

Follow up info from evidence session on Tuesday 28 September 2021

NatureScot

Following on from the recent evidence session that NatureScot attended, we were reflecting on our evidence and wanted to highlight Climate Change adaptation as an area of work that is critical in thinking about Net Zero, but was only touched on briefly during our evidence and the other sessions. I've included a few points on this subject below, but we would be happy to talk about it in more detail if the Convenor or any of the Committee members would be interested to hear more about it.

Adaptation to Climate Change is central to the drive to reach Net Zero – It is not enough to see Net Zero and adaptation to unavoidable climate change as two halves of the climate change equation. They are tightly bound, whether in Scotland or globally, we can't achieve Net Zero if we don't prepare for and adapt to climate change.

Scotland's Net Zero targets rely on changes to land use, including habitat restoration, but those carbon savings are only based on today's climate. The carbon we help nature to store will be at increasing risk of being re-emitted due to more weather extremes, increased seasonality, novel pests and diseases, and long-term climate trends. The Committee on Climate Change has [highlighted this risk](#) as one of eight "highest priorities" for immediate adaptation.

Nature can provide essential support to wider socio-economic adaptation that underpins Net Zero. It does this both directly - such as habitats reducing flooding of built infrastructure - and less tangibly, such as green infrastructure improving the health and resilience of local communities. Enhancing and protecting nature is thus fundamental to raising Scotland's adaptive capacity, so that the systemic change needed for Net Zero can be delivered.

I hope this is helpful and please let us know if you would like to hear more on this topic.

Kind regards
Alex

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