



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

Committee Conveners
Scottish Parliament
09 October 2025

Dear Conveners

Joint scrutiny of the draft Climate Change Plan

Following my [letter on 26 June](#) and Conveners Group (CG) discussions on 24 September on the upcoming draft Climate Change Plan (CCP), I am writing to set out the expected timeline for scrutiny and areas of the Plan that committees may want to consider scrutinising.

I thank committees for their interest in engaging in joint scrutiny of the CCP. I know that this is an especially busy time for many of you but reiterate my encouragement to keep time free in your work programmes to scrutinise it, especially those committees scrutinising sectors where decarbonisation is most needed and most challenging.

Timeline for scrutiny of the draft Climate Change Plan

On 30 September, the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee [published our report](#) recommending to Parliament the approval of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 (Scottish Carbon Budgets) Amendment Regulations 2025. The Regulations set out the reduction in carbon tonnage that the Scottish Government must meet over 5-year cycles starting in 2026.

Parliamentary agreement of the Regulations is a necessary precursor to the laying of the draft CCP. The Regulations were considered and approved in the chamber yesterday and come into force today, which means Scottish Ministers must now lay a draft CCP within two months.

[On 24 July, the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy advised that](#), if the Regulations were agreed by October recess, the Scottish Government's stated aim was to lay the draft around late October / beginning of November. We understand this remains the Scottish Government's position.

The draft CCP must be laid in the Scottish Parliament for 120 days. During this time committees may scrutinise and publish reports on the draft CCP, and the Chamber may debate or consider motions on it. If the draft Plan is laid in late October /

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beginning of November, the 120-day period will end around late February / early March 2026.

Scottish Ministers must then lay a Climate Change Plan within 90 days. However, the Scottish Government have been clear that they intend to lay the final Plan before the Parliament dissolves for the election i.e. well before the 90-day period is up. The Scottish Government must also publish a response to any resolutions by the Scottish Parliament or Scottish Parliament Committee reports within three months of them being passed or published.

Committee remits and scrutiny

At the 24 September CG meeting, Conveners advised that it would be helpful if I were to write to them outlining how scrutiny of the draft CCP could be divided up between committees, reflecting CG's agreement that climate change scrutiny is a collective scrutiny priority of *all* committees in this session.

A summary of the suggested areas of scrutiny committees may want to consider on the draft CCP is available in the annexe. This is based on our understanding of the different "chapters" (in the language of the relevant legislation) the draft Plan is likely to be divided into.

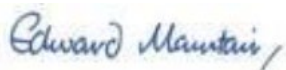
It is, rightly, entirely up to individual committees what work they undertake on the draft Plan, so please read this as requests for your assistance, not expectations or demands. However, I do stress that it would be impossible for the NZET Committee to carry out all this work on its own.

I also direct committees to SPICe blogs which outline the links between committee remits and climate change, which may also be helpful in considering how your committee could scrutinise its main areas of interest. Blogs are [available on the SPICe Hub](#).

I will write to you again once the draft Plan has been laid: to confirm timings and to seek confirmation of what work on the draft you are able to carry out, in order to help the NZET Committee carry out its coordinating role.

I am also happy to meet with Conveners if they have any further questions on how they might best utilise their committee's expertise in joint scrutiny. NZET Committee clerks are, as ever, also happy to discuss this with their counterparts.

Yours sincerely,



Edward Mountain MSP
Convener

Annexe: Areas of scrutiny committees may want to consider on the draft Climate Change Plan

The [Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#) requires the CCP (and draft CCP) to include chapters for certain sectors. The table below is based on the Scottish Government's [Indicative Statement published in May](#) alongside the Carbon Budget Regulations, which sets out a structure the draft CCP is likely to follow.

Sectors in the Indicative Statement	Committee best placed to lead on scrutiny in that area
Energy Supply	NZET
Transport (Including International Aviation and Shipping)	NZET
Business and Industrial Process and Negative Emissions Technologies (NETs) ¹	EFW
Residential and Public (In Relation to Buildings in Those Sectors)	LGHP
Waste Management	NZET
Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry ("LULUCF") ²	RAI
Agriculture	RAI

¹ We expect NETs to be in the Industry chapter. Carbon capture and storage; a process for capturing *generated* CO₂ rather than to remove already existing greenhouse gases, has had some scrutiny in this session from NZET, mainly as part of its energy remit (the process creates hydrogen). There is no strong link between NETs and energy generation overall: it depends on the technology. NETs are anticipated as having potential use in balancing residual emissions from industry where full decarbonisation is hard or impossible. EFW appears the appropriate Committee to consider NETs both in the overall context of decarbonising industry and potentially as part of a just transition (e.g. employment and skills needed for a potentially expanded NET sector.)

² We expect the LULUCF chapter to include, amongst other items, tree planting and peatland restoration, as well as agriculture. Rural land use is generally a matter for the RAI Committee, although the NZET Committee has scrutinised particular aspects (e.g. land reform, biodiversity and land use, natural capital, etc). Land is a finite resource, subject to sometimes competing interests and demands. In order to ensure a holistic approach to scrutiny of how to make best uses of land in the context of seeking to achieve net zero, the NZET Committee suggests that this is best done by a single committee, and that this be the lead committee on rural land use.

There are also two over-arching, non-sector-specific elements to be included in joint Committee scrutiny of the draft CCP

Major themes expected in the draft CCP	Committee best placed to lead on scrutiny in that area
Just Transition	EFW
Governance, finance, reporting and monitoring of the Plan	NZET (all) FPA (finance aspect) PAC (wrote in detail to NZET in 2023 summarising in detail their work on audit and climate change. They also wrote in July 2025 on Sustainable Transport: reducing car use. PAC may choose to write further with more recent work during the scrutiny period.)

As outlined in the SPICe blogs linked in the body of the letter, climate change impacts to some degree on all committee remits, and so there are further areas of scrutiny that committees which could add significant value to the Parliament's collective work on the draft CCP

Further areas of potential scrutiny	Committee who may want to undertake scrutiny on that area
CCP and the Tackling Fuel Poverty Strategy	SJSS
Emissions from the culture sector	CEEA
NHS plan to reach net zero Links between public health and climate change	HSCS
Decarbonisation of the criminal justice estate	CJ
Climate change and the proposed right to a healthy environment	EHRCJ