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Edward Mountain MSP
Convener
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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20 October 2023

Dear Edward

Publication of a Joint 4-Nation's Response to the Consultation on the Introduction of Mandatory Digital Waste Tracking

I am writing to advise the Committee that the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has notified us of its intention to publish a response to a consultation on the introduction of mandatory digital waste tracking ('the Response'), developed jointly by the 4-nations, on 21 October. The consultation response will be available here: [Implementation of mandatory digital waste tracking - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/mandatory-digital-waste-tracking)

In line with our commitment in the 2019 Update to the Climate Change Plan, we are working, through a project led by Defra, with other governments and regulators in the UK to develop a digital waste tracking service. While waste is a devolved policy area, this will improve the quality and timeliness of waste data by replacing the multiple and largely paper-based systems used to report and record waste transfers with a single, digital service.

Between January and April 2022, the Scottish Government, UK Government, Welsh Government and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland held a consultation on the Implementation of Mandatory Digital Waste Tracking; and published a summary of the 713 responses in November 2022. We have jointly considered the responses to the consultation to develop policy positions, which will be set out in the Response.

The Response will set out several positions, including on: the intended scope of the service; what and how information will be recorded; options to ensure waste handlers are following the waste hierarchy; the charges that will recover the cost of operating the service; provisions to allow digitally excluded individuals to use the service; data handling information; and implementation timelines.

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The implementation of a mandatory digital service will of course be subject to parliamentary approval. The Environment Act 2021 amended the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to provide powers to Scottish Ministers to implement such a service by way of regulation and we will bring forward a statutory instrument in due course. This instrument will be subject to the affirmative procedure. In the meantime, we will continue to work with other governments and regulators to develop the digital waste tracking service and prepare for implementation.

I am happy to discuss the Response further with the Committee once it is published.

Kind regards

LORNA SLATER

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