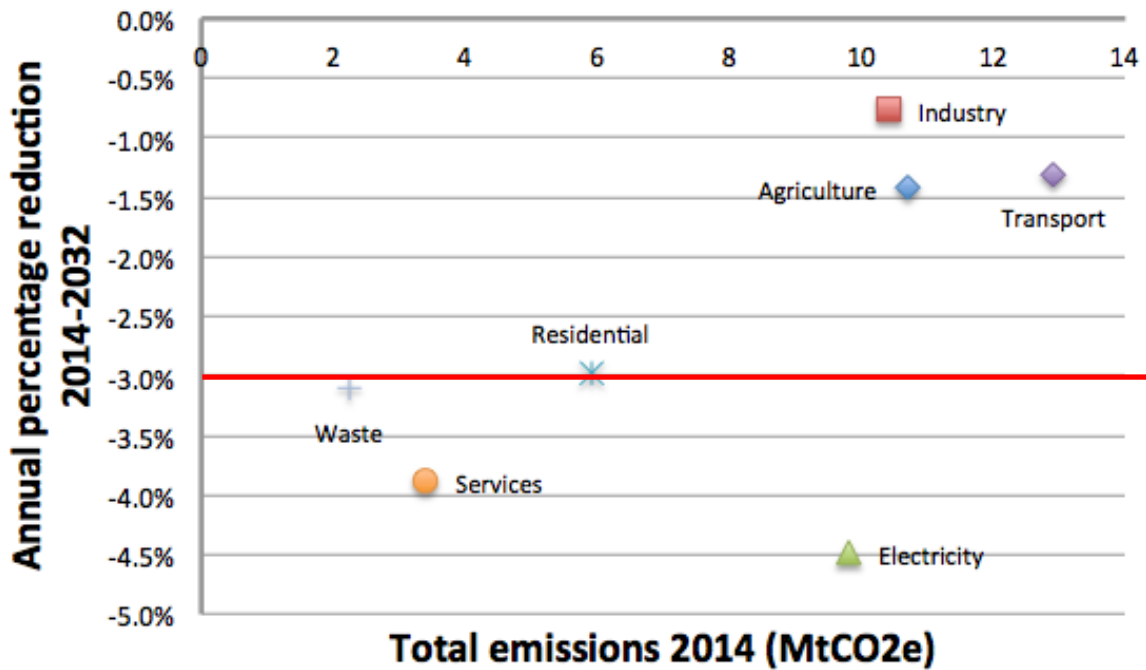
There is a new governance body proposed but no detail of who will sit on it nor what public scrutiny it will be open to. It is not clear that the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Climate Change will continue to exist.

Appendix

Actual annual sectoral reductions 1990-2014 vs total emissions



Predicted annual sectoral reductions 1990-2032 vs total emissions



Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

4th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5)

Tuesday 31 January 2017

PE1601: European beavers in Scotland

Background

1. Petition [PE1601](#), from Andy Myles, was lodged on 20 March 2016. It calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to make an urgent decision about the legal status of the two populations of European beavers in Scotland, and to extend the full protection of law to the species.

Public Petitions Committee consideration

2. At its meeting on [29 September 2016](#), the Public Petitions Committee (PPC) agreed to refer the petition to the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee.

3. The PPC had previously written to the Scottish Government to seek its views on the petition and to request a timetable for when a decision on the legal status of the two populations of European beavers in Scotland will be made.

4. The Scottish Government's response on [3 August 2016](#) referred to the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform's evidence to the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee on [28 June 2016](#) that a decision on the reintroduction of European beavers will be made by the end of 2016.

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee consideration

5. At its meeting on 25 October 2016 the Committee agreed to [write to the Cabinet Secretary](#) to seek an update on when the decision on the legal status of the two populations of European beavers might be made. The Committee also asked some specific questions on what work was being undertaken by the Scottish Government in advance of that decision.

6. Prior to responding to this letter, the Cabinet Secretary announced on 24 November that the Scottish Government is:

“...minded that the beaver populations in Knapdale in Argyll and in the Tay and Earn catchments can remain in Scotland. The decision is subject to satisfactory completion of a Strategic Environmental Assessment and a Habitats Regulations Assessment which can now be undertaken. The intention is that beavers in Scotland will be given protection under the law as a European Protected Species as soon as is practicable after completion of the Assessment processes.”

7. The Cabinet Secretary [wrote to the Committee on 28 November](#) where she reaffirmed the Scottish Government's decision while answering the Committee's specific questions on the issue.

8. At its meeting on 20 December 2016, the Committee agreed to [write to the Cabinet Secretary](#) to request an update on the timetable for extending protection to European beavers and ask what work would be done to conserve beaver populations prior to this legal protection. The Committee also agreed to [write to the petitioner](#) to ask whether, given the Scottish Government's announcement, he saw any requirement for the petition to continue.

9. In the [Cabinet Secretary's response](#), she said that while a Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) to add beavers to Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 could come into force as early as March 2017, it was more likely that this would happen in June of this year. In the interim period, Ms Cunningham confirmed that the Scottish Government could make use of Nature Conservation Orders should "evidence emerge that welfare concerns for beavers were being ignored". The Cabinet Secretary also advised that Scottish Natural Heritage would work with stakeholders to "develop solutions and mitigation measures" if they are affected by beaver activity.

10. The petitioner Andy Myles has (by telephone on 24 January 2017) confirmed that given the Scottish Government's announcement in November he saw no requirement for the petition to continue. However, Mr Myles requested that the Committee continues to scrutinise the work being done by the Scottish Government in formally protecting beavers as well as scrutinising the operation of the resultant management system.

For decision

11. The Committee is invited to consider whether it wishes to formally close the petition; notwithstanding that it will scrutinise the forthcoming SSI and may also wish to monitor its subsequent implementation.

Clerks

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

4th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5)

Tuesday 31 January 2017

PE1615: State regulated licensing system for gamebird hunting in Scotland

Background

1. Petition [PE1615](#), from Logan Steele on behalf of the Scottish Raptor Study Group, was lodged on 22 August 2016. It calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to implement urgent action to introduce a state regulated system of licensing of gamebird hunting, that addresses the potentially adverse environmental impact of gamebird hunting, provides for the revocation or amendment of licences where a licence-holder fails to comply with their terms and conditions, and to implement the recommendations of the Review of Wildlife Crime Penalties in Scotland.

Public Petitions Committee consideration

2. At its meeting on [8 December 2016](#), the Public Petitions Committee (PPC) agreed to refer the petition to the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee.

3. The PPC Committee had previously [taken evidence on 27 October 2017](#) from the petitioner Logan Steele and representatives from RSPB Scotland and the Tayside Raptor Study Group, who are also both members of the Scottish Raptor Study Group. To help “ensure fairness and balance”¹, the PCC Committee also [took evidence on 8 December 2016](#) from two groups who did not support the petition: the Scottish Moorland Group and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation.

Summary of oral evidence from the PPC Committee

4. While the full transcript of both evidence sessions can be found on the [PPC Committee’s webpage](#), a selection of this evidence is provided below:

- Logan Steele, petitioner
“We are not against game bird shooting and have no wish to ban it; we are just against the illegal elements of it. ... We have seen prevarication, obfuscation and leadership failings by the landowning and game representative interests. ... There is an overwhelming body of science from the RSPB and SNH, the Government’s statutory conservation body. There is also compelling evidence and intelligence on where the crimes are occurring. ... The golden eagle is the equivalent of Scotland’s tiger, and it is being grubbed out on grouse moors, which damages Scotland’s image in the world and affects green tourism and the wider rural environment. ... We maintain that no other land use or industry is allowed to behave in this way. We have established that, in countries where game bird hunting is better regulated,

¹ Public Petitions Committee. *Official Report*, 10 November 2016, Col 26.

intensive game bird hunting systems are not permitted and there is far better compliance with wildlife and environmental protection laws. That is why we are calling for the licensing of game bird shooting to be introduced.”

- Duncan Orr-Ewing, Head of Species and Land Management, RSPB Scotland
“The problem is systematic and endemic, and it is clear that those organisations [written submissions from Scottish Land and Estates and the Scottish Countryside Alliance] are out of touch with what is happening on the ground, the effects of which we see regularly. ... We propose not that game bird hunting should be banned but simply that it should be better regulated to get rid of the illegal element in the midst of the sector. Hunting jobs would continue, but we need a less intensive game bird hunting model to deliver a wider range of public goods. ... In Scotland, we have state-regulated systems for other aspects of natural resources management, such as water...deer and wild fisheries. Why should game bird hunting be any different? ... We suggest that the system should be supported by a code of practice for sustainable game bird hunting that sets out the standards that must be adhered to.”

- Andrea Hudspeth, Treasurer and Raptor Surveyor, Tayside Raptor Study Group
“I have only really come into this arena in the past six years and what I have seen on the ground is unbelievable. I have been astonished by what I have seen and by what people get away with. The problem is that, if you are out there on your own monitoring raptors, there is no one to corroborate what you have seen. I can report, and my reports can improve intelligence for the police and can go on record, but that does not lead to convictions. It is very hard to bring a case before the courts and get a successful conviction. It is also a long-winded and expensive process. ... The industry will say how vital its businesses are to rural economies in Scotland. I would counter that by saying that nature-based tourism contributes £1.4 billion to the Scottish economy and supports 39,000 jobs.”

- Dr Colin Snedden, Director Scotland, British Association for Shooting and Conservation
“Shooting is a substantial rural industry in Scotland that influences the management of about two thirds of the land and supports 8,800 full-time job equivalents. More important, the conservation work that is carried out by shooters from all walks of life is equivalent to 3,900 full-time workers. ... Those who participate in game bird hunting are regulated by some of the toughest firearms legislation in Europe; they must have a shotgun certificate, which means that they have been vetted by the police. As noted in the wildlife crime report for 2015, such certificates can be revoked, with wildlife crime considered relevant in such a revocation, at a civil burden of proof. Although shoot licensing does not exist in Scotland or anywhere else that I know of in Europe, game bird hunters are, in effect, licensed very much in the way that the petitioners desire. ... Shotgun certificate holders are among the most law-abiding sectors of society; any hint of illegal activity can lead to the withdrawal of the right to hold a certificate and the ability to shoot. ... The fear of the cost and the bureaucracy surrounding any shoot licensing scheme on top of the current legislation and regulation that land managers face could act as a

disincentive and may lead to shoots being abandoned and important conservation work being deserted.”

- Tim Baynes, Director, Scottish Moorland Group
“I am talking on behalf of the 2,500 or so people who operate Scotland’s 140 grouse moors. They are passionate about the work that they do looking after the uplands, the birds and the habitats. The petitioners say that environmental concerns are behind their call for licensing, but there is solid evidence that the muirburn, the predator control and the other work that goes on around moorlands is a positive net contribution to the environment—for example, it helps waders, whose numbers are fast declining elsewhere. ... The petition rests mainly on grouse moors, but we do not recognise the picture that the petitioners paint about how grouse moors are managed. We condemn any form of wildlife crime. Like the petitioners, we are members of PAWS—partnership for action against wildlife crime Scotland—and share the same objectives. ... Broadly speaking, [the Scottish Government’s most recent wildlife Crime report] shows that there has been a gradual decrease in wildlife crime over the past five years. We think that the figures for crime relating to raptors in the past three to five years are the lowest that they have been. That suggests to us that the current measures are working.”

Written evidence received by the PPC Committee

- [RSPB Scotland](#)
- [Scottish Land and Estates](#)
- [Scottish Countryside Alliance](#)
- [A joint submission from the Scottish Moorland Group and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation](#)
- [The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust](#)

SPICe briefing and a review of gamebird licensing and legislation in other European countries

5. The Scottish Parliament Information Centre’s (SPICe) [briefing to the PCC Committee on the petition](#) provided: a background to gamebird hunting in Scotland; some views on the potential negative effects of such hunting on raptor species in Scotland as well as wider environmental impacts; and a summary of previous work in this area by both the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament. The briefing also referred to a current piece of research commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to gather information and provide comparisons to game bird licensing and legislation in other European countries. It will not however make any recommendations in relation to whether a licensing system for gamebird hunting in Scotland should be introduced.

6. The SNH commissioned research was originally announced by the Scottish Government in 2014 and was due to be published by Autumn 2016. However, in an answer to a [recent parliamentary question from Mark Ruskell MSP](#) on 17 January 2017, the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform said:

“Scottish Natural Heritage will publish the commissioned research on gamebird licensing systems in selected other countries shortly.”

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee consideration

7. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take in relation to the petition. Options include:

- to invite the petitioner to give evidence to the Committee;
- to invite written or oral evidence from a range of interested stakeholders; or
- to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform to seek a further update on when the research on gamebird licensing systems in other European countries will be published and whether the Scottish Government has any current intention to regulate in this area. The Committee may wish to give further consideration to this petition following this response; or
- to invite the authors of the SNH commissioned research, once published, to give evidence on the report in order to fully explore international approaches and comparisons.

Clerks

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

4th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5)

Tuesday 31 January 2017

Consideration of the SNH Report on Deer Management in Scotland – Evidence heard 24 January 2017

Introduction

1. At its meeting on 24 January, the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee heard evidence representatives of SNH on its Report on Deer Management in Scotland.

2. The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the evidence heard at the meeting until its next meeting on 31 January 2017.

3. The relevant papers, including the Official Report, of the meeting on 24 January 2016 are available here:

- [Papers for Meeting 24 January 2017](#)
- [Official Report of Meeting 24 January 2017](#)
- [Minutes of Meeting 24 January 2017](#)

Clerks

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee